



BOSTON LYRIC OPERA ANNOUNCES LOCATION FOR ITS 2019 PRODUCTION OF *THE HANDMAID'S TALE*

Historic Lavietes Pavilion at Harvard Athletics Complex to house BLO's most-ambitious production May 5-12, 2019.

BOSTON – May 9, 2018 – Boston Lyric Opera (BLO) announced today the location of its 2018/19 Season-ending spectacle *The Handmaid's Tale*, which is based on the classic novel by Margaret Atwood. The opera will be installed at Lavietes Pavilion at Harvard Athletics Complex, a multi-purpose arena in Boston's Allston neighborhood, May 5-12, 2019. [NOTE: Some performance dates have changed from the initial season announcement earlier this year.]

“A show as large and exciting as *The Handmaid's Tale* will resonate in a space of this magnitude and storied history,” said BLO Artistic and General Director Esther Nelson. Lavietes Pavilion is the country's second-oldest college basketball arena still in use, and the home of Harvard Men's and Women's basketball. “I'm delighted we found a space that reflects the proportions and ambitions of this work and brings it home – in a sense – to some locations dramatized in Ms. Atwood's original book,” Nelson said.

Created in 2000 by Danish composer Poul Ruders and librettist Paul Bentley, *The Handmaid's Tale* is based on the lauded novel by Canadian author Margaret Atwood. The story takes place in the Republic of Gilead, a dystopian society formed by American Christian fundamentalists who assassinate the President and construct a rigid class system for women. The story is anchored by Offred, a woman who rebels against patriarchal rules through alliances and secretive friendships she hopes will uncover the fate of her husband and child, and preserve her story for future generations. The production will be helmed by Obie, Bessie, and American Theater Wing award-winning director Anne Bogart, who is Co-Artistic Director of the SITI Company and has been a leader in theater education for more than three decades. BLO commissioned a re-orchestrated score from Ruders for this production.

Since Nelson's arrival in 2009, BLO has sought unique alternative locations for at least one of its four annual production. Since leaving the Shubert Theater in 2015, BLO has worked in theaters and other locations across the city, matching distinctive spaces with the operas' content. The artistic challenges have brought significant artistic rewards, Nelson says, as evidenced by the global recognition of its 2017 World Premiere production of Julian Grant and Mark Campbell's “The Nefarious, Immoral, but Highly Profitable Enterprise of Mr. Burke and Mr. Hare,” which was produced at Boston Center for the Arts' historic Cyclorama and nominated for Best New Opera at the International Opera Awards this spring.

BLO's next production—a blending of Leonard Bernstein's short operatic works TROUBLE IN TAHITI and ARIAS AND BARCAROLLES—will be performed at Boston's Steriti Memorial Rink, a skating facility transformed into a cabaret modeled after mid-century Manhattan nightclubs like the El Morocco.

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MEDIA INFORMATION: For details on “The Handmaid's Tale,” or BLO's upcoming 2018-2019 Season, contact John Michael Kennedy at jmk@jmkpr.com or 781-620-1761.