

## ***LEND ME A TENOR***

By Ken Ludwig

April 5<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018

NorShor Theatre

### **Director: Michael Kraklio**

Michael received his B.A. in Special Studies: Performing Arts (with a minor in Opera Performance) from Marycrest College in Davenport, IA. He has performed on stage for over three decades in theatres all over the country. Along with performing Michael has designed sets and sound, is trained in Stage Management, and toured with children's theatre companies all over the midwestern states. He has performed professionally in New York, Cincinnati, Seattle, Minneapolis, Rapid City, and now Duluth. Michael is a member of the 2017-2018 Resident Acting Company for the Duluth Playhouse and serves on the PARC committee. He also served as Artistic Director for the Black Hills Community Theatre, as well as Education and Outreach Director for their children's and senior theatre companies. His directing credits include: *Joseph, Cats, Anything Goes, Always, Patsy Cline, Pirates of Penzance, HMS Pinafore, Rent, Cinderella, A 20<sup>th</sup> Century Christmas, Amadeus, A Few Good Men, Equus, Streamers, White as Snow Red as Blood, A Tuna Christmas, A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talking, Play It Again, Sam, I Take This Man, Take a Number, Darling, Free To Be You And Me, Hansel and Gretel*. All for the Black Hills Community Theatre, The Black Hills Playhouse, The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company, Third Eye Productions, La Comedia Dinner Theatre, ACTS Theatre. This is Michael's directorial debut for the Duluth Playhouse. Coming next June Michael will serve as Artistic Director and Acting Coach for 2018 PAWS (Performing Arts Workshop), A teen intensive producing Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, In Gillette, WY.

### **Audition Information**

**AUDITIONS:** Saturday, September 16 from noon – 3 pm. If possible, please prepare one of the six monologues attached below and be familiar with the play. Memorization of the Monologue is preferred but not required. Call backs will be Sunday September 17<sup>th</sup> times to be announced. Callbacks will consist of readings from the script.

**CALLBACKS:** Sunday, September 17. Time TBA.

- Auditions will be held at the Playhouse Conservatory (230 West Superior St; entrance on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. West between Superior and Michigan St) *If you cannot make these auditions contact Shad Olsen, [solsen@duluthplayhouse.org](mailto:solsen@duluthplayhouse.org), 218.733.7559 to arrange another time.*
- Read the Script. Available for checkout at Playhouse office (\$5 deposit, 3 days)
- Bring a picture and resume along with the audition form filled out (attached to the packet).
- The Duluth Playhouse auditions are open to all actors and actresses, including those who may be auditioning for the first time and professional or Equity actors and actresses.

### **Rehearsal and Performance Information**

**Rehearsals** begin February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and will run Sunday through Thursday evenings from 6:30pm – 9:30 pm. Only 4 weeks before TECH week. We are going to work quickly, so it will be strongly encouraged for actors to begin rehearsals already off book. Rehearsal times may change due to needs of the cast.

**Performance Dates:** April 5 – 15, 2018. Thurs, Fri, Sat @ 7:30pm Sundays @ 2:00pm. (8 performances plus Preview.)

# **LEND ME A TENOR: Synopsis & Character Breakdown**

## **Synopsis**

A hotel suite in Cleveland, Ohio - 1934

On a very important night for the Cleveland Grand Opera Company, Tito Mirelli, the world-famous Italian tenor, is set to perform the starring role of *Canio* in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*. Henry Saunders -- General Manager of the company -- is beyond stressed about everything turning out right, and insists that his assistant, Max -- a nervous, young fellow and secret tenor extraordinaire -- watch over Tito's every move to ensure smooth sailing. After a huge fight with his fiery, Italian wife Maria, Tito receives a double dose of tranquilizers through a series of mishaps. Throw in Diana, an ambitious, female co-star; Maggie, Max's giddy girlfriend; Julia, a flirty head of the opera guild; and a meddling bellhop fighting for Tito's attention. Together, you have a recipe for comedic disaster. Max navigates the company through one catastrophe after the next -- an angry wife, a presumed death, crazy costumes, secret sex romps, and loads and loads of slamming doors and mistaken identities -- and, ultimately, takes on the role of *Canio* to great effect. Together, Max and Saunders find a way to save the Opera Company's big night in grand, farcical fashion.

*\*\* In the original production, and the script we will be using, the opera being performed is Otello. Due to the sensitive nature of actors in "Black Face" make-up. We have decided to switch the operas. Instead Tito and Max will don the clown make-up and costumes required for the role of Canio in Pagliacci. In the musical version of LEND ME A TENOR in London, the opera was switched to Pagliacci with Ken Ludwig's permission and assistance. We will follow suit with his blessing.*

## **Character Breakdown**

**TITO MERELLI:** The World's most renowned opera tenor, and notorious "ladies man". Age 30 and UP. Not required to sing, although those auditioning that can sing may be an option.

**HENRY SAUNDERS:** The Cleveland Grand Opera's general manager. Father to Maggie. A blowhard who often loses his temper at the slightest mishap. Age 50 and UP.

