



A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO FORUM
AUDITION INFORMATION

Show Synopsis

The setting for *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* is a street in ancient Rome, in front of three adjacent houses. First is the brothel of Lycus, who takes his profession of peddler of flesh very seriously. Next is the house of Senex, his wife Domina, and their son Hero. Last is the house of Erronius who continually bemoans the unsolved kidnapping long ago of his son and daughter.

Pseudolus, a slave in the household Senex and the property of Hero, is anxious to obtain his freedom. To do so, he will resort to all kinds of trickery, abetted reluctantly by fellow-slave Hysterium. ("I live to grovel," he says complacently.) Pseudolus, who is a conniving and quick-witted rascal, has figured that the best way of bargaining for his freedom is to cater to the sex-hungers of the men of the household, especially Hero, who yearns for the beautiful Philia, a still virginal girl who is in basic training for a courtesan's career in the bawdy house run by Lycus. Hero agrees to give Pseudolus his freedom if he can help him win Philia.

Hero's aging father, however, lecherously wants to have a last fling and likewise has his eye on Philia. Thus, Pseudolus must also try to give him what he deserves. Finally, as the ultimate complication, Pseudolus is faced with the contracted fact that Philia has already been sold by Lycus to Miles Gloriosus, a soldier momentarily absent from Rome.

Forced to foil all the males who are after the lovely but dumb Philia, Pseudolus has to maneuver with resourcefulness and agility, and the action crosscuts from the chaste to the chase with dizzying speed. Guffaws keep erupting as the schemes of Pseudolus boomerang and get him ever deeper into a mire of deception, entangling everybody who comes near. When the vainglorious and licentious Miles Gloriosus returns to Rome and demands fulfillment of his contract for Philia, Pseudolus is in desperation and quickly declares that she is dead. To help him in this charade, he persuades Hysterium to don a wig and women's clothes and pretend to be the corpse.

The very much alive Philia, hearing her contracted owner has returned, dim wittedly thinks that old Senex is the man who has purchased her, so Senex excitedly tries to escape his battle-ax of a wife, Domina, in order to enjoy his good luck. In preparation for the anticipated encounter, he oils himself with sweet ointments and begins issuing a gurgling mating call.

The ever-funny comic bit of mistaken identities kicks into high gear as there are suddenly three Philias: the real one, Hysterium in his fright-wig and women's clothes, and Domina, who, in a similar wig, is attempting to snatch back her husband in the guise of the young courtesan.

Suddenly everybody is chasing everybody else, mistakenly and hilariously, as the wily Pseudolus keeps the three unsuspecting Philias from confronting each other.

In the end it is discovered that the real Philia and Miles Gloriosus are long-lost brother and sister, the kidnapped children of Erronius. Since they are siblings, Miles Gloriosus voids his contract for Philia, and she is found of sufficient high birth to become Hero's bride. And, of course, the scheming Pseudolus wins his freedom.

Artistic Team

Gillian Rodrigue, Director

Gillian is thrilled to be returning to the Director chair for EMP's Fall production of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Recently, Gillian had the privilege of directing *South Pacific* for EMP. Gillian has been performing on stage since the age of 12 and has been involved in all aspects of production on and off stage. Gillian also has had the privilege of directing EMP's *Anything Goes* and Theatre Unlimited's production of *Annie*. Gillian is excited for another great opportunity to direct and is looking forward to the auditions and all of the wonderful talent that will be out. Another bonus for Gillian is having the talented Andrew and David on crew!!!! Forum guarantees to be a fun production to work on and EMP has a fantastic production team in place!!!

