

2017-18 Season Artist Short Biographies

(Please visit the Mercury website for additional biographical details.)

INSTRUMENTALISTS



Violist **James Dunham's** rich background includes having been founding member of the Naumburg Award winning Sequoia String Quartet and subsequently violist of the Grammy Award winning Cleveland Quartet. A frequent guest with ensembles such as the American, Jupiter, and Takács Quartets, Mr. Dunham is violist of the Axelrod String Quartet, in residence at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. where the group performs on their collection of Nicolò Amati and Stradivari instruments.

Mr. Dunham is featured regularly in concerts, master classes and competition juries throughout the U.S. and abroad.

An impassioned advocate of new music, Dunham has premiered and recorded many works written for him, including Judith Shatin's "Glyph" for solo viola and piano quintet, and Libby Larsen has written two works for Mr. Dunham and his colleagues: the Viola Sonata (2001) and the song cycle "Sifting Through the Ruins" (2005) for mezzo-soprano, viola and piano. Both appear on the CD "Circle of Friends" by Libby Larsen.

Mr. Dunham is Professor of Viola and Chamber Music at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music where he also co-directs its Master of Music in String Quartet program. Formerly on the faculty of California Institute of the Arts and the Eastman School of Music, he chaired the String Department at the New England Conservatory of Music for six years where he received the Louis & Adrienne Krasner Teaching Excellence Award.



A founding member of Mercury, violinist **Jonathan Godfrey** has served as Concertmaster and violin soloist since the orchestra's inception. A graduate of Rice University, Mr. Godfrey is currently Assistant Concertmaster of the Houston Grand Opera and Houston Ballet Orchestras.

Mr. Godfrey has performed with many ensembles including the Houston Symphony, the Houston Bach Society, the IRIS Chamber Orchestra, and the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra. He has also served as Concertmaster of the Sinfonietta Cracovia, The Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, The American Radio Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra X, and the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra. He has concertized in the

US and abroad, performing solo and chamber music recitals in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, Interlochen, and Kansas City, as well as Guanajuato, León, Monterrey, and Santiago, Mexico; Yokohama, Kyoto, Matsumoto, Sapporo, Date, and Tokyo, Japan; and Quito and Ambato, Ecuador.

A music educator as well, Mr. Godfrey has taught for twenty years, including positions on the violin faculty of both the Interlochen Arts Camp and the Rocky Mountain Summer Conservatory. Mr. Godfrey plays on the first of a set of instruments to be made specifically for Mercury by violinmaker Dorian Barnes. This instrument was generously donated to Mercury by the Kirchner family.



Violinist **Augusta McKay Lodge** has been named a 2016 English Concert American Fellow, and a **2017 Mercury Juilliard Fellow**. She performs regularly with Apollo's Fire, the Cleveland Baroque Orchestra, and will be joining Les Arts Florissants on their 2018 season. She has performed in venues such as Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.), Alice Tully Hall (Lincoln Center, NY), The Metropolitan Museum of Art (NY), and Severance Hall (Cleveland).

Past positions include serving as assistant concertmaster with the Nederlands Studenten Orkest, principal second violin of the Sweelinck Baroque Orchestra (Amsterdam), and concertmaster of Juilliard415 under the leadership of William Christie, Masaaki Suzuki, Ton Koopman, Kristian Bezuidenhout, and Nicholas McGegan.

Among her numerous honors are winner of Juilliard's Historical Performance Concerto Competition, and first prize in the 2014 Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra Concerto Competition.

Augusta McKay Lodge earned a Bachelor of Music from Oberlin Conservatory of Music and a Masters of Music from Indiana University Jacobs School, and is a graduate of the Juilliard School in historical performance under the tutelage of Cynthia Roberts, Monica Huggett, Elizabeth Blumenstock, and Robert Mealy. Augusta plays on a Jason Viseltar baroque violin from 2014.



Cellist **Keiran Campbell** received his undergraduate degree from Juilliard with Darrett Adkins and is pursuing his masters in Historical Performance at Juilliard with Phoebe Carrai and Timothy Eddy.