**MAX:** Saunders' long-suffering assistant, who is forced to take Tito's place in the role of Canio. Age 20 – 50. Not required to sing, although those auditioning that can sing may be an option.

**BELLHOP:** A comic relief character who has an ongoing feud with Saunders. An obnoxious opera fan. The Bellhop keeps showing up at the hotel suite at the wrong moment, trying to get an autograph and photo of Tito Merelli. He ends up getting chased around the suite with fear of being strangled. This role is very high energy. Precise comic timing and quick wit is required. Age ANY

**MARIA MERELLI:** Tito's suffering wife, with an "Italian temper". Leaves Tito early in the play, but ultimately returns to him. Loves Tito. Despite his philandering. Age 30 and UP.

**MAGGIE SAUNDERS:** Saunder's daughter, and Max's girlfriend. She has a great admiration for Tito. Age 20 – 50.

**DIANA:** The opera's ingenue soprano, who is "fighting her way" to the top. A seductive woman, and she knows it. Age 20 and UP.

**JULIA:** Chairwoman of the Cleveland Opera Guild, who considers herself a "Grande dame". She wears an over-the-top dress which, Saunders says, makes her look like the Chrysler Building. Age 40 and UP.

*\*\* Please note that the ages listed are not set in stone. Singing is not required for any role, however, if "Tito" and "Max" can sing, we may switch to live performance singing as opposed to recordings. We will place the best person for those roles, whether they sing or not.*

## **AUDITION MONOLOGUES**

*Please get familiar with the following monologues. They will be used in the initial audition.*

*THEY DO NOT NEED TO BE MEMORIZED. ☺ However, get familiar with them, pick one, and work on it. Make broad choices and have fun with them. You may be required to read an additional monologue from this selection depending on the Director's needs. These pieces are obviously not from LEND ME A TENOR. During call-backs, scenes from TENOR will be used.*

### **Audition Monologue #1 (Female)**

It's no good you going on. I can't open sardines and answer the phone. I've only got one pair of feet. Hello.... Yes, but there's no one here, love.... No, Mr. Brent's not here...He lives here, yes, but he don't live here now because he lives in Spain... Mr. Philip Brent, that's right.... The one who writes the plays, that's him, only now he writes them in Spain... No, she's in Spain, too, they're all in Spain, there's no one here... Am I in Spain? No, I'm not in Spain, dear. I look after the house for him, but I go home at one o'clock on Wednesday, only I've got a nice plate of sardines to put my feet up with, because it's the royal what's-it's called on the telly -- the royal you know -- where's the paper, then? And if it's to do with letting the house then you'll have to ring the house-agents, because they're the agents for the house.... Squire Squire, Hackham and who's the other one...? No, they're not in Spain, they're next to the phone in the study. Squire, Squire, Hackham, and hold on, I'll go and look. Always the same, isn't it. Soon as you take the weight off your feet, down it all comes on your head.

### **Audition Monologue #2 (Female)**

Well, Tommy has proposed to me again. Tommy really does nothing but propose to me. He proposed to me last night in the music-room, when I was quite unprotected, as there was an elaborate trio going on. I didn't dare to make the smallest repartee, I need hardly tell you. If I had, it would have stopped the music at once. Musical people are so absurdly unreasonable. They always want one to be perfectly dumb at the very moment when one is longing to be absolutely deaf. Then he proposed to me in broad daylight this morning, in front of that dreadful statue of Achilles. Really, the things that go on in front of that work of art are quite appalling. The police should interfere. At luncheon I saw by the glare in his eye that he was going to propose again, and I just managed to check him in time by assuring him that I was a bimetallist. Fortunately I don't know what bimetallism means. And I don't believe anybody else does either. But the observation crushed Tommy for ten minutes. He looked quite shocked. And then Tommy is so annoying in the way he proposes. If he proposed at the top of his voice, I should not mind so much. That might produce some effect on the public. But he does it in a horrid confidential way. When Tommy wants to be romantic he talks to one just like a doctor. I am very fond of Tommy, but his methods of proposing are quite out of date. I wish, Gertrude, you would speak to him, and tell him that once a week is quite often enough to propose to anyone, and that it should always be done in a manner that attracts some attention.

### **Audition Monologue #3 (Female)**

Honey, can ya pass Grandma the salt...thanks honey...

*(she shakes salt shaker on her plate of food)*

Just a titsy I use, just a titsy.

Now, that son of a bitch Marvin's got it comin' to 'em. Ya hear? If he opens his mouth again, I want ya to cut his throat. That's right. Slice him up good. I don't want no more problems with Marvin. Ya hear? If he gets outta line again, either you cut his throat or I'll whack 'em myself. That's that.

*(her phone rings)*

Wait a minute...pass me the phone...

