

A PARTICLE OF DREAD

(OEDIPUS VARIATIONS)

Audition Information

Author: Sam Shepard

Director: J. Daniel Herring

Main Season Preliminary Audition: 6:00pm, Tuesday, August 22, 2017 John Wright Theatre

Callback Auditions: 7:00pm, Wednesday, August 23, 2017 John Wright Theatre & 4:00pm Thursday, August 24, 2017 John Wright Theatre

Characters: (6 men, 2 women, 4 either)

Oedipus/Otto: plays multiple roles including Oedipus, King of Thebes. When told as a young man that he was destined to kill his father and marry his mother, he left his home and came to Thebes. Also plays Otto, in a wheelchair, possibly a retired teacher. Mild mannered and curious, he is plagued by dreams in which he seems to have murdered someone.

Antigone/Annalee: plays multiple roles including Antigone, daughter of Oedipus. Strong, determined, passionate about how she lives her life. Uncompromising, loving. Also plays Annalee, daughter of Otto. Married to a violent man who has killed their babysitter. Terrified it will affect her baby son's future because of what he has seen. Blunt, outspoken, determined, loves her father.

Jocasta/Jocelyn: Jocasta is the Queen of Thebes. Attractive, sensual, high status, proud, a strong match for her husband Oedipus. He is in fact her son. Jocelyn is the wife of Otto. A Southwestern housewife. Otto is an anxious man, but she is the calm one, unruffled, wants a peaceful life, avoids conflict. A gently warm personality.

Uncle Del/Traveler/Tiresias/Maniac Of The Outskirts: with a strong comic sense, irony, sense of detachment from society's madness. Plays multiple roles, including Uncle Del, based on the Oracle at Delphi. Reads signs, throws the bones, and sacrifices animals to read their intestines; Traveler, blind, lives in the hills and can see the future; Tiresias, a blind seer called to Oedipus to reveal what he knows about why the city is ridden with plague; and Maniac of the Outskirts, an anonymous madman who lives on the outskirts of society and gets blamed for everything.

Laius/Larry/Langos: powerful presence, good-looking, sexy, threatening, simmering, high status. Plays multiple roles including Laius, a king who ruled Thebes years before the Oedipus story. Larry, a young, modern version of Laius, consulting a healer because his wife cannot conceive; and Langos, a gangster casino boss who denies at first that he ever had a son but then admits that he did abandon the child in the hills.

Randolph: an American detective who is very keen on the forensic aspect of the work. He is so obsessive about what one can glean about a crime from the evidence that he gets carried away and begins to picture the crime and the people and fantasize about them. Must have a strong comic sense.

Harrington: from the American Southwest. A highway policeman, he is laid back and feels very cynical about forensic experts. He sees the crime in a very straightforward way and simply assumes it is Mexican gang warfare. Must have a strong comic sense.

Chorus: Greek-style 4-member chorus for choral speaking of the oracle at the end of the play and to provide theatrical “tricks” using sound, props and movement throughout the play.

About the Play:

As a young man, Oedipus is told by a seer that he will grow up to kill his own father and marry his mother. He flees from home to avoid this terrible fate, but there is no escape—the dreadful prophecy finally catches up with him. Celebrated playwright Sam Shepard reimagines this Ancient Greek tale as a modern thriller. A murder is committed. Who is the victim? Who is responsible? What are the consequences for generations to come? There are many versions of the crime in this intriguing tale. People are hiding from the truth, even when it stares them in the face.

“Mythic and mysterious!” —Newsday.

“A noir thriller with touches of Grand Guignol gore and a sprinkling of surreal humor.” —The New York Post.

“Fans of the playwright should find this an intriguing addition to the Shepard canon—he cleverly weaves the threads of classic Greek tragedy through his own gritty sensibilities. The result is a non-linear work combining humor and poetry to remind us that the sins of the father and son are destined to repeat.” —NY1 News.

“[Shepard] pulls the Oedipus legend up by its roots, fits it with earthy new poetry, straddles it between comedy and tragedy, and splinters characters and time frames to construct an eternal dilemma.” —The Irish Times.

Preliminary concept ideas or technical requirements that might affect scope or budget of show:

The set is a “white world” – one you might find in a morgue or slaughter house. Blood needs to appear through the means of lighting or some stylized form with fabric/a trap covering the blood stained floor to be revealed. There would be a morgue or slaughter table to serve multiple purposes such as a table, desk, bed, etc. Other furnishings would be very cold sterile aluminum benches and chairs. Many of the costumes are blood stained.

REHEARSAL DATES & TIMES:

Sundays through Wednesdays, August 27 – September 20, 2017

(NOTE: NO REHEARSALS ON THURSDAYS, FRIDAYS OR SATURDAYS UNTIL TECH WEEK)

Sunday Rehearsals will be held from 5:00pm – 10:00pm **(NO REHEARSAL SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2017)**

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday Rehearsals will be held from 7:15pm – 10:15pm **(ONE THURSDAY NIGHT REHEARSAL ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2017)**

Tech Rehearsals

Saturday, September 23, 2017 – Dry Tech – No Actors Called

Sunday, September 24, 2017 1:00pm -10:00 pm

Monday, September 25 – Thursday, September 28, 2017 – TBA (usually 6:00pm -10:00pm, but depending on the needs of the show, director or designers these rehearsal times may vary)

PERFORMANCE DATES AND TIMES:

September 29, 30 and October 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7, 2017 at 7:30pm and October 1, 2017 at 2:00pm

Scripts are available in the Theatre Arts Department Office.