While at Juilliard, he has played under conductors including William Christie, Richard Egarr, and Masaaki Suzuki. Keiran has played in masterclasses for Zuill Bailey, Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, Harry Bicket, Christophe Coin, Richard Egarr, Pablo Heras-Casado, Bonnie Hampton, Frans Helmerson, Jordi Savall, Brinton Smith, and Hopkinson Smith.

He has attended the Berwick Festival, the Perlman Chamber Workshop, Sarasota Music Festival, and Kneisel Hall. He has performed with members of the Cleveland and Juilliard quartets, studied with David Geringas at the Accademia Chigiana, and has often participated in IMS at Prussia Cove, working with Steven Isserlis and Ralph Kirshbaum. Keiran is both an English Concert and **Mercury-Juilliard Fellow** for 2017-18.

VOCALISTS



Throughout her career, soprano **Dominique Labelle** has fearlessly plumbed the technical and emotional depths of music, turning in performances of “almost alarming ferocity” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), possessed of “conviction but without exhibitionism” (*De Telegraf*), that have “the audience hanging on every note” (*Boston Globe*). Her passionate commitment to music-making has led to close and enduring collaborations with a number of the world’s most respected conductors and composers, such as Iván Fischer, Nicholas McGegan, Jos van Veldhoven, Jean-Marie Zeitouni, and the Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Yehudi Wyner. She also treasures her long association with the late Robert Shaw. Dominique first came to international prominence as Donna Anna in Peter Sellars’ daring production of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, set in Spanish Harlem, which she performed in New York, Paris, and Vienna.

Most recently, Labelle was honored at the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Chorale's annual Winter 2017 Gala for extraordinary artistic contributions, performed at Göttingen International Handel Festival’s opening Galakonzert, and released an album, *Mi Palpita Il Cor* with Musica Pacifica.



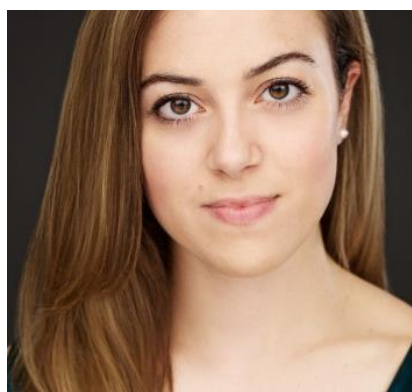
Soprano Hannah Celeste Lu received her Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Rice University and received her Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance at the University of Northwestern in St. Paul, MN.

Favorite opera roles include Gretel, Calisto, Pamina, Adina, and Anicia Eritea in the U.S. premiere of Cavalli’s *Eliogabalo* with the Aspen Music Festival. For her work in *Eliogabalo*, ‘Opera News Magazine’ wrote that her “pliable, floating voice was ideal for the role of Eritea.” She loves concert work, and has been soprano soloist multiple times with the South Dakota Symphony, as well as Houston’s Masterworks Chorus, the Houston Chamber Choir, and Cantare Houston.

Ms. Lu was the soprano in HGO’s educational outreach program, “Opera to Go,” for four seasons. She has been a member of the HGO Chorus for 7 seasons and was a member of the Houston Chamber

Choir for four seasons.

Hannah resides in Houston with her husband, Michael, their 5 year old, Isaac, and their 1 year old Lydia.



Recognized for a unique artistic curiosity in world class performances spanning the music of Claudio Monteverdi and Johann Adolph Hasse through to György Ligeti and George Benjamin, American **Lauren Snouffer** is celebrated as one of the most versatile and respected sopranos on the international stage.

She has performed with Handel & Haydn Society of Boston, The Cleveland Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, Houston Ballet, Mercury, Houston Grand Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and with Opéra Royal de Versailles, Max Emanuel Cencic’s new production of Hasse’s *Siroe*, with further performances in Budapest and Vienna; the project also was recorded and released commercially by Decca

Classics. In the contemporary music genre, she has performed at the Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music, Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse, for the New York Philharmonic Biennale, and Aspen Contemporary Ensemble.