Andrew Ascenzo, Musical Director

Andrew is excited to be returning to EMP as Musical Director for *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* after a wonderfully successful run of *South Pacific* in the fall of 2017. Andrew was most recently the Musical Director, Conductor, and Drummer for York University's spring production of *9 To 5 The Music*, and before that was Co-Musical Director and Conductor for Brampton Music Theatre's 2016 production of *West Side Story*. Andrew is a professional concert cellist and performs as a soloist, chamber musician with The Bedford Trio, and orchestra player in Toronto and throughout Canada. He is currently completing his Doctorate of Musical Arts degree at the University of Toronto as well as being an active performer and conductor. Andrew is currently the Musical Director and Principal Conductor of the Greater Toronto Youth Orchestra as well as a guest coach and conductor with several ensembles at U of T and throughout the city. A lover of musical theatre, Andrew has performed in pit orchestras for as long as he can remember as both a cellist and as a percussionist, and has seamlessly made the transition to becoming a Musical Director. Andrew is very excited to bring the luscious, and often silly, score of Stephen Sondheim to life with a full 17 piece Broadway-sized orchestra for this production and is thrilled to be collaborating with this wonderful artistic team for the next 6 months!

David Smith, Choreographer

David holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from the University of Windsor. He danced, acted, sang, and choreographed professionally for over 15 years, working with such great companies as The Stratford Festival, Drayton Entertainment, Disney Cruise Line, Smile Theatre, Sudbury Theatre Centre, and Persephone Theatre. David left the professional theatre world to pursue a new career and recently came back to the stage within the Toronto community theatre scene. He appeared last season in EMP's production of *South Pacific* and had such a great time he's come back for more – this time on the production side of the table.

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum is a fast paced musical farce with elements of vaudeville, burlesque, and good old fashioned musical theatre. All of these styles will be incorporated in to the show. While this isn't a show filled with huge dance numbers, there will be a lot of movement. David has had the opportunity to work as a choreographer for both community theatre and professional companies and understands (and welcomes) the challenge of working with performers who don't have a lot of dance training, so don't be intimidated if dancing isn't your forte! David work's patiently with performers to ensure that they understand and, more importantly, are comfortable with the moves.

There are 6 great roles in the show that do require some dance experience and these are the Courtesans – all great cameo roles with featured dance solos.

If you've been involved in an EMP production before then you know how much fun it is and know all about the wonderful people involved. This show is going to be a ton of fun both on and off stage. We hope to see you at the auditions.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals: Monday & Wednesday Evenings, 7:15pm -10:30pm
Sunday Afternoons, 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM
1st rehearsal Sunday, July 29th – 1:15pm – 5:00 pm

Rehearsals will take place in Etobicoke.

Note: not all cast members are called for all rehearsals, but must be available if called.

Note: it is possible that additional rehearsals could be called from time to time.

Performances: 8 shows over 2 weekends: Evening performances are at 8pm (6pm call);
Matinees are at 2pm (12pm call)
October 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, (Evenings)
October 21, 27, 28 (Matinees)
Performances will take place at Meadowvale Theatre, Mississauga.

Other information: All members of the cast are required to become members of EMP and pay membership fees. Membership Fees are as follows: \$40 single membership/\$60 family membership. In addition, all cast members are expected to help out in other areas of the production *from time to time* with activities such as flyer drops, set construction and painting, etc. All cast members assist in move in and strike after the final performance.

All cast will be required to have a pair of “Green Patched” Work Shoes/Boots for move in to the theatre and move out. Boots can be purchased at several locations i.e. Wamart or even better, ask a theatre friend... we are sure they will have them!!!

Audition & Call-back Dates

- Sunday, April 29 – 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
- Monday, April 30 – 7:30 PM – 10:30 PM
- Tuesday, May 1 – 7:30 PM – 10:30 PM
- Call Back Date – Sunday, May 13 – 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
- Location: Royal Canadian Legion, 110 Jutland Rd, Etobicoke.

Audition Format & Requirements:

- Prepare a SHORT monologue, 60 seconds in length (max).
 - You may be asked to do some basic improvisational work with the monologue.
- Please prepare a short musical excerpt(s) of 1 minute or less that demonstrates your vocal range and ability.

It is recommended that your selection reflects the genre and style of Forum. Repertoire by George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Leonard Bernstein, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Lerner & Loewe, and similar composers are good starting point. Though it is not required you can choose to sing a song from the Forum if you wish. An accompanist will be provided at the audition.

If auditioning for a Principal Role please prepare a short musical excerpt of 1 ballad and 1 upbeat musical theatre style piece.

If auditioning for the ensemble roles (the Courtesans or the Proteans) please prepare one number only.

