

AUDITION INFORMATION
A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM
Desert Foothills Theater
January 19 – 21, 2023
Location: The Holland Center, 34250 N. 60th St. Scottsdale 85266

Audition 1 -Choose a ten minute time slot on either day. (Sign Up Genius)
Thursday, January 19th, 7:00pm- 9pm window (Song of your choice, cold readings)
Friday, January 20th, 7:00pm- 9pm window (Song of your choice, cold readings)

Audition 2 Callbacks if invited

Saturday, January 21st, 10:00AM (Show song as requested by director and readings)

- *Character and plot information* which may assist your audition preparation.
- Please share widely and encourage your friends and contacts to think about auditioning.
- All ages are apparent not actual.
- You Tube link for investigation of characters and Songs: youtu.be/-NPY4M7QUug

Male Roles

Pseudolus – Baritone

A Roman slave, owned by Hero, who seeks to win his freedom by helping his young master win the heart of Philia. Quick-witted, scheming, childlike spirit. His name means “fake, liar” Most comedic and central role, timing is everything. Sings partial solos in 8 songs, delivery and enthusiasm and the ability to “sell” the songs are far more important than a beautiful voice. Some choreography — likely to be more comic than technical and adapted to the actor.
Age: 30 to 50

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

READING PSEUDOLUS 1, 2 and 3 (1 is a monologue)

Pseudolus 1 _ Prologus

Hero 1 & Pseudolus 2

Erronius & Hysterium 2 & Pseudolus 3

Callbacks may include this song for this character

M8_Pseudolus 2

Hero – Tenor

The young son of Senex and Domina. He falls in love with Philia and agrees to give Pseudolus his freedom if he can help Hero woo her. Practical, privileged, romantic. Singing role with some dance. Of all the characters he is the most traditional leading man type. He is also a virgin and must impart a naivety. Age: 20 to 35

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

Hero 1 & Pseudolus 2

Philia 1 & Hero 2

Callbacks may include this song for this character

M11_Hero _ Senex

Senex: (Latin for Old Man)

Singing role. A henpecked, sardonic Roman senator living in a less fashionable suburb of Rome. Plausibly Hero’s father. When his domineering wife is away, he enjoys believing the mistaken idea that he can be the object of the young virgin’s affection. Age: 45 to 70 (Age related to age of actors cast as Hero and Domina).

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

Senex 1 & Domina 1 & Hysterium 1

Senex 2 & Philia 2

Callbacks may include this song for this character

M9_Senex

Hysterium – Baritone

The chief slave in the House of Senex. Believes he is in control, but is actually Pseudolus' puppet to carry out his schemes. Anxious, conservative, loyal. He desperately wants everything to be in order. Although he is chief slave in the same house where Pseudolus is also a slave, Pseudolus bullies him and treats him as an underling. Much of his humor comes from the fact that he impersonates the young, female virgin, Philia. Must be able to sing, speak in a falsetto voice. Age: 30 to 55

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

Senex 1 & Domina 1 & Hysterium 1

Erronius & Hysterium 2 & Pseudolus 3

Callbacks may include this song for this character

M10_Hysterium

Miles Gloriosus – Bass

(Latin for “boastful soldier), the archetype of the braggart soldier in Roman comedies). A captain in the Roman army to whom Marcus Lycus has promised Philia. Commanding, boastful, manly and strong. Must sing, speak and act in a booming, arrogant voice. Although a costume may provide the muscles, the actor must be able to pull off “gladiator-ness.” Age: 25 to 40

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

Lycus Miles Gloriosus

Callbacks may include this song for this character

M13_Miles Glorious

Marcus Lycus - Baritone

A purveyor of courtesans, who operates from the house to the right of Senex. (Name based on Lycus, the pimp. Always out to make a profit, but also wants to provide good on what his business offers. Think of him as the “used car salesman” of the courtesans. Age: 30 to 50 (but not critical)

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

Lycus Miles Gloriosus

Callbacks may include this song for this character

M5_Pseudolus M6_Lycus

Erronius – Baritone

(Latin for “wandering”, elderly neighbor in the house to the left. He has spent the past twenty years searching for his two children, kidnapped in infancy by pirates. Sings as part of the chorus in 2 songs. Must be able to sound and move like an old man.

