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## **BOSTON LYRIC OPERA ACHIEVES RECORD 2010-2011 FUNDRAISING YEAR**

### **Company Receives First Million Toward \$4 Million 4-Year Challenge**

**Boston, MA**— Boston Lyric Opera (BLO) today announced that the Company has completed a record fundraising year, exceeding its overall goal for 2010-2011 and raising the highest level of contributed funds in its history. To achieve this, BLO successfully concluded the first year of its *Envision Opera Challenge*, securing an additional \$250,000 in matching gifts during the first year of this \$4 million 4-year challenge. This marks the first time Boston Lyric Opera, celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season in 2011-2012, has raised over \$5 million in one year.

The *Envision Opera Challenge* was established in November 2010 by a 4-year \$1 million matching gift from an anonymous family foundation. The Challenge supports projects that are part of the expanded artistic vision of BLO, including Opera Annex, new productions, and new works. Together with the foundation, BLO set the Year 1 *Envision Opera Challenge* goal at \$750,000 in order to receive \$250,000 in matching funds. The match was met with outstanding support from more than 100 individuals and foundations – chief among these, The Calderwood Charitable Foundation with an additional gift of \$250,000 – bringing its total support of BLO for the year to \$500,000. BLO's 60-member Boards of Directors and Overseers contributed an additional \$247,000 in response to the *Challenge*. Fundraising began anew July 1 in order to meet Year 2 of the *Challenge*.

"This first-year success positions us to enter the second year of the challenge with confidence that by June 2014, we will have secured \$4 million in new and increased gifts and have established a new threshold for support among Boston's opera-loving community," said BLO General & Artistic Director Esther Nelson. "We are delighted by donors' confidence in our direction."

The *Challenge* is designed to cultivate five- and six-figure gifts and identify new supporters from among both foundations and individuals.

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Boston Lyric Opera (BLO) is New England's largest opera company. Founded in 1976, BLO is recognized for its artistically excellent productions of a diverse repertoire that entertain and inspire audiences and feature emerging operatic talent. BLO produces four productions each season: three at the Citi Performing Arts Center<sup>SM</sup> Shubert Theatre in Boston and an Opera Annex production in a found space. BLO's programs are funded, in part, by a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the National Endowment for the Arts. [blo.org](http://blo.org).

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