



Audition Guide

14th-17th February 2024 - John McIntosh Arts Centre, London Oratory School, Fulham

Show Summary

Fame is a stage musical based on the 1980 musical film of the same name, with book by Jose Fernandez, music by Steve Margoshes and lyrics by Jacques Levy. Conceived and developed by David De Silva.

Fame the Musical follows the highs and lows of the final class of New York City's illustrious High School for the Performing Arts from their first year in 1980 to their graduation in 1984. It tells the story of several of the students, depicting their toils, triumphs and tempestuous relationships. We see their struggles with ambition, fame, and self-confidence through the eyes of students such as Carmen, the ambitious dancer obsessed with fame, serious actor Nick, dancer Mabel who is judged for her non-conventional body type, and the talented dancer Tyrone, who struggles desperately with dyslexia. The show does not shy away from complex issues, such as racial prejudice, drug abuse, and sexual exploitation, as the young performers explore the realities of striving for a career in show business.

Fame the Musical is a worldwide success that continues to be performed by growing generations of performers. It provides a unique opportunity to display a diverse range of talents on the one stage, including dancing, singing, acting, rapping and musicianship.

Our Production

For this production we want to transport the audience to 1980's New York. Period costume and a set of decking and scaffolding will create the gritty interiors of the school. With minimal props and set to distract the audience, this show is all about acting through song and dance.

We are hoping for a big cast of around 30 people, to take on the roles of the students and teachers. We want our cast to be as diverse as New York City, so strongly encourage people to audition for any role that speaks to them, not just the roles that 'match' their casting.

Workshops

An information evening and workshop will be held on **Thursday 21st September** in St Barnabas Church Hall, Lavenham Road, Southfields, SW18 5EP at 7.30pm. This will give an idea of the vibe of the show and will aim to get the theatre community excited about the production. Please see the Cygnet Players social media pages or contact info@cygnetplayers.com for more details.

Workshops will teach a song from the show, the group dance audition piece, and the additional dance student routine. The workshops are not a pre-requisite to audition; there will be recording of

the song and dance to practice with at home, but attending will be a useful environment to get comfortable with the material.

Audition Information

Auditions will be held **on Saturday 30th September, times 6-10pm** and **Tuesday 3rd October from 7.30pm** at St Barnabas Church Hall, SW18 5EP.

Please fill in this audition form to secure your audition slot: <https://forms.gle/geTHt7LTZjp5WxoJ6>

You will be given a group dance time slot, which will last 20 minutes, and an individual time slot for your singing and acting audition. Please note your individual slot may be before or after the group dance slot and please make sure you warm up in advance. If you have trouble attending any of the available slots, please contact cygnetspresentsfame24@gmail.com to discuss options.

A few days ahead of auditions we will email you with your specific time slots. Please check your spam folder!

There is an audition fee of £10 if you are not a current paid-up member of Cygnet Players. This can be paid at audition in cash, or by card, or please let us know if you wish to make a bank transfer in advance. If you are successful and are cast, you must then become a member of the society. Your £10 audition fee will be offset against your show fee. If you are already a member, you will not need to pay an audition fee.

Membership is £35 a year if you pay as a one-off, or only £30 when you set up a standing order (we can provide you with a standing order form to fill out). This lets you audition for both our musicals within that year, and our annual play. It also gives you members' rates to our social events.

Recalls for larger roles will be held on **Thursday 5th October from 19:30** at St Barnabas Church Hall.

Character descriptions

- * **Nick Piazza:** An actor who has had some small screen success, but dreams of being a serious classical actor. Played by a male presenting actor. Playing age 16-18
- * **Serena Katz:** A "shy" actress. She lacks confidence at the start of the show, but is very talented and her confidence and talent develops throughout the show. Played by a female presenting actor. Playing age 16-18
- * **Joe "José" Vegas:** Spanish acting student who is the comic of the show. Comes from a bad home and is dealt the bad hand. He uses jokes and comedy to hide his true feelings, and does not handle his sexual feelings well, either. He is also considered a bad boy and doesn't take things seriously enough for the other students. Played by a male presenting actor. Playing age 16-18
- * **Carmen Diaz:** A triple-threat dance major. Sassy, confident and determined to make it big. She is obsessed with Fame and confident in her abilities. She leaves school and moves to L.A. during the middle of 11th grade after an "agent" promises to make her a star. Played by a female presenting actor. Playing age 16-18
- * **Tyrone Jackson:** A hip hop dancer who is talented but comes from a deprived area. He comes up against the teachers, due to his dyslexia by not completing school work and copying assignments. Played by a male presenting actor. Playing age 16-18

* **Iris Kelly:** A talented ballet dancer who is believed to be extremely wealthy although it is later revealed that she is not. She appears stuck up but is actually insecure. Played by a female presenting actor. Playing age 16-18

