

William O. Beeman, (Basilio) bass, made his debut in Monterey, California as Dulcamara in L'Elisir d'Amore. He has appeared in concerts and performed more than 50 roles in opera and musical theater throughout the United States, Europe and Japan. A versatile singer/actor, Mr. Beeman is at home with both dramatic and comic roles, and on the concert stage. The Freie Presse in Germany wrote of him in June 1997, "He presented a beautiful, expression-filled voice with the sheer power to astonish the audience". Opera News has praised his performances on numerous occasions, citing his resonant voice, stage presence, and acting abilities.

In June, 1999 Mr. Beeman created the title role in the world premier of Emperor Norton of the USA by Jerrold Rosen and James to great critical acclaim. Reviewers called his performance "superb" and praised his powerful voice, elegant vocalism and musical ability in the contemporary score. He created the role of Doug in the world premier performance of A Fleeting Animal by Eric Nielsen and David Budbill from Budbill's well-known play, Judevine. He was Jabez Stone in Douglas Moore's The Devil and Daniel Webster with Granite State Opera and in live broadcast on WGBH Radio. In 1998 and 1999 he appeared with great success as Colline in La Bohème, Zuniga in Carmen, Basilio in Il barbiere di Siviglia, Sparafucile and Monterone in Rigoletto Leporello in Don Giovanni and Sarastro in Die Zauberflöte.

From 1996 to 1999 he was engaged at Oper Chemnitz in Chemnitz, Germany where he was featured in many concert appearances and 26 opera productions. In May of 1994 he made his Wagnerian debut as Fafner in Das Rheingold in San Francisco.

Mr. Beeman performed the title role in a revival of Cimarosa's L'impresario in angustie in Italy, including a "command performance" for Gian Carlo Menotti at the Spoleto Festival. Other recent roles include Raimondo in Lucia di Lammermoor, Mayor Swallow in Peter Grimes, Bartolo in Le nozze di Figaro, Osmin in Die Entführung aus dem Sarail, the title role in Don Pasquale, and the four villains in Tales of Hoffmann. In June 2000, Mr. Beeman sang the role of Zuniga in Granite State Opera's production of Carmen.

Mary Brown Bonacci (Rosina) has performed with the Kansas City Lyric Opera, the Des Moines Metro Opera, the Utah Festival Opera, the Dorian Opera, and with the opera company of the Pine Mountain Music Festival. Ms. Bonacci has appeared as soloist with the Omaha Symphony, the Kaw Valley Symphony, the Kansas City Chamber Orchestra, and as a featured soloist of the with the Kansas Composers' Project. Area audiences have seen Ms. Bonacci as Mercedes in the Granite State Opera productions of Carmen, and The Devil and Daniel Webster, where she had the role of Mary Stone. She has also been soloist in Handel's Messiah with the Masterwork Chorale, soloist in Massachusetts performances of Mozart's Requiem and Mozart's Mass in c minor, and in recital with New England Lyric Arts Trio. Putnam Ercoline (Stage Manager) has been involved in stage, television, and films his entire career. This is the fourth production that he has managed for Granite State Opera; his most recent was with their June 2001 production of Carmen. He was recently stage manager for the New Hampshire Symphony Orchestra. He is also a photographer and painter.

David Kravitz, (Figaro) was named by the Boston Globe as one of the "outstanding singers of the season" for 2000, has performed to critical acclaim with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's under Roger Norrington. He has also sung with the medieval music ensemble Sequentia, and on numerous occasions with the Cantata Singers under David Hoose, and Emmanuel Music under Craig Smith, among many others. Recent concert performances include Bach's St. Matthew Passion; Beethoven's Symphony No. 9; Handel's Jephtha and Judas Maccabaeus; the Boston premiere of John Harbison's Four Psalms; Carmina Burana; and as a Cantata soloist in Emmanuel Music's renowned Bach Cantata series.

