



Tony Award-winning
Michael Maguire from
the Broadway hit *Les
Misérables* to perform
with the **California
Symphony** on April 21

**Event marks first time a professional
orchestra has performed in Antioch's historic
El Campanil Theatre**

Walnut Creek, CA – March 8, 2007 – Continuing its 20th Anniversary celebration, the California Symphony under founder/conductor Barry Jekowsky will feature Tony Award-winner Michael Maguire at a special concert called “Broadway and Beyond” on April 21, 2007, at the historic El Campanil Theatre in Antioch.

In 1987, Maguire received every major Broadway award for his portrayal of Enjolras in the original long-running musical, *Les Misérables*, for which he was also featured on the cover of *Newsweek*. He previously performed with the California Symphony at the Concorde Pavilion. For the upcoming April 21 concert, Maguire will perform two medleys of famous Broadway songs, including Andrew Lloyd Webber’s “Music of the Night” from the *Phantom of the Opera* and “Bring Him Home” from *Les Misérables*. The concert will also include such enduring American standards as George & Ira Gershwin’s “Strike Up The Band,” Stephen Sondheim’s “Barcelona” from *Company* and Burt Bacarach’s “Promises, Promises.”

Notably, this event marks the first time that a professional orchestra has performed in Antioch's landmark El Campanil Theatre, built in 1928. It's also the first time that the California Symphony has appeared in East Contra Costa County.

"We are extremely grateful to the Dean & Margaret Lesher Foundation, the City of Antioch, and other sponsors such as Comcast for making this possible," says California Symphony Executive Director Stacey Street. "It has long been our goal to bring high-quality musical performances to communities throughout the Bay Area, and we hope this concert will be the first of many over the years."

The occasion will be particularly memorable for conductor Barry Jekowsky, who inadvertently began his professional career, at the age of 14, as a substitute percussionist playing in the orchestras of Broadway shows. While studying at Juillard, he had been invited to accompany the principal percussionist of the Tony Award-winning original production of "Man of LaMancha" to Sunday matinees, where Jekowsky would sit off to the side as an observer. To his surprise, individual players would head off to the lounge when they weren't needed.

One Sunday, Jekowsky became alarmed when the percussionist he had accompanied had not yet returned from the lounge. "I knew this man was going to have to be playing in two minutes, and he didn't move very fast anyway. So I'm getting *very* nervous," Jekowsky laughs. "I'm looking back and forth – and it's literally maybe a minute away. And suddenly he peeks through the doorway and motions to me to "Go ahead, and play. Just do it, I can't make it.'

The teenager couldn't believe he was being asked to step in. "I hadn't practiced. I had only watched it. He was taking such a chance! But I jumped in and played the entire scene, which was about five minutes." As it ended, Jekowsky heard this thunderous shuffling of the feet (musicians' equivalent of applause). He had unwittingly just auditioned – arranged in advance by his patron percussionist with the full knowledge of the orchestra! Before long, Jekowsky was also substituting on keyboard and piano. By the time he was 16, he was playing regular gigs on Broadway – including for Stephen Sondheim's "Company" and "Sweeney Todd," "Hair," "Irene" and "Two Gentlemen from Verona" – recording sessions, television shows and national advertising spots.

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