

# Boston Early Music Festival

INTERNATIONAL BAROQUE OPERA • CELEBRATED CONCERTS • WORLD-FAMOUS EXHIBITION

**Boston Early Music Festival**  
43 Thorndike Street, Suite 302  
Cambridge, MA 02141  
617-661-1812 | [www.BEMF.org](http://www.BEMF.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** August 16, 2016

## **Boston Early Music Festival announces two opera programs for the June 2017 Festival—a fully staged performance of Campra’s *Le Carnaval de Venise* and a double-bill of chamber operas by Pergolesi**

Cambridge, MA—Tickets are now on sale for two opera programs at the upcoming **June 2017 Boston Early Music Festival**. The weeklong celebration of Early Music will feature the North American premiere of **André Campra’s 1699 *opéra-ballet*, *Le Carnaval de Venise***, in a new, fully staged production for four performances at the Cutler Majestic Theatre at Emerson College, Boston. BEMF will also present encore performances of its 2014 production of a double-bill of Neapolitan comic opera featuring **Giovanni Battista Pergolesi’s *La serva padrona* and *Livietta e Tracollo*** at New England Conservatory’s Jordan Hall in Boston and the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington in Western Massachusetts. Ticket Packages are on sale now from the BEMF Box Office at **617-661-1812** or online at **[www.BEMF.org](http://www.BEMF.org)**.

**“A stunning, revelatory production.” — *The Wall Street Journal***

### **CAMPRA: *LE CARNAVAL DE VENISE***

The GRAMMY-winning Boston Early Music Festival presents an enchanting spectacle of music and dance with an all-new production of *Le Carnaval de Venise*, André Campra's captivating 1699 *opéra-ballet*. Join four star-crossed lovers as they experience the delights of the Carnival season in Venice—enjoying games, dances, and even a brilliantly realized “opera within an opera”—a miniature Italian opera on the Orpheus myth. This exquisite gem joins the elegance of French dance with the boisterous hilarity of Italian *commedia dell’arte* to produce a splendid feast for eyes and ears! BEMF will offer four fully staged performances of *Le Carnaval de Venise*, **June 11, 14, 16, and 18, 2017** at the **Cutler Majestic Theatre at Emerson College** (219 Tremont Street, Boston, MA, USA). Ticket packages are available through the BEMF Box Office at **617-661-1812** or **[www.BEMF.org](http://www.BEMF.org)**; individual tickets are available through the Box Office at the Cutler Majestic Theatre at **[cutlermajestic.org](http://cutlermajestic.org)** or 617-824-8000.

“Campra’s work has garnered some attention in recent years in Europe, but BEMF takes an approach that is quite different—and, in my view, much more rewarding,” comments BEMF’s Musicological Advisor and Cornell University Professor Rebecca Harris-Warrick. “The BEMF team knows how to put scholarship to the service of creativity. It is an engaged and time-consuming process and past BEMF productions show how successfully the results reward the effort.”

Though his music is rarely heard today, Campra was a leading composer of opera in France between the death of Lully and the emergence of Rameau. He flourished, in part, thanks to his engaging innovation, the *opéra-ballet*—a new form that eschewed mythological tragedies to instead focus on variety and

opulence, inviting the audience to indulge in imaginative exotica. This enabled Campra to weave together exciting new styles from Italy with the best of the French traditions, thrilling audiences and royal patrons alike with some of the most gorgeous music in the Baroque repertoire.

The Boston Early Music Festival's groundbreaking production of *Le Carnaval de Venise* promises a dazzling parade of extravagant costumes, magnificent sets, breathtaking dance, and truly ravishing music. BEMF's GRAMMY Award-winning Musical Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs** and internationally acclaimed Stage Director **Gilbert Blin** lead the production with lavish costumes designed by **Anna Watkins**, choreography by **Caroline Copeland**, and sumptuous sets designed by **Gilbert Blin**. BEMF has assembled a truly outstanding cast of 20 soloists, including many critically-acclaimed favorites from past BEMF productions, such as 2-time GRAMMY-nominee, soprano **Karina Gauvin**, GRAMMY-winning tenor **Aaron Sheehan**, soprano **Amanda Forsythe**, baritone **Christian Immler**, and more. Joining them will be the 27-member **Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra** led by Concertmaster **Robert Mealy** and 10 Baroque dancers from the **Boston Early Music Festival Dance Company** under the direction **Melinda Sullivan**, *Dance Director*.

