In The Heights

Information & Audition Packet

Auditions will be held Monday November 30-December 6. Nov. 30/Dec. 1 will be individual singing sign-ups. The next two days we will do cold readings and call backs on Friday Dec. 4th.

There will be a mandatory parent informational meeting Monday Dec. 14th at 7 pm.

The Music Auditions

Please select no more than 32 measures of a song from pop, musical theatre, or gospel style for the vocal portion of the audition. It must be thoroughly prepared, and if you select a stylized piece, be sure to reflect the uniqueness of that style in your performance. For men, the piece can include some rapping, but must also demonstrate singing range and ability. Select an excerpt, which demonstrates the optimum strengths, versatility, and quality of your instrument. For example, a piece that demonstrates your ability to access a more comprehensive vocal range will be preferential to one which is more limited in register. The excerpt should demonstrate your most resonant vocal tone quality, and the brilliance and projection of your voice. It is usually to your advantage to use a piece that you have established a “comfort level” with: familiarity will allow you to focus on your expression and delivery.

Act 1

At the crack of dawn, Usnavi chases away a graffiti artist from his tiny bodega in Washington Heights, opens the store, and introduces the major characters. Last to appear is Nina Rosario, back at last from her freshman year at Stanford University. Alone, Nina ponders her struggles at college and readies herself to give her parents some bad news (“Breathe”). Meanwhile, Nina's parents, Kevin and Camila, seek an emergency loan to keep their struggling taxi dispatch afloat, temporarily leaving Benny, a young employee and friend of Nina's, in charge (“Benny's Dispatch”). Meanwhile, at the hair salon across the street, Vanessa, Usnavi's potential love
interest, dreams of escaping to a studio apartment in the West Village, remaining optimistic despite her own financial insecurity ("It Won't Be Long Now"). When Vanessa stops by Usnavi's bodega, Usnavi's younger cousin Sonny asks her out to a romantic evening on Usnavi's behalf, and she accepts. When Nina's parents return, she reveals how she lost her academic scholarship and dropped out of Stanford. Nina's father, Kevin, is devastated that he cannot provide for his daughter ("Inútil"). Nina seeks comfort from Vanessa, but the salon owner and local gossip, Daniela, sits Nina down for a makeover, coercing Vanessa into admitting that she cares about Usnavi's sexual decisions; Nina then reveals to the salon that she has dropped out ("No Me Diga"). After Usnavi discovers that he sold a winning lottery ticket worth $96,000, everyone on the block dreams of how they would each spend the small fortune ("96,000"). Later, Abuela Claudia—the beloved neighborhood matriarch who "practically raised" Usnavi as a young orphan—reflects on her childhood journey from Cuba to New York in 1943, showing the audience that she secretly holds the winning lottery ticket ("Paciencia y Fé"). Nina and Benny take a tour of the neighborhood and reminisce, gradually sharing romantic feelings ("When You're Home"). At a dinner party, Kevin announces that he has sold the family car service to pay for Nina's tuition. Vanessa and Usnavi enter a dance club for their date, followed by a furious Benny, who is now out of work, and an apologetic Nina; tensions rise on the dance floor because Vanessa and Usnavi are attempting to make each other jealous, while Benny drunkenly hits a man dancing with Nina ("The Club"). The entire club breaks out into a huge fight when, suddenly, the power goes out throughout the city, erupting the neighborhood into chaos. Usnavi, Vanessa, Nina and Benny all look for each other in the darkness, while Sonny and his mischievous friend from the opening of the show, Graffiti Pete, attempt to distract the bodega from any potential looters by setting off fireworks; in the meantime, Abuela Claudia reveals to Usnavi that she won the lottery, while Nina and Benny find each other, argue, and kiss ("Fireworks").

