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Princeton Symphony Orchestra

30th Anniversary Season Opening Concert Sunday, October 4, 2009

4:00 pm concert at Richardson Auditorium

With Guest Conductor Benjamin Zander

**Works of Mahler, Saint-Saëns
Featuring Sarah Pelletier, Soprano
And George Li, Piano**

**Special Free Pre-concert Lecture at 2:45 pm featuring
Guest Conductor and Leading Mahler Authority
Benjamin Zander**

**Tickets: \$64, 50, 38, 20
Information: (609) 497-0020**

Princeton, NJ, September 17, 2009... On **Sunday, October 4 at 4:00 p.m. at Richardson Auditorium**, the Princeton Symphony Orchestra will kick-off its 30th anniversary season in grand fashion with a concert featuring internationally-renowned conductor, teacher, author and inspirational speaker **Benjamin Zander**. Zander, whose interpretations of Mahler have been described by *The New York Times* as “Mahler to sink your teeth into,” and who has been praised as a superb communicator, will give a special free lecture to ticket-holders just prior to the concert at **2:45 p.m.** in Richardson Auditorium. This is a not-to-be missed opportunity to hear the insights of one of the world’s leading authorities on Mahler.

The program will open with **Saint-Saëns’** brilliant and melodic *Piano Concerto No. 2 in G Minor*. To perform this most popular of Saint-Saëns’ concertos, the PSO will be joined by fourteen-year old piano prodigy **George Li**. This piece is a favorite of soloists and audiences alike for its flair and musical showmanship.

Zander will devote the second half of the program to Mahler's serene and magnificent *Symphony No. 4 in G Major*, a work for which Zander has received rave reviews in the international press for his masterful and definitive interpretation. One of Mahler's most popular symphonies, it is also his most accessible and sunniest work. Princeton soprano **Sarah Pelletier** will sing the finale's beautiful *Das Himmlische Leben* (*The Heavenly Life*), which takes its lyrics from the collection of German folk poetry called Des Knaben Wunderhorn.

This concert is the culmination of an entire weekend of 30th anniversary celebration events for the PSO featuring guest conductor **Benjamin Zander**. On **Saturday October 3 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** at Westminster Choir College's Bristol Chapel, Zander will give his widely admired lecture on inspirational leadership based on his best-selling book, *The Art of Possibility*. Using the metaphor of the orchestra, Zander's exuberant, bold and unconventional presentation teaches how to unlock the potential for greatness in human relationships and in organizations. The weekend's events are underwritten by a generous gift from Glenmede.

Benjamin Zander has been the conductor of the Boston Philharmonic since its formation in 1979 and, for the past 38 years, conductor of the New England Conservatory Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. He has guest-conducted throughout the world. He appears regularly with the Philharmonia Orchestra in London, with whom he has made a series of definitive recordings of Mahler, Beethoven and Bruckner for the Telarc label. Their 1998 live recording of Mahler's Ninth Symphony has become one of the most successful classical CDs of the era, gaining worldwide critical acclaim and a Grammy nomination in the category of Best Orchestral Performance. The recording of Mahler's Fourth Symphony was chosen by the New York Times as one of the ten best CDs of 2001, whilst Mahler's Fifth Symphony was awarded the Toblacher Komponierhäuschen Award

by the Viennese Critics Circle as ‘the best Mahler recording of the year.’ Mahler’s Sixth Symphony was on the Sunday Times list of the ten best records of 2002, and both Fanfare and High Fidelity chose it as their record of the year. Many of Zander’s recordings include full-length discs on which he explains the music for the lay listener.

Benjamin Zander gave the opening Keynote address at the World Economic Forum in Davos, where on another occasion he was awarded the Crystal award for "outstanding contributions in the Arts and International Relations. In 2002 he was awarded the "Caring Citizen of the Humanities" Award by the International Council for Caring Communities at the United Nations. In honor of his 70th birthday, and 44 years of teaching, he was recently awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the New England Conservatory.

Zander is an internationally-known speaker on leadership and the co-author of *The Art of Possibility*, a book which has been translated into 16 languages.

