**Brave New Works 2016 and As You Like It**

– FURTHER INFORMATION on THEATER EMORY AUDITIONS –

**GENERAL**

Please see the THEATER EMORY STUDENT AUDITIONS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS document for general information about auditions and Theater Emory productions.

Actors may audition for Brave New Works (BNW), or As You Like It (AYLI), or for both productions.

- BNW is a brief (maximum of 3 weeks) commitment and there is no overlap with AYLI; therefore, actors may possibly be cast in both. Actors will be asked whether or not they would accept roles in both productions, if roles in both were offered.
- Student actors are expected to keep up with course work during rehearsal periods. Participation in theater projects requires time management and careful planning with respect to assignments, exams, and papers. Rehearsal or performance is not an excuse for lack of preparation for classes.
- On the audition form, actors indicate their interests and priorities, from weighing one production against the other to giving both productions equal weight. Actors may also identify particular roles and/or projects of interest, if they wish. Directors carefully consider these interests and priorities in casting TE productions.

TE productions conflicting with student theater productions: (Check with these organizations for more information.)

- BNW will conflict with the ECTC January production but AYLI does not conflict at all with this show.
- AYLI does not conflict with Dooley’s Players’ production of Medea (we can work out the one week of overlap).
- Students cast in Medea may be able to participate in one of the BNW readings. This would be worked out between Theater Emory and the Medea director and is dependent upon when the reading is scheduled during Theater Emory’s 3-week play reading festival.
- BNW does not conflict with AdHoc Productions’ How to Succeed in Business, but AYLI will conflict with the AdHoc production.

Hard copies of AYLI, plus BNW project descriptions and excerpts may be read in Rich 229.

Audition speeches and instructions are located in the hall outside Rich 207.

Online access to scripts, further info, and Audition speeches and instructions can be found on Blackboard:

- You may email Robert Schultz robert.schultz@emory.edu and ask to be enrolled (also giving you access for future auditions).

**OR** You can self-enroll for the Blackboard site in this manner:

1. Go to Blackboard - https://classes.emory.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp and Log-in
2. Select "Organizations" from menu in blue at top of page
3. In Organization Search enter "Theater Emory Student Auditions" & click on resulting Organization link
4. Click on link to enroll – disregard the “Access Denied” message on next page
5. Click on the link "+ Enroll" in the left margin
6. On next page click "Submit"
7. Then click OK - Welcome to the site!

Signup to schedule an audition appointment on the callboard outside Rich 207 on or after Dec. 2 (can’t do this online).

- Audition appointments lasting 75 minutes begin at 10:00 AM on Saturday, Dec. 5.
- Callbacks will be held between 12:30 and 5:30 PM on Sunday, Dec. 6. Some actors will be called back for a portion of this time.
- On the audition form, indicate your availability for callbacks. If you will not be able to attend or if you have other concerns about the auditions or callbacks, please contact Robert Schultz, TE Casting Coordinator: 404-727-6462 robert.schultz@emory.edu (We may be able to work something out.)
- Audition Forms and Actor Info Sheets will also be available starting on Dec. 2 from the Rich Callboard and from the Blackboard site. Forms must be completed by 15 minutes prior to your audition appointment.
- Auditions take place on the second floor of the Rich Memorial Building. Report to the check-in desk outside Rich 205 and turn in your audition form at the desk, 15 minutes prior to your appointment time.

**PREPARATION** (See above regarding Blackboard site, script excerpts, audition speeches, etc.)

1) Read the plays. (As You Like It script, Brave New Works Project Descriptions/Excerpts).
   - You will have an opportunity to let us know which show(s) and role(s) especially interest you.

2) Prepare 1 audition speech.
   - You may audition for one or both productions (AYLI and/or BNW).
   - To audition for AYLI or for both productions, choose one AYLI speech from those provided for the audition.
   - If you are auditioning only for BNW, choose one of the contemporary speeches made available.
   - See further instructions that will be included with the audition speeches.

3) Singing (Optional – if auditioning for As You Like It)
   - There are some songs in AYLI. Singing ability is a plus but not mandatory.
   - If you can carry a tune, be prepared to sing a verse of something contemporary a cappella.
**PRODUCTIONS AND ROLES**

Theater Emory productions are open to all students. You need not be a Theater Studies major. All types, all races, all ethnicities are encouraged to audition. For tech work or other non-acting involvement, please contact Rosalind Staib - rosalind.staib@emory.edu.

**BRAVE NEW WORKS** 2016 Projects (Rehearsals and presentations Jan. 24 – Feb. 13)

**PLAYWRITING FELLOWSHIP PROJECTS A, B, C**

Emory’s Creative Writing Department is conducting an ongoing search for a two-year position with the department. The three finalists will be in residence at Emory, one each during the three weeks of the Brave New Works. Each week a reading of a candidate’s work will be presented on Thursday evening (Jan. 28, Feb. 4, and Feb. 11) in the Schwartz Theater Lab. Faculty from the Theater Studies Department will direct. (Scripts and roles are not yet known.)

