## CAST



Florrie Bagel+ is thrilled to be making her MetroStage debut. Among her favorite roles are Miss Pennywise in *Urinetown* and Mama Morton in *Chicago* (Montgomery College), *Godspell* (Olney Theater Center), Florinda in *Into the Woods* (Signature Theatre) and, most recently, she originated the role of Bethany in the new musical *Nobody's Perfect* at The Kennedy Center. Upcoming projects include: Signature Theatre's *Overtures Cabaret* and the role of Baby Jane in *Jerry Springer: The Opera* at Studio Theatre 2ndStage.



**Priscilla Cuellar\*** is thrilled to be making her MetroStage debut with *The Stephen Schwartz Project*. Priscilla has been with the project since it began years ago and is excited to be a part of the world premiere. Priscilla has also been seen in *Assassins, My Fair Lady, Into the Woods, Saving Aimee* (Signature Theatre), *Suessical, Twice Upon a Time (Imagination Stage), Little Shop of Horrors (Toby's Dinner Theatre)* and many other shows in regional theatres such as *Pippin, Big River, Footloose*, and *School House Rock*. Priscilla would like to thank her friends and family for their unconditional love and support.



Felicia Curry\* is thrilled to be back at MetroStage singing and dancing and storytelling with her SSP brothers and sisters! Other MetroStage credits - Susan, tick, tick...Boom; Irene, Three Sistahs; Wife, Two Queens, One Castle. National Tours: Violet, Roald Dahl's WILLY WONKA; Topaz, Barbie Live! (Original Cast Recording). NYC: Petite Rouge, Petite Rouge (NYMF). Regional credits: A-Kid, The Araboolies of Liberty Street, Aida, Aida (HH nom.); Featured Performer, Godspell (HH nom.), Featured Soloist, BSO Holiday Spectacular. Education: UMCP. Much love to God, family, friends, Michael, Doug, Danny, Carolyn and everyone that

worked on this amazing project! Thank you all for never making mama feel like an 'old lady'!



Kerry Deitrick+ is thrilled to be making her MetroStage debut! She completed her studies at the Baltimore School for the Arts before going on to receive her BM in Music Theatre from The Catholic University of America. Kerry also trained overseas at the London Dramatic Academy. She has performed at many area venues including The White House and the Meyerhoff Symphony Hall. Credits: Kennedy Center: Bernstein's Mass, Toby's Dinner Theatre: Titanic: The Musical (Caroline), Sound of Music, CUA: Pirates of Penzance (Edith), Jacques Brel...Paris, The Secret Garden (Alice). Upcoming performances include this summer's Jerry Springer: The Opera at The Studio Theatre.

She sends a huge THANK YOU to Michael and Doug! Special thanks also go to family, ducks, and Drew.



Benjamin Horen+, a native Ohioan, is currently teaching music in Fairfax County and has been the Music Director for the US Performing Arts Camps at George Washington University. He earned a Bachelors Degree in Music at Bowling Green State University where he performed in numerous productions (Frederic, *The Pirates of Penzance*; Cornelius, *Hello, Dolly!*; Shroeder, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown!*; Dick, *Dames at Sea*). He has performed at the Kennedy Center for the US Chamber of Commerce. He has also served as an understudy at Studio Theatre (Cosme, *Souvenir*). He owes a huge debt of gratitude to his friends and family, Mary Lincer, Robert Pullen,

Janine, RD, and to his castmates and directors who have made this a truly wonderful experience!



Amber Iman Moorer+ is a graduating Senior (May 10. 2008!!!!) Musical Theatre Major at Howard University. In recent years, she has appeared in *Working, Into the Woods, Eyes, Sweeney Todd, A Chorus Line, Yellowman* and *Gum* to name a few. Amber would like to thank Michael Bobbitt for this wonderful opportunity, her parents for their presence and prayers and her HU family and friends for making the past four years unforgettable. Let's go to work!



**Jobari Parker-Namdar**+ is delighted and eager to make his professional theatre debut at MetroStage. He is a native Washingtonian and ready to represent his town to the fullest of his capabilities. He is a Graduate of the Duke Ellington School for the Arts and, currently, a rising Junior, Musical Theatre Major at Howard University. Credits include: U of M: *Dreamgirls* (C.C. White), HU: *A Chorus Line* (Mark), *Working* (Rex Winship). He would like to thank his friends and family for their undying support, and would like to again thank Michael for believing in him and giving him a chance to do what he loves to do.



