

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Melanie Clarke (609) 497-0020 melcog@hotmail.com

Princeton Symphony Orchestra Presents

“Folklore, Village Life and Nationalism!”

**With Guest Conductor Julian Kuerti
And David Kim, violin**

**Sunday, March 15, 2009
4:00 pm concert at Richardson Auditorium**

Program of Bartók, Tchaikovsky, Smetana

Free Pre-concert Lecture at 3:00 pm

**Tickets: \$64, 50, 36, 16
Information: (609) 497-0020**

Princeton, NJ, February 23, 2009... The Princeton Symphony Orchestra continues its season on **Sunday, March 15, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.**, with *“Folklore, Village Life and Nationalism!”* Guest conductor **Julian Kuerti**, Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, will lead the PSO through a performance of works by **Bartók**, **Tchaikovsky**, and **Smetana** that portray the vibrant spirit and traditions of Eastern European and Russian cultures.

Bartók’s *Hungarian Sketches* portray various short and often comical scenes that might have occurred in Hungary’s small rural villages during the 1930’s when this piece was written. Bartók’s objective was to create a modern musical language for Hungary to rival what was being created at the time in Vienna and Berlin, but also to record and adopt the rich folk music that was beginning to disappear from Hungarian towns and villages. The *Hungarian Sketches* are full of humor and wit, illuminating a village life that likely no longer exists.

Tchaikovsky's poetic and powerful *Violin Concerto, Op. 35 in D Major* carries a strong flavor of Russian nationalism, and has often served as a "cultural ambassador" in the hands of Russian violinists. Composed in the spring of 1878, the premiere of this piece was delayed because many of the best musicians of the time found it too difficult to play. It eventually premiered in Vienna on December 4, 1881 with violinist Adolf Brodsky. For PSO's audience, the concerto will be in the accomplished hands of Philadelphia Orchestra's concertmaster, **David Kim**.

Considered the founder of Czech nationalist music, Smetana composed the symphonic cycle *Má Vlast* (My Country) in 1874 - 1879 during a period of strong and growing nationalist sentiments among his countrymen. Smetana's goal was to produce an iconic national music that would be a reflection of the people. One of the crowning achievements of this nationalist movement, *Má Vlast* is an idealistic and sincere record of the composer's love for his homeland. Consisting of six symphonic poems, three of which will be performed by the PSO, Smetana provides a window into the Czech identity that is hard to find anywhere else.

Julian Kuerti, *guest conductor*

Canadian conductor Julian Kuerti was appointed assistant conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra by James Levine in February 2007, and made his BSO debut with subscription concerts in March 2008 with soloists Leon Fleischer and, as a last-minute replacement in the final performance, his father, the famed pianist Anton Kuerti.

In 2006 Kuerti served as assistant conductor to Ivan Fischer and the Budapest Festival Orchestra, where he was immediately reengaged to lead three performances of Viktor Ullmann's "Der Kaiser von Atlantis" in the 2007/08 season. He has conducted extensively in Europe, North and South America, performing with orchestras such as the Toronto Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra Washington, Berliner Symphoniker, and the Budapest Festival Orchestra.

Kuerti was born in Toronto in 1976 into one of Canada's most distinguished musical families. He began his instrumental training on the violin, and while completing an honors degree in engineering & physics at the University of Toronto, performed as concertmaster and soloist with various Canadian orchestras. He began his conducting studies in the year 2000 at the University of Toronto. That summer he was accepted as a student at the renowned Pierre Monteux School for Conductors in Maine, where he studied for two years with Michael Jinbo and Claude Monteux.

In 2001 Kuerti won the position of Apprentice Conductor with Boris Brott and Canada's National Academy Orchestra. After a year as assistant conductor with Canada's foremost training orchestra, he finished his studies in 2005 with Lutz Köhler at the University of the Arts Berlin.

Kuerti studied with David Zinman at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen in 2004, and with acclaimed Finnish Maestro Jorma Panula at the NAC Conductors Programme in Ottawa. In 2005, Kuerti was one of two conducting fellows at Tanglewood, studying under James Levine, Kurt Masur, Stefan Asbury and Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos and performing with the Tanglewood orchestra and fellows throughout the summer.