### **PERGOLESI'S *LA SERVA PADRONA & LIVIETTA E TRACOLLO***

Originally written as interludes to be performed between acts of a more somber production, Pergolesi's light-hearted comedies quickly enchanted audiences with their farcical humor and engaging romance. Eventually, these comic operas would be performed on their own to adoring audiences throughout Europe, with Pergolesi acknowledged as an especially significant early composer in this *opera buffa* style. *La serva padrona*, which had its premiere in Naples in 1773, tells the tale of a haughty yet cunning maid who conspires to wed her testy employer. *Livietta e Tracollo* would debut a year later as part of festivities for a royal birthday and features the con-artist, Tracollo, meeting his match in a peasant girl, Livietta, out to avenge her wronged brother. For this new production—in a nod to the original presentations of these operas—Stage Director Gilbert Blin will alternate between scenes of the two works.

**“Zest and earthy opulence,” — *The Boston Globe***

BEMF presents encore performances of its intimate 2014 Chamber Opera Series production led by Musical Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs** and Stage Director **Gilbert Blin**. They are joined in the directorial team by Concertmaster **Robert Mealy**; Costume Designer **Anna Watkins**; and Movement Coordinator **Melinda Sullivan**. Soprano **Amanda Forsythe**, acclaimed by *The New York Times* as “simply dazzling” heads a cast of four dynamic singers, all favorites of past BEMF Opera productions. Forsythe sings the role of Serpina in *La serva padrona* opposite bass-baritone **Douglas Williams** in the role of Uberto, while **Erica Schuller** and **Jesse Blumberg** perform the respective title roles in *Livietta e Tracollo*. The soloists appear alongside the 13-member **BEMF Chamber Ensemble** and five members of the **BEMF Dance Ensemble**. One performance will take place at **New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall** on **Saturday, June 17, 2017 at 8pm**. Tickets are available now through the BEMF Box Office at [www.BEMF.org](http://www.BEMF.org) or 617-661-1812. BEMF will bring the production to the Berkshires the following weekend for two additional performances, **June 24 & 25** at the **Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center** (14 Castle Street, Great Barrington, MA, USA).

**ABOUT THE BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL**

Recognized as the preeminent early music presenter and Baroque opera producer in North America, the **Boston Early Music Festival (BEMF)** has been credited with securing Boston's reputation as "America's early music capital" (*The Boston Globe*). Founded in 1981, BEMF offers diverse programs and activities, including one GRAMMY Award-winning and four GRAMMY Award-nominated opera recordings, an annual concert series that brings early music's brightest stars to the Boston and New York concert stages, and a biennial week-long Festival and Exhibition recognized as the "world's leading festival of early music" (*The Times*, London). The 19<sup>th</sup> Boston Early Music Festival will take place from June 11–18, 2017, and will feature fully staged performances of André Campra's *Le Carnaval de Venise* as the Centerpiece Opera. BEMF's Artistic Leadership includes Artistic Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs**, Opera Director **Gilbert Blin**, and Orchestra Director **Robert Mealy**.

The 2017 Boston Early Music Festival is presented with support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, ConstellationCenter, WGBH Radio Boston, Harpsichord Clearing House, Zuckermann Harpsichords International, and The Gregory E. Bulger Foundation.

**For more information, images, press tickets, or to schedule an interview, please contact Kathleen Fay at 617-661-1812 or email [kathy@bemf.org](mailto:kathy@bemf.org).**

#####