



The Savoyard Light Opera Company

Audition and Casting Policy

Revised 01.29.12

Goals

- **Production Quality** - SLOC's primary obligation is to our audience. We must provide our audience with an experience that they will enjoy and for which they will be satisfied that they have received value commensurate with ticket price. This means selecting a cast that will result in the best quality production possible. Criteria include:
 - Vocal quality
 - Vocal balance
 - Acting/Comedic value
 - Cast enthusiasm/morale

- **Organizational Health** - SLOC is a volunteer, community organization. As such, we rely on the volunteer efforts of a large number of people to produce each show. Special effort must be made to ensure the growth and long-term viability of the company. Casting decisions may be made with consideration of such factors as:
 - Past and current association with the organization
 - Potential for future involvement
 - Attendance requirementsMonetary contributions do not influence casting decisions.

- **Fair & Open Auditions** - Community theater groups are frequently stigmatized when casting decisions do not appear to be fair and above-board. The SLOC casting process must be above suspicion. Specific policies must be articulated to ensure that this goal is achieved, including:
 - Audition procedures and requirements
 - Clear procedures for cast selection
 - Communication of casting policies at auditions

Casting Policies

- **Who May Audition** - SLOC auditions are open to all. No roles are pre-cast, and anyone may be considered for any role. To be considered for a role, an individual must audition. Special preference will *not* be given to members of the Board of Directors, or to members of the production staff.
- **Casting Decisions** - Casting decisions are made collectively by the Casting Committee, which consists of the Stage Director, Music Director and two representatives appointed by the Board, each having an equal vote. The committee is empowered by the Board to select the best individual for each role, consistent with:
 - The vocal, acting, and physical requirements of the role
 - The acoustical requirements of the performance venue
 - The Directors' concept(s) of the roles and/or the production
 - The morale and collective wellbeing of the organization
- **Resolving Ties** - When evaluating competing candidates for the same role, the following factors should be considered:
 - In the case of a tie, preference should be given to the individual who has the longest association with the organization
 - Past association with the organization may be assigned greater weight in Ensemble casting, and less weight in casting Leads roles.
 - Preference should be given to the candidate who can more fully meet the rehearsal schedule.

Audition Process

- **Cast Size** - The size of the cast affects both the production budget, as well as the spirit of the organization. The specific cast size for each show is set by the Board of Directors in consultation with the Directors. A target cast size or range should be decided prior to the auditions, and any deviation from that target must be approved by the Board.
- **Audition Timing** - Auditions may be held in the spring or fall at the discretion of the Board and subject to the availability and preferences of the Directors. The current consensus is that Spring auditions receive the greatest response, with the drawback of some attrition. The Audition Coordinator is responsible for engaging the venue, publicizing the auditions, and coordinating the logistics of the audition process. At the discretion of the Directors, alternate audition times may be arranged to accommodate individuals who are unable to attend the general auditions.
- **Audition Environment** - Ensemble auditions are conducted in groups in a relaxed environment, and generally consume the first 30 minutes of the audition schedule. Lead auditions are closed, and are scheduled by appointment at 5 or 10-minute intervals. This is repeated for as many evenings as required, usually 2 or 3. At the

discretion of the Directors, an additional evening may be scheduled for call-backs. All auditions should be conducted in a manner designed to give each auditioner an equal opportunity to demonstrate his/her talents.

- **Participants** - Only those approved by the Board of Directors should be present during auditions. These include but are not limited to:
 - Stage Director - *responsible for evaluating each auditioner, with an emphasis on acting and stage presence.*
 - Music Director - *responsible for evaluating each auditioner, with an emphasis on vocal quality.*
 - Board Representatives (2) - *responsible for ensuring that casting decisions are made in accordance with the organization's policies, for providing background information on past performers, and for making sure that casting decisions take into account what is in the best interests of the organization overall.*
 - Producer - *responsible for ensuring that casting decisions are made in accordance with the established production values and budget.*
 - Assistant/Coordinator (optional) - *responsible for assisting in the organization of forms and tracking/sorting of data. (This individual should have no input in the selection process)*

- **Data Collection** - Each auditioner is required to complete an Audition Information Form to provide key contact, audition, and participation information. A photo is taken and attached to the form prior to the audition. If possible, all data is entered into a database in real time. This form may be modified as necessary.

- **Cast Communication** - Each auditioner receives a sheet describing the audition process and cast responsibilities. The SLOC casting policies should also be posted in a prominent spot.

- **Casting Calls** - After all casting decisions have been made, each auditioner is contacted by telephone or by e-mail and informed of their casting status. This process should be completed within 3 days of the last day of auditions, or within the time frame set out previously in the cast communication sheet. Confirmation letters with additional information are sent to all cast members within 2 weeks. The cast list is also posted on the organization's web site.

- **Filling Vacancies** - Should a vacancy in the cast occur, the Directors may fill that vacancy following the general casting policies with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors.