

# 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)

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## **Boston Early Music Festival releases a new recording of Johann Sebastiani's *Matthäus Passion***

Cambridge, MA – The Boston Early Music Festival has released a new recording of **Johann Sebastiani's *Matthäus Passion***, on the German label cpo (Classic Produktion Osnabrück), BEMF's tenth CD featuring our own GRAMMY Award-winning Musical Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs**. First presented by BEMF on Good Friday, 2014, this exquisite 1663 setting of the *St. Matthew Passion* is lushly scored for six voices, six strings, and continuo. BEMF was praised for its "polished and lovingly executed performance" by *The Boston Globe* after the 2014 concert.

"The haunting beauty of Sebastiani's melodies, the poignant directness of the chorales, the intensity of the intricately interwoven contrapuntal lines of the strings, and the sensitive harmonization of the text combine to present the passion story in a quietly moving but powerful fashion," remarks Musical Co-Director Paul O'Dette. "It makes for a worthy predecessor to Bach's own *St. Matthew Passion* of 1727."

In August of 2017, the artists departed Boston for Bremen, Germany and the acoustically brilliant Sendesaal (former site of Radio Bremen) for six days of rehearsal and recording. Musical Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs** lead the stellar cast, which features tenor **Colin Balzer** as the Evangelist and baritone **Christian Immler** as Jesus. Additional roles are sung by soprano **Ina Siedlaczek**, countertenor **Nathan Medley**, tenor **Jason McStoots**, and bass-baritone **Jonathan Woody**. Concertmaster **Robert Mealy** leads the ten-member BEMF Chamber Ensemble.

### **ABOUT THE BEMF RECORDING PROJECT**

With the goal of capturing the exceptional work of the Baroque Opera Project, BEMF initiated an effort to record its acclaimed Baroque Operas in 2005. This commitment to preservation has produced ten celebrated recordings and attracted the attention of the international community in the form of numerous awards and accolades, including five GRAMMY nominations in ten years and a GRAMMY Award for Best Opera Recording for our 2014 CD release of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers* and *La Couronne de Fleurs*. BEMF recordings have also been nominated for—and won—ECHO Klassik awards, Gramophone awards, the Diapason d'Or de l'Année, and *Gramophone Magazine's* Recording of the Month. In 2017, the Recording Project was expanded to include non-operatic Baroque vocal works, with our recording of the chamber duets of Agostino Steffani. In January 2019, BEMF's next CD will be recorded in Bremen, Germany—Charpentier's *Les Plaisirs de Versailles*, part of the November 2016 Chamber Opera production *Versailles: Portrait of a Royal Domain*—and released on the cpo label in June 2019.

**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-winning and four 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 20<sup>th</sup> Boston Early Music Festival will take place from June 9-16, 2019, and will feature fully staged performances of Agostino Steffani's *Orlando generoso* as the centerpiece opera. BEMF's Artistic Leadership includes Artistic Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs**, Opera Director **Gilbert Blin**, Orchestra Director **Robert Mealy**, and Dance Director **Melinda Sullivan**.

**For more information, please contact Kathleen Fay at 617-661-1812 or email [kathy@bemf.org](mailto:kathy@bemf.org).**

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