

# AUDITION TIPS and GUIDELINES

These audition tips and guidelines comprise some thoughts on what helps to make an audition a less daunting proposition and how to stack the odds in favour of a successful outcome. Please don't take them as exhaustive nor authoritative - they're simply some observations of the author.

Whilst many things that follow are specific to MUGSS' 2004-5 Ruddigore auditions, many of the suggestions will apply to any audition.

## **DON'T PANIC!**

The auditions are there to give **you** a chance to show the auditioning panel what you can do.

Whilst auditions are inherently stressful for many people, the panel do not want you to panic – they want you to do well. If you relax and enjoy it, so will the panel.

You will not be "marked" or "scored" per se. The object of the auditions is to select the people who, *in combination*, will best be able to create a coherent, convincing and successful show.

As well as the talents you present during the audition, a big consideration is your potential. How well you respond during the audition will also be noted.

It is highly unlikely that your audition will be perfect but you CAN stack the odds in your favour!

**Simply, do some preparation...**

## **CONTENT**

Find out what you are going to be asked to do. For the forthcoming auditions, everyone will need to perform a piece of **dialogue**. Additionally, those auditioning for singing roles will need to **sing two pieces**; for the singers there will also be a brief "range check" to see how high and low you can sing effectively.

## **DIALOGUE**

You will be asked to speak one of the pieces of dialogue depending on the character for which you are auditioning.

## **ROLE SELECTION**

Do some research and see to which part you think you would be most suited. There's some information on the website as to the characters. Check out the MUGSS website [www.mugss.org/show/auditions](http://www.mugss.org/show/auditions) and thereafter [www.mugss.org/show/auditions/pieces](http://www.mugss.org/show/auditions/pieces). You can download a full libretto from this website <http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/>

Going for certain parts will require you to prepare certain sections of dialogue. If you have no particular part in mind (and would like to be considered for anything that might be considered appropriate) then choose the piece appropriate to the most significant part that you would be happy playing (you might like to discuss this before planning your audition).

You **MUST** do some preparation (however good you deem yourself to be)!

## **LEARN IT...**

Do not rely on reading it just before you go in (or worse, reading it "cold" at the audition). You will **NOT** be convincing. Ideally you should learn the words - it's always much more impressive to a panel because it shows that

- (a) you have the ability to learn them, which is reassuring and
- (b) that you have the dedication, which is encouraging.

Furthermore, make sure you know what the other characters say in response.

Keep it snappy and don't allow big gaps/silences. If you need to, then by all means keep the words "to hand" as an aide-memoire, but if you end up simply reading them out, you will not do yourself justice (the panel assumes you learned to read some time ago!).

Word-perfect is nice, but it's far more important that you are convincing.

At the audition one of the panel will read-in the other parts as necessary.

### **DELIVERY...**

There are no right and wrong ways to deliver the lines and you can do it how you like providing it's convincing. That said, I am far more interested on someone who auditions using their own voice rather than in any "affected" fashion^ . I would prefer to be able to develop a character with someone rather than fight against a preconceived perception.

The one thing you absolutely **MUST** do is make yourself heard. In a show, you are telling a story - there is no point in wasting yours and the audiences time if they can't hear you. **BE LOUD!**

*^ the single exception being the part of "Richard Dauntless" – in this case I would like to hear first no accent and then an attempt at a Cornish/West Country accent.*

### **PRACTISING...**

Make sure you practice the dialogue

- (a) OUT LOUD
- (b) strongly and
- (c) with someone else (several different people if possible so that you don't get used to the same response).

Do this as many times as possible before you bring it to the audition.

### **SINGING**

Think about what you are going to sing. And prepare it!

You will be asked to **sing the chorus line** that you have learned in rehearsal so far from "Welcome Gentry". You'll find it in your chorus copies.

Additionally you will need to **sing something of your own choice**. A minute or two will be enough. Choose something with which you are very, VERY familiar. It can be anything at all - from a hymn tune to a rugby song, from the Chilean national anthem to Freddie Mercury, something G&S or something Pink Floyd. Having said that, do give a passing thought to the word "appropriate"!

Just bear in mind that your performance needs to be convincing.

Think how you can make it entertaining. What can you do to engage the attention of the panel (without distracting from your singing, that is!!!!)? **Make sure you learn whatever it is you plan to perform.** You could, of course, use words/music but it will not do you many favours. Don't worry if it is not perfect, just "sell" it. It's better to get it 75% right with 100% delivery than vice versa!

Also don't worry if you're stopped mid-verse - it doesn't always take long to assess a singing voice - the panel may not need to hear all of your song. Don't assume that this is because it's bad.

At some point we may do a range-check. Don't worry if this goes too high and/or too low for you - that's the whole point of it! Remember that your range is your own personal trait; everyone's is different - some are bigger than others but none are right or wrong. It is likely that everyone has a range suitable for at least one of the parts.

You will be accompanied on the piano if you provide the sheet music. **HOWEVER**, don't bring some ridiculous concert-pianist-virtuoso accompaniment and expect it to be note perfect! (You are entitled to bring your own personal Vladimir Ashkenazy, of course...)

## **FORMAT OF THE AUDITIONS**

The auditions will take about ten minutes. You can do your songs and dialogue in any order you like.

After you do the dialogue you might be asked to redo some bits in differing ways to assess versatility and how responsive you can be to direction.

Naturally, the panel reserve the right to amend this format as they see fit. We will try as far as possible to run to schedule, but...

## **OUTCOMES**

The results of the auditions will be conveyed to all those who audition as soon as possible after the parts have been cast. This will hopefully be after the Tuesday recalls but this depends on the roles being successfully cast by this stage. Please make sure that the panel have your phone number!

## **FEEDBACK**

The auditioning panel will be happy to discuss your audition afterwards. Realistically this needs to be done before the panel forgets who you are (!) but not so soon that the panel is still reeling from the process.

## **FINALLY**

Remember, not everyone will get a part, but have a go, because you never know. If you are unsuccessful then do not be too upset. It is not an indication of any lack of talent, ability or suitability, but more that the panel thinks that (for this production) someone else is for various reasons more suited to the part.

## **SUMMARY**

# **Prepare – Learn – Practice – Relax – Deliver – BE LOUD**

Then Keep Your Fingers Crossed!!!

## ***VERY FINAL HINT***

*You cannot sing your best if you're feeling the affects from a night of alcohol...! If you must, then you must, but think moderation!*

GOOD LUCK!!!

**Pete England**

Director

MUGSS – “Ruddigore” 2004/5