Robert Clayton Samels: In Memoriam
Airs: 6 June 2006, 10 pm

PART I

Good Evening, I'm __________________, and I welcome you to the final program in a series of memorial programs remembering the lives of the five Indiana University Jacobs School of Music graduate students whose lives were cut tragically short by a plane crash on the evening of April 20th as they returned to Bloomington from a rehearsal in Lafayette, Indiana.

Tonight, we remember the life of Robert Clayton Samels. Robert was born in Akron, Ohio on June 2, 1981 to Clayton and Paula Samels. It can truly be said that Robert was many things to many people. You may have known Robert as an announcer, writer of Ether Game, and host of Cantabile here on WFIU, or maybe you remember his many performances as a singer or conductor on the stages of the IU Jacobs School of Music; perhaps you were one of the lucky students to find yourself in his T231 musical skills class, or maybe you even knew him through one of his many other talents: composer, actor, bassoonist, hammered dulcimer player, devoted friend, the list goes on...

However you may have known Robert, or even if you never had the pleasure to meet him, in the next two hours, we invite you to join us as we remember his life and his music through a few of his many recordings.

We begin with Robert performing music of a composer he greatly admired, Johann Sebastian Bach. From a recital given on December 4th, 2004, here are two arias from Bach's Cantata No. 20: O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort.

Music: Bach; Burned CD-1, T.1 (7:32)

Two arias from the cantata O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort, BWV 20. Music of Johann Sebastian Bach performed by bass-baritone Robert Samels with oboists Annie Corrigan, Teresa Furlough, and Erica Howard; Joe Morgan, trumpet; Laura Barker, cello; and Marcelo Urias, organ; from a recital given in December of 2004.
One of the first roles Robert played on the IU Opera stage was that of Leporello, the servant to Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in an October 2002 production. Here he is, in the first act catalog aria “Madamina”, enumerating his master's many conquests to Elvira, one of Giovanni's former lovers.

**MUSIC: Mozart; Burned CD-1, T.2 (5:41)**

Robert Samels as Leporello in a 2002 IU Opera Theatre production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Guest conductor Mark Gibson led the IU Concert Orchestra.

In addition to his numerous appearances on the opera stage, Robert frequently appeared as soloist in the oratorio repertoire, recently being selected as a semifinalist in the annual competition of the Oratorio Society of New York. Our next three selections feature Robert as a vocal soloist in oratorios by Handel, Haydn, and in the collegiate premiere of *El Niño*, the nativity oratorio of American composer John Adams.

First, we'll hear three selections from Handel's *Messiah* in a performance given by the Bloomington Chamber Singers as a part of the 2004 the Bloomington Early Music Festival.

**MUSIC: Handel; Burned CD-1, T.3 (8:22)**

In the past several years, Robert sang in world and collegiate premieres of operatic works by American composers William Bolcom, John Eaton, Ned Rorem, and as soloist in this performance, the collegiate premiere of John Adams' nativity oratorio, *El Niño*. Here are two excerpts from that November 2002 performance. Carmen Helena Téllez leads the IU Contemporary Vocal Ensemble, Concert Choir, and Symphony Orchestra.

**MUSIC: Adams; Burned CD-1, T.4 (14:11)**


Robert had also recently appeared as a soloist in two oratorios of Franz Joseph Haydn. In March of 2004, he sang the role of the archangel Raphael in Haydn's *Creation*, and then in December of 2005, he sang the role of Simon in Haydn's *The Seasons*. Here are three excerpts from that performance, Jan Harrington leads the IU University Singers and Chamber Orchestra.

**MUSIC: Haydn; Burned CD-1, T.5 (11:21)**


And that concludes the first half of our program honoring the life and musical legacy of Robert Samels. We'll return in a moment with music of Benjamin Britten.

**END PART I**
Welcome back to the second half of this special memorial program remembering the life of WFIU announcer, bass-baritone Robert Samels.

Another composer Robert held in high esteem was Benjamin Britten, and Robert recently had the opportunity to take the stage in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, singing the role of Nick Bottom during this past year's IU Opera season. Here is Bottom's third act dream aria. David Effron leads the IU Symphony Orchestra.