Act 2

Benny and Nina have spent the night together and, the next morning, Nina teaches Benny some Spanish phrases, while he shares his stress over what Kevin will think of their new relationship ("Sunrise"). Down on the street, Usnavi's bodega has been looted. Abuela Claudia convinces Usnavi they should use her lottery winnings to move to Usnavi's homeland: the Dominican Republic. Usnavi agrees to pursue this lifelong dream at last ("Hundreds of Stories"). Nina's parents have been searching for her all night, and when they learn that she has been with Benny, Kevin is furious. Kevin vows that Benny will never be a part of the Rosario family because he is not Latino, but Camila ends the family fight ("Enough"). It is high noon and all are frustrated by the extreme heat and continuing power outage. The locals, led by Daniela, muster enough energy for a last celebration before the bodega, salon, and dispatch shut their doors forever. Usnavi
publicly announces that Abuela Claudia won the lottery, and he and she will soon leave for the Dominican Republic; the neighborhood celebrates, though Vanessa is heartbroken ("Carnaval del Barrio"). Kevin makes a sudden announcement over the taxi radios: Abuela Claudia has suddenly died ("Atención"). The neighborhood holds a vigil for Claudia, while Usnavi, attributing her death to a "combination of the stress and the heat," makes an impromptu eulogy ("Alabanza"). Usnavi and Nina rummage through boxes of Claudia's keepsakes ("Everything I Know"). As Nina discovers photographs from her own high school graduation, she decides to accept her father's sacrifice and return to Stanford. Across the street, as Daniela closes her salon, she reveals one last bit of juicy news: she will cosign on Vanessa's dream apartment in the West Village, thanks to a little convincing from Usnavi ("No Me Diga" – Reprise). Vanessa brings a bottle of champagne to thank Usnavi and, though she flirts with him, he is so flustered by Claudia's death that he is unable to appreciate Vanessa's attempts; Vanessa finally kisses him and leaves ("Champagne"). Meanwhile, Benny worries about his relationship with Nina, since her decision to go back west, and they stand together while the sun sets, uncertain of their future ("When the Sun Goes Down"). The next morning, Usnavi wakes up early to begin closing up shop. In just a few weeks, Usnavi imagines that the block will be completely changed. Sonny, however, has commissioned Graffiti Pete to paint a mural of Abuela Claudia on the bodega's grate. Sonny now rolls down the bodega grate in front of Usnavi, revealing the memorial. Usnavi is stunned that they completed this all in one night; he tells Sonny to spread the news that he has changed his mind to stay, promises to pursue Vanessa, and realizes that this block is his true home ("Finale").

Characters

- **USNAVI DE LA VEGA** The 24-year-old owner of De La Vega's Bodega, Usnavi's parents emigrated from the Dominican Republic and have since passed away. He lives with Abuela Claudia (Grandmother Claudia), who isn't actually his grandmother but they are as close as family. Usnavi is in love with Vanessa and remains the eyes and ears of his Washington Heights neighborhood. high baritone/tenor (to G4), no required dancing
- **NINA ROSARIO** 19-year-old Nina has just finished her freshmen year at Stanford University. The daughter of Kevin and Camilia Rosario, Nina is the only one from her family and group of friends who has made it to college. She is best friends with Vanessa and a beacon of hope and inspiration to all who know her. Nina represents the opportunity outside of "the heights."high belter (to F5); no required dancing
- **KEVIN ROSARIO** In his 40s and owner of Rosario Car and Limousine, Kevin is husband to Camilia and father to Nina. Born and raised in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, Kevin immigrated to New York City with
Camilia. He immediately began working to provide a better life for his newly arrived family. He is stubborn, hot-tempered at times and can be quick to act without thoughts of repercussions. baritone (to E4); no required dancing

- **Camilia Rosario** Also in her 40s, Camilia co-owns Rosario Car and Limousine with her husband, Kevin. Also from Arecibo, Puerto Rico, she fell in love with Kevin at age 19 and immigrated with him to New York City. She is cool-headed and keeps a subtle yet strong leash on Kevin. Her daughter Nina has just returned for the summer after her first year at Stanford University.(G3 to B4), no required dancing