Andrew Sonntag\* is proud to make his MetroStage debut. His recent credits include Jimmy in *Reefer Madness* at The Studio Theatre (Helen Hayes nomination— Outstanding Lead Actor in a Musical) and Dickon in *The Secret Garden* at Adventure Theatre. He has also appeared as Mike in *A Chorus Line* at the New London Barn Playhouse and recently understudied *Glory Days* at Signature Theatre. He graduated from the Catholic University of America with a BA in Drama, and will appear this summer as Atreyu in Imagination Stage's *The Neverending Story*.



Clif Walker\* is a native Washingtonian and graduate of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. He received his BFA from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA. He has performed leading roles in a variety of musicals and revues including Leader in the American Music Theater Festival's *The Hidden Sky* (workshop), American Music Theater's *Hitwave*, Debbie Allen's *Soul Possessed* at the Kennedy Center, Arena Stage's *South Pacific*, RoundHouse Theater's *Once on this Island* and *Where Eagles Fly* with the late Mike Malone. He is delighted to be working with such wonderful people and wishes to thank

God, mom, family and friends.

## **BAND**

Doug Bowles (Conductor/ Keyboard 1) has music directed nearly 80 productions on the local, regional and international scene. Doug teaches voice at American University and the Catholic University of America. Recent Credits: OFF BROADWAY: Music Director, Petite Rouge by Joan Cushing for the NY Musical Theatre Festival. LOCAL: Writer/Music Director/Actor for G.I. Jive: Letters from the War coproduced by Doug and the IN Series at ATLAS PAC. Conductor/music director: Kennedy Center: Celebrate Broadway, with John Lithgow and Linda Eder. In 2006, Doug conducted They Shoot Horses, Don't They for AU and toured the production to Yaroslavl, Russia. As a performer, Doug appeared at Signature Theatre in Stephen Sondheim's Assassins (directed by Joe Calarco) which won several Helen Hayes Awards; and in Saving Aimee, which was prepared and performed with Kathie Lee Gifford (the show's creator) and Carolee Carmello. Doug also appeared as the General in Kiss Me, Kate for the Washington Savoyards. Doug founded and directs SingCo Music (www.singcomusic.com), a local entertainment company which proudly represents Doug's hot jazz and swing band The SingCo Rhythm Orchestra, a 12 piece Dance Band which has performed for venues as varied as the Voice of America, The National Archives, Channel 4 TV and many others.

Brent Birckhead (Saxophone) Under the tutelage of Louis Tibbs and Charlie Young, Brent has become a dynamically versatile saxophonist of many genres. Brent has traveled worldwide, gracing the same stages as legendary jazz performers such as Benny Golson, Geri Allen, Wallace Roney and Eddie Henderson. Brent has also performed at the 2004 & 2005 Kennedy Center Honors, 2007 Nagano Jazz Festival, Amway Japan, Capitol Jazz Cruise and Blues Alley. He has volunteered to bring youth closer to musical artistry, by spreading his infectious love of rhythms, harmony and melody. Brent is currently finishing his Bachelor's degree in Music Education at Howard University. After graduating, he will pursue his Master of Music in Jazz Studies.

Jean Finstad (*Bass*) graduated with a degree in Jazz Bass Performance from the University of Maryland, College Park in 2003. He has worked in close to 100 musical theater orchestra pits since 1998, including MetroStage's productions of *Starting Here, Starting Now* and *The Last Five Years*. Other theater credits include Signature Stage, Studio Theater, Roundhouse Theater, Wayside Theater, Dominion Stage, Toby's Dinner Theater, University of Maryland, Catholic University, American University, Montgomery College, Kennedy Center Millennium Stage and Carnival Cruise Lines. Jean also performs constantly with his band, the Justin Trawick Group, around the DC Metro area as well as on tour along the east coast. Jean is very excited to be in the pit for yet another brand new musical!

Vishal Panchal (*Drums*) is currently finishing a Bachelor's Degree in Music at the University of Maryland, College Park. He has studied with some of the foremost percussionists in the country, including Anthony Ames, John Tafoya, Tim Adams, Steve Fidyk, Michael Burritt, and many others. Vishal performs frequently in the Maryland/D.C. area with many musical theater, jazz, and other professional groups. Recent highlights include playing with the Washington Performing Arts Society Gospel Choir at the Kennedy Center, *Kiss Me Kate* with the Savoyards at the Atlas Arts Center, and *Evita* with Catholic University. In the upcoming year Vishal will begin working towards a Master's Degree in Music, and from there he hopes to become a Broadway musician in New York.