Each cast will be made up of 3-4 student and 2 professional actors.

Actors are ‘as cast’ in these TBA projects


The Fellows Project was created by inaugural Emory University Playwriting Fellow Edith Freni with the goal of identifying and mentoring a promising Emory student playwright who has completed the first draft of a full-length play. Fellow and student continue development through dramaturgical meetings and workshops. The project culminates in a staged reading during Theater Emory’s Biennial new works festival Brave New Works.

Julia Agrippina is a young bride living in 1st century Rome. When she meets the scholar/philosopher Seneca at a party to celebrate her recent marriage to the controlling Domitius, she becomes infatuated with him. Her pursuit of Seneca’s affections leads to his expulsion from the city and a desperate quest to bring him back regardless of the costs.

Likely student roles in **The Younger**:

- **Agrippina** - 18, female. Short and strong-willed. The new bride of Domitius. Caligula’s little sister.
- **Caligula** - 21, male. Agrippina’s brother. Slightly unstable. Returns from the war to pursue his dream of becoming emperor.
- **Slave 1 / Student / Guard** - 15, female or male.
- **Slave 2 / Doctor** - 17, female or male.

PLEASE (working title), a stage adaptation of Jericho Brown’s, Please, which won the American Book Award in 2008.


“Please explores the points in our lives at which love and violence intersect. Drunk on its own rhythms and full of imaginative and often frightening imagery, Please is the album playing in the background of the history and culture that surround African American/male identity and sexuality.”

NOTES on casting:

- All of the characters are envisioned as African-American, but for this workshop we are open to multi-ethnic casting.
- A likely cast of three professional and three student actors will be cast as an ensemble. Specific character lines will be assigned by the director in rehearsal.

**Detroit:** an escaped convict, early to mid 20s, smart, educated, poetic, a person caught by bad circumstances.

**Chicago:** an escaped convict, early to mid 20s, a little shadier then Detroit and of the streets.

**Austin:** more obviously effeminate than other members of the cast late 20s to 30s

**Claremont:** 30s, black, thin or at least svelte-looking in a suit and tie throughout

**Birmingham:** 30s, brawny, wearing t-shirt and jeans and a tool belt throughout

**Philly:** late 20s, black, a more stocky character, wears a beret throughout
BRAVE NEW WORKS 2016 Projects (continued)

The Bonobo Project by Johnny Drago, Daryl Fazio, Michael Winn and Edith Freni.

Four Atlanta playwrights have created four distinct new plays all inspired by the common source material, “Sex at Dawn: the Prehistoric Origins of Modern Sexuality,” by Christopher Ryan and Cacilda Jetha: The Flower Room by Daryl Fazio, Mystic (formerly Tierra del Fuego by Edith Freni, Homo Sapiens is Latin for Man Who Knows by Michael Winn, Cul-de-Sac by Johnny Drago. The plays will share a company of four professional actors in multiple roles, with the addition of a student role in Mystic.

Ms Fazio and Mr Winn are currently expanding their original script to full length, Mr Drago is refining his existing script, and Ms. Freni is working on transforming her current draft into a trilogy of plays. During BNW, she will be focused on one of the three, which is set in both the present day and in the 12th century and revolves around Bret’s mother who believes she is a medieval Christian mystic.

Student roles: There is a role for a student currently being written into Edith Freni’s play, “Mystic.” The role is currently named, “Medieval Person #1” – other character descriptions and scenes are TBA.

King James, written and directed by David Garrett.

King James is a film adaptation of Woyzeck, Georg Buchner’s play about poverty, morality, madness, and violence. This re-imagining brings the action into present-day Atlanta, about a black cop named King James buffeted by societal upheavals sparked by police brutality and race.

Possible student roles:
- Maria (20’s-30’s) African-American. A young mother struggling with poverty and the slowly encroaching madness of her husband, King.
- Margaret (20’s) African American. Maria's friend, young and angry. Always carries a smartphone in her hand, ever-ready to record encounters with the police.
- Newsreader #1: This actor presents news broadcasts throughout the play.

The Looking Glass by Jim Grimsley.

Director: Joseph Megel. Dramaturg: Elisabeth Corley

The Looking Glass tells the story of the Widow Evangeline Norris, whose history is similar to the infamous 17th century figure Elizabeth Bathory, “The Blood Countess,” although the play is set in an imagined future when our modern world has collapsed back into slavery and serfdom. Widow Norris is visited in prison by her now dead husband, General Norris, while the grim reality and scope of her crimes are revealed as her accomplices are put on trial.