- **Benny** Now a cab driver for Rosario Car and Limousine, 24-year-old Benny once was a street punk and hoodlum. Kevin saw promise in Benny and helped shape him into a responsible, hard-working young man. As a result, Benny has enormous respect for Kevin and sees him as a father figure. Benny eventually falls in love with Nina and sees a future for them if he becomes a businessman. Benny and Usnavi are best friends.tenor (to Ab4), singer/rapper, no required dancing

- **Vanessa** A 19-year-old shampoo girl at Daniela’s Salon, Vanessa is strong and intelligent. She grew up with Benny and Usnavi. Though Usnavi would like to be more than Vanessa’s “friend,” he has never made any attempt to elevate the relationship. Vanessa dreams of leaving to create her own life away from her alcoholic mother. MUST be strong dancer, high belter (to E5)

- **Sonny** Usnavi’s 15-year-old cousin, Sonny, is spending the summer working for Usnavi at the bodega. He often hangs out on the street with his friend Graffiti Pete but avoids trouble. Sonny is an extremely intelligent young man who strives to emulate Usnavi. Passionate to solve the social and economic problems of the city, he needs guidance to avoid ending up a street punk. rapper/singer, tenor (to Bb4)

- **Abuela Claudia** Now in her late 60s, Claudia has raised Usnavi since his parents passed away and continues to live with him. She emigrated from Cuba when she was very young. Of all the characters, Abuela Claudia has been in “the Heights” the longest. She struggled to learn English and find work. Consequently, she has helped others who have followed in her path. She is the clear matriarch of the neighborhood. r (F#3 to C5), no required dancing

- **Daniela** In her 30s, Daniela owns Daniela’s Salon. She is savvy, quick-witted, brassy and outspoken. Although she retains a motherly relationship with Vanessa, Daniela remains the gossip queen of the neighborhood. The no-nonsense Daniela has built a successful business but is being forced of the neighborhood because of rent hikes. singer belter (G3 to C5)

- **Carla** In her mid-20s, Carla is a hairdresser at Daniela’s Salon. Born and raised in Queens, she is a pure, sweet, innocent and loving woman who is devoted to her family and friends though she is easily taken advantage of because of her naivete. She and Daniela are best friends.

- **Graffiti Pete** An 18-year-old graffiti artist and nemesis of Usnavi, Graffiti Pete always hangs out on the streets, dancing to his boom box music and spraying any surface he can. Usnavi is unhappy that Sonny and Graffiti Pete are friends because Graffiti Pete epitomizes everything that Usnavi hopes that Sonny will not grow up to be. HIP HOP dancer
• PIRAGUA GUY In his mid-30s, he walks the hot and humid streets of Washington Heights selling piraguas (flavored ice shavings) to earn a living. He represents a rhythm of the islands in the big city. extensive singing (must have sustainable A4


Rehearsal Information

Rehearsals will be from 3:45 pm-5:45pm Monday through Friday. Saturday rehearsals will be called throughout the rehearsal process. Not all cast members will be scheduled for every rehearsal. However, please prepare to be available on weekdays and weekends.

Please be honest with your scheduled conflicts, failure to submit accurate conflicts can result in dismissal from casted roles.

Don’t let this deter you from auditioning; this time is going to be an awesome bonding experience!

If cast you ARE REQUIRED TO BE AVAILABLE FOR TECH WEEK (April 11-20) AND SCHEDULED PERFORMANCES (April 21-24).

CASTING PHILOSOPHY

We firmly believe that the quality and importance of a role has NOTHING to do with how “big” the part is or how many “lines and solos” it has. If the student’s or parents’ attitude is that of “I’ll audition and then drop out if my role isn’t big enough,” we’d rather he/she didn’t audition at all. We're looking for performers who want the TEAM experience of doing a show and working as an ENSEMBLE. In short,

IF YOU OR YOUR PARENT CARES ABOUT THE SIZE OF THE ROLE...

