FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Boston Early Music Festival receives its sixth nomination for Best Opera Recording at the 2020 GRAMMY Awards

Cambridge, MA – The Boston Early Music Festival recording of Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* and *Les Arts Florissants* on the German label cpo (Classic Produktion Osnabrück) has been nominated for a 2020 GRAMMY Award in the category of Best Opera Recording. This marks the sixth GRAMMY nomination for BEMF’s series of Baroque Opera recordings, including a win in this category at the 2015 GRAMMY Awards for Charpentier’s *La Descente d’Orphée aux Enfers*. The nomination is shared by BEMF Artistic Directors Paul O’Dette and Stephen Stubbs and Producer Renate Wolter-Seevors, who collaborated on all six of BEMF’s nominated recordings, as well as lead soloists Jesse Blumberg, Teresa Wakim, and Virginia Warnken. Blumberg and Wakim have appeared on numerous BEMF recordings, including our 2015 GRAMMY winner. Warnken made her BEMF recording début on this release and is a previous GRAMMY Award winner as a member of the ensemble Roomful of Teeth.

The Boston Early Music Festival is one of two Boston ensembles to be nominated in the Best Opera Recording category for the 2020 GRAMMY Awards, being joined by fellow perennial nominee, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and their recording of *Fantastic Mr. Fox* by Tobias Picker. The 62nd GRAMMY Awards will be announced on January 26, 2020.

**Charpentier’s Les Plaisirs de Versailles and Les Arts Florissants**
The Boston Early Music Festival has enjoyed a celebrated history with French operas of the 17th-Century, and especially the music of Marc-Antoine Charpentier. This release marks BEMF’s third recording exploring the Baroque master’s operatic repertoire, following the 2011 release of his *Actéon* and the 2014 release of *La Descente d’Orphée aux Enfers* and *La Couronne de Fleurs*. The later won the GRAMMY Award for Best Opera Recording. Both *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* and *Les Arts Florissants* depict allegorical scenes united in praise of King Louis XIV and his grand palace at Versailles. The recording was made over thirteen days in January of 2019 in Bremen, Germany at the acoustically superb Sendesaal (former site of Radio Bremen). In addition to nominated Musical Directors Paul O’Dette and Stephen Stubbs, the disc features Robert Mealy as Concertmaster for the BEMF Chamber Ensemble, Gilbert Blin as Drama Coach, and Kathleen Fay as Executive Producer.

**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 nine celebrated opera recordings and attracted the attention of the international
community in the form of numerous awards and accolades, including 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* and five more GRAMMY nominations. 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. The Recording Project was expanded to include nonoperatic Baroque vocal works, with recordings of the chamber duets of Agostino Steffani (2017) and Johann Sebastiani’s *Matthäus Passion* (2018). BEMF’s next CD—Handel’s first opera, *Almira*—will be released on the cpo label in late 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 Award-winning and five 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 21st Boston Early Music Festival will take place from June 6–13, 2021, and will feature the fully staged North American premiere of Henry Desmarest’s *Circé*. 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.

Boston Early Music Festival is grateful for support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, Constellation Charitable Foundation, WGBH Radio Boston, the Institut Français, as well as a number of generous foundations and individuals from around the world.

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

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