

**CHARLESTON
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**



David Stahl,
Music Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HIGHEST GROSSING OPENING NIGHT EVER FOR THE CHARLESTON
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S PORGY AND BESS HIGHLIGHTS**

CHARLESTON, SC (September 27, 2009) – The Charleston Symphony Orchestra (www.charlestonsymphony.com) (CSO) opened its Merrill Lynch Masterworks Series on Saturday, September 26, 2009, to a crowd of almost 2,200 earning the highest gross revenue in the Symphony's history. Ticket sales were up 24% over last year's Opening Night performance.

"What a great beginning to a full season of outstanding performances," Ted Legasey, President of the Board of Directors, comments, "We are thrilled. Congratulations to David and all the performers and the staff."

"From my vantage point up on stage, the magic of a full house and the energy it creates for everyone is hard to put in words!" Maestro David Stahl explains, "When I was arriving at the Gaillard and stuck in traffic on Calhoun as everyone was arriving for the performance, it was a huge rush. It obviously shows tremendous community support for the Symphony and to hear our very special interpretation of *Porgy and Bess* which has won a special place in the hearts of all 'Charlestonians'."

Guest soloists Roberta Laws and Alvy Powell, joined the Symphony, CSO Gospel Choir and CSO Chorus to perform highlights from Charleston's own opera, *Porgy and Bess*.

The Symphony's Backstage Pass series will open with "Songs of our Youth" conducted by David Stahl and including music composed by College of Charleston's own Edward Hart. The performance will be Thursday, October 8, 2009, at 7 pm at Memminger Auditorium (56 Beaufain Street, Charleston, SC). The McCrady's Pops will open with music from James Bond at the Memminger on Friday and Saturday, October 30 and 31, 2009.

Tickets are on sale at www.charlestonsymphony.com, the Gaillard Auditorium Box Office (77 Calhoun Street, Charleston, SC) or any Ticketmaster outlet. Prices range from \$20 - \$60. Student tickets are available for \$5 to all CSO performances.

The Charleston Symphony Orchestra, the largest full-time performing arts organization in South Carolina, has been a partner in weaving the cultural fabric of Charleston since 1936. The Orchestra's mission is to promote the enjoyment and appreciation of music among visitors and residents of the Charleston area, and to make music a vital part of the area's cultural life. Its artistic excellence, youth education programs and community outreach have made The Charleston Symphony Orchestra a central component in the rich cultural foundation of this region.

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