FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Grammy-winning Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Opera Series presents a double-bill of works by Lully and Charpentier on Thanksgiving weekend in Boston

Cambridge, MA – The GRAMMY Award-winning Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Opera Series returns on Thanksgiving weekend with an all-new production of Lully's *Idylle sur la Paix* and Charpentier's *Le Fête de Rueil*. Each opera was commissioned in 1685 by French courtiers to celebrate a recent truce "given" to Europe by King Louis XIV. The genius of Charpentier and Lully raises these formal tributes to musical masterpieces where dazzling singing combines with charming dances in a vivid depiction of the people's desire for peace. The production will be performed twice in Boston on Saturday, November 26, and Sunday, November 27 before going on tour to Miami on Wednesday, November 30 and New York City on Saturday, December 3 and Sunday, December 4. A virtual presentation will follow, available from Monday, December 12 through Monday, December 26.

“We are excited to have a larger company of vocalists and dancers back on the BEMF stage without the limitations of social distancing,” reflects Executive Director Kathleen Fay. “It is a joy to be touring again and we look forward to returning to our friends at the Morgan Library and Museum in New York City as well as to building a new relationship with the audience of RK Cultural Productions in Miami.”

Musical Directors Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs and Stage Director Gilbert Blin lead an all-star roster of 26 singers, dancers, and instrumentalists in this idyllic double-bill. The stellar vocal cast includes many returning favorites: sopranos Danielle Reutter-Harrah and GRAMMY-nominee Teresa Wakim, mezzo-soprano Mireille Lebel, GRAMMY-winning tenor Aaron Sheehan alongside the equally brilliant Jason McStoots and James Reese, and magnificent baritones John Taylor Ward and Jonathan Woody. Rounding out the directorial team are Concertmaster Robert Mealy leading the all-star BEMF Chamber Ensemble, Dance Director Melinda Sullivan, Costume Designer Gwen van den Eijnde, Lighting Designer Kelly Martin, and Executive Producer Kathleen Fay.

Originally performed at the Château de Sceaux—country home of one of Louis XIV’s most trusted ministers—*Idylle sur la Paix* was created to honor the Sun King, who would attend the festivities. With a text by poet Jean Racine written specifically for the occasion, Lully’s masterpiece was a splendid success, honoring the majesty of the audience and the pastoral environs. Charpentier’s *Le Fête de Rueil* was commissioned for a less successful celebration planned by the Duke of Richelieu—great-nephew of the infamous Cardinal Richelieu. Charpentier was tasked with creating a triumphant centerpiece for the all-night revelry, but Louis cancelled at the last minute and the opera went unperformed for over three centuries.
ARTISTS:  
Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Opera Series  
Paul O'Dette & Stephen Stubbs, Musical Directors  
Gilbert Blin, Stage Directors  
Robert Mealy, Concertmaster  
Melinda Sullivan, Choreographer  
Gwen van den Eijnde, Costume Designer  
Kelly Martin, Lighting Designer  
Kathleen Fay, Executive Producer

Boston Early Music Festival Vocal Ensemble  
Danielle Reutter-Harrah & Teresa Wakim, soprano  
Mireille Lebel, mezzo-soprano  
Jason McStoots, James Reese & Aaron Sheehan, tenor  
John Taylor Ward & Jonathan Woody, bass-baritone

Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble  
Robert Mealy & Cynthia Roberts, violin; Sarah Darling & Laura Jeppesen, viola;  
Phoebe Carrai, violoncello; Emi Ferguson & Andrea LeBlanc, traverso;  
Gonzalo X. Ruiz & Kathryn Montoya, oboe & recorder; Dominic Teresi, bassoon;  
David Morris, viola da gamba; Michael Sponseller, harpsichord;  
Paul O'Dette, theorbo; Stephen Stubbs, theorbo & Baroque guitar

Boston Early Music Festival Dance Company  
Julian Donahue, Shaun Ferren, Caitlin Klinger & Sonam Tshedzom Tingkhye

LOCATION:  
Saturday, November 26, 2022 at 8pm ET  
Sunday, November 27, 2022 at 3pm ET  
New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston, MA

Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at 8pm ET  
Aventura Arts & Cultural Center, Aventura, FL  
Presented by RK Cultural Productions, rkculturalproductions.org

Saturday, December 3, 2022 at 7:30pm ET  
Sunday, December 4, 2022 at 3pm ET  
Presented by the Morgan Library & Museum, themorgan.org/bemf/

Virtual Premiere: Monday, December 12, 2022 at 8pm ET  
Available to watch until Monday, December 26, 2022 at 11:59pm ET

PROGRAM: Lully’s Idylle sur la Paix and Charpentier's Le Fête de Rueil

TICKETS: Tickets for the Boston performances are priced at $125, $90, $60, $45, and $25 for the in-person performance, and $25 for the virtual event. All Boston tickets include a complimentary ticket for the virtual performance. To purchase tickets, visit BEMF.org or call the BEMF Box Office at 617-661-1812. Discounts are available for students and seniors.
COVID-19 SAFETY PROTOCOLS
As we return to in-person performances with our 2022–2023 Season, the health and safety of our audience, employees, and artists is our highest priority. BEMF is requiring patrons to provide proof that they are fully vaccinated. Patrons may use either paper or electronic documentation. All staff and musicians will also be required to be vaccinated. In addition, we will require patrons to wear a well-fitted mask covering their nose and mouth at ALL times at the concert venue, including throughout the performance. Visit BEMF.org/safety to review our current safety policies.

ASSOCIATED EVENTS
A recorded Pre-Opera Talk featuring the BEMF Directorial Team discussing the opera and production will be released on social media and BEMF.org the week before the performances.

ABOUT THE BEMF CHAMBER OPERA SERIES
Hailed by the Boston Globe for “vivid performance,” since 2008 the BEMF Chamber Opera Series has taken the internationally acclaimed musicianship, scholarship, and direction showcased in BEMF’s fully staged Festival opera and focused it on small-scale works in intimate productions each Thanksgiving weekend. Two productions from the Chamber Opera Series have also been presented on tour across North America: Handel's Acis and Galatea in 2011 and Charpentier's La Descente d’Orphée aux Enfers and La Couronne de Fleurs in 2014. BEMF’s studio recording of the two Charpentier works was awarded the 2015 GRAMMY Award for Best Opera Recording.

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, 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 weeklong Festival and Exhibition recognized as the “world’s leading festival of early music” (The Times, London). The 22nd Boston Early Music Festival, A Celebration of Women, will take place from June 4-11, 2023, and will feature the North American premiere of Henry Demarest’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.

The Boston Early Music Festival is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, Constellation Charitable Foundation, and WCRB Classical Radio Boston, as well as a number of generous foundations and individuals from around the world.

For more information, press tickets, or to schedule an interview, please contact Kathleen Fay at kathy@bemf.org.

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