- Everyone auditioning will participate in a movement / dance audition. The group audition will occur in the middle of each audition session. If your audition time is set during the first part of the session, you will be asked to wait in the audition location until after the dance portion. If your audition time is set during the last part of the session, you will be advised about your arrival time for the dance audition.
 - Please bring comfortable clothing and appropriate footwear.

Principal Singing Roles

PLEASE NOTE – AGE RANGES ARE SUGGESTED RANGES

CAST SIZE – 18

Prologus: An actor who introduces the play, Prologus then changes into the character of Pseudolus. **PSEUDOLUS: A2 - High G Baritone, Age Range 30-55** A slave of Hero, Pseudolus is sly, conniving and willing to do anything for his freedom. Must have an impeccable comic sense.

HERO: A2 - F#4 Tenor, Age Range 18-25 The handsome son of Senex and Domina. He is an innocent master, lovesick juvenile who schemes with Pseudolus to win the hand (and body) of Philia.

PHILIA: A3 - G5 Soprano, Age Range 18-25 A virgin in the house of Marcus Lycus, and Hero's love interest. An ingenue who doesn't know how funny she really is. A beautiful slow witted

HYSTERIUM: A2 - G4 Tenor, Age Range 25-35 Nervous and hapless slave of Senex & Domina and unwitting accomplice in Pseudolus' schemes. He is the frantic and frenetic straw boss of all slaves in the household.

SENEX: B flat-G flat Baritone, Age Range 40s-60s A henpecked, sardonic Roman Senator with a wandering eye - attracted to wine, women, and song, Senex is the perennially henpecked husband. Hero's father and the aging master of the house.

MARCUS LYCUS: A2 - F4 Baritone, Age Range 30s-50s The owner of the brothel, Lycus is the snaky, slimy, lecherous procurer of courtesans.

DOMINA: A3 - F#5 Mezzo-Soprano, Age Range 40s-50s The battle axe Wife of Senex. A manipulative, shrewish woman loathed by even her husband.

ERRONIUS: A2 - F4 Baritone, Age Range 60s-70s (can be younger and aged) Senex's elderly neighbor, a befuddled old man who is partially blind and always confused. He's spent the past twenty years searching for his two children, kidnapped in infancy by pirates.

MILES GLORIOSUS: A2 - F4 Bass Baritone, Age Range 30s-40s A captain in the Roman army to whom Marcus Lycus has promised Philia. A braggart of the highest order, he is, in his own words, his "own ideal", pompous, handsome and strong.

THE COURTESANS (6 women) Age Range 18-30s Slaves in the House of Senex. Funny and sexy!

- Tintinabula: One of Lycus's courtesans, Tintinabula has "the face of an idol . . . the arms of a willow tree . . . and the pelvis of a camel."
- Panacea: Another of Lycus's courtesans, Panacea has "a face that holds a thousand promises, and a body that stands behind each promise."
- The Geminae: Twin courtesans, the Geminae are, according to Lycus: "A matched pair.
- Either one a divinely assembled woman, together an infinite number of mathematical
- Possibilities."

- Vibrata: Another of Lycus's courtesans, Vibrata is "exotic as a desert bloom . . . wondrous as a flamingo . . . lithe as a tigress . . . for the man whose interest is wildlife."
- Gymnasia: Another of Lycus's courtesans, Gymnasia is "a giant stage on which a thousand dramas can be played."
- **THE PROTEANS (3 males): Age Range is *flexible*** Choristers who play multiple roles (slaves, citizens, soldiers and eunuchs). They accompany Pseudolus in "Comedy Tonight" and other numbers within the Prologus

Ensemble Vocal Information

Sopranos – Middle C to G above C'
Altos – Middle C to D above Middle C
Tenors – D below to A above Middle C
Baritones – D below to D above Middle C

Booking An Audition:

To book an audition contact Danielle Amoroso, Producer at daniamoroso25@gmail.com

Individuals will be advised if they are called back for a role (or roles) after the initial auditions. Arrangements will be made to get call back material to those chosen, most likely by e-mail. *Please ensure your e-mail contact information is accurate at time of audition!*

All principal roles and potentially some supporting/featured roles will require a call back. Casting for all roles will be announced as soon as possible after call backs. (See also call back requirements, below). All of those auditioning will be notified via email or phone (their choice) as to their casting status as soon as possible.

