

# Hitting the high notes at the Houston Symphony's annual black-tie gala

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Soon to be officially anointed as head of the [Houston Symphony](#), the youthful **Mark Hanson** and his wife, **Christina**, took bows at the symphony ball at the [Hilton Americas-Houston](#) on Saturday night and gave the black-tie crowd a hint of the impressive personality that he brings to the orchestra beginning May 1.

It was only a brief moment in the spotlight for the soon-to-be CEO and executive director, but Hanson was so well spoken and so earnest that he sent a mini-wave of excitement through the glamorous gathering. It was a moment not lost on **Steve Mach**, who headed the search committee for the individual to replace **Matthew VanBesien**.

"Music Matters! What a Wonderful World" was the theme of the gala chaired by Dr. **Kelli Cohen Fein** and **Martin Fein** and honoring **Aileen Gordon**, **Cora Sue Mach** and Fidelity Investments. Gordon was honored with the Ima Hogg Philanthropy Award while Fidelity received the Maurice Hirsch Corporate Citizenship Award. Mach, who happens to be the mother of Steve Mach, received special recognition for her long-time leadership in education and community engagement. Noted philanthropist **Margaret Williams** assisted as honorary chair.

Key players who contributed to the financial success of the evening (it looked like the \$1 million goal was in sight before auction tabulations) included underwriter chairs **Tara** and **David Wuthrich**, auction chairs **Sharin Gaille** and **Nancy Littlejohn**, Symphony League president **Jane Clark** and Symphony Society president **Bobby Tudor**, Houston Symphony interim executive director and CEO **Richard Hoffert** and honorary committee chair **Julia Frankel**.

The Richard Brown Orchestra and his merry band of crooners kept the dance floor hopping with two-stepping couples including Lt. Gov. **David Dewhurst** and wife **Tricia**, **Cora Sue** and **Harry Mach**, **Judy** and **Rodney Margolis**, **Sue** and **Lester Smith**, **Melissa** and **Bill King** and **Vicki** and **Paul West**.

The notables attending far exceed space limitations but a few were **Frann Lichtenstein** and **Jeff Hirschberg**, **Jill** and **Brad Deutser**, **Cappy** and **Darlene Bisso**, **Phyllis** and **Cornel Williams**, **Donna** and **John Speer**, **Carmen** and **Butch Mach**, **Joella Mach**, **Dede** and **Connie Weil**, **Cathy** and Dr. **Gary Brock**, **Donna** and **Tony Vallone**, **Lilly** and **Thurmon Address** and **Mary Lynn** and **Steve Marks**.



[view slideshow](#)



Photo by Fulton Davenport: PWL Studio