* **Mabel Washington:** A dancer and singer who is not the traditional slim dancer. The dance teacher is often commenting on her weight. Mabel has to decide between her love of food and dance. Played by a female presenting actor. Playing age 16-18

* **Schlomo Metzenbaum:** A quiet, saintly, classical musician, who sets up the rock band and takes on the role of caretaker to his classmates. Schlomo comes from a musical background, with a father who is a famous violinist. Schlomo is fed up with the strain of being expected to do well and wishes to rebel. Played by a male presenting actor. Playing age 16-18. Ideally would play an instrument

* **Grace "Lambchops" Lamb:** A "rock chick and tomboy" and the drummer for Schlomo's band. Does not take school "seriously". Played by a female presenting actor. Playing age 16-18. Ideally would play an instrument

* **Goodman "Goody" King:** A musician who is in Schlomo's band. Sarcastic yet sensitive at times. Played by a male presenting actor. Playing age 16-18. Ideally would play an instrument

* **Miss Esther Sherman:** A strict, old-fashioned and academic English teacher who loves her students, despite the fact that she comes down hard on them. Played by a female presenting actor. Playing age 40+

* **Miss Greta Bell:** A dance teacher who likes different styles of dance and is "protective" of the students. Played by a female presenting actor. Playing age 35+

* **Mr. Myers:** The drama teacher. He is firm but encouraging to the students and wishes to get the best out of them. Played by a male presenting actor. Playing age 40+

* **Mr. Sheinkopf:** A Music tutor who loves classical music but does not like "rock and roll". Played by a male presenting actor. Playing age 50+

Additional roles:

Drama students: The students who study drama under Mr Myers. These students will require strong acting and singing skills. Playing age 16-18

Dance students: The students who study dance under Miss Bell. These students will lead the large dance numbers and have scenes showcasing dance skills in ballet and jazz set in class or the locker room. Please note anyone auditioning for one of the dance students needs to perform an additional dance routine in auditions. Playing age 16-18

Music students: The students who study music under Mr Sheinkopf. These students will require strong acting and singing skills. Playing an instrument is beneficial but not required. Playing age 16-18

Note on gender of parts:

In Fame, we are generally keeping the parts to their originally written gender in the production. However, we are open to all gender presentations for each part and will rework them as necessary to make sense of the script and narration of the story.

Some roles will allow for a straight swap such as making the two male teachers female or non-binary presenting for example, however the named student roles might require some adaptation.

Note on disability accommodation: Some parts require technical dancing but we can accommodate performers with physical and other disabilities, so we encourage such auditionees. We ask that if you require any additional support for your audition that you let us know in advance so we can accommodate you fully.

Note on accents: Preferably American, but happy to hear all accents and to change it if there is a strong offering and we like it!

Understudies

We will be considering casting understudies for the main parts (details on which roles to be announced) from the ensemble. There will not be an allocated show for understudies to perform in and this is just a precaution, but you will have the chance to attend rehearsals and receive training for principal roles.

Audition Pieces

You can audition for more than one part, but please audition with the pieces from your preferred role. All audition pieces and dance videos will be added to this drive in the lead-up to the auditions https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dyeZh7L_AAKZGjHu1GSUegocck1fW6K1?usp=drive_link

Dancing

Everybody auditioning for the show will need to learn and perform the group dance audition. This will be taught at the pre-audition meeting and videos will be available after the first meeting to practise at home. Auditionees will perform the routine in small groups, nobody will need to dance on their own in auditions.

If you want to go for one of the "Dance Students" which will be the technically strongest dancers in the show, you will need to prepare a second routine as well and indicate this on your form.

Due to the nature of the show there will be a lot of full company numbers involving all students so all students will need to be able to do basic choreography as a minimum. The teachers will not need to be strong dancers but will participate in a few numbers including the finale.

Acting/Dialogue

Audition pieces for each character are available on the drive. Someone on the audition panel will read in the lines of the other characters in the piece. If you are auditioning for a non named student role, you will not need to prepare dialogue but try to show character in your singing and dancing audition.

Singing

Audition pieces for each character will be available on the drive including an indication of which part(s) the song is for; recall songs will also be added. If you are going for a solo singing role (named part) or would like to be considered for a solo line, please prepare one of the principal pieces (the

most relevant for the part(s) you are auditioning for) plus the ensemble piece. If you are just going for the ensemble, feel free to just prepare the ensemble piece.

Rehearsals and Shows

Rehearsals will be on **Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 19:30-22:00**, and from January on **Sunday afternoons/evenings (exact times TBC)**, at St Barnabas Church Hall, Lavenham Road, Southfields, SW18 5EP. The first rehearsal will be Tuesday 10th October. The rehearsal schedule has not been fully formed yet and will partly depend on cast availability, so please let us know your availability as accurately as possible on the audition form as it will be difficult to accommodate any changes after this point.

