

Guidelines for Actors

League of Washington Theatres Areawide Auditions February 22-24, 2010

The League of Washington Theatres Annual Areawide Auditions is a professional audition aimed at the **professional, working** actor in the Washington metropolitan area. It is open to both union and non-union actors. These Guidelines provide additional specifics about the auditions.

Note: The Washington AEA Liaison Committee will hold auditions for AEA actors on February 1-2, 2010. For more information, contact EquityAuditions@aol.com. If eligible, you may audition at either the AEA auditions or the LOWT auditions, but not both.

Please note that the auditors are looking for professional actors, not students or beginning actors with no experience in the business. One should NOT audition "just for the experience"-especially if you are just starting out, or if you are not really available (e.g, if you are a student elsewhere during the year, or are not available for daytime auditions, rehearsals, and performances).

Out-of-town actors may attend these auditions. It is emphasized, however, that the majority of the professional theatres attending the auditions that do cast out-of-town actors usually audition in New York as well. Actors from out of the area should indicate whether they have local housing available.

Your Audition: The Facts

1. Auditions will take place at **Imagination Stage in Bethesda. (4908 Auburn Avenue)**. You will have 1 ½ minutes (90 seconds) on stage to use as you like. Two chairs will be provided for your use. We anticipate that an accompanist will be provided at all three days of the LOWT auditions.

2. **Pre-Audition Procedures:** Actors are seen in groups. You must check in at Imagination Stage in Bethesda on the day of your audition **no later than 60 minutes prior to your audition time**. At that time, you will turn in your Picture/Resumes, and the actors in your group will be informed of the order in which you will audition. Twenty minutes prior to your audition time, your group will be asked to remain in a staging area. A monitor will review the procedures with you at this time. Then led by the monitor, you will all enter the backstage area together and seat yourselves **in order** in the chairs provided.

3. **Audition Procedures:** When given the cue to begin, each actor will perform his/her audition in order. When it is your turn, you will enter from backstage. First clearly and loudly state your name and the piece(s) you will be performing – name of play, playwright, character's

name. Then, begin. (DO NOT give any other introduction to your piece – no plot description or "setting the scene".) If you are doing two short monologues, make sure to announce that fact and identify both pieces in your introduction. When you complete your piece(s), exit and return to the waiting area; the next actor will take the stage as you leave it.

4. **Timing:** As noted above, you have up to 1 ½ minutes to use at your discretion. You may do any combination of pieces not to exceed 1 ½ minutes. The timekeeper starts the clock when you begin your piece; your introduction (name – play – character) is not part of the 1 ½ minute limit. Be aware, however, that if your piece involves silent action before the first word is spoken, the clock will be running. At 1 minute 20 seconds, the timekeeper will silently raise a hand to indicate that your 1 ½ minutes are ending.

If time is called on you, stop immediately and exit stage left. DO NOT plow through and finish anyway, no matter how close to the end you may be. Your 1 ½ minutes are up!

5. Information about which auditors saw your audition will be available in the actors' waiting area after your audition. A list of the organizations registered for the auditions will be posted on the LOWT website.

Suggestions

The following guidelines are included particularly for actors who are new to general auditions such as these, but others also may find them useful. The guidelines are based on experience of veterans of the LOWT auditions – both actors and auditors. These are not hard and fast rules; they are offered to help you prepare for your audition.

1. **Material Selection:** Choose material you enjoy and are comfortable with.
 - The theatres and casting directors that attend these auditions present a wide repertoire, so choose material that shows you well rather than trying to guess what a specific theatre might be looking for.
 - For this reason, avoid pieces requiring an accent if this is your first time at these auditions and avoid Shakespeare.
 - You may do one 1 ½-minute monologue or two short monologues (e.g., classical/contemporary; English/foreign language – if you are fluent).
 - This year, an accompanist is provided so you may sing as part of your 1 ½ minutes.
 - For some thoughts on audition pieces, check [So, learn a new audition piece already!!](#)
2. **Music:** If you plan to sing as part of your audition, please be sure:
 - the section you are going to sing is clearly marked (no chord charts or lead sheets)
 - your music is in the correct key (the accompanist will not transpose)
 - the tempo you want is clear
2. **Timing:** It is a good idea to time your piece(s) to a little under 1 ½ minutes to give yourself a bit of breathing space. That way, if your rhythm is a touch slow on your audition day, you won't risk hearing "Time!" called just before you reach the big finish. (Note: Don't feel you must fill the entire 1 ½ minutes – shorter pieces are fine.) Remember: if you are going to

sing, it is part of your 90 seconds.

3. Don't be disappointed if the auditors do not react to your piece, or if you see them writing during your audition. They ARE paying attention to you.

4. **Props:** Professional actors know to avoid props! Anything you carry onto the stage with you must be carried off immediately when you leave. For example, a letter or a pair of gloves would be OK if you feel them essential to your monologue, but don't carry on an armload of things. Avoid firearms and NEVER use any item that risks making a mess and littering the stage for subsequent actors. No Liquids! Also, NEVER use anything that is part of the set for the host theatre's current production. Your audition should showcase you and your talent only. Props always risk drawing attention to themselves in an audition setting.

5. **Dress:** There is no dress code for the LOWT Audition, but these suggestions are offered:

- Dress appropriately for your pieces(s); i.e., if your character is a farmer, don't wear a three-piece suit – or shorts and a halter top if your character is a corporate executive! Your clothes should fit your piece without being a costume. The simpler the better. You want the auditors focused on you and your talent, not on your outfit.
- Dress in a way that reflects who you are, as well as who your character is. The auditors are forming an impression of you, the person, as well as of your acting ability.
- Please avoid disrobing during your audition. If you must, please carry your clothes off stage with you and dress there!

6. **When Onstage:** Be sure to find the light on stage and don't hide upstage. Also, be sure to speak loudly and clearly. Check the pronunciation of unfamiliar words before your audition.

7. **Preparation:** DO NOT let the day of the audition be the first time you perform your piece(s) for other people. Try to get a director or fellow actor or even a non-theatre friend to view your piece(s) and give you feedback beforehand. Not only can an objective eye point out problems you can't see for yourself, but having shared your work with another person before your audition will boost your self-confidence considerably.

8. If possible, relax and have fun! Remember two things:

- The auditors are indeed looking to see your talent. They rely on the LOWT Auditions to introduce them to new faces and to new facets of familiar faces. They want to see you do well!
- Your career does not begin and end with 1 ½ minutes. This is not your one and only chance. Have a good time. These are your 1 ½ minutes – enjoy them!

***These auditions are not for the novice actor.** If you are just starting an acting career, we suggest you contact the Actors' Center, a non-profit volunteer organization created to provide Washington's professional actors with an organized base of support. For further information call the Center's office at (703) 413-3270 or visit the Actors' Center website at www.actorscenter.org.

No phone calls to Imagination Stage, please. The personnel answering their administrative or

box office phones do not have the answers to any questions regarding the LOWT Auditions. Please do not call Imagination Stage.

For tips on putting together a theatrical resume, check [What's a Theatrical Resume Supposed to Look Like?](#)

For audition information, call the League of Washington Theatres at (202) 638-4270 or contact info@lowt.org.