...DON’T AUDITION!
As always, we’ll be limiting the cast sizes for some shows of the year. Not being cast in a show is always disappointing, but it’s essential that it not be taken as a personal insult. Unlike large book musicals, plays and smaller musicals have very specific casting needs and requirements that often have nothing to do with talent. A person can easily be cast or not cast depending on things over which the actor has no control. Variables such as vocal-range, height, gender, etc., can work for or against an actor depending on the requirements of the production. It is rarely a question of talent and is never a reflection on the actor as a person. It is very bad form to approach a director and ask why you weren’t cast in a show.

CASTING PROCESS
Casting is done using the following criteria (in order of importance):

1. Ability to handle and perform the role well. Yes, this is an appraisal of talent, but also, and perhaps more importantly, of work ethic and attitude.

2. Does the student physically and vocally fit the role? The audience must be able to accept the actor as the character for the show to work.

3. Energy, volume, confidence, attitude and preparedness at auditions.

4. Seniority: If the director feels that two students are equally right for a role, the role will go to the older student. However, if the best person for a role is a 9th-11th grader, it will go to that person. Being a senior does not automatically guarantee an actor a role, principal or otherwise.

SCHEDULING CONFLICTS & ATTENDANCE POLICY

All rehearsal conflicts must be listed on the audition form. It is recommended that a student not attempt to participate in the show if he/she has more than one conflict per week.
Because of the collaborative process of theatrical productions, having a student miss a rehearsal, arrive late or leave early (no matter the size of their role) is detrimental to the whole cast. Because of this, the DCT Performing Arts Department has adopted the following policy:

If a student misses a rehearsal for an unexcused absence, arrives late or has to leave early, they will be removed from the scene being rehearsed that day. If consistent absence or lateness continues, a student may be removed from their role, or the production.

Excused Absences

- Conflicts listed on the audition form and approved of by the directors.
- Serious/Contagious illness
- Family emergencies

Unexcused Absences

- Community & Social Events
- Upcoming Exams
- Athletic Events • Concerts
- Medical appointments

PLEASE NOTE: If a student has an unexpected excused absence, they must contact the directors via email before the rehearsal begins. If they do not, the absence will be considered unexcused. If a student simply does not “feel well,” they still need to make every effort to attend rehearsal and at least sit and take notes on what they are missing.

The following guidelines must be maintained by a student in order to remain a cast member of the production:

- Attend rehearsals for which they are called (unless absence previously submitted in writing and approved by directors).
- Memorize lines, lyrics, and staging by given deadlines.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude toward the project and fellow cast members.
• Follow directions of all staff members and volunteers.
• Maintain a positive attitude and strong work ethic.
• Participate in NO excessive talking or disruption of rehearsals.
• Keep all academic standards and grades at a passing level or above.

Failure to abide by these guidelines will result in removal from the production.

Parents should feel free to communicate any concerns they have with their child’s ongoing participation in a production with its director. Our goal is to present a polished production and to give the students a rewarding educational experience. We expect each cast member and parent to have the same commitment and to adhere to the strict professional standards outlined above. Obviously, we must adhere strictly to these rules and cannot make exceptions for any individual under any circumstance.

The fun and invaluable learning experience of participating in a show is working together to create an outstanding theatrical experience.
AUDITION FORM - Bring to Auditions!!!
In The Heights

Name: ________________________________________ Age: ____ Class of: _____
Student ID # ___________________________ G.P.A. (End of Last year)_____

Height: _______ Weight: _______ Eyes: _______ Hair: _______ Sex: M F
Soprano __ Alto __ Tenor __ Baritone __ Bass __ Low note: ___ High note: ___

Audition Song: ______________________________________________________

Role(s): you would like to be considered for: ______________________________
Will you take any role offered? __________ *Will you take an Ensemble role? ______
* If you write maybe, it will be considered a no

Do you have other talents (ex. playing an instrument, juggling, sewing etc)
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Are you auditioning for another show at this time? _____
Do you speak Spanish? ___________

Home Phone: _______________________ Cell Phone: _________________________

E-Mail: ____________________________

Previous Theatre Experience (if any)(Leave Blank if attaching a resume):
________________________________________________________________________
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Conflict Calendar- Please Mark Every Conflict that you may have within the next two months.

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