

The Wilma Theater, Philadelphia, (LORT-C) announces Equity Principal Auditions for the last three plays of its 2008-2009 season: “Schmucks” by Roy Smiles, director: Jiri Zizka, casting director: Richard W. Kotulski. “Scorched” by Wajdi Mouwad, director: Blanka Zizka, casting director: Richard W. Kotulski. “Hysteria” by Terry Johnson, director Jiri Zizka, casting director: Richard W. Kotulski.

Dates:

Monday, July 21st, 10am – 6pm

Tuesday, July 22nd, 10am – 6pm

PLEASE CALL **215-893-9456 x111** to schedule an individual appointment.

Appointments are available *only* to members of Actor’s Equity. Non-Equity and Equity Membership Candidates will be seen as time allows on a standby basis.

Please prepare two contrasting monologues of not more than a minute and a half each.

“Schmucks”: directed by Jiri Zizka. It’s 1965, and the great Northeast Blackout covers New York City in a state of panic and disorder. Isolated in a small diner, a young stand-up comic with an upcoming gig on *The Ed Sullivan Show* encounters comic icons Groucho Marx and Lenny Bruce and implores them for comedic guidance. Actors will need excellent comic timing and two will be portraying famous comics and should thus be able to convey each particular comics style of delivery and mood.

Joe Klein:

A twenty-eight year old struggling/failing stand-up comic with a deep sentimental streak, self-confidence issues, and very much in need of advice. Desperately wants to succeed as a comic but doesn’t really know what to do with his tremendous luck at landing a gig on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. In many ways a very bland person, but must be bland in an interesting way.

Groucho (Julius) Marx:

The famous comedian is seventy-five years old when we meet him. He is witty, quick, sarcastic, and earnest. Marx uses humor to shield himself from the immense pain he feels at the loss of his beloved brother, Harpo. He also feels as though he pales in comparison to the tremendous talent of his brother. Must have tremendous comedic timing. Actor will need to convey the essence, timing and rhythm and comic delivery of the real Groucho Marx.

Mary Lenahan:

A thirty year old waitress when we meet her. She is cagey and canny and knows a thing or two about the ways of the world. She is more prone to subtle rather than overt opposition and confrontation, especially when confronted with the overwhelming force of Lenny Bruce’s action and ego. She’s had a hard life and it shows a little more than she’d like it to.

Harpo Marx:

The dead brother of Groucho. He is a kind of ghost or specter that represents the very best of physical, silent, vaudeville comedy more than representing the real life Harpo. He can be of any age but must be an outstanding physical comedian. Needs to be able to ride a unicycle and juggle. Clown and/or mime training a definite plus. The actor must be able to exemplify a representation of the ideal of physical comedy.

First rehearsal is November 4, 2008; first preview is December 3, 2008; opening is December 10, 2008; closing is January 4, 2009.

“Scorched”: directed by Blanka Zizka. Takes place in various locations in an unnamed North American city and various places in an unnamed civil war-torn Middle Eastern country over the course of fifty years. Actors will be required to play multiple roles. Facility with a near-eastern accent may be required for some characters.

Alphonse Lebel:

A wordy and malapropism spouting notary public who has been engaged as the executor Nawal’s will. He talks a great deal, has a clear sense of right and wrong, believes firmly in seeing things to their ends. He is also warm and understanding. Would also play **Militia Man** and possibly around six other characters sometimes with extremely quick costume/character changes. Character ages range from forties to fifties.

Simon / Wahab:

Simon is a headstrong and angry young man in his mid to early twenties. He’s an aspiring professional boxer. The son of Nawal and twin brother of Janine, he holds on to tremendous resentment of his mother which has caused him great pain for much of his life. **Wahab** is a hopeful young man in his mid to late teens filled with love of the young Nawal and blinded by the realities of the world because of it.

Janine:

Janine is the daughter of Nawal and twin brother of Simon and is in her early to mid twenties. She is a new graduate student working on her Ph.D. in Mathematics focusing on the subject of Graph Theory. She is pensive, quiet, and shy, but can also be obstinate and unyielding when she believes she is right. She is more at comfortable in a solitary environment.

