

## **Theatre Bay Area General Auditions FAQ (for actors)**

### **What are the General Auditions?**

The General Auditions (also referred to as the “TBAs”) are an annual Actors’ Equity-sanctioned event where member performers can be seen by 150-200 auditors representing 80-90 West Coast theatre companies of all sizes, as well as independent directors and casting directors.

### **When are the 2016 Theatre Bay Area General Auditions?**

The 2016 General Auditions are scheduled for January 30, 31 and February 1, 2016. Non-Equity actors will be seen at scheduled times between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Actors under 18 will only be seen in the afternoon on Sunday. Equity actors will be seen at scheduled times between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Monday.

### **Who can participate in the General Auditions?**

Equity actors who retain their Equity membership through February 28, 2016, are automatically eligible for a slot on a first come, first served basis. Equity actors must include proof of their Equity membership with their application. EMC does not count as Equity membership.

Non-Equity actors who are members of Theatre Bay Area can submit an application for a chance to participate in a weighted lottery through which participants are selected. Non-Equity applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Maintain Theatre Bay Area membership through February 28, 2016, and
2. Show on their resume the equivalent of at least one year of full-time acting training or at least six stage productions apart from school (see below for more on these requirements).

### **What if I am a non-Equity actor not currently a member of Theatre Bay Area?**

You must be a member of Theatre Bay Area (excludes two-week free trial and monthly members) by December 7, 2015 and your membership must be good through at least February 28, 2016, in order for your application to be processed. Please note: Due to the number of applications that we receive, Theatre Bay Area membership does not guarantee participation in the Generals. **We will not refund memberships of individuals who do not receive an appointment.**

### **What if I am just about to join Equity?**

If you join Actors’ Equity after the General Auditions application deadline (December 7, 2015) but before the dates of the Generals we will move you to the Equity day, space allowing.

### **When is the application due?**

Applications must be received by 5 p.m., December 7, 2015. All applicants will receive results of the lottery via email by January 4, 2016. **No late non-Equity applications can be accepted. This rule is strictly enforced!**

**How are the participants selected?**

An independent panel of representatives from the theatre community screens all non-Equity applicants to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements as outlined above. This committee then holds a weighted lottery on all eligible applicants. Equity applicants with proof of Equity membership are guaranteed a slot.

**What does “weighted lottery” mean?**

There are many more applicants than we have room to schedule. Rather than simply “drawing applications out of a hat,” we have worked with Bay Area theatres to identify their general casting needs and have based our sorting process to reflect these needs. We aim for a group of actors that is inclusive and diverse in terms of experience, age, ethnicity and previous participation at the General Auditions.

**How many applications does Theatre Bay Area receive?**

Last year there were almost 500 applications for approximately 340 slots.

**What if I missed the deadline?**

No late non-Equity applications can be accepted. This rule is strictly enforced! As you can see above, non-Equity applications go through a rigorous process and once the panel has met, there is no way to recreate that process. The screening committee fills the participation slots *and* the waiting list from the many applications we receive. (Please note: Equity actors should contact Theatre Bay Area for an overview of their options, based on Equity rules and regulations.)

**What can I do to maximize my chances of getting a slot?**

While we do not require that you generate a resume specifically for your General Audition application, it is imperative that your resume reflects the minimum eligibility as outlined above.

- Your resume must show six productions outside of school OR the equivalent of one year of full-time acting training. Productions at an elementary school, high school or college/university or sponsored by any other training program do not count toward your six productions.
- Please be sure that productions that were not school related but may have been performed in a school location are correctly credited on your resume so that it is clear to the screeners why this was not a school production.
- See below for tips on making sure your resume reflects one year full-time acting training.
- Please review your resume to be sure that it clearly states how you meet these guidelines.

Eligibility decisions made by the panel are final.

**What constitutes “the equivalent of one year of full-time acting training”?**

There is not a hard and fast answer to this question because acting training courses are very different in their requirements and commitments. However, when looking at traditional “classes,” a good rule of thumb is to equate your acting training to a full-time year of school. A typical full-time semester of school would be about four classes. A year

would be eight classes. If you feel that you meet this requirement, you may want to make sure your resume specifies individual classes and course length. On a traditional resume, it is impossible for the panel to know if the classes you have taken at a particular venue for one, two, three or even four or more years translate into the equivalent of one year of full-time training. For instance, on a traditional resume, one class per year at a venue for three years might be listed as:

Acting I, II, III, IV    XX Training School                    2008-2010

In this example, the panel might not know how much of this training actually counts toward eligibility.