Please arrive for your audition in sufficient time to get settled and to fill out the necessary paperwork (audition information sheet). Bring a Theatre Resume & photograph if available (preferred, but not mandatory).

**The first opportunity to book an audition is at Information Night on April 8th.
After Information Night on April 9th please contact:
Danielle Amoroso, Producer at 647-402-9002 or email at: daniamoroso25@gmail.com**

Call-back Requirements:

Those called back for **principal roles** will be asked to prepare specific musical selections and sides from the show and will be given a cold reading from the show upon your arrival at call backs. Some performers may also be called back to do a dance audition.

If you are auditioning for one of the principal roles, please indicate on the audition information sheet (obtained at the sign-up or at the audition) if you are willing to be considered for another role IF you are not given a call back for the principal role(s) you indicate.

Only people who are required for call-back auditions will be notified by phone and materials required for the call-back will be forwarded by e-mail. *Please ensure your e-mail contact information is accurate at time of audition!*

All others not required for call-backs will be considered for non-principal roles. No casting for any roles will be determined prior to the end of the auditions (call-backs) on May 13th.

Call backs will occur on Sunday, May 13th and you will be notified of specific times when you are advised of the call back.

People who cannot attend their call back cannot be considered for the role(s).

FORUM – REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Rehearsals will be held at Royal Canadian Legion, 110 Jutland Rd. Etobicoke and will commence Sunday, July 29, 2018.

Rehearsals Are Held: Monday & Wednesday Evenings, 7:15pm -10:30pm
Sunday Afternoons, 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Note: not all cast members are called for all rehearsals, but must be available if called. A detailed schedule will be distributed to cast prior to first rehearsal. There may be additional rehearsals called from time to time.

Rehearsal Dates

JULY 2018	AUGUST 2018	SEPTEMBER 2018	OCTOBER 2018
Sun, Jul 29	Wed, Aug 1	Sun, Sept 2	Mon, Oct 1
Mon, Jul 30	Sun, Aug 12	Wed, Sept 5	Wed, Oct 3
	Mon, Aug 13	Sun, Sept 9	Sun, Oct 7
	Wed, Aug 15	Mon, Sept 10	Tues, Oct 9
	Mon, Aug 20	Wed, Sept 12	Wed, Oct 10
	Wed, Aug 22	Sun, Sept 16	
	Sun, Aug 26	Mon, Sept 17	
	Mon, Aug 27	Wed, Sept 19	
	Sun, Aug 29	Sun, Sept 23	
		Mon, Sept 24	
		Wed, Sept 26	
		Sun, Sept 30	

THE FOLLOWING DATES/REHEARSALS WILL BE HELD AT MEADOWVALE THEATRE, MISSISSAUGA:

Sat, Oct 13th – Move into the theatre – **timing and details will be provided closer to date**

Sat, Oct 13th – Sitzprobe – 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Sun, Oct 14th – Rehearsal Time TBC

Mon, Oct 15th – Scene Changes/Spacing – no orchestra

Tue, Oct 16th – Cue to Cue – no orchestra but rehearsal pianist

Wed, Oct 17th – Full Run – Orchestra

Thurs, Oct 18th – Dress Rehearsal

SHOW DATES – CURTAIN 8:00 PM

Fri, Oct 19th – 6:00 PM CALL

Sat, Oct 20th – 6:00 PM CALL

Sun, Oct 21st – 12:00 PM CALL

Thurs, Oct 25th – 6:00 PM CALL

Fri, Oct 26th – 6:00 PM CALL

Sat, Oct 27th – 12:00 PM CALL

Sat, Oct 27th – 6:00 PM CALL

Sun, Oct 28th – 12:00 PM CALL

PLEASE DO NOT MAKE PLANS FOR THE EVENING OF OCT 28th AS EVERYONE IS REQUIRED TO HELP STRIKE THE SET AND ASSIST AT GETTING EVERYTHING BACK TO THE STORAGE UNIT.