

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Broadway Show Tunes and Island Chic**  
**Spark Princeton Symphony Orchestra Benefit for *BRAVO!***  
**May 2, 2009 at The Bedens Brook Club**

Last Saturday may have been a perfect spring evening in the countryside outside of Princeton, but the mood was tropical at the Princeton Symphony Orchestra Benefit for its highly acclaimed education program *BRAVO!*

That's because the star attraction of the event's cabaret was William Michals, the understudy to the lead in the current Lincoln Center production of *South Pacific*, and in his honor the guests were asked to don "Island Chic." And, so they did. From hot pink, azure and coral ensembles to shell adornments and a few Hawaiian shirts for the gentlemen, the theme took hold. Along with the music, it was the talk of the evening among the 200 guests.

The flowers, beautifully executed by Holly Schade of Hopewell Township and the decorations committee, enhanced the Pacific island theme. The centerpieces featured birds of paradise, colorful calla lilies, exotic protea and graceful ranunculus. Potted palms graced all corners of the Bedens Brook Club where the benefit was held. There was even a smattering of exotic orchids on the plates of passed hors d'oeuvres.

After cocktails and dinner, Mr. Michals began his star turn with "Some Enchanted Evening" from *South Pacific*. It was just the beginning of an hour-long magical sampling of Broadway show tunes from a wide selection of musicals such as *Les Miserables*, *Man of La Mancha* and *Oklahoma*. He was accompanied by pianist Robert Felstein.

"It was the perfect way to conclude our very successful concert season," said Caren Sturges of Princeton, president of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra Board of Trustees and chair of this year's benefit. "William Michals wowed everyone with his magnificent voice and his repertoire. He sang Broadway songs that we all grew up with and love, even encouraging us to sing along with him a few times. I was thrilled with the

whole evening, and the symphony is very grateful to the support from patrons and corporate sponsors for our **BRAVO!** program.”

**BRAVO!** enriches music education by providing a comprehensive and sustained introduction to the symphony orchestra integrated within a school’s regular music curriculum. **BRAVO!** establishes PSO musicians in permanent teaching partnerships at more than thirty public, private and special-need elementary schools throughout central New Jersey and serves 10,000 students, from elementary school through college.

**BRAVO!**’s small ensemble program offers instructional performances using a planned, sequential curriculum for each grade level to teach about the instruments of the orchestra and prepare students to attend an orchestra in concert. The **BRAVO!** program also sponsors **Master Classes** for talented high school and college instrumentalists, conducting workshops for regional youth orchestras, and the **ListenUp!** series for middle school students. **ListenUp!** invites students to create art in response to what they hear at PSO concerts. Later this month, the entire orchestra will perform dance music from the classical repertoire for 4,500 elementary students.

“We are thankful to everyone who supported our gala this year and I am pleased to announce that we have raised enough money to pay for all five orchestra concerts that will be performed next week for thousands of local elementary students,” said PSO executive director Melanie Clarke. “This is an outstanding commitment from our community to join the PSO in sustaining this important arts education program, and the schools we serve join us in thanking our supporters for their generosity. Special thanks must also be made to the individuals who made their wonderful vacation homes available to our auction, adding \$20,000 to the money we raised. I would also like to thank PSO board member Nina Wainwright for introducing us to Broadway star William Michals. His participation in our benefit was just the right touch – making music to support music!”

This year's benefit corporate sponsors included PricewaterhouseCoopers, Verizon Wireless, Ortho-McNeil-Janssen, Tyco International, Goldman Sachs & Co., WithumSmith + Brown, and Integra Neuro Sciences.

Serving on the benefit committee were Peggy Hughes-Fulmer, Toby Goodyear,

Rachel Gray, Lynette Hull, Kate Lindseth, Deborah Lunder, Ann Marciano, Pamela Morandi, Jacquie Phares, Ellen Pitts, Katie Poole, Anne Reeves, Kim Rizk, Randie Roderick, Barbara Straut, Kathleen Tovar, Martha Vaughn, Nina Wainwright, Nancy Woelk, and Marlyn Zucosky of Princeton, Lucy Anne Newman and Susie Paneyko of Skillman, Holly Schade of Hopewell Township, and Ruta Smithson of Lawrenceville.

### **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 28-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.

**For more information, please visit our website at [www.princetonsymphony.org](http://www.princetonsymphony.org), or contact the PSO office at 609-497-0020.**