A recent graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, Lauren Snouffer was a winner of a 2013 Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, a Richard F. Gold Career Grant bestowed by Houston Grand Opera, and grand finalist in the 2012 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She graduated from Rice University and The Juilliard School.



Soprano **Mary Wilson** is acknowledged as one of today's most exciting artists. Cultivating a wide-ranging career singing chamber music, oratorio and operatic repertoire, she receives consistent critical acclaim from coast to coast, and is in high demand on the concert stage. She has most-recently appeared with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Detroit Symphony, Delaware Symphony Orchestra, San Antonio Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony, Virginia Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Dayton Philharmonic, VocalEssence, and at the Hollywood Bowl.

An exciting interpreter of Baroque repertoire, especially Handel, she has appeared with Philharmonia Baroque, Musica Angelica, American Bach Soloists, Boston Baroque, Grand Rapids Bach Festival, Bach Society of St. Louis, Baltimore Handel Choir, Florida Bach Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Casals Festival, and the Carmel Bach Festival.

On the opera stage, she has created leading roles in North American and World premiere performances of Dove's *Flight*, Glass' *Galileo Galilei*, and Petitgirard's *Joseph Merrick dit L'Elephant Man*. She has appeared most recently with Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Minnesota Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Dayton Opera, Arizona Opera, Tulsa Opera, Mississippi Opera, Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Goodman Theatre. With the IRIS Chamber Orchestra, she sang the world premiere of the song cycle "Songs Old and New" written especially for her by Ned Rorem.



Widely praised for her musical intelligence and "expressive virtuosity" (*San Francisco Chronicle*), **Meg Bragle** is quickly earning an international reputation as one of today's most gifted mezzo-sopranos. A frequent featured soloist with Sir John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Soloists, she has made four recordings with the group, including Bach's Easter and Ascension Oratorios – the vehicle for her BBC Proms debut – and the October 2015 release of Bach's *Mass in B Minor*.

As a gifted early music specialist, Ms. Bragle has sung in North America and Europe with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Music of the Baroque, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Les Violons du Roy, Apollo's Fire, and the Dunedin Consort.

Ms. Bragle has appeared with many symphony orchestras in the US and Canada including the Houston, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Pacific, and Colorado Symphonies; the National Arts Center Orchestra; and the Calgary Philharmonic.



Mezzo-soprano **Cecilia Duarte**'s latest appearances include Isabella (*Rapaccini's Daughter*) with University of Houston; Daniel (Handel's *Susanna*) with Ars Lyrica Houston, Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) with Opera in the Heights; Jessie Lydell (*A Coffin in Egypt*) with Houston Grand Opera and the Wallis Annenberg Center in Beverly Hills, CA; and the creation of Harriet/First responder in HGO's world premiere of *After the Storm*.

Ms. Duarte created the role of Renata in Houston Grand Opera's world premiere of *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, -the first opera with mariachi music- and has toured with it at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, France, Chicago Lyric Opera, San Diego Opera and Arizona Opera.

An early music enthusiast, Cecilia often performs with the Bach Society of Houston, Ars Lyrica Houston, the Oregon Bach Festival, the Festivalensemble in Stuttgart, Germany, and the Festival de Música Barroca de San Miguel de Allende, México. She lives in Houston, where she is active in the contemporary music circle, performing and collaborating with composers and premiering their works.



Recognized as "Canada's star countertenor" and "Canada's most prolific recording artist", **Daniel Taylor** has received invitations from the world's preeminent early and contemporary music ensembles, appearing in opera (Metropolitan Opera, Glyndebourne, San Francisco), oratorio (Gabrieli Consort, Monteverdi Choir/English Baroque Soloists, Bach Collegium Japan, Les Arts Florissants), and symphonic works (Cleveland, St. Louis, Lisbon, Philadelphia, Tonhalle Zurich, Toronto, and Gothenburg.).