Fourteen-year-old pianist **George Li** was hailed as a “piano virtuoso” with “a talent and technique somewhat larger than this solar system” by the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette* after his performance of the Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 2 with Symphony Pro Musica. Recently back from Sweden where he was a soloist with the Nordic Chamber Orchestra, the Sundsvalls Tidning’s review described Li’s playing technique as leaving, “nothing to be desired of virtuosity, timbre, dynamics, speed, sense of phrasing...and deep heartfelt musicality.”

Having performed publicly since he was nine years old, Li is gaining attention as a significant chamber musician and orchestral soloist. Li has appeared at the opening ceremony of Boston's new Institute of Contemporary Art, at New England Conservatory, and at Boston's Steinway Hall. He also was a soloist at Carnegie Hall in the new television series produced by the popular NPR radio show *From the Top*. In addition, he has been featured on ABC's *Martha Stewart Show*. Li has appeared with orchestras in China, Venezuela and the United States.

Praised by the *Boston Globe* for possessing "virtues of voice, intelligence and musicianship... with purity of tone and expression," soprano **Sarah Pelletier** demonstrates these qualities in all her performances. She is Associate Choir Director of the Princeton High School Choir while maintaining an active professional career as a singer and a pianist. She was guest artist at Spoleto Festival USA, Bard Music Festival, and Aldeburgh Festival. Past seasons include a solo recital on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage; Berg's *Wozzeck* and Schwantner's *Magabunda* with New England Philharmonic; Bach *B minor* Mass with San Francisco Bach Choir; Handel's *Messiah* with New Jersey Symphony Orchestra; Schumann's *Genoveva* and Handel's *Ariodante* with Emmanuel Music; and Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* with Princeton Festival Opera. Ms. Pelletier toured with Maestro Seiji Ozawa to Japan, China, and Italy performing *Madama Butterfly* and *Peter Grimes*. She received Vocal Fellowships at Tanglewood and the Ravinia Festival. Upcoming performances include Brahms *Requiem* with Princeton Pro Musica and Handel's *Messiah* with Masterwork Chorus at Carnegie Hall.

She has given solo recitals at Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Goethe Institute. She has premiered works by Howard Frazin, John Goodman, James Yannatos, and Arlene Zallman with performances under the direction of Lukas Foss, Robert Spano, and John Harbison. She has performed for Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music, "Music in Time Series" at Spoleto Festival USA, and Santa Fe New Music. Ms. Pelletier is recorded on Chesky Records.

Concert, Lecture and Ticket Information

PSO presents its five-concert classical subscription series and its Holiday and Broadway Concerts at the 850-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 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, 38, and 20. Richardson Auditorium is wheelchair accessible. Large print programs are available. **Admission to the "Art of Possibility" lecture on October 3rd is free, by reservation. Seating is limited. To reserve a place at this event, e-mail the PSO at info@princetonsymphony.org or call (609) 497-0020.**

About the Princeton Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1980, the Princeton Symphony Orchestra is a cultural centerpiece of the Princeton community and one of the State's finest musical organizations. The Symphony has been guided by an extraordinary Board of Trustees and is grateful for the vision of its early Trustees, including Frank E. Taplin, Jr., Edward T. Cone, William F. Scheide, Reid White, Nathaniel Burt, and Judy Thomson. Over the course of its 30-year history, the PSO's leadership has invested in the artistic excellence of its orchestral, chamber, and

pops concert offerings. Under the auspices of *BRAVO!*, the PSO also produces wide-reaching and innovative education programs carried out in partnerships with local schools, arts organizations, and other community agencies.

The PSO is proud to have been awarded the New Jersey State Council on the Arts' highest honors—*Citation of Excellence* and designation as a *Major Arts Institution*. The only professional orchestra to make its home in Princeton, the PSO performs at beautiful Richardson Auditorium on the campus of Princeton University. In June 2009, the PSO board appointed Rossen Milanov to be the PSO's third Music Director. Mr. Milanov is a gifted and accomplished conductor with outstanding musical credentials, energy, and creativity.

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

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