Student roles:
- Milly. Female. A young girl, one of the victims.

As You Like It: 2 productions in rotating repertory

Theater Emory launches its yearlong celebration of the 400th Anniversary of Shakespeare’s death with the great romantic comedy, As You Like It. As one character famously asks, “Can one desire too much of a good thing?” We think not, so we are running two versions in repertory:

All MALE cast directed by Tim McDonough
All FEMALE cast directed by Jan Akers

The same student roles are available in both productions: Rosalind, Amiens, Celia, Le Beau, Charles, Touchstone, Oliver, Orlando, Silvius, Phebe, William, Audrey, and Martext.

The two productions will take a unified approach, with the same designers for props, costumes, lighting, sound. There will be five performances of each version.
As You Like It: 2 productions in rotating repertory (continued)

We are interested in hearing the play through the voices of male and female performers. We are curious to see if certain themes, points of view and emotions might come into focus differently or similarly in the two productions. The genders of the characters remain as Shakespeare wrote them. We are asking the actors to seek what is human in each of the characters.

In this contemporary approach to As You Like It, the fictional “Arden” is inspired by the annual Burning Man Festival in Nevada’s Black Rock Desert. In the spirit of this festival of citizen artists, innovators, adventurers and seekers, the exiled characters in As You Like It venture into this new world of “dreamers and doers” in a quest for truth, true love and a life that has new meaning.

Character Descriptions:
The same student roles are available in both productions.

Rosalind, daughter of an exiled Duke, is banished by her uncle Frederick. She flees with her daughter Celia, her close friend, to the Forest of Arden. She disguises herself as a young man. As Ganymede, Rosalind plays a mercurial version of “Rosalind,” character, supposedly to cure Orlando of his love for her, even as she struggles with her own feelings for Orlando in a world where trust is dangerous.

- Rosalind is a mess.
- Her trauma makes it difficult for her to bond or belong or believe.
- She struggles with melancholy.
- Her disguise transforms her. She does not know who she is.
- She is winging it.
- Love makes her feel crazy and out of control, which is dangerous.
- Disguise protects her and empowers her.
- She cannot bring herself to reveal that she is Rosalind, to Orlando or to her father.

Celia is the daughter of the usurper Frederick. When Rosalind’s father is stripped of his dukedom and exiled, Frederick keeps Rosalind at court as companion to Celia. Celia then asks Rosalind to come to terms with the situation, arguing that she would do so if their situations were reversed. But when her father exiles Rosalind, she flees with her to Arden, where her uncle, Duke Senior, is living with a growing band of followers. “The relationship between Celia and Rosalind is socially the most equal of all the friendships between women in Shakespeare’s plays” (Arden).

- It’s Celia who comes up with the idea of going to Arden and of disguising themselves. She is an initiator.
- Her adoption of the name “Aliena” is evidence of her sharing Rosalind’s melancholy sense of being exiled and alienated from her identity – which has been shattered by events.
- She facilitates Rosalind’s romance with Orlando and takes vicarious pleasure in it, but it also excludes her.
- Celia’s bonding with Oliver is love at first sight, and it happens before our eyes.

Orlando is the youngest son of a nobleman, but his brother Oliver, the first-born son privileged by primogeniture, has given Orlando none of his meager inheritance and denies him a formal education. His name is that of a character of an Italian epic poem who is driven mad by unrequited love. For all his prowess as a wrestler, Orlando is a gentle hero in contrast to Elizabethan notions of masculinity (Arden). Like others in the play, Orlando is in exile and in search of his true identity. He is willing to playact his courtship of Rosalind with another male (Rosalind playing Ganymede).

- Orlando is conflicted: he is attracted to this “Ganymede” at times but represses his feeling because Ganymede is a male.
- His brother would not allow him the education that he should have had. In this Arden world, he seeks his identity. Who is he now?
- The one thing he has brought with him is the memory of Rosalind.
- All this love business is maddening. Is his wooing of Ganymede as “Rosalind” curing him or not? Does he want to be cured? Is he lovesick or ecstatically in love?
- Orlando is taken aback by how quickly and intensely his brother Oliver and Celia fall for each other.
- “I can live no longer by thinking” expresses Orlando’s deeply felt need to move beyond playacting and have a real relationship of his own.
Oliver is Orlando’s older brother and the heir to their father’s estate. He refuses to give Orlando any part of his small inheritance and denies him an education. Oliver, like a wicked witch, hates his brother simply because he is good and people like him. But he does not understand his feelings: “my soul (yet I know not why) hates nothing more than he.” Like other Shakespeare villains, Oliver is an outsider – but unlike a one-dimensional bad guy, he is painfully conflicted about his behavior in the first part of the play.

