



CONTACT: Joyce Linehan, 617-282-2510, joyce@ashmontmedia.com

OPERA BOSTON ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF LESLEY KOENIG TO GENERAL DIRECTOR; GIL ROSE APPOINTED TO NEW POSITION OF ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

(BOSTON) Opera Boston Board President and Acting General Director **Gregory E. Bulger** announced that after an extensive national search, **Lesley Koenig** has been unanimously selected by a search committee as General Director, and will join the Company in mid-January 2011. **Gil Rose**, Opera Boston's Music Director since 2003, has assumed the new role of Artistic Director.

According to Bulger, "Lesley and Gil will comprise one of the most dynamic and innovative collaborations in the arts in the United States, and we look forward to a new chapter in Opera Boston's development. As opera watchers know, this company's artistic growth over the past several years has had positive impact in Boston and across the country, and with these appointments, its reach will grow."

Koenig brings many years of experience at the Metropolitan Opera as a stage director and producer, and later as the Assistant Manager and Director of Production. In this position, she was responsible for creating new productions: engaging all creative personnel and managing the logistics of the production process for the repertory productions. She also served as the General Manager of the San Francisco Ballet from 2002-2008, where she implemented the company's five-year strategic plan and managed the opening of more than 60 new productions. Most recently, she is a Fellow with the Stanford University Center for Philanthropy and Civil Society and a Consultant with the Stanford Institute for Creativity and the Arts. She holds degrees from Harvard and Stanford.

Mezzo-soprano **Stephanie Blythe**, who made her Opera Boston debut in May 2010 in Offenbach's *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein*, and a longtime colleague of Koenig's at the Metropolitan Opera, said, "I am incredibly pleased for Opera Boston and Lesley. This pairing is a match made in heaven—two forward thinking, intelligent, talented, imaginative forces for good—that will generate nothing but positive creations to support and bolster the operatic community and the City of Boston."

Anita Walker, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Cultural Council said, "we are so proud of the contribution Opera Boston makes to the cultural life of Massachusetts. The fact that this organization continues to attract top notch talent and leadership is evidence of its stature beyond the boundaries of the Commonwealth. It will be exciting

to see Lesley take the reins and help guide this important organization to the next level.”

Gil Rose has been the Music Director and principal conductor of Opera Boston since 2003. Together with former General Director Carole Charnow, he is responsible for the extraordinary growth of the Company over these last seven years. Rose has conducted almost every Opera Boston production during this period. His greatest achievements with the Company include *Nixon in China* by John Adams, *Ainadamar* by Osvaldo Golijov and the world premiere of *Madame White Snake* in 2009. Gil’s adventurous spirit is embodied in Opera Boston and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, which he founded. With BMOP, he has been nominated for multiple Grammy Awards, most recently for Steven Mackey’s *Dreamhouse*.

According to composer John Harbison, “In his time at Opera Boston, Gil Rose has demonstrated his control, comfort and authority in a whole range of operatic experience – Beethoven, Verdi, Shostakovich, Adés. No style seems foreign to him, and his elevation to Artistic Director of the company ratifies his evident status as a leader in the musical community. He will be a force in the world of opera for many years to come.”

About Opera Boston

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 a popular cabaret series and a vibrant educational program in Boston-area schools. For more information about Opera Boston, visit www.operaboston.org.