

P R E S S R E L E A S E

For Immediate Release: November 8, 2011

Contact: Susan Joslin, Associates Administrator & Events Coordinator, Marine Biological Laboratory, Phone: (508) 289-7281, E-Mail: sjoslin@mbi.edu

MBL Falmouth Forum to Premiere Musical Masterpiece Based on Words of Charles Darwin on Friday, November 18th

MBL, WOODS HOLE, MA—The MBL will premiere a major musical work: the *Missa Charles Darwin*, performed by New York Polyphony, a male classical vocal quartet, on Friday, November 18th at 7:30 PM in Lillie Auditorium, 7 MBL Street, Woods Hole. The event will kick off to the 2011-2012 Falmouth Forum season. All MBL Falmouth Forum presentations are free and open to the public.

In the summer of 2010, the acclaimed male classical vocal quartet New York Polyphony revealed its plan to embark on a groundbreaking creative enterprise with up-and-coming American composer Gregory Brown: setting the words of Charles Darwin to music. The framework for the composition is something truly daring: employing the 5-movement structure of the Catholic Mass as a vehicle for excerpts from Darwin's seminal *On The Origin Of Species*, creating a modern secular Mass setting based on Darwin's words. The decision to support the work on behalf of the MBL and to hold the premiere on the MBL campus was quickly made, with the enthusiastic support of the MBL Director, Dr. Gary Borisy.

A preview of the work was presented at TEDxWoodsHole, on Saturday, October 15, 2011. The full premiere will be held on November 18, 2011 as part of the MBL Falmouth Forum series. The *Missa Charles Darwin* is a multi-movement composition scored for unaccompanied male vocal quartet. The tradition of setting to music the sacred texts of the Mass—the principal celebration of the Roman Catholic Church—was established in the late Middle Ages. Over the centuries, literally thousands of Mass settings have been composed, many by the greatest composers of their generations, with exemplars ranging from Mozart to Stravinsky.

“The *Missa Charles Darwin* is a musical composition, not a political statement,” says Mr. Brown. “Rather, its purpose is to venerate a celebrated work of human ingenuity through the application of an accepted musical form that is uniquely suited to enhance the expressive potential of language. Through music, we seek to celebrate not only Darwin’s genius, but his inestimable contribution to the human spirit.”

A buffet dinner is available before the lecture at 6:00 p.m. in the Swope Center located near the auditorium. Dinner tickets are \$30 and must be purchased in advance at either Eight Cousins Children’s Books, Main Street, Falmouth, or at the MBL’s Communications Office in the Candle

House, 127 Water Street in Woods Hole. Dinner seats are limited and tickets are only available until they sell out or until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 15th. All tickets are nonrefundable. For more information contact the MBL's Communications Office at 508-289-7423.

All MBL Falmouth Forum lectures, performances and presentations are sponsored by the MBL Associates for the Cape Cod community and feature topics in the arts, humanities and health. They are always free and open to the public.

The series will continue throughout the winter. The remaining lectures in the series are:

December 2

Cape Cod Maritime History: First American Globalization
David Nordlander, Library of Congress
Lillie Auditorium, 7 MBL Street, Woods Hole

February 3

Will the Decline of U.S. Hegemony Be Good for Latin America?
Joseph Tulchin, Visiting Scholar, Harvard University
Lawrence School, 113 Lakeview Ave., Falmouth

March 2

Poetry Reading with Linda Pastan
Linda Pastan, two-time finalist for the National Book Award
Falmouth High School, 874 Gifford St., Falmouth

March 9

The Arab Spring One Year After
Ambassador Robert Pelletreau, former Ambassador to Egypt, Tunisia and Bahrain
Lawrence School, 113 Lakeview Ave., Falmouth

March 30

Honeybee Democracy (co-sponsored by The 300 Committee)
Thomas Seeley, biologist and author, Cornell University
Falmouth High School, 874 Gifford St., Falmouth

—###—

The Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) is dedicated to scientific discovery and improving the human condition through research and education in biology, biomedicine, and environmental science. Founded in 1888 in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, the MBL is an independent, nonprofit corporation.

The MBL Associates are a group of individuals and businesses that support the scientific mission of the MBL through their gifts to the Annual Fund. The Associates sponsor educational and

research programs for the MBL and raise funds for special projects. In addition, they operate the MBL Associates Gift Shop, located on Water Street in Woods Hole, the profits from which support scientific fellowships.