

CAST

EMMY ROSSUM (Alexa Walker)

Roger Ebert has called her “a phenomenal talent.” David Ansen of Newsweek wrote “Emmy Rossum is a heart-stopping presence.” Jack Matthews of the New York Daily News wrote: “Her voice is like fine crystal and every moment while she’s singing is something special.”

Twenty year old Emmy Rossum is a gifted young actress and an accomplished musician. Nominated for a Golden Globe Award in 2004 for her starring performance as Christine in the film *The Phantom of the Opera*, she won the National Board of Review’s Best Female Breakthrough Performance Award and the Broadcast Film Critics Association’s Best Young Actress Award in 2005. She also starred in the hit action film, *Poseidon* in 2006, as well as the global warming blockbuster *The Day After Tomorrow* with Jake Gyllenhaal, in the Clint Eastwood directed drama *Mystic River*, and in the independent feature, *Songcatcher*, which won the Special Grand Jury Prize for Outstanding Ensemble at Sundance in 2001. Rossum’s acting performance in *Songcatcher* earned her an Independent Spirit Award nomination in the category of Best Debut Performance. Her television credits include guest starring appearances on “Law and Order,” and “The Practice.”

Most recently Rossum completed *Dragonball*, FOX's \$60 million action adventure comedy slated for 2009 release. Rossum plays the female lead Bulma, a scientist and weapons expert who is the very tough/sexy/feisty comic relief of the film.

In 2007, Rossum recorded her first album for Geffen records, “Inside Out”. Using her classically trained voice as the primary instrument, she is writing and recording all her own songs. Currently Rossum is working on her second album in between film roles.

Rossum began her theatrical career at the age of seven when she began singing the children’s roles at the Metropolitan Opera at Lincoln Center. Between the ages of seven and twelve she was trained there in stagecraft and classical vocal technique and performed in five languages in 20 different operas.

Rossum is the Youth Ambassador for the international organization Youth AIDS, which works to educate young people in sixty countries on the prevention and treatment of AIDS. Rossum travels internationally raising awareness of the pandemic by speaking at schools, universities and government forums.

Rossum was born in New York City in 1986 and attended the Spence School until 1996. She earned her high school degree through Stanford University’s Education Program for Gifted Youth (EPGY) and Northwestern University’s Center for Talent Development (CTD).

ZACH GILFORD (Johnny Drake)

Zach Gilford stars as the backup quarterback turned football hero in NBC's critically acclaimed drama "Friday Night Lights," which just returned for its third season this fall exclusively on DirecTV. Gilford recently wrapped filming the lead role of "Gus" in *The River Why* opposite William Hurt, Amber Heard and Kathleen Quinlan, for director Matt Leutwyler. The film is based on the novel of the same name which was the first book published by The Sierra Club. Gilford stars in the upcoming Fox Atomic film *The Post Grad Survival Guide* opposite Alexis Bledel, Michael Keaton and Carol Burnett, directed by Vicky Jenson (*Shrek*). He made his feature film debut starring in Larry Fessenden's *The Last Winter* and he appeared in the recent film *Rise* opposite Lucy Liu. He has also appeared on "Law & Order: SVU." Gilford graduated from Northwestern University where he starred in productions of "Equus" and "The Laramie Project." A Chicago native, Gilford spends his free time leading backpacking, ice climbing and diving expeditions in Alaska, New Zealand and Australia.

ASHLEY SPRINGER (Ben Berger)

Ashley Springer was born and raised in NYC. After graduating from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, he was cast in *The Secret*, *Anamorph* and *Assassination of a High School President*. He also appeared in Tom McCarthy's *The Visitor*. Springer's first lead role was in Mitchell Lichtenstein's *Teeth*.

ROONEY MARA (Courtney)

In addition to **DARE**, Rooney Mara also stars in *The Winning Season* at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival. Other upcoming films include *Youth in Revolt* (Dimension), *Tanner Hall* and *Dream Boy* (2008 Berlin Film Festival). Her work has been seen on television with guest roles on "The Cleaner", "Women's Murder Club" and "Law & Order: SVU." Rooney founded and directs the not-for-profit organization Faces of Kibera which provides much needed care and assistance to poverty stricken orphans in Kibera, Kenya (www.facesofkibera.com). She resides in Los Angeles with her dog Oscar Pinkerton.