An exclusive recording artist for Sony Classical Masterworks, Daniel Taylor's discography of more than 100 recordings includes the 2017 Juno Award nominated *Four Thousand Winter* with the Trinity Choir, and its companion release *The Tree of Life*. Other recorded highlights include Bach Cantatas with Monteverdi Choir/Gardiner, Handel's *Rinaldo* with Bartoli/Academy of Ancient Music/Hogwood, and a CD/DVD of Bach's *Mass in B minor* with the Ensemble Orchestral Paris/Nelson.

Mr. Taylor is Head of Early Music and Professor of Voice at the University of Toronto, and is Artistic Director and Conductor of the Choir and Orchestra of the Theatre of Early Music, which he founded in 2002.



Tenor **Derek Chester** has quickly established himself as a preeminent interpreter of early music, oratorio repertoire and a teacher of the vocal arts.

Recent concert appearances include Ars Lyrica Houston, Colorado Symphony, Handel Society of Dartmouth, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Barokksolistene of Norway; Boston Baroque; Berkshire Choral Festival, the Korean Broadcasting System Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, American Bach Soloists, the Staunton Music Festival and the Colorado Bach Festival.

Though his career is concentrated primarily in concert work, Chester is also passionate about opera and opera history, with theater credits including Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Peter Quint in *Turn of the Screw*, Oronte in *Alcina*, and Acis in *Acis and Galatea*.

Chester received his bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Georgia and his Master's Degree in Vocal Performance of Oratorio, Early Music, Song, and Chamber Music on full scholarship from the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music. As a Fulbright Scholar, he spent a year in Germany working as a freelance musician and furthering his training. While maintaining an active performing career, Chester received his DMA in Voice Performance and Opera Studies with full scholarship and a graduate teaching fellowship from the University of North Texas. He currently serves as Assistant Professor of Voice at the University of Northern Colorado



Nicholas Phan continues to distinguish himself as one of the most compelling tenors performing today. He has appeared with many of the leading orchestras in the North America and Europe, including the Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony, Boston Baroque, Les Violons du Roy, BBC Symphony, English Chamber Orchestra, Strasbourg Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, and Philharmonia Orchestra of London, to name a few.

Phan has toured extensively throughout the major concert halls of Europe with Il Complesso Barocco, and appeared with the Oregon Bach, Ravinia, Marlboro, Edinburgh, Rheingau, Saint-Denis, and Tanglewood festivals,

as well as at the BBC Proms.

Mr. Phan's many opera credits include appearances with the Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, Chicago Opera Theater, Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Glyndebourne Opera, Maggio Musicale in Florence, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, and Frankfurt Opera.

A Grammy nominated recording artist, Phan's most recent solo album, "Gods and Monsters", was released on Avie Records in January. Phan's growing discography also includes the Grammy-nominated recording of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* with Pierre Boulez and the Chicago Symphony, A graduate of the University of Michigan, Mr. Phan is the 2012 recipient of the Paul C. Boylan Distinguished Alumni Award. He also studied at the Manhattan School of Music and the Aspen Music Festival and School, and is an alumnus of the Houston Grand Opera Studio.



Tenor **Eduardo Alberto Tercero's** performance credits include the world premiere of *Nicholas of Myra* by Robert Nelson in the role of Marcus, Piacere in the Houston premiere of Handel's *Il Trionfo del Tempo e della Verita*, Adamo in the Houston premiere of *Il Primo Omicidio* by Scarlatti, Obidah in *Elijah* by Mendelssohn, *Messiah* by Handel with the Des Moines and La Cross Symphony Orchetras, Houston Chamber Choir and Bethany (KS) and Augustana (IL) Colleges, Montiverdi's *Vespro della Beata Vergine 1610* with Ars Lyrica Houston, and his Houston Symphony debut as the Narrator in Copeland's *The Lincoln Portrait*.

Most recently he has appeared in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* in his debut with the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra of Houston, and the St. Cecilia Early

Music Festival in Austin, performing works by Michel-Richard de Lalande and J. J. Cassanea de Mondonville.

