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Broadway Music and Inspiring Words to Help Cambridge Homeless

Cambridge Housing Assistance Fund Hosts Eighth Annual Fundraiser September 29th

CAMBRIDGE, MA, September 1, 2006 – Cambridge citizens who are homeless or in jeopardy of becoming homeless will benefit from a special concert of Broadway show favorites, the world premier of an inspirational musical composition, and a unique visual art installation on Friday, September 29th. This fundraising event, ***Celebrating Broadway's Best: Sondheim & Bernstein***, is hosted by the *Cambridge Housing Assistance Fund (CHAF)*, an organization of Cambridge Realtors and concerned citizens who responded to a need to help people with rising home rental costs. CHAF has grown over eight years into a citywide coalition including the Cambridge banking community, Harvard University, city officials, individuals and other businesses committed to opening doors for the homeless.

Celebrating Broadway's Best: Sondheim & Bernstein is CHAF's Eighth Annual Benefit Concert for the Homeless. It will be held at Sanders Theater in Harvard Square, 45 Quincy Street, Cambridge at 8:00 p.m. The *Boston Secession*, a 25-voice professional choral ensemble under the artistic direction of Jane Ring Frank, will perform selections by Broadway legends Stephen Sondheim and Leonard Bernstein, who collaborated on music for *West Side Story*, *Candide* and other musical works. This performance kicks off the 10th anniversary season for *Secession* who is known for forging connections between music, culture and art.

Secession will be joined by popular musical theater soloists Leigh Barrett, Caroline deLima, Brad Peloquin and Drew Poling, all of whom have performed together in other stage shows. (Please see performer bios enclosed.)

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Secession will also perform the world premier of *regardisregard*, a multimedia presentation featuring the words of and by people who are homeless. This unique and powerful musical work was composed by Ruth Lomon, *Secession's* composer-in-residence. Lomon also serves as composer / resident scholar at the Women's Studies Research Center, Brandeis University.

Lomon was inspired to write *regardisregard* by Mary Oestereicher Hamill who is a resident scholar also at the Women's Studies Research Center. Hamill created an interactive multi-media art installation of the same name, elements of which were composed using the words and film actually shot by 33 people who are homeless, as well as sculpture and live web cam technology. *regardisregard* was shown at the Museum of Fine Arts in 2004 and the Massachusetts State House in 2003. Elements of Hamill's installation will be at the fundraising event. *regardisregard* represents a unique collaboration between Brandeis Women's Studies Research Center colleagues Hamill, Lomon and Ring Frank, who are also Cambridge residents working together to help Cambridge homeless.

"Each year, we've chosen a different aspect of American music around which to build our concert", said David Pap, volunteer Director of CHAF, which uses the concert as a focus for its fundraising efforts. "This year, we've been lucky enough to find an extraordinary musical group – *Boston Secession* – to present what many have called the truly American "opera" – music from Broadway's two greatest composers. Premiering *regardisregard* allows us to combine entertainment with our message – that homelessness is a tragedy we Americans must all work together to prevent."

Celebrating Broadway's Best: Sondheim & Bernstein starts with a fundraising reception at the *Regattabar* in the Charles Hotel, One Bennett Street in Harvard Square, from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Tickets for the reception are \$75.00. The concert begins at 8 :00 p.m. at Sanders Theater, which is just over a half mile from the hotel. Tickets for the concert are \$20.00 and \$25.00 (\$10.00 for students and senior citizens). Tickets may be purchased by calling 617-496-2222 or online at www.fas.harvard.edu/~tickets or www.CHAFund.org.

The *Cambridge Housing Assistance Fund (CHAF)* is committed to breaking the cycle of homelessness in our community. *CHAF* raises funds to assist the homeless and near homeless with initial apartment rental costs such as first month's rent, last month's rent or security deposit. The average amount needed to keep one family from becoming homeless is \$700; once homeless, approximately \$37,000 is expended in state, local and charitable funds to assist them. For more information, please call CHAF at 617-354-5678 or visit www.CHAFund.org.

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