*(she answers it)*

Hello? Ooooooh hi Linda dear. How are you sweetheart? What's that? Tonight is bingo night for us girls. Yeah. Hahahaha. Sure. Can't wait to see you. I'm looking forward to it, dear. Good. Do you want to drive here and then—Oh okay. Wonderful. Yes. Oh, I'm having lunch with my handsome Grandson. Yes. Oh no, that's okay, that's alright, dear. We just sat down. Haha. Okay..I will call you back when he leaves. He's leaving soon. Okay. So looking forward to seeing you tonight. Maybe we will win some MONEY! Hahaha. Okay hon. Ba-bye. Ba-bye.

*(back to her Grandson)*

She's next! That woman never stops. She gives me indigestion. After Marvin, I want you to take care of Linda. Pain in my ass, she is. I've had it up to here with here pleasantries. She's just too pleasant. Everything is so happy go lucky for her. Not a care in the world, while everybody else gets a migraine. People should not be that happy. WHACK HER! Maybe tonight after bingo, we'll give her a little bango instead. Alright? I'll bring her over for a night cap and you come up from behind and choke her out. Yah hear? CHOKE HER right the fuck OUT and we'll dispose of her in the morning!

### **Audition Monologue #1 (Male)**

Why am I waiting in line with all these losers? I am a grown man... With a job... I don't even live in my parent's basement. Yet here I am... Waiting in line to meet William Shatner. I even got here early. I have a sleeping bag... Snacks... I am not even going to explain about the bathroom situation. Why do we put ourselves through this? I have dignity... I have a life... I don't need this. I should walk on out of here and leave this insanity behind me. Shatner once told us to get a life. It's time I got one.

There he is! He's coming over here! William "frackin'" Shatner is coming over here to meet me. Oh, wow, Mr. Shatner. This is such an honor... Yes sir... First in line to see you. You're my favorite celebrity. Well, my favorite person in the whole world actually. I love everything you've done. Everything is better when you're in it. I love Star Trek, T.J. Hooker, 3rd Rock from the Sun, Miss Congeniality, Boson Legal... even the Priceline commercials... I love you... Meeting you is the most magical moment in my life so far... Thank you, Mr. Shatner... Call you Bill? Oh wow... Bill. Bye bye... Live long and stay awesome!

Oh my God! What is wrong with me?! What am I? A fan girl? I need my head checked... Oh, no... I have a man crush, don't I? I have a William Shatner man crush. I want to die now. Crawl under a rock with the other creepy fans... And....

They're opening the doors! I am so getting my boots autographed. Hey Bill! Look why I found on eBay for you to sign! It's the actual rocket boots from Star Trek V!

### **Audition Monologue #2 (Male)**

Don't tell me you've never seen a *knife*. *Knife*. That's a *knife*. Use it to cut things. Cut things. Like - ham. If we had some ham. Or bacon, or sump'm. I can't believe you don't -. Or butter. If we had some butter, you could use it to spread it on -. You don't really need it. No, you don't need it. Put it down. Bad. Uh-. Yeah, now that's your spoon. Use that to put sugar in your coffee, if you had some sugar, here. And you had some coffee - shoot. I don't really know why we got all these things. But your fork - man, I wish somebody else'd help you with this, 'cause I don't know anything, but - I *think* that your fork - your fork'd be the main thing you'd use. 'Cause you got your eggs, and you got your grits. Y'see? Eat 'em with a fork, just like we been doin'. Can - you - say - "fork"? "Faw-werk"? "Faw-werk." Two parts. "Faw-werk." Right. Put 'em together. "Faw-werk" Good! That was *great!*

### **Audition Monologue #3 (Male)**

Let me tell you something about *my life*. I have the Duke of Buckingham on the phone to me for an hour after rehearsal every evening complaining that the Duke of Gloucester is sucking boiled sweets through his speeches. The Duke of Clarence is off for the entire week doing a commercial for Madeira. Richard himself -- would you believe? Richard III? Has now gone down with a back problem. I keep getting messages from Brooke about how unhappy she is here, and now she's got herself a doctor's certificate for nervous exhaustion -- she's going to walk! I have no time to find or rehearse another Vicki. I have just one afternoon, while Richard is fitted for a surgical corset, to cure Brooke of nervous exhaustion, with no medical aids except a little whisky -- you've got the whisky? -- a few flowers -- you've got the money for the flowers? -- and a certain faded charm. So I haven't come to the theatre to hear about other people's problems. I've come to be taken out of myself, and preferably not put back again.

# Playhouse Audition Form

Please bring this completed form with you to the audition along with a **resume** & current **photo or headshot**. The photo/headshot can be in an upper corner of the resume or attached separately.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address (Including Zip) \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Hair Color \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a particular role in the show you are most interested in? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

Will you accept another part if not offered any listed above? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not get a part, would you be interested in working on tech crew or backstage? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you sing, dance, play piano or have other special talents? If so, please explain level of skill: *(Please list any musical instruments that you play and skill level)*

Do you have **ANY** conflicts with the rehearsal/performance schedule? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Please list ALL conflicts below (be as specific as possible to dates, times). Additional conflicts after being cast may not be accepted.**