

Granite State Opera to perform l'Elisir d'Amore (The Elixir of Love)

Concord, NH - Granite State Opera opens its 6th Subscription Season with Donizetti's hilarious comedy l'Elisir d'Amore (The Elixir of Love). Stars from the Metropolitan Opera, Seattle Opera and New York City Opera join with local New England artists and the Granite State Opera Orchestra under the baton of Philip Lauriat to create a new production of one of Bel Canto opera's great comedies.

Tenor Philippe Castagner (Metropolitan Opera) will sing the role of Nemorino, a simple farm hand and the role the great Enrico Caruso himself premiered at The Met in 1904. One of opera's all-time favorite tenor arias "Una furtive lagrima" (A Furtive Tear) highlights the second act.

Soprano Heather Parker (Seattle Opera) sings Adina, the beautiful, wealthy owner of the farm, and the object of Nemorino's desperate affection. Parker will be familiar to Granite State Opera audiences as Susana from last year's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Marriage of Figaro), a role she sang to great acclaim.

Ms. Parker's husband, Derrick Parker (New York City Opera) will sing the role of the impossibly pompous army sergeant Belcore whose name is both a literal pun (meaning "good heart") and a play on "bellicose." Belcore is a rival for Adina's affections, and she seems to prefer his machismo to Nemorino's heart worn on the sleeve.

But it is when "Doctor" Dulcamara (literally "sweet/bitter") comes to town hawking a cure-all elixir, that this rollicking comedy really takes off. Dulcamara will be sung by David Ward (New York City Opera) who also sang Dr. Bartolo in Granite State Opera's production of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Mr. Ward has been hailed as one of America's rising basso buffos, bringing his dazzling patter, his hysterical stage presence and his "shining bass" to productions of comic opera across the country.

Hearing Dulcamara sing of the elixir's ability to cure everything from baldness to consumption to indigestion, Nemorino pulls him aside and asks if it can make Adina fall in love with him ("like the story of Tristan and Isolde" from which he's just heard Adina read). No surprise to infomercial watchers everywhere, of COURSE it can. But the cheap bordeaux that's in the bottle makes Nemorino drunk instead, and he behaves so badly that Adina agrees to marry Sgt. Belcore the next morning.