**MUSIC: Britten; Burned CD-2, T.1 (4:02)**

Robert Samels singing the role of Bottom in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. David Effron led the IU Symphony Orchestra in this performance given on November 11, 2005.

We mentioned earlier that Robert had taken part in recent premieres of works by American composers William Bolcom and Ned Rorem. Next, we'll hear selections from each of these productions. First, Robert sings the role of Marco in the collegiate premiere of William Bolcom's *A View from the Bridge*. And we'll follow that with an excerpt from the recent world premiere of Ned Rorem's *Our Town*. Robert sings the role of Dr. Gibbs in that performance.

**MUSIC: Bolcom and Rorem; Burned CD-2, T. 2 (12:06)**

Bass-baritone Robert Samels taking part in two premieres of works by American composers William Bolcom and Ned Rorem. First, we heard “A Ship Called Hunger” from the February 2005 collegiate premiere of William Bolcom's *A View from the Bridge*. And we followed that with an excerpt from the March 2006 world premiere of Ned Rorem's *Our Town*. Robert was joined by Cody Fosdick as George Gibbs in that performance.
We're remembering the life of WFIU announcer, bass-baritone Robert Samels, one of the five IU students who were lost in a plane crash on the evening of April 20th, 2006. Also among the five victims was one of Robert's close friends and a frequent musical collaborator, Chris Carducci. The two shared the stage in a summer 2003 IU Summer Festival production of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*. Here are two selections from that production, Chris Carducci sings the role of Doctor Malatesta, the best friend of the title character, Don Pasquale, who is sung by Robert Samels.

**MUSIC: Donizetti; Burned CD-2, T. 3 (10:27)**

Two selections from Gaetano Donizetti's opera *Don Pasquale* from a summer 2003 IU Opera Theatre production. Chris Carducci sang the role of Doctor Malatesta and Robert Samels sang the title role of Don Pasquale with the IU Summer Festival Orchestra under the direction of Imre Palló.

We now turn to selections featuring Robert as a composer and conductor. First, he leads performers from the IU Jacobs School of Music in the September 2005 world premiere of his opera *Pilatus*. We'll hear excerpts from the second act of the opera. In order of appearance, the cast of characters is: Teresa Herold as Mother Mary, Hannah Penn as Claudia, Chris Carducci as Pontius Pilate, and Nathan Baer as Bar-Abbas.

**MUSIC: Samels; Burned CD-2, T. 4 (23:22)**

We heard the conclusion of *Pilatus*, an opera by Robert Samels. Teresa Herold sang the role of Mother Mary, Hannah Penn was Claudia, Chris Carducci was Pontius Pilate, and Nathan Baer was Bar-Abbas with an ensemble of singers and instrumentalists from the IU Jacobs School of Music. Robert Samels conducted the world premiere on September 6, 2005.
And we conclude our program this evening with another composition by Robert Samels. From a performance at his memorial service the week following the accident, here is the “Pie Jesu” from Robert's *Requiem*. Ann Corrigan is the soprano soloist with singers and instrumentalists from the IU Jacobs School of Music under the direction of Tim Shantz.

**MUSIC: Samels; Burned CD-2, T. 5 (4:10)**

Music of Robert Samels. We heard the “Pie Jesu” from Robert's *Requiem* in a performance by soprano Ann Corrigan with singers and instrumentalists from the IU Jacobs School of Music. Tim Shantz led this performance given at Robert's memorial service on April 25th, 2006.

In the past hour we've been remembering the life and music of Robert Samels, through the rich legacy of his recordings.

Tonight's program was written and produced by Adam P Schweigert with assistance from Mona Seghatoleslami. Our executive producers are Christina Kuzmych and Cary Boyce. Special thanks to Dean Gwyn Richards, Alain Barker and Konrad Strauss for the IU Jacobs School of Music, as well as Annie Corrigan, Ann Elizabeth Sauder, Courtney Crouse, and Davis Hart who assisted in the preparation of the musical excerpts for tonight's program.

For WFIU, I'm__________________.