

# ***Almost, Maine***

## **Phil's Audition Notes**

*Almost, Maine* is a very unusual show, quite different in many ways from other productions we've performed at Sun City Theatre. The play's unique qualities suggest we should approach auditions for it in different way.

One of the things that makes this play different, is that it is made up of nine individual vignettes, most of which feature only two principal roles. For that reason, we will be seeking "lead" actors for about twenty characters.

The play has been performed by other companies with as few as four actors, each taking on multiple roles. Other productions have cast individual actors for each role. My goal is to take the latter approach, with each role performed by a different actor. I prefer this approach because it will be less confusing for the audience, while offering a greater number of our performers opportunities to take on some truly delightful roles.

Because of the unique nature of this play, I think the traditional approach to auditions that we normally use would be too awkward. Instead of posting sides for each role, and generating a confusing puzzle of auditions for a wide variety of parts, I want to try a different approach:

### **THE CASTING PROCESS**

We are going to hold multiple group table reads, each with about 15 auditioning actors. In each of these sessions, we will read through the entire play, with actors switching off, trying different roles. We will record these table reads on video to help me and the production team evaluate each of the actors afterwards. Some actors will be brought back a few days later for callbacks to help us make final casting decisions. We will hold enough table read sessions to allow anyone who wishes to audition to do so.

### **WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR**

During these sessions, I'm not looking for perfect performances. Instead, I want to see that you can demonstrate the style of acting this play demands. What do I mean by "style"? I'll let John Cariani, the play's author describe it:

*"Your job as an actor is to tell the stories... Don't worry about being a chameleon. Don't create caricatures. Sure, you want to create distinct characters--- but trust the stories to do a lot of that work for you. Tell the stories, and allow the characters to come to life. That doesn't mean be lazy. It doesn't mean do nothing or be boring. It just means... construct truthfully!"*

***That word... "Truthfully" is going to be a guidepost for me.*** As you read this play, your ability to make me believe that you are truly in the moment is going to be how I measure you. The

situations in this play are whimsical, and sometimes a bit outrageous. But the dialog is brilliantly written in an extremely realistic and human manner. And that's what I need to see from you in your audition. Here's some more advice from the author:

*“Remember: The people of Almost, Maine are not cuddly and cute. They're not quaint eccentrics. They are not simpletons... They are not quirky. They are ordinary people. It's their situations that are odd, extraordinary and quirky. My advice: Don't forget how much the people of Almost, Maine are hurting. Honor the ache, play the pain (keep most of it covered), and don't forget that Almost, Maine is a comedy. Sadness and pain are the funniest things in the world.”*

In order to successfully audition for this play, **you absolutely must be familiar with it in its entirety beforehand**. We have posted a PDF file of the script for you to read and familiarize yourself with. Again, I'm not looking for polished performances... But having a good understanding of the entire work and its characters going in will help you deliver what I'm looking for in you.

## **THE ROLES**

Below is a list of the play's vignettes with its characters along with a few notes about them.

### **Prologue/Interlogue/Epilogue**

Ginette  
Pete

### **Her Heart**

East (male)  
Glory (female)  
*This scene includes some kissing.*

### **Sad and Glad**

Jimmy  
Sandrine  
Villian (female waitress)  
4 or 5 non-speaking “extras”, bar patrons.

### **This Hurts**

Steve  
Marvalyn  
*This scene includes physical stunts, involving being hit on the head by a swinging ironing board and notebooks. And there is a kiss.*

**Getting it Back**

Gayle

Lendall (male)

*This scene includes kissing.*

**They Fell**

Chad

Randy

OR

Deena

Shelly

*This scene may be played by a pair of men OR a pair of women. It involves both characters, who are lifelong best friends suddenly falling (literally) in love with each other. Actors must have the ability to fall to the floor and get back up multiple times.*

**Where it Went**

Phil

Marci

**Story of Hope**

Daniel

Hope

Suzette (bit part)

**Seeing the Thing**

Rhonda

Dave

*Lots of kissing in this scene.*

**BE FLEXIBLE!**

On your audition from, you may tell us which roles you're interested in, and we'll make sure you get to read for those roles. But I urge you to be flexible, as not everyone will be able to get their first or second choice. If cast, we may ask you to perform a role other than what you may have had in mind.

If you have questions about the audition process, or getting signed up, or need a physical copy of the script, please contact Chad Eastwood at [chadeastwood1@gmail.com](mailto:chadeastwood1@gmail.com).

For questions about the artistic/acting aspects of the audition, please email me at [pmastman@gmail.com](mailto:pmastman@gmail.com)