

Auditions Notice for Pygmalion – Performances 21-23 Nov 2019

Christ Players' 2019 Theatre Production: G. B. Shaw's *Pygmalion*

Call for Actors and Creative-Team and Production-Team Members

Since 2012 some members of this faith community have staged in the sanctuary adapted plays that deal with matters of social justice. Our previous shows were Sophocles's *Antigone* in 2012, Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* in 2013, Shaw's *Don Juan in Hell* in 2014, Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* in 2016, Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* in 2017, and a double-bill of *The Trojan Women* by Euripides and *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes this past November.

Our next production will be Shaw's renowned comedy *Pygmalion*. The performance dates are **21-23 November 2019 at 8 pm**.

Written in 1912 when cracks in British imperialism, the class system, and patriarchal domination were expanding, Shaw's play exposes the exploitive professional relationship between two wealthy older bachelors with a poor young woman. Henry Higgins and Colonel Pickering, linguistics experts, subject Eliza Doolittle, a street-vendor of flowers, to an intense, sometimes abusive tutorial in "the King's English" and in proper decorum as "a lady." But just as Pygmalion in the Greek myth did, puerile Henry falls in love with his own creation. Eliza rebels against his manipulations, abandoning the experimentation to make her way in the world.

Soon after the play was first performed actors and audiences insisted on a happy ending of Henry and Eliza becoming romantic partners. Shaw capitulated and subsequent versions inspired "My Fair Lady." But our production follows the original storyline, retaining the bite of Shaw's still apt societal and psychological critique. At the same time, the play is very funny.

Auditions

Auditions will occur on **April 22nd** from 7 to 10 pm, the **27th** from 1:30 to 4:30 pm, and the **29th** from 7 to 10 pm in the church sanctuary. Auditioners will read excerpts from the script. Anyone interested should email the director, Richard Walsh [rwalsh@wlu.ca] or text him 519-897-3630 for more information and the **script** doc.

There are **12 roles** in the play, all speaking: 7 for women, 5 for men. The **small** roles are a young-adult sister and brother and their middle-class mother; a working-class husband and wife; and the parlour-maid to Mrs. Higgins, Henry's wealthy mother. The **medium** roles are Mrs. Pearce, Henry's middle-aged, principal housekeeper; Mrs. Higgins; and Alfred Doolittle, Eliza's impoverished father. The **principal** roles are Eliza, Henry, and Colonel Pickering.

Location: Christ Church Waterloo, 445 Anndale Rd., corner of Davenport and Lexington Rd. Please enter from the parking lot at the northwest corner of the church. Auditions, rehearsals, and performances occur in the open-concept sanctuary, slightly to the right from the entrance.

Production Schedule

On **17 June** from 7 to 9:30 the cast will do a “read-through” of the script.

Rehearsals begin on **26 August** and will occur every Monday and Wednesday from 7 to 9:30 and every Saturday from 1:30 to 4:30. Initially, individual actors will be “called” only for certain acts and scenes; in other words, flexible rehearsal commitments are possible. However, by November 2nd rehearsal demands will increase for all actors, culminating in **Performance Week**, which begins November 16th.

Creative Team and Stage Crew

We also need individuals to manage publicity (producer); monitor the rehearsals, including script and blocking (assistant director/stage manager); assist Hilary Walsh (costumer) with period costumes (costume assistant); assemble period-pieces of furnishings and props (designer/ASM); and oversee and run sound and lighting cues (ASM, tech manager). Anyone interested should email Richard [rwalsh@wlu.ca] for more information.

Director’s Bio

Richard Walsh is co-chair of Christ Church Council; a husband, father, and grandfather; and a retired professor of psychology at Laurier. For decades he’s acted in local community theatre and university productions. He’s also directed two shows each for Laurier, Kitchener-Waterloo Little Theatre, and Elora Community Theatre. He stresses psychological character-development, text-interpretation, and strong ensemble acting, and he employs the entire performance-space at Christ Church – its sanctuary – which has a small thrust-dais. The space enables close proximity to the audience but has no backstage or wings.