

## AUDITION INFORMATION

**“Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike”** is a comedy by Christopher Durang (author of “Sister Mary Ignatius Explains it All For You” and “The Actor’s Nightmare”). The play won the **Tony Award** in 2013 for **Best Play**, originally starring Sigourney Weaver (a school friend of Durang’s) and David Hyde Pierce.

Background - The play tells the story of three siblings, all in their mid50’s, each feeling some regret about how their lives turned out and some unease about the future at this point in middle age. The theme touches on the plays of Anton Chekhov in a general sense (but the audience - or the actors - need no background information to fully enjoy the play.) They are named for Russian characters because their parents were college professors who enjoyed doing community theatre.

The Play - Vanya and Sonia (who was adopted) live a quiet country life in their family home in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, having never worked and spent many years caring for their elderly parents, recently passed. Vanya is gay and dabbles at writing plays, Sonia is moody and harbors regret at never having “lived”. Their sister, Masha, who is a movie star and pays the bills, comes to visit (with her boy-toy, “Spike”) and tells them she intends to sell the house. Their cleaning woman, Cassandra, who is psychic and prone to predictions of doom, sees the writing on the wall and attempts to stop Masha, using voodoo. And Spike, while romping about the grounds in his boxer briefs, brings back Nina, a fresh young hope-to-be-actress in her 20s, thrilled to meet Masha, the less-than-thrilled movie star in her 50s.

The play centers around two events, a local costume party-turned-bust for Masha, who had planned to appear as Snow White, with an entourage of dwarves backing her up (but only Vanya agrees to go along with it - Spike goes as the prince and Sonia goes as “The Evil Queen as played by Maggie Smith...on her way to the Oscars.”) Later Vanya hosts an impromptu reading of his latest one-act play, which turns disastrous when Spike keeps texting someone, driving Vanya into a rage against modern technology.

Masha sends Spike packing when it’s revealed that he’s been texting (and sleeping with) her personal assistant back in L.A. Putting aside her pride, Masha decides accept a movie offer playing a dreaded “mother role”, just to get money to keep the house. In a resigned, yet surprisingly positive conclusion, the three face the future with some hope (Sonia even snagged a date at the party) and some real connection to one another.

***Vanya** - 50s, gay, quiet, gentle, and wry. A reader, with literary ambitions. A bit cautious around Sonia’s moods. Resigned to his life, but often wishes for a simpler time, like the suburban 1950s in which he grew up.*

**Sonia** - 50s, moody, sometimes discontent, sometimes manic or anxious. She regrets never having “lived” and harbors a desire for glamour and romance that she feels life has denied her. Jealous of Masha. At several points Sonia does a workable imitation of MAGGIE SMITH in the movie CALIFORNIA SUITE, please prepare to read some dialogue “as Dame Maggie” when auditioning. Clips are on YouTube.

**Masha** - 50s, self-involved Hollywood actress, always performing and always “on”, short attention span if it’s not “about her”, her regret at never having been taken seriously as an actress is now mostly an affectation. Terrified of aging and losing “star” status.

**Spike** – 20s, 30s. Good-looking (and knows it), hunky, dim-witted. Amoral Hollywood wannabe actor (he was almost cast in “Entourage 2”) who struts about in boxer briefs when he feels like it.

**Cassandra** - (any age) - Cleaning woman. Mercurial psychic and voodoo practitioner. Alternately visionary or down-to-earth. Often feels the put-upon domestic servant.

**Nina** - 20s. An attractive young girl, the relative of a neighbor, who dreams of becoming a serious actress. Eager to please, enthusiastic and sincere.

*Non-traditional, racial, ethnic casting opportunities will be considered.*

**The Director** – Jim Webber has directed “City of Angels”, “The Philadelphia Story”, “Boeing Boeing” and “The Tale of The Allergist’s Wife” for Community Players. “Cabaret” and “Clue” for Majestic. “Good People” for M&M Productions. At NHTI, he also directed “Last Night of Ballyhoo” and “Skin of Our Teeth”, “Crimes of the Heart” and other plays.

**INFORMATION NIGHT: Monday, Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>, 7PM Players Studio**

**AUDITIONS: Mon. & Tues, Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>, 7PM – 8:30PM Players Studio**

**CALL BACKS (if needed): Weds. Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>, 7PM (by appointment) Players Studio**

**PERFORMANCES: February 16, 17 & 18, 2018**

Director – Jim Webber

Producers – Barbara Woodman, Allwynne Fine

Costumes – Joan Vick

Lighting – Jack Duncan

Props – Kendra West-Senor

Master Carpenter – Rick Silverberg

Stage Manager – Beck Bryson

ASM – Ron Bryson

Questions: Contact Jim Webber at [jbw1026@aol.com](mailto:jbw1026@aol.com) or (603) 669-9975.