Kuerti was founding artistic director of Solistenensemble Kaleidoskop in Berlin, with whom he has recorded a recently released CD of Italian Cellist / Composer Giovanni Sollima for Sony/BMG. Larger upcoming engagements for 2008/2009 include debuts with the Calgary Philharmonic, Victoria and Edmonton Symphonies.

David Kim, *violin*

Violinist **David Kim** was named Concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1999. Born in Carbondale, Illinois, he started playing the violin at the age of three, began studies with the famed pedagogue Dorothy DeLay at the age of eight, and later received

his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from The Juilliard School. In 1986 he was the only American violinist to win a prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, and in 1990 was a prize winner at the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis. Kim is founder and artistic director of the Kingston Chamber Music Festival at the University of Rhode Island (founded in 1989), where he also holds the position of Special Guest Artist and was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Arts in 2001.

Kim devotes a portion of his schedule each year to bringing classical music to children. In conjunction with the Kingston Chamber Music Festival, he founded an annual outreach program that has taken him to elementary schools, performing and speaking about classical music in an effort to cultivate future audiences. To date, he has performed for well over 12,000 young people in the State of Rhode Island. He also visits schools in the Philadelphia area each season.

Kim appears as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra each season as well as with numerous orchestras around the world. Conductors with whom he has performed include Christoph von Dohnanyi, Charles Dutoit, Christoph Eschenbach, Vladimir Jurowski, Andrew Litton, Peter Oundjian, and Wolfgang Sawallisch. He also appears internationally at festivals such as Kuhmo (Finland), Pacific (Japan), and Seattle. His instrument is a J.B. Guadagnini from Milan, Italy ca. 1757 on loan from the Philadelphia Orchestra.

PSO's Classical Series will conclude on **April 26, 2009**, when PSO welcomes guest conductor **Scott Yoo**, Music Director of the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival in California, in a concert featuring **Soyeon Lee**, a gifted young pianist who resides in Princeton. For more information please visit the PSO website at www.princetonsymphony.org or contact the PSO office at 609-497-0020.

Free Pre-concert Lecture with Gene DeLisa

Every classical concert is preceded by a free lecture given by PSO program annotator, composer, and musicologist Gene DeLisa. Free to all ticket holders, the lectures take place in the concert hall beginning at 3:00 pm the day of the concert. No reservations are required.

Concert and Ticket Information

PSO presents its five-concert classical subscription series and its Pops series at the 800-seat Richardson Auditorium (on the Princeton University campus) during a September through May season.

Five-concert classical series subscriptions, pops series options, and single tickets are available by calling the PSO at 609-497-0020. Complete season information can be found on the PSO's website, www.princetonsymphony.org. Single tickets can also be purchased at the Richardson Auditorium box office (609) 258-5000, and at www.princeton.edu/utickets. Single tickets cost \$64, 50, 36, and 16. Richardson Auditorium is wheelchair accessible. Large print programs are available.

About the Princeton Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1980 by Portia Sonnenfeld, today's Princeton Symphony Orchestra has been hailed by critics as New Jersey's "virtuoso orchestra." Over the course of its 29-year history, the orchestra's leadership has invested in artistic excellence as well as community and educational concerts and programs that contribute broadly to civic life and establish the PSO in partnerships with local educational, arts and social service organizations. Since its inception, the Princeton Symphony has been guided by an extraordinary Board of Trustees and is grateful for the vision of its early Trustees who included Frank E. Taplin, Jr., Edward Cone, William F. Scheide, Reid White, Nathaniel Burt, and Judy Thomson. Caren Sturges, Board Chair, currently leads an active and deeply committed Board. For the 2008-2009 season, the PSO received a **Citation of Excellence** from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for its work commissioning and presenting a new composition—Paul Moravec's Clarinet Concerto.

Page 6
Princeton Symphony Orchestra
February 23, 2009

For more information, please visit our website at www.princetonsymphony.org, or contact the PSO office at 609-497-0020.

##