



National Anthem

Classical Musicians Unite to Elect Barack Obama

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Maureen Dezell (617) 281-6807, maureen.dezell@gmail.com
Joyce Linehan (617) 282-2510 x 1, joyce@ashmontmedia.com

Local Luminaries Perform All-Star Classical Concert for Obama Campaign

Charles Blandy and David Kravitz, Blue Mass. Group political bloggers/professional opera singers, gather musical colleagues to perform for the benefit of presidential hopeful

(Boston, Mass. - Aug. 7, 2008) More than 50 internationally acclaimed singers, conductors, and instrumentalists, including Blue Mass. Group founders and opera singers Charles Blandy and David Kravitz, join forces at New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall in Boston on Friday, Sept. 12, at 8 p.m. for ***National Anthem***, an extraordinary concert of classical music to benefit Senator Barack Obama's presidential campaign. Tickets are available for minimum contributions to the Obama campaign of \$100, \$50, or \$20. Patron seating is available for a \$1,000 contribution. For more information visit www.ObamaConcert.com or call (617) 209-4303.

Baritone David Kravitz and tenor Charles Blandy, both lauded and applauded for their work on Boston classical music stages, are producing *National Anthem*, and will perform at the concert. Kravitz and Blandy co-founded Blue Mass. Group (www.BlueMassGroup.com), the popular, increasingly influential progressive political blog *Boston Magazine* called a "must read" for people interested in Massachusetts politics. Blue Mass. Group endorsed Senator Obama in early February, 2008.

Blandy and Kravitz have rallied dozens of musicians to volunteer their time and talent to the benefit concert. Among the singers scheduled to appear are sopranos Lisa Saffer and Amanda Forsythe; mezzos Janna Baty, Krista River, Lynn Torgrove and Majie Zeller; tenor Matthew

DiBattista; and baritone Robert Honeysucker. Instrumentalists include Russell Sherman, piano; Daniel Stepner, violin (concertmaster) and the 50-piece National Anthem Orchestra. Conductors include Beatrice Jona Affron, David Hoose, Edward Elwyn Jones, Amy Lieberman and Gil Rose. All of these musicians perform regularly in Boston with organizations as revered and diverse as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Lyric Opera, Handel & Haydn Society, Opera Boston, Cantata Singers, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and others.

National Anthem will feature solo performances, chamber music and works for full orchestra that promise to appeal to classical music lovers and casual listeners alike. The program includes some of opera's greatest hits such as the "Toréador Song" from *Carmen*, the famed quartet from Verdi's *Rigoletto*, and the much-loved trio, "Soave sia il vento" ("Softly blow the breezes") from Mozart's *Così fan tutte* - and more favorite works of classical musicians and audiences worldwide.

While actors and pop musicians are often seen lending their time and talents to political causes, classical musicians appear less frequently in political settings.

"People don't often associate classical musicians with politics," said Blandy. "But we care just as much about the future of our country as people in any other profession."

"Everyone I've asked to participate in this concert was thrilled to be able to use their talent for a cause in which they deeply believe," added Kravitz.

Indeed, in some ways this concert closes a circle. Blandy and Kravitz organized a sell-out concert to benefit John Kerry's 2004 presidential campaign. That event raised over \$20,000 and inspired the two singers, along with Kravitz's long-time friend Bob Neer, to found Blue Mass. Group.

The singer-citizens' activism has won accolades from political leaders, who've expressed enthusiasm for *National Anthem*.

"This fundraising event is the latest reminder both that Blue Mass. Group is one of the most effective statewide blogs in the country and that Barack Obama is inspiring extraordinary grassroots energy across

America," said Senator John Kerry.

Massachusetts Democratic Party chairman John Walsh, manager of Deval Patrick's 2006 gubernatorial campaign, praised Blue Mass. Group for its "tremendous help" in winning that election. "I am pleased to see Charley and David turning their efforts to help Barack Obama become president," said Walsh, who added, "I am looking forward to attending this concert, and I encourage Democrats around the state to do the same."

(More information on the performers and the program is available at www.ObamaConcert.com.)

Blandy and Kravitz are available for interviews. Photos are available on request.