

TRAVELING PLAYERS ENSEMBLE

WINTER PERFORMANCES 2022

WELCOME! We're so excited for you to audition! We can't wait to meet you – or see you again!

WHAT HAPPENS AT AUDITIONS?

We know that actors can shine in different ways, so we organize our auditions to allow actors with different strengths to shine. You will read a few scenes, play improvisation games, and participate in ensemble building activities. The audition is an opportunity for the director to get to know you and to see how you work and play with other potential members of the ensemble. It is also an opportunity for you to get to know your potential castmates. You will have your best audition if you relax, have fun, and connect with your fellow performers! We have been told that our auditions are significantly more fun than the average audition. We plan to keep it that way.

THE SIDES:

- Familiarize yourself with the scenes below and their source mythologies to prepare.
- These scenes **do not need to be memorized.**
- You'll read these scenes as part of your audition with Emma Mearns and Morgan Shotwell.
- Some helpful guidelines as you prepare:
 - Do I understand all the words? Have I looked up any words or phrases I don't understand?
 - Do I understand why these characters say each line? Will it be clear to my audience?
 - Am I speaking loudly and clearly enough so my audience can understand me?
 - How can I engage my whole body in the performance? (This doesn't necessarily mean moving your whole body.) Are my physical gestures connected to my character?

If there are any questions, please don't hesitate to ask...you can reach us at 703-987-1712 or you can email us at info@travelingplayers.org.

ON AUDITION DAY:

Eat before you come to the Studio. Please dress in clothes that will allow you to comfortably move, and bring a water bottle.

You could very likely learn new skills and make new friends! Relax and have fun -- you're going to do great!

SIDE 1: CHORUS

The Chorus enacts Theseus' nightmare of being trapped in the Labyrinth

Chorus:

The thread's on the spool,
The spool's wound tight,
You must feel it in the dark, cause there is no light,
Hold the spool fast, hold the spool right,
If it drops you're lost
Cause it's black as night.
If you drop it in the labyrinth,
It will unwind in the labyrinth,
And you're blind in the labyrinth,
You can't find, in the labyrinth,
Your way, in the labyrinth,
And what's down feels like up,
And you're dizzy with fear
But you can't give up now,
You're partway there –

ALL:

The path goes down,
Goes round and round
And round and round then
Back again. (1/2) Are you up? (1/2) Are you down?

SIDE 2: PROCRUSTES/THESEUS/BEAUTY REST

Procrustes, an innkeeper in the Underworld, attempts to trap Theseus -- but his servant, Beauty Rest, warns Theseus.

Procrustes:

Please sir, my house is your house, my servants your servants, my riches, your riches, and (*ominously*), my bed, your bed.

May I take your -- *luggage?* (*looking greedily at Theseus's sword and cudgel.*)

Theseus:

No, thanks. I'll keep it with me.

Procrustes:

As you wish. And now, food? Wine? A bed? A warm, soft, cozy, comfortable twin-size, queen-size, King-size, — perhaps a water bed would suit you, sir?

Theseus:

Why do you say that?

Procrustes:

My little joke, forgive me, sir.

(*explaining, to audience*) Water-bed, water, Poseidon- -get it??

(*Back to Theseus*) I believe you're related to Poseidon???

Theseus: (*aside, to Audience*)

How did he know that?

Procrustes:

Now it's time for you to go nighty-night.

Theseus:

I'm tired. I've been sleeping in trees and on the ground -- and I've been having these strange dreams--

Procrustes:

Yes, yes, yes, Procrustes understands.

What you need is a feather comforter, a down pillow – you don't have allergies, do you?

Theseus:

Nope. Sounds good.

Procrustes:

You will never sleep a sleep as deep as you sleep in Procrustes' bed.

I guarantee...you'll never have a bad dream again. My able servant, Beauty Rest,*(she enters)* will take care of you...I'll be right back with your wine. Beauty Rest, see to our guest. Posturpedic, you know the routine! Snap to it!

Beauty Rest:

As you say, Master. *(When he turns, she spits at him!)*

Procrustes:

(An after-thought, over his shoulder) What are you, about 5'4"? *(exit)*

Theseus:

That was weird. Why did he ask my height?

Beauty Rest:

He's measuring you!

For his iron bed!

Oh, sir, I must warn you.

Even in this desolate place we have heard of you—

The great hero Theseus.

But you have come to an evil house.

Evil like you wouldn't believe.

My master is an evil man, a murderer.

He has only one bed. It is only one size.

If you drink his wine, you will fall asleep in his cruel bed —

and you will never wake up again, never, never, never--

for he will kill you in your sleep.

He lures weary travelers, steals their possessions,

and chains them to his iron bed.

If they are too long, he chops off their head,
if they are too short, he stretches them to fit.
He's coming. Save yourself!

Theseus: (to audience.)

That. Is. A terrible. Story.

Procrustes: (*entering*)

Ready for beddy-bye?

Theseus:

You know, suddenly, I'm feeling wide awake. But *you* look tired.

Procrustes:

No, really, I had a nap---

Theseus:

Nice, cozy bed—

Procrustes:

Please, no!

Theseus:

Comfy blanket--

Procrustes:

No, no!

Theseus:

Good night, sleep tight, and don't let the bedbugs bite!

Procrustes:

Owwwwwww!