He is longtime member of the Houston Chamber Choir, frequent soloist for Ars Lyrica, and staff singer at Christ Church Cathedral, Houston. He can also be heard in the Newport Classic's recording of *Cassanova's Homecoming* by one of America's leading composers, Dominick Argento, and is the tenor soloist for the World Premiere Recording of G.P. Colonna *Psalmi ad Vesperas (1694)* on MSR Classics.



American bass-baritone **Michael Sumuel**, hailed as having “vocals [that] are smooth and ingratiating” (*Daily Camera*) returns to Houston to perform with Mercury once again. A sought-after artist, Sumuel has performed with such distinguished opera companies as Houston Grand Opera, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, North Carolina Opera, Norwegian National Opera, Dayton Opera, and Central City Opera, to name a few. Notable concert appearances include *Messiah* with Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, United States Naval Academy and San Francisco Symphony, as well as performances with The

Cleveland Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony, American Classical Orchestra, Da Camera of Houston, Santa Barbara Symphony, the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic and University Musical Society in Ann Arbor.

While a Studio Artist with Houston Grand Opera, Mr. Sumuel appeared in numerous productions, including the Motorcycle Cop in *Dead Man Walking* starring Joyce DiDonato (now available on compact disc).

Mr. Sumuel’s competition accolades include being awarded a 2015 Richard Tucker Career Grant, 2012 MONC Finalist and a winner of the 2009 Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition. He is an alumnus of the Merola Opera Program at San Francisco Opera Center and the Filene Young Artist program at Wolf Trap Opera.

DANCERS

Luna Tango Productions is a dedicated promoter of Argentine culture through stage productions and collaborations with live music and fine arts organizations, under the direction of **Susana Collins**.

Susana has been performing and teaching in the U.S. over 18 years. She began her dance training in Classical Ballet at the age of 5 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, adding Argentine Folk, Flamenco and Latin dance forms. Her passion in Argentine Tango returned her to Argentina to further her training with some of Buenos Aires’ top maestros. Her work as a performer has led her to varied forms of expressions in choreography and production, including her own original work – Luna Argentina.

The August 31 and September 2 collaborations includes dancers: **Ilya and Inna Karash**, who have over 15 years working together locally in stage and instruction; and **Gonzalo Gomez**, renowned tango singer and dancer, who will be partnering with Susana.

DIRECTOR/CREATOR



The creator of last season’s multi-media event *Bach and Piazzolla* and Mercury’s 2014-2015 season audience-favorite *The Crimson Prince*, **Denis Plante** has long been a partner in Mercury’s creative endeavors. His unusual career as a performer and composer has made him the bandoneón artist in Canada, and an exceptional figure in contemporary tango on the world scene. Denis is frequently invited to perform as a soloist with symphony orchestras or chamber-music ensembles. A spiritual son of Astor Piazzolla, he has enriched the bandoneón repertoire with dozens of works capturing the essential pulse of the tango. He has recorded seven CDs of his work, composed two operas and a ballet, and has been awarded the title of Creator of the Year by Quebec’s Art Council and an Opus prize for best Global album.

DIRECTORS and ENSEMBLES



Stage director **Tara Faircloth's** work has been seen in opera houses around the nation. She is in demand as an interpreter for familiar works and those that are more obscure.

Faircloth directed two world premieres with the Houston Grand Opera's East+West series (*The Bricklayer* and *Her Name Means The Sea*) and has a thriving career in regional houses such as Wolf Trap Opera, Utah Opera, Arizona Opera, Tulsa Opera and Atlanta Opera (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Rigoletto*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Hänsel & Gretel*, etc.). The baroque repertoire is of special interest to Ms. Faircloth, who made her directorial debut with Ars Lyrica Houston's production of *Cain: Il primo omicidio* in 2003, and has since designed and directed a number of shows for the company, including

Charpentier's *Actéon* and *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers*. She created productions of *Dido & Aeneas* for Ars Lyrica at the Festival di Musica Barroca in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, and for Mercury Baroque in collaboration with the Dominic Walsh DanceTheater.