ANA GASTEYER (Ruth Berger)

Ana Gasteyer recently starred to rave reviews as Fosca in Gary Griffin's production of Sondheim's "Passion" (Jefferson Award nomination) at The Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Prior to that, she earned raves as Elphaba in "Wicked" (Broadway & Chicago, Jefferson Award nom). Broadway: "The Threepenny Opera" (with Alan Cumming and Jim Dale), "The Rocky Horror Show." Off-Broadway/Regional: "Kimberly Akimbo" (MTC), "Roulette," "The Vagina Monologues," "Cinderella" (NYC Opera), Fanny Brice in "Funny Girl" (Pittsburgh CLO) and Mary Zimmerman's "The Notebooks of Leonardo

DaVinci.” Film: *Reefer Madness, Mean Girls, What Women Want, Dick, What's the Worst That Could Happen* and *The Women*. Former member of LA's comedy troupe The Groundlings. Spent six seasons on “Saturday Night Live” - popular characters included music teacher Bobbi Moughan-Culp, NPR's Margaret Jo, and impressions of Martha Stewart and Celine Dion. Other TV includes: “Frasier,” “Just Shoot Me,” “3rd Rock from the Sun,” “Seinfeld” and “Law & Order.” Guest hosted “The Late Late Show,” and “The Rosie O'Donnell Show” and others. Recordings: the Grammy-nominated “Hair” (Actor's Fund), “Reefer Madness.” Gasteyer continues to perform her musical evening “Let It Rip!” around the country.

ALAN CUMMING (Grant Matson)

Alan Cumming most recently appeared on the New York stage as Dionysus in the National Theatre of Scotland's production of “The Bacchae.” Previously on Broadway he played Mack the Knife in “The Threepenny Opera,” Otto in Noel Coward's “Design for Living,” and the Emcee in “Cabaret” (for which he won the Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics' Circle, Theater World, New York Press, FANY and New York Public Advocate's Awards). Off Broadway, he played the Pope in Jean Genet's “Elle” (which he also adapted), and most recently Trigorin in “The Seagull” opposite Dianne Wiest for the Classic Stage Company. His latest West End appearance was as Max in Martin Sherman's “Bent.” His many films include *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion* (MTV Award nomination), *Circle of Friends, Emma, Goldeneye, Titus, Eyes Wide Shut, X2: X-Men United, Nicholas Nickelby* (National Board of Review Award), *The Spy Kids Trilogy, The Anniversary Party* (National Board of Review Award, two Independent Spirit Award nominations) and *Sweet Land* (Independent Spirit Award). Cumming has written a novel, *Tommy's Tale*, and launched a line of fragrance – Cumming -- and body products. For his activism and humanitarian work, he has received many awards including the Human Rights Campaign Equality Award, the GLAAD Vito Russo Award, and the Trevor Project Hero Award.

SANDRA BERNHARD (Dr. Serena Mohr)

An accomplished comedienne, actress, singer, and writer, Sandra Bernhard truly embodies the spirit of the Arts. Breaking down perceived boundaries between entertainment, social commentary, and performance art, Bernhard defies neat categorization. Described by The New York Times as “a living breathing bonfire,” Bernhard has been challenging fans and critics with her knife-edged humor, satire and emotive performances for the past 25 years.

Bernhard's live performances, which are part comedy, part social satire, and part cabaret, showcase her astonishing range of talents. Her recent show “Everything Bad and Beautiful” galvanized audiences in the United States and Great Britain. Her critically acclaimed Broadway hits, “I'm Still Here... Damn It!” toured nationally and was filmed for an HBO special, which has achieved legendary cult status. You can currently

catch her on tour celebrating the 10th anniversary of her classic hit show “Without You I’m Nothing.” The show toured the world and led to a Grammy nominated album and feature film of the same name.

Since she first appeared in 1983 in Martin Scorsese’s *The King of Comedy*, Bernhard’s numerous films include *Inside Monkey Zetterland*, *Hudson Hawk* and more recently, *Dinner Rush*.

Her television appearances include a regular role on “Roseanne” from 1991-1996, and guest starring roles on “Ally McBeal”, “Chicago Hope”, and “Will & Grace”. She has appeared on “Late Night with David Letterman”, as well as “The Tonight Show”, “Rosie O’Donnell”, “The View” and “Chelsea Lately”. She hosted the season premiere of “MadTV” and in 2001 hosted her own talk show, “The Sandra Bernhard Experience” for A&E television.

Her publications include Confessions of a Pretty Lady, Love, Love, and Love, and May I Kiss You on the Lips, Miss Sandra? Her essays have been published in numerous magazines, including The New Yorker.