Show week at the venue is from **Sunday 11th to Saturday 17th February 2024** with full cast called. Please note times are subject to change.

- Sunday 11th February – Get-in and Sitzprobe: all cast required 9am-10pm
- Monday 12th – Technical rehearsal, Time TBA-Midnight
- Tuesday 13th – Dress Rehearsal, 5pm-11pm
- Wednesday 14th-Friday 16th – Shows, call time 6pm-11pm (7:30pm show)
- Saturday 17th – Shows, call time 10am-Midnight (12pm show, 5pm show, get-out)

There will also be some promotional events such as flyering and live performances for cast. More details on these will be given later – each member of the cast will be expected to attend at least one promotional event, as these are vital for making sure you have big audiences to perform to!

Show Fee

In amateur dramatics, because we are self-funded and doing this for fun, a show fee is paid by participants to cover all the costs of the show – things like performance rights, venue hire, scenery, costumes, lighting, insurance and lots more! For Fame, the fee will be **£110**.

Payment Plans

The cost of living has risen sharply recently and we don't want financial circumstances to be a barrier to participation. If you are concerned about the show fee or membership cost, or due to current circumstances you are unable to pay the full amounts upfront, please speak to the Cygnet Players committee in confidence to arrange a payment plan by emailing info@cygnetplayers.com.

About Cygnet Players

Cygnet Players is a young and vibrant company based in South West London. We rehearse in Southfields and put on shows in and around Putney. We perform two musicals and a play every year, as well as putting on various concerts and other events. We also have regular social events, which are great opportunities to meet and catch up with other Cygnets. We always welcome new members, so if this is your first show with us – welcome to the family!

For more information about the company in general, have a look at our website at www.cygnetplayers.com or email info@cygnetplayers.com.

You can also find us on social media:

- Facebook – www.facebook.com/cygnetplayers

- Instagram – [@cygnetplayers](#)
- TikTok- [@cygnetplayers](#)

Diversity and Inclusion

Cygnet Players strives to create an accessible and welcoming environment for members and audiences. We are committed to diversity and inclusion within our casting and storytelling to ensure there are opportunities for all people, from every walk of life, to take part.

As part of this, we are committed to a conscious casting process; making conscious decisions about how a show can be cast, rather than following the “traditional” model that repeats whatever has been done before. We are always open to non-traditional casting, and conscious artistic decisions will be made whenever race, ethnicity, gender or other factors are a key component of the story or integral to the relationships between characters. Where this is the case, it will be clearly highlighted in character breakdowns.

Cygnets is a member of the South West London amateur theatre societies’ Inclusion, Diversity, Equality and Accessibility Group (IDEA): a group of five societies working towards improved diversity and inclusion in amdram.

We are open to feedback to improve our processes and create a warm and welcoming atmosphere that creates opportunities for people of all ethnicities, gender identities and physical abilities.

If you have any suggestions, feedback or ideas please speak to a member of the Committee or Production Team, or email swamdramidea@gmail.com. It will always be treated in the strictest of confidence but if you wish to provide feedback anonymously, please fill in this form.

Meet the team

Phoebe Fleetham (Director): Fame has been one of Phoebe’s favourite musicals, since she saw it in the west end nearly 20 years ago. She was lucky enough, and obsessed enough, to see it nearly 20 times (so she is pretty familiar with it). Phoebe has a 2:1 from the University of Kent in Theatre Studies & a Music Theatre Diploma from Trinity. Directing credits include The Wedding Singer, A Wicked Christmas Carol, I Love You, Your Perfect, Now Change (Playing Around Players), The WLOS 90th Anniversary Cabaret (WLOS), Kiss Me Kate, A Midsummers Night Dream (Cygnet Players), Arcadia (T24), Rhinoceros (Bucks Rock staff show). Producer credits include Young Frankenstein, Cygnets Speakeasy & Let’s do it (Cygnet Players).

Ashley Harvey (Musical Director): Ashley trained as a classical pianist in Manchester. She read Natural Sciences at University College London graduating with first class honours. She returned to music to pursue a career as a musical director. Since then she has worked in and around London on a variety of pro, amdram and cabaret shows.

Kim Schenkelaars (Choreographer): Trained in ballet, tap, jazz and contemporary from 5 years old, and a dance teacher and choreographer for the last 15 years. Currently choreographing Mayhem’s Anything Goes. Previous London choreography credits; Sister Act (2022), All Shook Up (2019), Spring Awakening (2019), Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (2016) plus PLOS pantos (2021, 2018).

The team are ably supported by the brilliant and experienced **Sally Bourne** as producer.

Contact

Please contact cygnetspresentsfame24@gmail.com with any questions.

Good luck with your audition!