His operatic appearances include Don Alfonso in Così fan tutte, L'incoronazione di Poppea with Boston Baroque, the title roles in Don Giovanni and The Barber of Seville, Handel's Admeto with Emmanuel Music; and Ken Keaton in Sarah Caldwell's world premiere production of Thomas Whitman's The Black Swan. This year he sang Captain Corcoran in HMS Pinafore with the Lake George Opera Festival, Leporello in Don Giovanni with Lowell Opera, La Bohème and Tod Machover's Resurrection with Boston Lyric Opera, Handel's Messiah with the Masterwork Chorus in Carnegie Hall, and a new work by Andy Vores with Collage New Music.

Philip Lauriat (Artistic Director, Conductor) has more than 20 years experience in the world of opera, as conductor, singer,

producer and stage director. As a conductor, he has been in constant demand since making his theatrical conducting debut with Amahl and the Night Visitors in 1996 in Peterborough, New Hampshire. In 1998, he made his European conducting debut with *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the East Slovakian State Opera, Kosice, Slovakia. He has been Music Director for *La Bohème*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Let's Make an Opera*, *The Gondoliers* and many other productions. The Keene Sentinel said of his *Così fan tutte*, "Philip Lauriat set a pleasing, brisk pace that moved the opera vigorously along." In the spring of 2000, he made his concert debut conducting the Keene Chamber Orchestra in a performance of Brahms' First Piano Concerto, with Eric Stumacher as the piano soloist.

He studied conducting with the late Dr. Georg Tintner, a student of Felix Weingartner and noted Brucknerian, and was an Auditor in Conducting at Tanglewood. Having studied conducting and voice at The Eastman School of Music and Westminster Choir College, Mr. Lauriat was the first student to win both the singing and conducting competitions at Westminster.

Mr. Lauriat is also a lyric tenor who has performed nationally in opera and concert. He has sung with such companies as The Cincinnati Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Longwood Opera, Merrimack Lyric Opera, and Midland Music. The varied roles he has performed include Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Sam in *Susannah*, Belmonte in *The Abduction From The Seraglio* and Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*. Composer David McKay chose him to create the role of Anse in his opera *As I Lay Dying*, based on the William Faulkner novel. A critic said of his performances in *Die Fledermaus*, "Lauriat was the most charming and seductive Alfred I've seen." He currently teaches both voice and conducting in Boston and Temple, New Hampshire, where he resides.

Robert Lawson (Stage Director) is a writer, director, composer, screenwriter and teacher. He has created numerous original theater works, frequently in collaboration with his wife - choreographer Sally Bomer. He is the author or dozens of performance texts that have been produced in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, New Haven and at the Milwaukee Rep. His work has been published in *American Writing*, *Poems & Plays* and *The Northern New England Review*, and he was a finalist/recipient of an artist's grant from NH State Council on the Arts in 1999. He is the artistic director of Andy's Summer Playhouse, a peculiar theater in southern New Hampshire that works with professionals to create innovative, original works for young performers.

The screenplay for *Safety Glass* that he co-authored with writer/director Jonathan Glatzer has been optioned and is in development with Industry Entertainment (LA), and another Glatzer/Lawson film project - *King Callow* - was recently bought by Starboard Entertainment (LA). In January of 2002 he will be conducting a course in Creative Process at the Donau University in Krems, Austria. In the spring of 2002 he will be mounting the premiere of his music/theatre piece "...but the rain is full of ghosts -- based in part on the writings of Edna St. Vincent Millay -- at Franklin Pierce College, where he is on faculty. While he has directed innumerable theater works, *The Barber of Seville* marks his opera directing debut.

Gregory Mercer (Count Almaviva) has been hailed throughout the world for the sweetness and agility of his voice, his musicality and his acting ability. It is no surprise, therefore, that this sublimely flexible singer is best suited to roles in bel canto and contemporary opera, as well as character roles and the tenor solos in the symphonic repertoire.