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

[Erronius & Hysterium 2 & Pseudolus 3](#)

Callbacks may include this song for this character

[M3_Chorus and Erronius](#)

Female Roles

Philia – Soprano

(Greek for Love): A virgin in the House of Lycus whom we also find out is Erronius' daughter. She is promised to Miles and vows to give him bodily what he has paid for, but loves Hero and promises he will always have her heart. Young, pretty, devoted. An archetypal ingénue. Age: 18 to 25+

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

[Philia 1 & Hero 2](#)

[Senex 2 & Philia 2](#)

Callbacks may include this song for this character

[M18_Philias](#)

Domina – Mezzo-Soprano

(Latin for “mistress”) The wife of Senex and mother to Hero. She is a shrewish woman who is loathed and feared by even her husband. She dominates to the point of answering herself the questions she asks of others. Loves her husband deep down, but is outwardly controlling, demanding, and manipulative. Singing role. Must play the stereotypical overbearing wife and mother. Age 40 – 60 (Age related to age of actors cast as Hero and Domina).

Callbacks may include these sides for this character

[Senex 1 & Domina 1 & Hysterium 1](#)

[Domina 2](#)

Callbacks may include this song for this character

[M18_Philias](#)

Cortesans in the house of Lycus

(provide part of the female chorus. Notice there are 6 courtesans as the Geminae are twins)
Please note that the courtesans can be played by actors across a range of ages and looks. Lycus caters to all tastes. At least some of the courtesans will however need to be prepared to wear revealing costumes and move and dance in a sexy or sensuous way. If this is likely to be of concern to you please mention concerns at the audition.

Anyone age 16 or 17 (by the date of the first performance) intending to audition as a courtesan – Please note we will need to get parental consent.

The courtesans will be expected to display their own personalities and characters largely through movement and attitude

Callbacks may include this song for these characters

[M3_Chorus and Erronius](#)

(No Reading)

Please note: The named courtesans may not be selected at initial auditions. This may or may not be done early in the rehearsal process. This is to ensure the best match of skills and attitude with each role. If there are more than 6 prospective courtesans, there will be a “dance audition” to determine who plays courtesans and who plays proteans.

Gymnasia: (Greek for “athletic”, with the connotation of nakedness) A courtesan from the house of Lycus with whom Pseudolus falls in love.

Often played by a very statuesque or voluptuous woman; however, a female of any size and shape may be cast as long as she portrays the voluptuous attitude

Tintinabula: (Latin for “bells”) A jingling, bell-wearing courtesan in the house of Lycus. Think of a belly dancer whose every motion makes the bells ring

Vibrata: (Latin for “vibrant”) A wild, vibrant courtesan in the house of Lycus.

In all likelihood her costume would be made of leopard skin – Needs to be able to growl sensuously and move like a tigress

Geminae: (Latin for “twins”) Twins courtesans in the house of Lycus.

The aim will be to get 2 actors of similar stature and coloring, however it is more important that the two actors can work together and act/move in tune with each other.

Panacea: (Greek for “cure all”. A courtesan in the house of Lycus. A face that can say a thousand words and a body that can hold a thousand promises.

The Company

Proteans:

Choristers who play multiple roles (slaves, citizens, soldiers, and eunuchs). Wonderful parts as they are almost always on stage, though very few lines. On Broadway, three men played all of these roles, we may use more and may cast women in these roles. These are singing and dancing roles

Plot

In ancient Rome, some neighbors live in three adjacent houses. In the center is the house of Senex, who lives there with wife Domina, son Hero, and several slaves, including head slave Hysterium and the main character Pseudolus. A slave belonging to Hero, Pseudolus wishes to buy, win, or steal his freedom. One of the neighboring houses is owned by Marcus Lycus, who is a buyer and seller of beautiful women; the other belongs to the ancient Erronius, who is abroad searching for his long-lost children (stolen in infancy by pirates).

One day, Senex and Domina go on a trip and leave Pseudolus in charge of Hero. Hero confides in Pseudolus that he is in love with the lovely Philia, one of the courtesans in the House of Lycus (albeit still a virgin). Pseudolus promises to help him win Philia’s love in exchange for his own freedom. Unfortunately (as the two find out when they pay a visit on Lycus), Philia has been sold to the renowned warrior Miles Gloriosus, who is expected to claim her very soon. Pseudolus, an excellent liar, uses Philia’s cheery disposition to convince Lycus that she has picked up a plague from Crete, which causes its victims to smile endlessly in its

terminal stages. By offering to isolate her in Senex's house, he is able to give Philia and Hero some time alone together, and the two fall in love. But Philia insists that, even though she is in love with Hero, she must honor her contract with the Captain, for "that is the way of a courtesan". To appease her, he tells her to wait "that's what virgins do best, isn't it?" inside, and that he will have the captain knock three times when he arrives. Pseudolus comes up with a plan to slip Philia a sleeping potion that will render her unconscious. He will then tell Lycus that she has died of the Cretan plague, and will offer to remove the body. Hero will come along, and they will stow away on a ship headed for Greece. Satisfied with his plan, Pseudolus steals Hysterium's book of potions and has Hero read him the recipe for the sleeping potion; the only ingredient he lacks is "mare's sweat", and Pseudolus goes off in search of some.

Unexpectedly, Senex returns home early from his trip, and knocks three times on his own door. Philia comes out of the house, and, thinking that Senex is the Captain, offers herself up to him. Surprised but game, Senex instructs Philia to wait in the house for him, and she does. Hysterium arrives to this confusion, and tells Senex that Philia is the new maid that he has hired. Pseudolus returns, having procured the necessary mare's sweat; seeing that Senex has returned unexpectedly and grasping the need to keep him out of the way, Pseudolus discreetly sprinkles some of the horse-sweat onto him, then suggests that the road trip has left Senex in dire need of a bath. Taking the bait, Senex instructs Hysterium to draw him a bath in the long-abandoned house of Erronius. But while this is happening, Erronius returns home, finally having given up the search for his long-lost children. Hysterium, desperate to keep him out of the house where his master is bathing, tells the old man that his house has become haunted – a story seemingly confirmed by the sound of Senex singing in his bath. Erronius immediately determines to have a soothsayer come and banish the spirit from his house, and Pseudolus obligingly poses as one, telling Erronius that, in order to banish the spirit, he must travel seven times around the seven hills of Rome (thus keeping the old man occupied and out of the way for quite a while).

When Miles Gloriosus arrives to claim his courtesan-bride, Pseudolus hides Philia on the roof of Senex's house; told that she has "escaped"; Lycus is terrified to face the Captain's wrath. Pseudolus offers to impersonate Lycus and talk his way out of the mess but, his ingenuity flagging, he ends up merely telling the Captain that Philia has disappeared, and that he, "Lycus", will search for her. Displeased and suspicious, Miles insists that his soldiers accompany Pseudolus, but the wily slave loses them in Rome's winding streets.

Complicating matters further, Domina returns from her trip early, suspicious that her husband Senex is "up to something low." She disguises herself in virginal white robes and a veil (much like Philia's) to try to catch Senex being unfaithful. Pseudolus convinces Hysterium to help him by dressing in drag and pretending to be Philia, "dead" from the plague. Unfortunately, it turns out that Miles Gloriosus has just returned from Crete, where there is of course no actual plague. With the ruse thus revealed, the main characters run for their lives, resulting in a madcap chase across the stage with both Miles and Senex pursuing all three

"Philia"s (Domina, Hysterium, and the actual Philia – all wearing identical white robes and veils). Meanwhile, the courtesans from the house of Marcus Lycus – who had been recruited as mourners at "Philia"s ersatz funeral – have escaped, and Lycus sends his eunuchs out to bring them all back, adding to the general pandemonium.

Finally, the Captain's troops are able to round everyone up. His plot thoroughly unraveled, Pseudolus appears to be in deep trouble – but Erronius, completing his third circuit of the Roman hills, shows up fortuitously to discover that Miles Gloriosus and Philia are wearing matching rings which mark them as his long-lost children. Philia's betrothal to the Captain is obviously nullified by the unexpected revelation that he's her brother. Philia weds Hero; Pseudolus gets his freedom and the lovely courtesan Gymnasia; Gloriosus receives twin courtesans to replace Philia; and Erronius is reunited with his children. A happy ending prevails for all – except for poor Senex, stuck with his shrewish wife Domina.