- Oliver undergoes a miraculous transformation when he enters Arden: his brother saves his life and he discovers Aliena.
- Something about this new world allows him to transform himself and to find who he really is.
- After a life of elegant shoes and suits, of extravagant dinners and fine wines, he is ready to give it all to his brother and to live happily in Arden with a shepherdess.

Amiens & Sir Oliver Martext (double cast)

Amiens is a young lord in attendance on Duke Senior in Arden. In this most musical of Shakespeare’s plays, Amiens sings – and his several songs comment on what is happening. His name suggests concord and Amiens’ role is expanded in this production, because several other lords and their speeches are absorbed into his role. It is Amiens, for example, who will describe the famous scene of Jaques and the dying deer.

Sir Oliver Martext shows up to marry Audrey and Touchstone. Like other folk at the Burning Man festival (our Arden), Martext has created his own version of a wedding officiant. Whatever wild form this takes, he is likely to “mar” the text of the marriage – and Jaques seems alarmed at the prospect!

William & Charles (double cast)

William has done quite well as a young countryman, and he is in love with Audrey. His encounter with Touchstone is a great comic scene. Note that he shares Shakespeare’s name – someone from the countryside who also did quite well for himself; this may be a sly self-parody.

Charles is tattooed. Is he a gang member? Think Fight Club or Extreme Boxing. He has to make a living, and he knows he is entertainment for these rich folk, but he has a sense of honor when he warns that Orlando is going to fight him and get hurt.

Le Beau: In this production, Le Beau’s role is expanded and complicated. He is the lord closest to Frederick, who walks a fine line between doing the right thing by containing Duke Frederick’s evil, and saving his own skin. He is forced to take action in secret. (Please note that professional actors are also being considered for the role of Le Beau.)

- Le Beau was written as a foppish character who takes on weight when he warns Orlando to flee Duke Frederick’s wrath.
- In this production he is indeed elegant: his clothes are both cover-up and compensation for the nasty business he deals with every day, about which he is very ambivalent. But he is no op and no fool.
- It is Le Beau who will bring to Arden the astounding news of Duke Frederick’s conversion.
- The Le Beau actor will make appearances as other people in Arden. They are fantasy expressions of his desire to be someone free of his present circumstances.

Touchstone: A touchstone, originally a stone used to test the purity of gold and silver, takes the measure of things and tells us if they are real or fraudulent. Touchstone was the fool in the court of Duke Frederick, before he ran off with Celia and Rosalind to Arden – presumably because he was unhappy in this repressive, censored environment. He is an insecure personality lacking in social skills and obsessive about being courtly, even though he is very much an outsider. He is out of his element in a country environment, but he falls for a country girl.

- This Touchstone will be less of a professional jester and more what Elizabethans called a “natural” fool – that is, a person who is in some (entertaining) way challenged.
- At times he has provocative impulses that test physical and social boundaries.
- His behaviors are odd and could include:
  - physical tics – for example, repeating gestures, touching things and people, doing everything symmetrically, etc.;
  - an obsessive, restless need to examine and analyze everything, with keen, fierce attention to every detail;
  - violent urges;
  - an impulse to imitate everything that seems odd;
  - dancing by way of reaction to events.
- And he likes to skip.
Silvius, a gentle shepherd madly in love with Phebe, who spurns him, is comically lovesick. In the pastoral tradition, he is eloquent about love; it is he who starts and drives the love quartet in 5.2.

- He is committed to the 10 Principles of Burning Man, and he is an organizer of the event – or should be.
- But he is a mess because of Phebe.

Phebe is scornful of Silvius’ love. She sets her sights higher – and then falls for Ganymede: “Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?” Her comic situation occasions contradictions and confusions – and devious plotting.

- Phebe is in search of herself. She doesn’t know what she wants, except that it’s not Sylvius. And then she discovers Ganymede. This catapults her into focused action.
- Her refusal of Silvius really gets under Rosalind’s skin – because it puts Rosalind in touch with how she is holding off Orlando.
- She may be a techie at Burning Man.

Audrey, in Shakespeare's play a country girl who herds goats, becomes the unlikely target of Touchstone’s desires, even though she does not understand his references to things poetical. She is not a slut, she insists, but she is grateful that she is “foul” (plain). She is a long-time “burner” – taking part every year in the Burning Man Festival – and she looks as though the dust of the desert is embedded in her skin. She scavenges trinkets and articles of fanciful clothing left here and there around the festival.

- There is a lot of comic disconnect between her down-to-earth, genuine literalness and Touchstone’s awkward, deceitful efforts at courtliness.
- She and Touchstone are suited to each other “as winter to foul weather”: they will continue to wrangle.

Please see the THEATER EMORY STUDENT AUDITIONS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS document for general information about auditions and Theater Emory productions.