Darius Smith (Keyboard 2) earned his B.Mus from Howard University in 2003 and his MFA in Musical Theatre Composition from NYU in 2005. Since leaving NYU, he has been on full-time faculty at Howard University, teaching Voice for Musical Theatre. He is pleased to be able to work with John and Michael again on another project, having music directed two other works of theirs, Bingo Long (Kennedy Center) and Say It Ain't So (RoundHouse Theater). Darius has also worked on I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change (Bethesda Theater), Go, Dog, Go (Adventure Theater) and Queen of the Bohemian Dream (Source Theater). Some of his original words and music have been heard at He Triad Theater (LAUNCH NYC), The Kennedy Center and Aaron Davis Hall (NYC) where he collaborated with choreographer Princess Mhoon-Cooper on a commissioned dance piece, Dangerous Liasons. At Howard University, he serves as Founder/Artistic Director of Standing Room Only, Howard's premiere musical theater ensemble. He is currently writing two new works, Amorous Ruminations: a song cycle and U.G.L.Y. (workshops - Summer 2008).

Danny Villanueva (*Drums Alternate*) is a freelance percussionist/drummer who performs and teaches in the Washington DC area. He has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra, the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Florida Orchestra and the Florida West Coast Symphony. Mr. Villanueva has worked with many prestigious conductors including Mstislav Rostropovich, Leonard Slatkin, Michael Stern, JoAnn Falletta, Erich Kunzel, Marvin Hamlisch, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, and Roberto Minczuk. Career highlights include performances at Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center and Blues Alley. Local theatres include productions at Arena Stage, Signature Theatre, Roundhouse Theatre and Ford's Theatre. Internationally, he has performed in Italy, Russia, Korea and Spain. Currently, he is the percussion instructor at Hardy Middle School in Washington, DC.

## PRODUCTION & DESIGN

Michael J. Bobbitt\*\*++ (*Director/ Choreographer*) has directed, choreographed and performed at many theatres in the Washington DC metropolitan area, including Arena Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, Studio Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Center Stage, RoundHouse Theatre and the Kennedy Center. His National and International credits include the NY Musical Theatre Festival, Mel Tillis 2001, 1996 Olympics, and the Washington Post Music and Dance Scholarships Awards. He studied creative writing and music at Susquehanna University and theatre and dance at The Washington Ballet, The Dance Theatre of Harlem, The American Musical and Dramatic Academy and NY University's Tisch School of the Arts (Cap 21). He is a member of the Dramatist Guild of America and the Society of Stage Directors and choreographers and the African-American Playwright's Exchange. He is an Artistic Associate at the Smithsonian's Discovery Theatre and the Artistic Director of Adventure Theatre. As a writer, his work has been accepted in the 2006 NYC International Fringe Festival and has received numerous grants from such places as the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council and the Puffin Foundation. Michael has taught theatre and dance at George Washington University, Catholic University, Montgomery College, Howard University, and the Washington Ballet.

John L. Cornelius, II (Composer) A member of ASCAP, John has been the music director/arranger/composer for a number of theaters including the Great Caruso, the Ensemble Theater, Adventure Theater in Glen Echo Park, Main Street Theatre and Theater Under the Stars' Humphries School, he has also written, along with his collaborator, Michael J. Bobbitt, several works for the lyric theater including The Stephen Schwartz Project, Mirandy and Brother Wind, Say It Ain't So!, The Yellow Rose of Texas and his latest, an adaptation of the Negro Baseball League classic, Bingo Long and his Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings. He was featured at a number of Prelude Festivals at the Kennedy Center and has received a commission from the Smithsonian Institute, Going the Distance, a children's musical about the lives and careers of Wilma Rudolph and Jesse Owens. His most recent works include Chansons Creoles, a song cycle whose text is by gens de colour of 19th-century Louisiana and Sonata of Attitudes for 2 horns and piano. Dr. Cornelius is a native of Jackson, Mississippi and received his D. M. A. in Composition from Rice University.

Doug Bowles (Music Director) see Band

Danny Tippett\* (Assistant Director/Choreographer) received a Bachelors of Music from The Catholic University of America. Danny has toured the United States in the title role of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer for The Kennedy Center. He also had the priviledge of performing in Shenandoah with Scott Bakula at Fords Theatre. He would like to thank Michael for this opportunity and wants to give kudos to the cast and Jessica for all their hard work!

**Alex Cooper** (Set Designer) works at The National Portrait Gallery in Washington DC.

Jason Arnold+++ (Lighting Designer) is happy to return to MetroStage, having designed last summer's 
Three Sistahs. His local design credits include Emergence-See! (Arena Stage), The Price, Family 
Secrets, A Bad Friend, Oh the Innocents, Talley's Folly (Theatre J), The Jungle Book, Junie B. 
Jones, Seussical, Charlotte's Web, The BFG (Imagination Stage), Mrs. Farnsworth, A Shayna Maidel, 
and The Santaland Diaries (Rep Stage).