The example below better reflects how much training goes toward the one-year equivalent:

Acting I, II, III, IV    XX Training School                    2008-2010  
                                  \*\*Course met 8 hours a day, 4 days a week for 4 months each.

Additionally, some courses listed in the training section of a traditional resume are not considered “acting training” and will not count toward eligibility. Examples of such classes include film acting, directing, playwriting, technical theatre, etc.

### **What constitutes “six shows outside of school”?**

To be eligible for the lottery you must have been in six theatrical productions that take place outside a training setting. Examples of productions that would not count toward the eligibility requirement include:

1. Scene work from an acting class
2. A final presentation from an acting class
3. A role in an elementary school, middle school, high school or university-sponsored production
4. Film work

(Please note: Generally, improv performances do not count toward eligibility, although there are some exceptions.)

A good rule of thumb: If you paid to take part in the production, it probably doesn’t count toward eligibility.

If you have been involved in a professional production that took place at a training facility, please credit the production company rather than the venue on your resume.

### **Why do I have to submit two headshots and resumes with my application?**

All eligible applicants who are not given an audition slot through the lottery will have a headshot and resume available for the auditors to review over the course of the weekend. We use one headshot/resume for the application process and one for this additional option, should you not receive a slot. They do not have to be the same headshot.

### **How do I hear whether or not I have been given a slot?**

All applicants will receive notification by email (or “snail mail” when necessary) whether

or not they receive a slot. These notices will go out by January 4, 2016. Applicants who receive slots are encouraged to read their notice very carefully for special instructions regarding location, arrival time, confirmation of their slot and materials to bring (usually between 75-100 headshots and resumes, depending on Equity status. You do not have to submit the same headshot as the one you submitted with your application). A certain number of applicants will be put on a waiting list, our way of ensuring no slot goes unused due to cancellations. Please note that time slots are randomly assigned. We do not accept requests for particular times or requests to change times once assigned. Participants in the Generals will be invited to a Yahoo chat group where they can request to switch slots with another participant (limitations apply).

**What if I am on the waiting list?**

Waiting list applicants will receive all pertinent information with their notice and will be notified as soon as possible if a slot opens up for them, usually by phone. Waiting list applicants are encouraged to plan as if they have a slot and to be prepared. While we attempt to give as much notice as possible, we might not be able to give you more than 48 hours' notice.

**If I'm given a slot, how much time do I have?**

Equity auditions are three minutes and non-Equity auditions are two minutes, starting after you complete the introduction of your piece(s). This time is yours to fill as you see fit. It is customary to prepare two contrasting monologues or one monologue and one song, but feel free to fill the time in a way that you think best showcases your skills and maximizes your hiring potential.

**Why do we get "only" two (or three) minutes?**

Actors often feel that they can't showcase their talents in two (or three) and that it is difficult to find contrasting pieces to fit in the time frame. But remember the goal of these auditions is to get a callback. It is extremely rare for anyone to get a role from only the General Audition. The General Auditions are the equivalent of a "casting handshake." Give the directors a taste of what you can do and leave them wanting more. Two (or three) minutes are more than enough time to accomplish these goals. In fact, you might want to consider using even less than your allotted time: perhaps two 45-second pieces.

**Does Theatre Bay Area offer any assistance in preparing for the Generals?**

Theatre Bay Area does offer assistance for your General Audition preparation.

January 26 or 27, 2016

**General Auditions Dress Rehearsal**  
Itinerary and details to come soon!

**If I do not get a slot, can I "drop in" at the auditions?**

Non-Equity actors must have a confirmed slot to be seen at the auditions. Remember, everyone who applies but is not seen will have his or her resume available for review at the auditions. Equity actors can drop in and will be seen if there are no-shows or cancellations, as time allows.

**What is the ATLAS program?**

ATLAS is a program to encourage actors to develop the business side of the careers by providing 17 hours of training in identifying specific and personal goals for success and writing an actor's career map (read: business plan) to meet these goals. The up to 36 actors who enroll in the program will get automatic slots in the 2016 General Auditions as well as feedback on their auditions that will help inform their map. Check out the ATLAS page of the Theatre Bay Area website (under resources) for more information on the program.

**What if I have more questions?**

Please contact Dale Albright, director of field services, at (415) 430-1140 x\*14 with additional questions. You can also email him at [dale@theatrebayarea.org](mailto:dale@theatrebayarea.org).