

***The Maids by Jean Genet  
Directed by Ruth Griffin***

***Calendar***

***General Auditions***

***Sunday August 24, 2014  
6:00 P.M.-8:00 P.M.***

***First Callback***

***For callbacks it is not necessary to have a monologue. Please dress to permit movement.***

***Monday August 25, 2014  
7:00-9:00 P.M.***

***Second Callback***

***Wednesday August 26, 2014  
4:00 P.M.***

***General Rehearsal Schedule***

***Rehearsals will begin Sunday September 7, 2014.***

***We will rehearse***

***Sunday through Thursday from 7:15 P.M.-10:00 P.M.***

***Technical rehearsal will take place Sunday October 25.***

***Dress rehearsals will run October 26-30, 2014.***

***Call times for Dress rehearsal will be 6:00 P.M.***

***The show runs October 31- November 8, 2014.***

**In his most personal work, *The Thief's Journal (Journal du Voleur)*, Jean Genet describes an event where he witnessed the tall handsome one-handed man he adulated lost in a maze at a Carnival. It was labyrinth constructed partially of mirrors and partially of panes of glass arranged in such a way as crowds outside could be voyeurs.**

*Stilitano was alone. Everyone had found the way out except he. Strangely the universe veiled itself for me. The shadow that suddenly fell over things and people was the shadow of my solitude confronted with this despair, for, no longer able to shout, to butt himself against the walls of glass, resigned at being a mockery for the gaping crowd, Stilitano had crouched down on the floor, refusing to go on....*

**The essence of Genet's theatre is the man caught in a maze of mirrors, trapped by his own distorted reflections, trying to find the way to make contact with others he can see around him but being rudely stopped by barriers of glass. (*Esslin: A Hall of Mirrors, p200*)**

**In the case of *The Maids* it is three women, which can be played by men. *The Maids* written in 1947 was initially inspired by the case of two maids who murdered their employer's wife and daughter in Le Mans, France in 1933. I am casting the roles for women. The play *The Maids* teems with oppositions: male/female, master/slave, criminal/saint, sadist/masochist, debasement and enthronement. Genet was a thief and exalted the criminal. The play is filled with illusions created by the maids as a way to combat their oppressive circumstances. They feel ashamed and dirty because of their poverty, and act out "the**

**ceremony." This game incorporates elaborate role-plays in which Claire fulfills her dreams of wealth and prestige by playing the haughty Madame and Solange satisfies her desire to prove herself worthy as a maid by beating down Madame. Something else is intrinsically at work in *The Maids*, which is the theme of ritual sacrifice exemplified in the pagan yearly festivals of return and renewal and the Catholic mass. In their "ceremony" the maids employ cutting insults and even resort to physical violence. The play is organized around this game or "ceremony." We are lead to believe the maids have been playing this game since childhood and on this night they will find the way to complete it. Above all this is a play about performance and the actors embody many states of being. All roles are lead roles.**

**The story is told by three.**

**1. Claire 2. Solange 3. Madame**