

GRCT Audition Handbook

© copyright, 2009

GRAND RAPIDS

Civic
Theatre & School of Theatre Arts



30 N Division Ave *Grand Rapids, MI 49503 * www.grct.org

AUDITION NOTICES

Tell it All (almost)!

Important details

Title of Show

WILLY WONKA

May 29-June 14, 2008

Performance Dates

(includes daytime performances May 28, 29)

Music and Lyrics by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley
Adapted for the stage by Leslie Bricusse and Tim Mc Donald

Based on the book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl

Director: Penelope Notter

Choreographer: Lisa Catrett

Musical Director: Charles Hutchins

Directing team

Kind of Audition

Auditions by Appointment:

Call 222-6654 after March 1

Youth- March 29.

Adults March 30.

Phone no. & when to call

Audition Dates

Cast Needs: Large Cast—Roles for children ages 8 and up. Roles for adults of all ages.

Looking for actors...

- ❖ All auditionees must prepare 16 measures of a song and bring sheet music to auditions. An accompanist will be provided.
- ❖ All auditionees must participate in a group dance audition.

Preparation details

Show description

Willy Wonka and his band of Oompa-Loompas lead sweet-natured Charlie Bucket and four other Golden Ticket winners on the tour of a lifetime through a mysterious candy-maker's fantastical factory. Featuring your favorite songs from the 1971 film—including "The Candy Man" and "Pure Imagination"—this theatrical adaptation is a sweet treat for children and adults alike!

The notice doesn't say...

The Director hopes you'll READ the SCRIPT before Auditions!

You'll be asked to mark down all CONFLICTS with the Rehearsal and Performance Schedules at the Audition!

In Community Theater, an AUDITION is a friendly invitation for singers, actors, or other volunteer performers to “try out” for the roles in a live stage show.



There are many kinds of AUDITIONS:

Cattle Call -- days and times announced; actors are taken in order that they arrive (like American Idol.) GR Civic uses Cattle Calls for our Summer Repertory Theatre’s preliminary rounds out in the community.

By Appointment -- days and times are announced, sometimes for youth on one day and adults on another; actors need to contact the theatre before the audition day(s) and arrange for a 1/2 hour time slot (that will be shared with 8-12 others.) GR Civic uses this process for Musicals.

Open Audition -- “open” means open to the public, but in community theatre an open audition usually refers to auditions where actors are expected to come ONE of the published days of Auditions and stay for 2-4 hours. GRCT uses this process for non-musical plays, and Summer Repertory Troupe Finals.

Call-backs -- after all of the above, the directing team usually makes a “short list” of actors to be considered for each role in the show. They are asked to come in again on another day to try out in very specific ways.

You may be asked to do a number of different things at any AUDITION:

Cold Reading -- reading something you haven’t ever seen or prepared

Short Preparation -- scene/monologue you’re handed when you come to auditions and given a few minutes to look over

Prepared Monologue -- memorized 1-person speech which each actor chooses and rehearses to a performance level before the audition

Prepared Song -- memorized, short excerpt (16 bars) from a song which each actor chooses and rehearses to performance level before auditions

Dance Audition -- in 5-10 minutes actors are taught a short dance to perform in a group of 4 or 5

Improvisation -- acting without a script, making it up as you go along

The A.B.Cs of Audition PREPARATION

A **LWAYS read the script and and do your research EARLY!**

1. Check out the script well before Auditions

Wait too long, and all the scripts may be checked out!

2. Read the script CAREFULLY

Is it a good match for your family's world-view? (copyright law prevents changing even a word or two!)

Would you be comfortable playing any character?

3. Know what is expected before you come down to audition

The Casting Needs: what ages, genders of actors are needed

Does this show require singers? Dancers?

Is there anything to prepare: (16 bars of a song?)

Is there anything to bring? (sheet music for your song?)

Must you make an appointment, or can you just show up?

How long will you be expected to stay?

Is there a Callback date you need to be available to attend?

What is the time commitment, both rehearsal & performance?

SCRIPTS may be checked out from the Tower Ticket Office with a \$10 cash deposit, for one week.



B **RING EVERYTHING you'll NEED...**

1. Dress in clothing that allows you to move and groove

And avoid clothing/jewelry that draws attention away from YOU -- you don't want the Director remembering your necklace and not your face!

2. Family Calendar/schedule -- you will be asked to declare all CONFLICTS with the show's REHEARSALS and PERFORMANCES at auditions! The Director must consider conflicts as he/she casts to ensure actors are available to rehearse together!
3. Water bottle -- hydration helps relieve stress
4. Dance shoes (or flat shoes you can dance in...) for a Musical audition, or shoes to change into if you've worn snow boots
5. Personal items -- kleenex, brush, comb, hair ties, etc.
6. Pencil, pen, notebook (just in case...)

**The MOST important thing to bring is a
POSITIVE ATTITUDE to have Fun!**



C

OME to Auditions EARLY to:

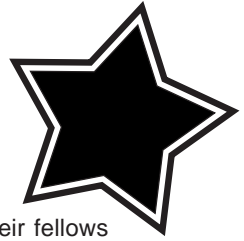
1. Find a Parking space and get to the correct room
Parking downtown is always difficult, especially if you're not familiar with the area or are in a hurry!
Be on the lookout for signs directing you to a certain entrance! They'll help you find the most direct route!
2. Fill out Paperwork (Neatly and Legibly!)
Audition Card of individual and contact information
Conflict Calendar
List of past experience/training and where you got it
3. Warm up your voice (and stretch for a dance audition)
Actors are expected to be ready to go at their given time
4. Look over any Monologue or Scene handed out
If the Director is going to give you something to Prepare beforehand, you want to give yourself time to do it!

**Save TIME filling out Audition paper-work -- bring
in a TYPED LIST of your past Experience and
Training to staple to your audition card!**

A Bit about the CASTING Process...

1. The DIRECTOR may see up to 250 people audition for one show!
The more people, the more time casting takes -- it may include several "Callback" sessions!
2. It is the Director's Job to BALANCE the production's cast
Can't have everyone be short, or tall, or blond, or female...
Perhaps some people need to look like they're part of a family
A Musical needs some people who can sing high and some who can sing low.
3. There may be special needs for a particular role
Like juggling or playing the guitar -- so the Director has to search until he/she finds someone who can do that!
4. Before ANNOUNCING the Cast
The Director must be sure that every person he/she cast will accept the role. This sometimes takes a little "phone tag!"
Casting is a "house of cards" -- if someone doesn't accept a role, the Director may have to start back at "the drawing board!"

Directors ALWAYS Look for...



- Team Players** -- actors who listen and support their fellows
- Poise & Personality** -- confident, relaxed and energetic actors
- Good Diction & Projection** -- speaking loudly, clearly, and slowly enough to pronounce all the sounds in each word
- Understanding** -- actors who “get” what they’re reading
- Expression** -- an actor must share his/her feelings and emotions with the audience while reading, dancing or singing
- Vulnerability** -- allowing your sensitive side to show
- Whole-hearted Acting** -- using everything you’ve got -- Face, Voice and entire Body
- Flexibility** -- being able to make changes if asked
- Dedication** -- Volunteers who can really commit to the show

There’s a limited number of roles in each play-- So only a limited number of people can be IN the show, but the AUDITION is a chance for EVERYONE to have a fun theatre experience.

Most of the casting process is out of the Actor’s control -- So concentrate on preparing as well as you can, and having a great time at auditions!

Be AWARE that being in a Show is a HUGE Commitment! Most shows rehearse 5 or 6 nights a week in the evenings (6:30 or 7pm until 9 or 10pm.) The week prior to opening there may be rehearsals scheduled on Saturday and/or Sunday during the day, and the Dress Rehearsals those last weekdays may last until 11pm.

There’s no substitute for TRAINING -- GRCT doesn’t require training or classes to audition for our plays, but taking an Acting, Singing or Dance class is the BEST way to prepare for Auditions! That’s why we have the largest, most comprehensive community Theatre School in the country!

PARENTS -- help your Child Prepare...

1. Guide him/her through the A, B, Cs (pp. 3 & 4!)

Even older kids will need your help!

2. Be aware that a child in a show is a FAMILY commitment

Children must be driven to and from rehearsal and performance

He/She may need help learning lines

He/She will definitely need help balancing Theatre & School

3. Planning Ahead

Check out auditions as you plan Everyone's school year activities so a Theatre commitment can be balanced with family needs

The more pre-planning, the better prepared and less stressed the child will be at auditions, allowing him/her the best Audition possible

4. Talk about the Whole PROCESS

BOTH of you should read the script

Help him/her become familiar with ALL the Characters

Discuss how Directors will have to cast people who have the correct "look" for each role (as well as the talent!)

Remind him/her that there will be a lot more kids at auditions than there are parts in the show

Theatre is NOT like Sports -- help your child understand that

Theatre isn't about COMPETING, but COOPERATING.

The Director may ask to see the children audition without parents in the room -- to help them feel less nervous and audition better

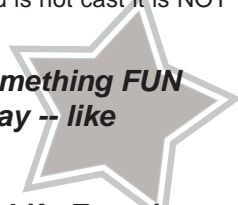
5. Consider ALL Possible Outcomes

What will he/she have to give up if he/she is cast?

Discuss if he/she is offered a different role than he/she wanted...

Be aware that the Director's job is to cast while considering the BIG picture for the WHOLE production, so if your child is not cast it is NOT because he/she did something wrong!

In case your child is NOT cast, plan something FUN that he/she COULDN'T do while in a play -- like take an acting class!



6. Discuss AUDITIONING as a Wonderful Life-Experience

Setting a goal, preparing ahead of time, and doing your best on the day is a great accomplishment and should be applauded!

Community Theatres offer children the opportunity to perform in order to develop life skills and have FUN -- and most Directors will try to make the audition experience itself fun, too!

Remember that Casting is out of your hands -- your job is to give the best Audition you possibly can on that particular day.

Everyone SINGS at Musical Auditions

NON-singing Roles in a MUSICAL are very RARE, so the Director and Music Director need to hear EVERYONE sing. They must hear everyone sing ONE at a time – even those who are not auditioning for leads or roles that will have solos in the production. So, musical auditions usually start with EACH person singing SIXTEEN BARS of a prepared, memorized song while someone plays the piano part (not necessarily the tune) along with you. Most auditions provide someone to play the piano (an accompanist) but you need to bring in the SHEET MUSIC with the voice part plus piano accompaniment.

16 Bars of What?

A “bar” is a “measure” of music. 16 bars is about the length of the CHORUS of a song.

Pick a song from a MUSICAL – not necessarily the one you’re auditioning for, but rapping or singing a hymn doesn’t show what the Directors need to hear.

Pick a song that shows your RANGE – how low and/or high you can sing – and be careful to avoid choosing one that is too low or high for your comfort!

Why do I have to bring in the sheet music?

The Directors need to know that you are capable of singing while the piano (representing the orchestra) is playing.

Here are some websites to purchase and download sheet music:

musicnotes.com

sheetmusicplus.com

sheetmusicdirect.com

There are also books of music with CD’s to help learn the song;

available through www.amazon.com —

Search “books” for “solos for kids with CD”

***A choir teacher, piano, voice or band teacher
can HELP you find sheet music!***



Could I sing with my CD of the song at auditions?

If the CD has only the BACKGROUND accompaniment — without someone singing the song. (Remember, the Directors need to hear you by yourself!)

Always bring in your own machine to play the CD – there will NOT be one at auditions. A battery-powered player is best.

Be Prepared!

Know your song – memorized is best

Know what the piano part sounds like — when to “come in” after the introduction, for example.

Mark your sheet music where you want the accompanist to start and stop

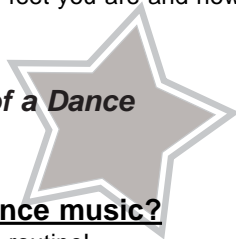
Attach your music to something sturdy so it won’t fall off the music stand

If you use a CD, bring the player in with the song all ready to go

Everyone DANCES at Musical Auditions

ALL roles in a MUSICAL require the actor to do some simple dance steps and move as a group. SOME roles are for trained dancers or actors who can pick up dancing very quickly. So, EVERYONE has to dance at musical auditions, in addition to singing. The CHOREOGRAPHER (person who makes up the dances for the show) needs to see how light on your feet you are and how quickly you can learn new steps.

The most IMPORTANT part of a Dance Audition is your SMILE!



Do I have to prepare a dance or bring dance music?

No, the Choreographer will teach a short dance routine!

The choreographer plans the audition dance routine to his/her own music and brings it to auditions

Be Prepared!

Come to auditions dressed ready to move in comfortable clothing. Tight jeans, short skirts, cropped tops, etc. are not the easiest things to dance in!

Wear appropriate shoes. Obviously, ballet slippers or jazz shoes if you have them. If you don't, flat heels or even heavy socks usually work well.

Tips to make the most of your dance audition.

