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**MEDIA ALERT: THE BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL
PRESENTS ITS FOURTH ANNUAL CHAMBER OPERA SERIES:
A DOUBLE BILL OF CHARPENTIER**

PROGRAM: Marc-Antoine Charpentier: *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers*
Marc-Antoine Charpentier: *La Couronne de Fleurs*

WHEN: Saturday, November 26, 2011 at 8pm
Sunday, November 27, 2011 at 3pm
New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston, MA

ARTISTS: Paul O'Dette & Stephen Stubbs, *Musical Directors*
Gilbert Blin, *Stage Director*
Anna Watkins, *Costume Designer*
Melinda Sullivan, *Choreographer*

Vocal Cast

Aaron Sheehan, *Orphée*
Mireille Asselin, Carrie Henneman Shaw, Michael Kelly, Olivier Laquerre, Thea Lobo,
Jason McStoots, Megan Stapleton, Brenna Wells, Douglas Williams

Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble

Robert Mealy, *concertmaster*
Cynthia Roberts, *violin*
Laura Jeppesen, *viola da gamba*
Christel Thielmann, *viola da gamba*
Beiliang Zhu, *viola da gamba*
Gonzalo X. Ruiz, *oboe & recorder*
Kathryn Montoya, *oboe & recorder*
Avi Stein, *harpsichord*
Paul O'Dette, *Baroque guitar and theorbo*
Stephen Stubbs, *Baroque guitar and theorbo*

Boston Early Music Festival Baroque Dance Ensemble

Carlos Fittante, Olsi Gjerci, Caitlin Klinger, Alexis Silver, *Baroque dancers*

TICKETS: Tickets are priced at **\$19, \$38, \$49, \$66 and \$125** each and can be purchased at WWW.BEMF.ORG and **617-661-1812**; a \$5 discount for students, seniors, and groups is offered by calling 617-661-1812. Subscription discounts of 10% are available with the purchase of three or more programs.

EVENT DESCRIPTION:

The **Boston Early Music Festival** presents the fourth annual installment of its acclaimed Chamber Opera Series, a Marc-Antoine Charpentier double bill. Charpentier, the composer of *Actéon* in BEMF's first presentation of chamber operas in 2008, is the creator of both works in this year's double bill exploring the transcendental power of music. The tragic *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers* tells the famous story of Orphée who descends into the underworld to rescue his beloved Euridice using his musical charms. *La Couronne de Fleurs*, based on a text by Molière, depicts a musical contest in tribute to Louis XIV as shepherds vie for a crown of flowers from the goddess Flora for the most beautiful and eloquent aria. These miniature masterpieces showcase one of the great composers of the French Baroque.

"These two pieces reveal Charpentier's richness of style," remarks Stage Director Gilbert Blin. "They also offer a meditation on the 'functions' of music—from songs of royal praise to personal lament—and how music has the power to transcend reality."

ABOUT THE BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL CHAMBER OPERA SERIES

In 2008, BEMF took the same level of musicianship and scholarship employed in their fully-staged Festival opera productions and directed it towards small-scale works with the introduction of the **BEMF Chamber Opera Series**. Each production would feature intimate staging with full costumes and elements of Baroque dance. The inaugural production in November 2008 paired Charpentier's *Actéon* with Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and was hailed by the *Boston Globe* as "vivid performances of two seldom-heard works" and "a highly welcome addition to the local concert calendar." Subsequent productions include Handel's original 1718 chamber version of *Acis and Galatea* in 2009 and a 2011 North American Tour and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* in 2010. Recordings of Charpentier's *Actéon* and Blow's *Venus and Adonis* have been released by BEMF in the last year.

RESOURCES

Download artist photos

<http://www.bemf.org/pages/press/images.htm>

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** has been credited with securing Boston's reputation as "America's early music capital" (*The Boston Globe*). Founded in 1981, the Boston Early Music Festival offers diverse programs and activities, including three Grammy-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 17th Boston Early Music Festival is planned for June 9–16, 2013.

The 2011–2012 Boston Early Music Festival Concert Series is presented with support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, ConstellationCenter, 99.5 All Classical, Harpsichord Clearing House, Zuckermann Harpsichords International, The Gregory E. Bulger Foundation, U. S. Trust/Bank of America Private Wealth Management, and GTC Law Group.

For more information, images, press tickets, or to schedule an interview, please contact Kathleen Fay at 617-661-1812 or email kathy@bemf.org.

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