Theater Emory announces student auditions for *Les Blancs*

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

*Les Blancs*

Best American play of 1970, *Les Blancs* prophetically confronts the hope and tragedy of Africa in revolution. The setting is a white Christian mission in a colony about to explode. The time is that hour of reckoning when no one the guilty nor the innocent can evade the consequences of white colonialism and imperatives of black liberation. Tshembe Matoseh, the English educated son of a chief, has come home to bury his father. He finds his teenage brother a near alcoholic and his older brother a priest and traitor to his people. Forswearing politics and wanting only to return to his wife and child in England, Tshembe is drawn into the conflict symbolized by a woman dancer, the powerful Spirit of Africa who pursues him. (Directed by Lydia Fort)

**WHEN**

- Auditions will be submitted by video with the deadline August 30 at 5 p.m., no in-person auditions.
- Callbacks, if needed, will be held by zoom appointment with the director, Lydia Fort, September 5 & 6
- Rehearsals begin October 13, 2020 and the production completes recording on October 31 with performances available on a password protected site online running Nov. 6-13, 2020.

**PREPARATION**

- Script available on the Student Auditions Emory Box site and by request to teauditions@gmail.com
- Sides available online here: [http://theater.emory.edu/home/get-involved/student-auditions/index.html](http://theater.emory.edu/home/get-involved/student-auditions/index.html)
- Sides that include another actor can be read off-camera or the actor can skip those lines.

**SUBMITTING VIDEOS**

- There will be no in-person audition appointments, all auditions will be submitted by video.
- Select at least one of the audition sides provided on our website for video recording, sides are available online here: [http://theater.emory.edu/home/get-involved/student-auditions/index.html](http://theater.emory.edu/home/get-involved/student-auditions/index.html)
- Please make these videos available to us by utilizing a private YouTube or Vimeo or similar site. Send the instructions needed to access your videos.
- Videos will be provided to the director, Lydia Fort, for casting.
- Email video submission to teauditions@gmail.com.
- Please also email a recent photo and resume to teauditions@gmail.com with your video.

**STUDENTS: MAKE SURE TO NOTE IN THE SUBJECT OF YOUR SUBMISSION EMAIL THAT YOU ARE A STUDENT AND FROM WHICH UNIVERSITY.**

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

- Fall 2020 all projects will be entirely online and remote, the performance will be recorded and streamed at a later date.
- *Les Blancs* will be cast with professionals and students.
- Performers of all ethnic and racial backgrounds are encouraged to attend.
- Any member of the Emory community is welcome to audition for Theater Emory productions. A major or minor in Theater Studies is not required.
Character Breakdown/Descriptions
The company will include professional and student actors. The roles available to students include ERIC, AFRICAN VILLAGERS (AND WARRIORS) and the AFRICAN CHILD.

Les Blancs Cast Breakdown

THE WOMAN African descent, female, dancer. The Woman: The abstract, non-speaking representation of the growing conflict in Africa and the growing conflict within the heart of the main protagonist, Tshembe. She appears only to Tshembe as a decorated spear-bearing warrior; dancing rhythmically to war drums.

TSHEMBE MATOSEH African descent, male. The protagonist. He is the son of a Kwi chief and is returning to attend his father's funeral who had died before he could arrive. He is returning from England where he immigrated and gained a formal English education. He is married to an English woman and they have had a child together. The conflict in Africa will not let him go and he is inevitably dragged into the mounting revolution.

ABIOSEH MATOSEH African descent, male. Tshembe's brother. He has fully embraced the culture of the west as he is training to be an ordained Catholic priest. He hopes that taking on this lifestyle will allow him to share in the power held by the white settlers. He is a symbol of full assimilation as he has denounced his heritage to the point of betraying his own people.

MADAME NEILSEN Caucasian, female, elder. A sharp and intelligent older woman and the wife of Reverend Neilsen who started the Mission 40 years prior when they were in their late 20s. Many of the members of the Kwi tribe look up to her as a mother figure, including Tshembe and his brothers. She is outraged by the encroaching colonial military and pushes Tshembe into joining the revolution.

ERIC African descent, male. The teenage, biracial brother of Tshembe and Abioseh, the result of their mother's rape by Major Rice. He is a rash young man with an affinity for alcohol. He is caught between his two older brothers who argue over who shall take responsibility for him.

DR. MARTA GOITERLING Caucasian, female. A young doctor who is passionate about her job. She is the newest member of the Mission and has only been there seven years. She has an outspoken pride for the creative thriftiness of the Mission Hospital, which Dr. DeKoven considers to be a naïve obliviousness of the discrimination against the African natives as a white hospital only 75 miles away is top of the line.
CHARLIE MORRIS  Caucasian, male. A middle-aged journalist from America there to report on the growing conflict. He is very idealistic and as such, he is very naïve to the growing conflict between the African natives and the English settlers. He carries himself with an air of enlightened superiority while also being very willing to help.

NGAGO  African descent, male. A charismatic war leader

DR. WILLY DEKOVEN  Caucasian, male, elder. A doctor who has been part of the mission for twelve years. He carries himself with a lofty air as he is hyper-aware of how terrible the situation is and has essentially numbed himself to it. Though he is prone to drinking, he is one of the wisest characters in the play. He shows himself to be very brave and compassionate while also seeming like he has given up.

MAJOR GEORGE RICE  Caucasian, male. He is a leader of the colonial military forces. He represents both the oppressive colonial regime and is a symbol for blatant racism as he is always using racial slurs. He honestly and openly refers to the whites as superior to the Africans and treats them like idiot children.

PETER  African descent, male. The middle-aged cousin of Tshembe and his brothers, a servant at the Mission, and a member of the resistance

AFRICAN CHILD
PRISONER
AFRICAN VILLAGERS (AND WARRIORS) (5 actors listed in script)
SOLDIERS (2 actors listed in script)