SIDE 3: CHORUS/NIKE/ADIDAS

The Chorus, along with narrator Nike, describe the sacrifice of young Athenians to the Minotaur.

Chorus: (or Aegeus)

You see, King Minos demanded a sacrifice
to avenge his own son's sad demise
at the hands, he thought, of Athenians.

Nike:

And the worst, Aegeus told, when he'd drunk some wine--
At the bottom of a pit lived a loathsome beast,
Half-man, half-Brute, entirely terrible--
On human flesh and blood the beast would feast –

Other voices from Chorus:

Its cries of misery were unbearable
When in the night it would scream to be fed! //
True, no one survived to tell the tale – ///
But they'd heard the cries; / they'd felt the ground shake, /

All: (Freeze in scary Minotaur posture)

For the beast was part Bull – a child of Poseidon,
The earth-shaker. (Break Freeze)
That was the word, and the world would quake!
That was the word, the word that spread
And all who'd heard of him lived in dread
of the Minotaur –for that was his name!

Nike:

Oh! A terrible thing to trade more sons,
And daughters too,

ALL:

For the death of one!

SIDE 4: THESEUS/ARIADNE

Ariadne has agreed to help Theseus in his quest to get rid of the Minotaur, but he does not know that Ariadne seeks to help the Minotaur, who is her half-brother.

Ariadne:

My mother was once a priestess of Aphrodite, but they had a major falling out.

My father double-crossed Poseidon.

It's our family's curse -- bad blood.

So now, people treat me like a priestess, and make disgusting sacrifices to me,
and expect me to act like a priestess,

but I don't seem to have any special powers.

I don't even have any *ordinary* powers.

Theseus:

Hey- wait, you said you could help me. Kill the Minotaur.

Ariadne:

No! No! That's not what you said. You said, and I quote, "I will *get rid of* the Minotaur."

Theseus:

That's just a technicality.

Ariadne:

Maybe so- but it's also the only reason I said I would help you.

Theseus:

Ariadne, this isn't gonna work for me. I made a bargain with your father. I gave my word.

I have to be true to what I said.

Ariadne:

I know, I'm still working on that.

Why is life so hard?

Why can't it be simple—as a jar of honey - or a spool of thread?

Theseus: (*He recognizes the thread.*)

That spool of thread!

I've seen it before! —I've seen it *every night!* -- In my dream.

Ariadne:

And I have seen you — *your* face -- in *my* dream. (*Remembering the chant*)

The thread's on the spool,

Theseus:

The spool's wound tight,

Ariadne:

You must feel it in the dark, cause there is no light...

Theseus:

And the cry, almost human, of a beast in pain—???

Ariadne:

---Is my half-brother, Asterion, called the Minotaur.

Bad blood, remember?

Theseus:

Every night, as I slept, I heard a voice calling me- Was it Asterion's voice I heard? (*he is lost in his thought and the implications of it.*)

Ariadne:

He has the blood of Poseidon in him-- the bull's form disguised the god—

but his mother-

also *my* mother — is human.

Theseus:

Asterion is like me — half mortal, half god.

Ariadne:

Yes, but no one has ever looked for the god in him.

He's *not* like you and me, he has the appetites of a beast for human flesh - but he's still my brother.

And that is why you must not kill him.

SIDE 5: THESEUS/ARIADNE/ASTERION

Theseus and Ariadne, having made their way through the Labyrinth, come face to face with Asterion, the Minotaur, who is angry with humanity for his imprisonment.

Theseus: (*groping on the ground*)

Oh, no! I've dropped the spool,

Is it here ---It must be here, but I can't find it.

Must stay calm, must keep my cool--

Ariadne. Are you still there?

Ariadne:

I'm right behind you. (*She lights a little light.*)

Theseus:

Listen. I can hear him breathing --

Asterion: (*with a great roar, rising and flailing about--*)

I will devour you!

I will kill everyone!

I will eat the whole bad world!!!

(*Theseus and the Beast have a fierce Struggle. At last he pins the Minotaur, holding it by the horns.*)

Ariadne:

Asterion, it's me, it's your sister, Ariadne. (*She tentatively moves toward him.*)

Do you remember? Long ago? We used to play together...

you rolled an apple to me, and I rolled it back...?

Asterion:

I remember.

Ariadne:

Theseus and I won't hurt you.

Theseus:

How can I hurt you? You and I share the blood of Poseidon.

Asterion: (*raging again*)

But that is all we share! You! You were the lucky one!
Even such a wretched beast as I know of the 'brave Theseus!
The charmed son, the favored son, the son of a loving mother
and *two* loving fathers! While I am the child of shame—
hidden away, imprisoned here, alone in the dark!
Didn't you hear me calling you?
How long have I called to you?
How long have you left me here?
And then, you wanted to kill me!

Theseus:

I know. I'm sorry. I didn't understand.

Asterion:

'Sorry.' 'Didn't understand.' Is that all you have for me?
Those hollow sounds, that feeble apology?

Theseus:

Maybe – if I had known then what I know now—
I could have---

Asterion:

'*Maybe,*' 'If?' — 'Could have!!' Such shrinking words!
Where's your hero's heart in all this??
You hide your true feelings – as my Mother hid me!
I may be a monster – but at least I know my own nature.
Humans! You disgust me!