Keep your eyes up – looking at your feet makes the people watching you look at them too!

Relax and have fun – if you make a mistake, it's not the end of the world.

The Director and Choreographer are looking for people who are easy to work with, not people who get uptight and upset if something goes wrong.

If you don't understand something, ask right away for an explanation. The Choreographer may forget and use some dance terms. If you don't know what "ball-change" means, and can't tell from what he or she is doing – ask for a "translation, please!"

Reading Scenes is done at CALLBACKS

Because everyone in a Musical sings and dances, the Directing Team uses those two ways to narrow down the people who could play each role. Then, at another audition day, they will hear them read for those roles, sing a bit of a song from the show, and maybe go through a more difficult dance routine. But you should still read the script before auditioning to help you prepare!

EVERYTHING You DO at an Audition becomes PART of the Audition!

Do! Do! Do!

DO -- Listen to everything & everyone!

DO -- Follow Directions as soon as they're given.

DO -- Dress nicely in something comfortable that makes you feel good.

DO -- Pull your hair back so the director can see your face even if you bend over.

DO -- Be prepared and ready to go from the moment you come in.

DO -- Smile -- look friendly and happy to be here!

DO -- Be courteous, friendly and considerate of all workers and other auditionees, and applaud everyone who is auditioning.

DO -- Speak (or sing) loudly and clearly.

DO -- Ask questions if you really don't understand -- raise your hand.

DO -- The best you can -- don't worry that it might have sounded better at home.

DO -- Respect the director -- this is his/her job & he/she has a lot of experience!

DO -- Make sure your card and other paperwork has all possible phone numbers, e-mail, and other ways to get in touch with you.

Please Don't!

DON'T -- Talk while anyone else is talking/singing!

DON'T -- Make the director repeat instructions, by not listening the 1st time.

DON'T -- Put on a costume to show how you'd look as the character!

DON'T -- Wear stage makeup or a fancy hairdo, or a hat hiding your face!

DON'T -- Be late, unprepared, or expect the director to help you warm up.

DON'T -- Try to hide behind other people, look at the floor all the time or hide your face in the script.

DON'T -- Pay attention ONLY to the director. Assistants give casting suggestions, and you're hoping to be in a show with the other auditionees!

DON'T -- Mumble, shout or talk very fast.

DON'T -- Interrupt the director -- wait for a break or ask the worker at the desk.

DON'T -- Make excuses about why you usually do better. (Directors can tell when you have a cold.)

DON'T -- Try to influence the director -- let your audition speak for itself.

DON'T -- Call the director or theater to see if you've been cast. If the director has your phone number and casts you, then you WILL get a call.

The DIRECTOR will usually announce his/her estimate of when casting will be complete, so don't worry if you don't hear anything BEFORE that!



If you are CAST...

CONGRATULATIONS!

The Director or Stage Manager will call you to offer you a role.

You will be expected to officially "accept" that role.

If he/she leaves a message make sure you call him/her back ASAP!

Scripts will be available to pick up at the Tower Ticket Office. Pick yours up as soon as you can and read it a couple of times before rehearsal starts!

Put the preliminary rehearsal schedule on your calendar IMMEDIATELY, and update it once you get the final schedule!



It's very IMPORTANT to fill out your paperwork NEATLY and LEGIBLY! You want the Director to be able to READ your phone number!

If you AREN'T Cast this time...

CONGRATULATIONS!

You worked hard, gave it your "all," and we really appreciate you coming down!

Remember, the more you audition, the better the Director gets to know you and your talent!

The Director will notify you by postcard after the casting is finalized -- remember that this doesn't mean the director didn't like you, but it's his/her job to pick a cast that "fits" together.

Please don't be discouraged -- just keep trying until you find the right role for you!

Sometimes it take a little time to make these important decisions. Please be patient. No one at the theatre will have a cast list until the Director has made all calls and sent out postcards!



Where to find AUDITION Notices

Online at WWW.GRCT.ORG

The Sunday Entertainment section of the *GR Press*

In the literature racks outside the GRCT Ticket Office

Scripts can be BORROWED

At the GRCT Tower Ticket Office on the main floor

Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm

\$10 CASH deposit required

Return script within a week and deposit is refunded

A limited number of scripts are available from 2 months prior until a week before auditions.

We regret that scripts may not be checked out the week before the audition for that show.

All scripts must be returned to the Ticket Office at least 24 hours before auditions start.