

Smokey Joe's Café

The songs of Leiber and Stoller.

Directed and Choreographed by Rusty Curcio

Musical Direction by Fred Tessler

Costumes by Alan Smith

Scenic Design by Vicki Neil

Lighting Design by Phil Hickox

I know that often this can be and was thought of as a “Black Show”. Although it can be successfully done that way I do not think it is necessary. (If Audra McDonald can play Carrie Pipperidge in Carousel, I think that any accomplished actor that can portray an understanding of the spirit of the character and period of Rock and Roll will be able to embody the performance and service the show’s goals.) We are here to give an experience to an audience and evoke certain memories and nostalgia. The following descriptions are taken from the Production Notes for the show written by Jack Viertal. Below and on my office door is the full production note, which I encourage you all to read.

9-11 Strong Singers who move well

6-8 Strong Dancers

All the singers (especially the quartet) need to be extremely facile at picking up and holding onto harmony. Also all the singers really need to embrace the STYLE of the music. I would encourage all auditioning to be as familiar with the score as possible. In terms of music to audition with, a pop song from the era is fine as is a more rock or pop style musical theatre song.

Female singer 1 – (BJ) This character was inspired by the titanic rhythm and blues shouter Big Mama Thornton, who recorded the original version of “Hound Dog”. Big Mama was a woman of size, arrogance and great humor. Sings to a High F. Needs a strong belt.

Female Singer 2 – (Pattie) This Character is the throaty voices of experience: a little older-but-wiser, she anchors the more serious moments, and may even seem to come from a slightly later period (Janis Joplin, Tracy Nelson, Bonnie Raitt) than the rest of the company. Sings from Low F to High F. Needs a strong belt.

Female Singer 3 - (Brenda) This character is a combination of savvy, with, brains and beauty that is born of the line of stunning rock and roll divas which has included Ruth Brown, LaVern Baker, Tina Turner and Patti LaBelle. She must have timing and sexuality. Middle range.

Female Singer 4 – (Delee) This character should evoke both the innocence of the teenage girls who fell in love with Elvis and Dion and Fabian and Frankie Avalon on the Dick Clark Show, and the wild streak that all of us dreamed about such girls having. She is Brenda Lee, but sometimes she wants to be Jayne Mansfield. Middle range. Sings to a Low G. Needs almost a “Natalie Cole” sound.

The 4 men of the quartet need to embody the quality of the famous quartets of the 50-60's like the Drifters and Coasters. They were promoted as “clown princess of rock and roll” and delivered hectic mayhem on stage, almost an extension of vaudeville clowning, but entirely in song.

Male Singer 1 – (Victor) the preening bad-boy. Lyric Baritone sings up to an A flat.

Male Singer 2 (Adrian) the slow one. Lyric Baritone sings up to an A flat. Needs a good “Crooner” quality.

Male Singer 3 (Ken) the smoothie. Bari/tenor sings up to an A flat.

Male Singer 4 – (Fred) the implacable bass, who's seen it all and refuses to get upset about it. Bass. Sings down to a Low C if possible...

Male Singer 5 – (Michael) This character should evoke the memory of Elvis (and Dion and Fabian and all those other duck-tailed teen idols) without doing an Elvis impression or camping his way through a GREASE- inspired parody. He should be genuinely suave and impressive (and sexy). Lyric Baritone. Sings to a G.

We are considering adding 1 male and 1 female singer and may even consider more as we navigate our way through the auditions

6-8 strong dancers

There will be a dance ensemble of 3-4 couples, which will play the action of many of the numbers in the way that “Swing” and “Moving Out” utilize dancers to tell the story. The dancers will require strong technique and partnering skills along with expressive qualities to embody the different characters and tell a story. The movement will be based in dance styles of the Swing Era through the 1960's and integrate Musical Theatre conventions and vocabulary.

Loose Knit

LOOSE KNIT, by Theresa Rebeck, is a contemporary comedy of manners set in present-day New York City. All characters are in their early to mid - 30s. For the audition, please prepare a SHORT modern comic monologue - selections from "Loose Knit" are acceptable. (Note - Knitting skills are helpful but not required.)

CHARACTERS:

LILY - The "perfect wife", very feminine, very controlled but with a serious subversive streak.

LIZ - Loose, easy going, intelligent. Lily's younger sister and (in many ways) her opposite - with all the emotional baggage that implies.

GINA - Career woman (a lawyer), controlled, matter-of-fact but very repressed - holding herself in until things go wrong.

MARGIE - Quite lovely but a bit scattered and erratic, always at the end of her rope.

PAULA - A well-adjusted, sharply intelligent Black woman. A successful psychotherapist, she is the voice of reason (usually).

BOB - Lily's husband, intelligent, charming and easy going, but not ambitious. An early middle-aged slacker.

MILES - Reeks of power, money and entitlement - and all the smugness (and sexiness) that comes with it.

Questions? Contact the director at michael.tennenbaum@wagner.edu