

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MCKINNEY SUMMER MUSICALS
KICKS OFF 2012 SEASON WITH *MY
FAIR LADY* FUNDRAISER;
AUDITIONS BEGIN MARCH 30TH

DATE:

FEBRUARY 23, 2012

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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On Friday, February 10, a large crowd of McKinney Summer Musicals (MSM) supporters and enthusiasts gathered in the McKinney home of Eugene and Pam Knies for “A Lovely Evening for MSM,” a fundraiser for this summer’s production of *My Fair Lady*. Always a much-anticipated event, this year’s gathering featured a unique attraction—internationally renowned vocalist and stage performer David Gaschen, who starred as the title character in Andrew Lloyd Webber’s *The Phantom of the Opera* throughout Europe and on Broadway.

Gaschen, now a resident of Frisco, regaled the audience with a variety of Broadway tunes throughout the evening, with occasional interruptions from live “telethon” emcees Thom Chesney, Rick Robertson, and Patrick Briggs, who encouraged guests to pledge their monetary support through good-natured banter. At one point, Chesney jokingly suggested that, without adequate funds, the show might have to be re-named *My Mediocre Lady*.

The event also included a sumptuous feast of traditional British delicacies, such as roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, and trifle, and drawings for a variety of *My Fair Lady*-

themed gift baskets, including Eliza's basket of chocolates and Alfred Doolittle's basket of wine. A limited number of wrapped gift boxes were sold for \$100 each. The winning box contained a certificate for a silver, gold, and diamond Pandora bracelet donated by hostess Pam Knies.

The highlight came at the end of the evening, when guests were invited to bid on a chance to be serenaded by Gaschen, re-enacting the Phantom's famous "Music of the Night" scene with the highest bidder (or person of their choosing) in the role of Christine.

MSM Director Kevyn Robertson noted, "We knew this would be a popular auction item, especially since it was the Friday before Valentine's Day, but even I was amazed at the response we received from the audience. All of the women wanted the chance to be Christine, and all the men wanted to give their sweethearts this once-in-a-lifetime experience."

After several minutes of intense bidding, host Eugene Knies emerged as the highest bidder. The audience sat rapt as Gaschen serenaded Knies' wife, Pam. It was the perfect ending to an extraordinary evening.

MSM's production of *My Fair Lady*, with book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner and music by Frederick Loewe, will take place at McKinney Boyd High School July 7-8 and 12-15.

Open auditions for the show will be held at Trinity Presbyterian Church in McKinney on Friday, March 30 and Saturday, March 31. Additional details about auditions,

performances, and volunteer opportunities can be found at the MSM website at www.mckinneysummermusicals.com.

MSM is funded in part by the City of McKinney through a grant from the City of McKinney Arts Commission.