Emily Dere (Costume Designer) is a Northern Virginia native and is pleased to be designing her first show with MetroStage. Some of her most recent design work was seen in Rorschach Theatre's Kit Marlowe, Washington Shakespeare Company's Caligula, Journeyman Theater Ensemble's Getting Out and Adventure Theatre's Stuart Little, where she is also a Resident Artist. After graduating from Syracuse University in 2004, she designed for the Hangar Theatre's Lab Company (Ithaca, NY) and appprenticed for Naples Dinner Theater (Naples, FL) and Round House Theater (Bethesda, MD).

Steve Baena (Sound Engineer) is the owner/ head engineer of Funkymonkeyboymusic LLC, a Maryland-based sound company. After many years of doing this for fun, he finally got an education. Since graduating from Omega Studios engineering and recording school, Steve has managed to make a living out of this business. His work scopes UK nightclubs to the US capitol building and most things in between. This is his ninth production at MetroStage and is happy to be back again.

most things in between. This is his ninth production at MetroStage and is happy to be back again. Jessica Lee Winfield\* (Stage Manager) is pleased to wrap up her first season as resident stage manager at MetroStage. Other stage management credits include Three Sistahs, tick, tick...BOOM!, Cookin' at the Cookery (MetroStage), Raisin the musical and Ragtime (Morgan State University). She is also a freelance lighting designer and theatre electrician. She currently works at Arena Stage as an electrician and received Honorable mention in Broadwayworld.com for her design for Run of The Mill's production of Blood Wedding. Other design credits include Man of La Mancha (Spotlighters Theatre) Miss Evers Boys, Black Nativity, Story Train (Morgan State University), Night of January 6, Dreamgirls- Assistant Lighting Designer (ARTSCENTRIC). She would like to thank her mother and sister for being supportive, Dannielle and Tonisha Keyinta for always coming through for her, the cast and crew for being terrific and Shirley Basfield Dunlap and Cheryl Williams for being great teachers and mentors.

**Brandon Guilliams** (*Technical Director*) has built sets for Washington Shakespeare Company, JourneymanTheatre, Actors Theatre of Washington, Imagination Stage, Theatre J, Kennedy Center, as well as MetroStage. He also designed MetroStage's Nat King Cole and Duke Ellington shows. He got his start at the West End Dinner Theatre where he did it all from Kitchen Manager to tech to actor. Brandon's roots are in cooking as he has an Associates degree in culinary arts from Johnson and Wales University. He also currently works at the Kennedy Center answering the information line. Enjoy!

**Kevin Laughon** (*Production Manager*) has worn many hats at MetroStage for over three years. A graduate of Syracuse University, he is also an actor/singer/dancer and an accomplished choreographer/teacher who has worked at local theatres, schools and dance studios for 15 years. Kevin works on the technical teams at many DC area theatres and he performed in *Kiss Me Kate* (Paul/ Hortensio) at Toby's last year. Films he worked on include HBO's *John Adams*, *Burn After Reading* (with George Clooney) and *State of Play* (with Ben Affleck).

Carolyn Griffin (*Producing Artistic Director*) has been with MetroStage since its founding in 1984 and has produced over sixty mainstage productions, including four plays and three musicals that were world premieres. She is committed to producing the best contemporary writing and showcasing the best regional artists for a broad-based audience from the Washington metropolitan area. She is the co-founder of the Alexandria Arts Forum, which she chaired for five years, and has served on many regional panels for area arts commissions. Awards include the Actors' Center Award of Distinction, the Cultural Affairs Award from the Alexandria Commission for Women, the Award of Harmony from the Alexandria Harmonizers and the 2005 ALEX Award. She is on the Board of The Playwrights Forum and was chosen by the Canadian Embassy and the Helen Hayes Awards to travel to Canada in 2004 as part of the Canadian/Washington Theatre Partnership. She holds a Masters degree in Psychology from Catholic University and an MBA from Georgetown University. Her four children live in Washington DC, New York City, Savannah, Georgia, and Alexandria.

<sup>\*</sup>Member of Actors Equity Association (AEA).

<sup>\*\*</sup>Member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc. (SSDC), an independent national labor union.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Member of The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), United Scenic Artists #829.

<sup>+</sup>Equity Membership Candidate (EMC.)

<sup>++</sup>Member of the Dramatist Guild of America.