Ms. Faircloth has worked extensively on directing staff with such companies as Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Central City Opera, and Dallas Opera, and as such, has worked on some of the most complicated operas in the repertoire, assisting international directors and preparing cover casts of some of the best performers in our industry. She is increasingly sought out for her skills as an adapter and has created such pieces as the "Mini" *Grapes of Wrath*, and the "Mini" *Magic Flute*, commissions of Opera in the Ozarks and Utah Symphony & Opera. She has a private coaching studio in Houston, Texas, and regularly works with the talented singers in the Houston Grand Opera Studio and Rice University.



Carole Nelson has been on the staff of Houston Boychoir since 1991. In addition to annual concerts, she has prepared the boys for work with the Houston Symphony Orchestra, Houston Grand Opera, The Moores School of Music Symphony Orchestra, Choruses and Opera as numerous other organizations. She has taken the choir each year on concert tours to numerous venues in Chicago, New York, Washington DC, New Orleans, Taiwan, East Germany and most recently South Africa.

For 25 years Ms. Nelson served Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts as a choir director and voice teacher where her teaching was nationally recognized and her students were consistently accepted into the top schools of music and conservatories across the country. Ms. Nelson has served as the Director of the Voice faculty for AFA.

She is a graduate of the University of Houston Moores School of Music, Magna Cum Laude and has served as a clinician for choirs across the country. Ms. Nelson is affiliated with TMEA, TCDA, and she is the R & S Chair for Boychoirs in the Southwest Division of ACDA. She is grateful for the entire Artistic and Administrative staff of the Houston Boychoir; who together set the standard for the best musical education for boys.



Houston Boychoir was established by the Houston Independent School District in 1962 as The Singing Boys of Houston. Becoming an independent arts organization in 1991, today Houston Boychoir continues to provide boys in the Houston Metropolitan area with the exciting opportunity for vocal music study and choral performance. The Choirs are regularly presented in concert throughout the city and are often featured with Houston's major performing arts organizations including Houston Grand Opera, the Houston Symphony Orchestra, the Houston Bach Society and the Houston Tidelanders.



Dr. Betsy Cook Weber is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at the University of Houston's Moores School of Music and is also internationally active as a conductor, clinician, adjudicator and lecturer.

In 2013, Weber became the 13th person and first woman to receive the Texas Choral Director Association's coveted Texas Choirmaster Award. She is editor of the Betsy Cook Weber choral series with Alliance Music Publishing.

Choirs under Weber's direction, including the Moores School Concert Chorale, have been featured at multiple state and national conventions. Internationally, Chorale has won prizes and received acclaim at prestigious competitions in Wales, France and Germany.

Weber has prepared singers for Da Camera of Houston and for early music orchestras Ars Lyrica Houston and Mercury. She prepares singers for touring shows, including Josh Groban, NBC's Clash of the Choirs, Telemundo's Latin Grammy, Star Wars: In Concert and Andrea Bocelli.

Before joining the University of Houston, Weber taught vocal music, K-12, in public schools. Prior to her appointment as Houston Symphony Chorus Director, she served from 1990-1997 as Assistant and, later, Associate Director of the Chorus. She holds degrees from the University of North Texas, Westminster Choir College (Princeton, NJ) and the University of Houston.

The **Houston Symphony Chorus**, the official choral unit of the Houston Symphony, consists of highly skilled and talented volunteer singers. Over the years, singers in this historic ensemble have learned and performed the world's great choral-orchestral masterworks under the batons of Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Michael Krajewski, Hans Graf, Robert Shaw, Mitch Miller, Peter Schrier, Helmut Rilling and Nicholas McGegan, among many others. Under the leadership of Director Emeritus Charles Hausmann, the Chorus made several European concert tours performing with orchestras in Germany, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Hungary, Austria, England, and Mexico. They have performed previously with Mercury in last year's Handel's Complete Messiah and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.