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Opera Boston's 2009 InnOvation Gala to honor baritone Sherrill Milnes

(BOSTON-Oct. 13, 2009) Opera Boston proudly presents its signature gala event entitled: InnOvation 2009, this year in honor of celebrated American baritone **Sherrill Milnes**. The gala recognizes the legendary baritone, paying tribute to his career as a singer and educator. The event will take place on Thursday, November 5, 2009 at the Boston Harbor Hotel (70 Rowes Wharf, Boston, MA), starting with cocktails at 6:00 pm and followed by dinner, award presentation, and performances beginning at 7:00pm.

One of the most prominent American opera stars of the 20th century, **Sherrill Milnes** has continuously captivated audiences with his dazzling voice, effortless acting and powerful stage presence. His successful career at the Metropolitan Opera spanned more than two decades, beginning with his company debut as Valentin in Gounod's *Faust* in 1965. Over his long and distinguished career, Mr. Milnes' range and endurance placed him in the forefront of the Italian and French repertoires for dramatic baritone.

The splendid evening will feature famed radio personality **Ron della Chiesa** as the host, an array of costumed entertainers, and, of course, musical performances. Soprano **Barbara Quintiliani** (whose most recent role with Opera Boston was as Elvira in Verdi's *Ernani* in 2008) and New England Conservatory Fellow baritone **DongWon Kim** will sing, and a roving chorus will bring to life the rousing ensemble numbers from the Verdi works that represented many of Mr. Milnes' greatest triumphs. The Boston Globe's long-time classical music critic **Richard Dyer** will introduce Mr. Milnes and present the award. Joining the honoree and guest artists will be the event's co-chairs—Daniel Ludden and John Fiske III, Stephen M. Weiner and Donald G. Cornuet—along with other arts and civic leaders from the Boston area and beyond.

Opera Boston is Boston's most innovative opera company. Founded in 1980, the company has presented more than 70 operas, including 34 regional and two world premieres. In addition to its critically acclaimed, award-winning mainstage productions, Opera Boston offers a range of programs, including an occasional chamber opera festival, a popular informal cabaret series and an extensive educational program in Boston's schools.

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