Among the many companies with which he has been associated in the United States, the list includes the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera's Western Opera Theater, Virginia Opera, L'Opera Francais de New York, Orlando Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Opera Festival of New Jersey, Skylight Opera Theater, Connecticut Grand Opera and Opera Roanoke. Overseas, he has appeared at the opera companies of Amsterdam, Monte-Carlo, Basel, Fgraz, Caracas, and Prague, with whom he also toured Japan.

A suburb concert artist as well, Mr. Mercer has been featured with many major orchestras including The Saint Lukes Chamber Orchestra, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Chicago's Grant Park Symphony, Grenoble Symphony, Springfield Symphony, Rhode Island Philharmonic and the Westchester Philharmonic. Choral groups include The Oratorio Society of New York, New York Choral Society, Dessoff Choirs, Pro Arte Choral, Princeton Pro Musica, Amor Artis, National Chorale, Baltimore Handel Choir, Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus and the Barnard-Columbia Chorus. He has also sung at several music festivals, such as the Tanglewood, Stern Grove, Besancon, Brevard, Winter Park, Monadnock and Berkshire Choral Festivals.

His television credits include appearances on ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, German National Television, Czech National Television and Yugoslav National Television. He has recorded for the Albany, Caedmon, Vox, Koch and Original Cast Record labels.

David Ward (Dr. Bartolo) is 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. The 2000-2001 season brings this 18th production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in which he portrays his critically-acclaimed Dr. Bartolo. "Splendidly crotchety and fussy - he stole the show." His "inspired" Bartolo has been seen on tour twice with the New York City Opera National Company under Maestri Joseph Colaneri and Christopher Larkin, as well as at Nevada Opera, Knoxville Opera, Kentucky Opera, Lake George Opera Festival, Opera Idaho, Toledo Opera, Virginia Opera, El Paso Opera, Opera Roanoke, Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts and the Aspen Music Festival. A "wonderful character actor, with a stellar voice," Mr. Ward's "lovable" and "brilliant" Bartolo "carries the show. His bursts of patter were fast, furious and crystal clear."

Mr. Ward is also acclaimed for his Donizetti roles as Don Pasquale, Sulpice, and Dr. Dulcamara. His Lake George Opera Festival Don Pasquale "was superb," deemed a "show-stopper" and "lovable" and he returns to Nevada Opera in 2003 for a new production with Buck Ross. An American tour, again with the New York City Opera National Company, of *La Fille du Regiment* brought him acclaim as an outstanding "Sulpice. Opera News wrote of his Dulcamara, that "Ward juggled dizzying patter and demanding state business with the aplomb" while Opera Canada called his Dulcamara "dazzling." Other recent Mozart performances include Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* for the Chattanooga Symphony and the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* for Lake George Opera Festival, under Maestro Daniel Beckwith.

A versatile bass, Mr. Ward sang Fra Melitone in *La Forza del Destino* last season for New York Grand Opera in Central Park, where he returned this summer to sing the title role of Falstaff. Other companies he has appeared with include Opera Ontario, Opera Delaware, New Orleans Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Utah Opera, Sarasota Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Sacramento Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Des Moines and National Grand Opera.

Shay Zeller (Berta) has performed with the Granite State Opera in the chorus of *Carmen* and *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, and Berta is her first professional role. In 1997, she graduated from Centenary College of Louisiana with a B.A. in Music. In performances of opera scenes with Centenary Opera she appeared as Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, and the First lady in *The Magic Flute*. With Centenary Opera she also performed in *Così fan Tutti*, *Susannah*, *La Bohème*, *Hansel und Gretel*, and *Carmen*. While in college, she performed with Shreveport Opera Company in *Aida* and *Daughter of the Regiment*. Originally from New Orleans, Ms. Zeller moved to New England four years ago to intern at NPR's *Car Talk*. She then came to New Hampshire Public Radio where she is the producer and host of NHPR's literary program *What's Your Story?* Ms. Zeller is a member of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. Her teachers have included Eva Nagorka and most recently Phillip Lauriat.