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Media Contacts: Goodwin Group PR
Margrette Mondillo: 508.404.1745,
margrette@goodwinpr.com
JoJo Gutfarb: 508.404.1745,
jojo@goodwinpr.com

BOSTON LYRIC OPERA RELEASES FIRST COMMERCIAL RECORDING

Naxos CD of world premiere of Clemency reflects modern day headlines

Boston, MA—Boston Lyric Opera (BLO) and Naxos of America, Inc. are proud to announce BLO's first commercial release: a recording of a live, staged performance of *Clemency* that was presented in February 2013 at Boston's Artists for Humanity EpiCenter. The world-premiere English recording, available online and in stores now, is of the chamber opera composed by James MacMillan with libretto by Michael Symmons Roberts and the inclusion of Franz Schubert's "Hagar's Lament."

Clemency was a co-commission between The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Scottish Opera; Britten Sinfonia, and Boston Lyric Opera. The production was led by Stage Director Andrew Eggert and BLO Music Director David Angus, and was further enhanced by the immersive set design of Julia Noulin-Mérat.

"It was about four years ago that the first seeds of *Clemency* were planted with James MacMillan over a lunch in Boston," recalls Esther Nelson, BLO's General & Artistic Director. "Our initial conversation quickly grew into an international partnership, on top of which we added the layer of Franz Shubert's powerful and heart wrenching 'Hagar's Lament,' written more than two centuries ago. The excitement and modern-day relevancy of the whole production experience inspired us to make our first commercial recording, of which we could not be more proud. We are immensely grateful to the artists, production teams, staff and sponsors who made this recording possible."

It featured compelling performances by Christine Abraham and David Kravitz in the roles of Sarah and Abraham; Michelle Trainor in the role of Hagar; and David McFerrin, Neal Ferreira, and Samuel Levine as the three Travelers. This recording was made possible through the generous support of Jane and Steven Akin.

"*Clemency* challenges us to rethink ourselves, to measure the impact of our lives in a modern world that continue to be marked politically and spiritually by acts of mercy and acts of vengeance," notes Eggert. "The challenge of *Clemency* is universal and timeless," adds Nelson. "How do we weigh the quality of mercy? Perhaps this bold retelling of an ancient tale will give us all new insight into our time."

Praise for BLO's *Clemency*:

"The music has moments of lushness but also plenty of sinew, lyrical curves as well as sharp angles." – Jeremy Eichler, *The Boston Globe*, February 7, 2013

"Baritone David Kravitz and soprano Christine Abraham were outstanding ..." – Lloyd Schwartz, *The Boston Phoenix*, February 20, 2013

"The intensity of the 45-minute piece lies in Mr. MacMillan's fierce, harmonically tense writing for the trio of travelers, tightly rendered by tenors Neal Ferreira and Samuel Levine and baritone David McFerrin, who sang as one, with an otherworldly character that befit the voice of God." – Heidi Waleson, *The Wall Street Journal*, February 11, 2013

Where to Buy It: *Clemency* can be purchased through Blo.org, iTunes, or at any major retail outlet. BIS recordings are available worldwide and are distributed in the U.S. by Naxos of America, Inc.

About the Production:

Composer: Jams MacMillian; Librettist: Michael Symmons Roberts
Sung in English

North American Premiere, commissioned by the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Scottish Opera; Britten Sinfonia and Boston Lyric Opera

Preceded by "Hagar's Lament." Music: Franz Schubert; Poem: Clemens August Schücking
Orchestration by David Angus, and sung in a new English Translation by David Angus and Bernd Ulken

Performances: February 6, 7, 9, 10m, 2013 at Artists for Humanity, 100 West 2nd St., Boston, MA 02127

This production and Opera Annex are made possible through the support of: an Anonymous Family Foundation; the En**Vi**sion Opera Challenge; the Mattina R. Proctor Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts

2012/13 underwriter of Music Director David Angus: Linda Cabot Black

The Cast (in order of vocal appearance):

Abraham:	David Kravitz
Hagar:	Michelle Trainor [#]
Traveler:	David McFerrin [#]
Traveler:	Neal Ferreira [^]
Traveler:	Samuel Levine [*]
Sarah:	Christine Abraham

BLO Music Director: David Angus

Boston Lyric Opera Orchestra Concert Mistress: Sandra Kott

** signifies Boston Lyric Opera debut*

signifies BLO Emerging Artist

^ signifies Boston Lyric Opera Emerging Artist alumna/us

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ABOUT BOSTON LYRIC OPERA

Boston Lyric Opera is the largest opera company in all of New England. Now in its 38th season, BLO celebrates the art of the voice through its mission of building curiosity, enthusiasm and support for opera by creating musically and theatrically compelling productions, events, and educational resources for the Boston community and beyond. Since its founding in 1976, the company has staged world premieres, U.S. premieres, co-productions and co-commissions of note with organizations such as The Royal Opera, Covent Garden and Scottish Opera, and continues to be a destination for some of the leading artists, conductors, directors and designers from around the world.

ABOUT NAXOS OF AMERICA

In addition to being an award-winning classical label, Naxos of America is the #1 independent classical music distributor in the U.S. and Canada. Specializing in state-of-the-art distribution, marketing and promotion, Naxos of America distributes nearly 50,000 titles on CD and DVD to traditional brick and mortar retail, as well as offering a comprehensive suite of services tailored to consumer direct fulfillment. Naxos of America is also the largest digital distributor of independent classical music, supplying a catalog of over 50,000 albums to hundreds of digital download and mobile outlets worldwide.