Ralph / Nihad:

Ralph is Simon’s personal boxing trainer and a man who wants to help Simon as much as possible by helping Simon help himself. He is in his late twenties or early thirties. **Nihad** is a psychopathic sniper who is very, very good at killing people. He loves music, frequently sings along to his walkman, and likes to imagine himself being interviewed on American talk shows. A very funny and vicious killer who has no mercy and gets tremendous enjoyment out of killing. Actor would need facility with a near-eastern accent.

Young Nawal:

The character is between 14 and 19 years old when we see her. Possessed by love and convinced that love can move mountains. She is smart, thoughtful, and poetic. She is headstrong and but when first confronted with opposition she melts and gives in to the will of others. She later grows much more trusting of herself.

Jihane / Middle Aged Nawal:

Jihane is the mother of Nawal and she is in her forties when we see her. She is traditional, conservative, and closed minded. She sees the world for how it is and is perfectly alright with it that way. **Nawal** in her middle age has learned a great deal about the world. She is highly intelligent, merciful, understanding, but also brutal, stubborn, and self-assured.

Nazira / Older Nawal:

Nazira is Nawal's grandmother. Nazira is in her sixties when we meet her. Aware of the closed-mindedness and ignorance of those around her she prods Young Nawal to learn and grow and leave her town. She is kindly, perceptive, wise and passionate. **Older Nawal** is seen testifying before a war crimes tribunal about her treatment in prison.

Elhame / Sawda:

Elhame is a midwife who delivers Nawal's child with Wahab. She is kindly and knowledgeable. **Sawda** is a friend of Nawal who leaves the village with Nawal when they are young. Over the course of the play Sawda ages from twenties to forties.

Antoine Ducharme:

Nawal's male nurse in the hospital. Kind, warm, and friendly. A very sweet man. This actor would play numerous other roles, including a Militia Man and others ranging in age from twenties to fifties.

First rehearsal is January 20, 2009; first preview is February 25, 2009; opening is March 4, 2009; closing is March 29, 2009.

“Hysteria”: directed by Jiri Zizka. Takes place over the course of one day during the last days of Sigmund Freud's life in Freud's home in exile in London just before World War II. This is a darkly comic farce that requires excellent physical comedy, excellent timing, and dry irony from its actors. Various accents (German/Austrian, British and Spanish) are required for certain roles.

Dr. Sigmund Freud:

The famous doctor in the twilight of his life is in his late seventies or early eighties when we meet him. He is still an energetic old man even though he suffers from pain in his jaw caused by a malignant cancer. Practical, rational, and not easily befuddled. He has a secret which defines his life and which he guards very closely. He would have a slight Austrian accent.

Jessica:

A young woman in her twenties or early thirties. She arrives unexpectedly and is willing to do anything to get and keep Freud's attention. She has a grudge against Freud and demands satisfaction. She doesn't like being touched. An accent (German/Austrian or British) may be required for this character.

Abraham Yahuda:

A large man in his sixties. Yahuda is deeply intelligent. He is Freud's medical doctor and a scholar. He is of an even greater status and weight in the play than Freud himself. A British accent.

Salvador Dali:

The famous surrealist painter in his thirties. Thin, tall, with a distinctive moustache. He has a thick Spanish accent and queer ideas about the world. Very enthusiastic about Freud and his ideas Dali is a bit of a sponger who feels that he has landed at the feet of a true master. Very arrogant.

First rehearsal is April 14, 2009; first preview is May 13, 2009; opening is May 20, 2009; closing is June 14, 2009.

The Wilma Theater is an equal opportunity employer and subscribes to the LORT agreement non-traditional casting policy, encouraging audition participation by and casting of ethnic minority actors (African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American, and Native-American), women actors, and actors with disabilities in roles where race, ethnicity, gender, or the presence or absence of a disability is not germane. Wilma Theater, 265 South Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19107. www.wilmatheater.org