

Summer Academy 2024 Audition F.A.Q.

I. Audition Logistics

How do I schedule an audition?

You can call (585) 420-2052 to schedule your audition beginning on Monday, February 5th. Auditions will be held at Geva Theatre on Friday, March 8 from 4-6pm, and Saturday, March 9 and Sunday, March 10 from 10am-4pm. The focus of this summer is Shakespeare and other heightened-language text and performances.

What happens at the audition? What should I bring with me?

Summer Academy auditions are a casual and fun experience! At your audition, you'll have the chance to meet several members of the Summer Academy staff, and they'll have the opportunity to meet you. Each audition will be 15 minutes long. We ask that you present a 1-minute monologue (memorized) from a Shakespearean play. You will also want to bring two copies of a headshot (any recent picture featuring you only from the waist up), two copies of your resume, and a list of potential conflicts between July 8 and August 3 (if any). A brief interview will follow the audition. We may ask you questions about the piece you've chosen or why you think this program is a good fit for you. You must complete a form before your audition, so please arrive at least 20 minutes early to take care of the necessary paperwork.

What should I wear to my audition?

We do not have a required dress code for auditions. Many students who audition wear jeans and a T-shirt, while others wear dress pants, a dress or a skirt, and a nice top. Please wear something that shows us who you are and clothing you are comfortable moving in. You do not have to wear special dance clothes or shoes, but avoiding outfits that are too baggy, too tight, too short, or will otherwise make you uncomfortable or inhibit your range of movement would be a good idea.

II. Audition Materials

What does "Shakespeare" mean?

William Shakespeare was an English playwright from the 1600s who wrote 38 plays, many of which are considered some of the most famous plays of all time! Shakespeare's plays are distinguishable by their poetic writing style and the three categories they fall within – comedy, tragedy, and history. When choosing your monologue, look for a compelling character – gender and age do not matter within the context of this audition, though many actors feel more connected to monologues where they share a general age range with the character. Shakespeare's language style may be new to you, but spend some time finding the meaning behind the lines and read the entire play!

How do I choose a monologue?

Use resources at your school; a director, a teacher, or other students involved in theatre can steer you toward great ideas. English teachers often know a good deal about Shakespeare, if you are looking for a place to start. All of Shakespeare's plays are able to be found online, for free, as well. Once you have found some possibilities, pick a monologue you feel you understand, a character you feel connected with in some way, or a piece that makes you curious about the rest of that person's life. Look for a story you feel compelled to share. Please be sure to read the entire play that your monologue comes from. A good

piece will usually grab you because you know you can express something honest about yourself through that character.

What should I include on my resume?

Your resume can include any of your experiences that might be useful to your success in this program. If you have performed in a play, that's an excellent place to start: please tell us the title of the piece, your role, and where and when the play occurred. If you have worked in other areas of the theatre (running lights, painting sets, volunteering as an usher, etc.), you can also include that information. You might include other performance experiences besides theatre, such as voice or dance training. We'd love to know if you make films, write songs or stories, paint or draw, play an instrument, partake in sports or other physical movement mediums (such as karate or gymnastics, etc.), or any other creative or passion projects! Any activity that can show how you are motivated and prepared to participate in this program is appropriate. A special skills section (or a list of hobbies or activities you participate in) is much appreciated so we can learn more about who you are and what you enjoy doing.

III. About the Program

What are the criteria for acceptance into the program?

Many different qualities often align in a strong candidate for Summer Academy. We are looking for curious young artists who want to explore, investigate, and stretch themselves and are willing to try new things. We're looking for students who wish to express themselves through theatre and storytelling, and students who are motivated, eager, kind, generous, and willing to dedicate the time, effort, and collaboration necessary to create compelling theatre. We look to see that you are well-prepared, focused, honest and authentic, and enthusiastic in your audition, and that you do the work to choose and prepare audition pieces you are confident in and care about. We don't care too much about auditions that make the actor look cool or important; we look for young artists who want to engage in working together toward a shared goal and who use the words of a play to show us something honest. We look for actors who care about their work and the stories they tell, and have a solid understanding of the pieces they've chosen, why they've chosen them, and how those characters and stories are relevant today and connect to the contemporary world around us. In your audition, we may ask about your experiences because it can help us learn about what interests and inspires you. Having previous theatre experience is not necessary to succeed in this program. Each year, choosing a Summer Academy class is like casting a play: we select a company of individuals with different abilities, lived experiences, backgrounds, personalities, passions, strengths, and opportunities for growth that will complement each other.

How can I tell if Summer Academy is a good fit for me?

While fun and inspiring, Geva's conservatory program is not a summer theatre camp. Summer Academy comes from the mission and intention of 27 years of Geva's original Academy program, which offers conservatory-style training to select young artists ages 12-18. Summer Academy is a place for self-motivated students to enhance their skills through perseverance and dedication, including work outside of class hours. The program carries expectations for excellence in the craft, including professionalism, commitment, maturity, self-discipline, and preparedness. We also require an open mind to deeper thinking, new approaches, ideas, and differing perspectives. We seek students who are eager to explore complex topics and materials, and who are ready to transform their relationships with theatre, teachers and directors, fellow actors, and themselves. Regardless of prior experience, students who thrive in the Academy are ready to take responsibility for their own learning and genuinely engage with themselves and those around them. They rise to the challenge of a rigorous theatre training program, put aside competitiveness and judgment of self and others, and actively help facilitate an environment of kindness,

vulnerability, trust, and artistic risk-taking. Please carefully consider your readiness for this program before enrolling to ensure commitment not only to the time and effort various courses and learning opportunities will require of you throughout the summer, but also to pursuing personal growth, artistic growth, and evaluating what tools and processes you hope to come away with this summer.

What if I am outside of the 12-18 age range?

All Summer Academy participants must be twelve years old by the first day of the program (July 8, 2024). Students may audition at age eleven, provided they will turn twelve before the Academy begins. There are no exceptions. The maximum age to audition is eighteen. However, a student who will turn nineteen before the end of the Academy is still eligible to participate in the program.

How many students does the program accept?

Up to (but no more than) 30 students are selected to participate in the Academy each year. Geva will also choose several alternate candidates. If a student is accepted but unable to participate, an alternate will be invited to join the program.

Can a student attend for more than one summer?

Yes, students can attend a maximum of three Summer Academy sessions (not including our 2020 and 2021 hybrid summers). If you have already participated in a Shakespeare summer, you can still attend another Shakespeare summer for the second time. Each summer, up to ten returning students may be accepted into the program.

When will I be notified about my acceptance status?

We will notify applicants about their acceptance status on or before Friday, March 15.

What if I have been accepted into a program or cast in a show that conflicts with the Summer Academy?

Many Summer Academy students audition for multiple opportunities, and candidates accepted to more than one program often face difficult decisions. Interest in other programs should not prevent a student from auditioning. However, if you are accepted into the program, Summer Academy will require a total commitment on weekdays between the hours of 8:30am-4:30pm from Monday, July 8 – Friday, August 2, plus the entire day on Saturday, August 3 (the day of the showcase performance). Because absence from classes and rehearsals impacts the whole group, it is not possible to accommodate other activities or vacations that conflict with class hours. Due to the nature of the full-day schedule, plus evening and weekend hours preparing materials for classes and rehearsals, we strongly recommend that participants avoid scheduling additional activities, vacations, meetings, appointments, or employment opportunities during the four weeks of the program – these should be avoided as much as possible.

For these same reasons, if a student who is accepted into Summer Academy is also cast in other local theatrical productions or programs that rehearse in the evenings or on weekends between July 8 and August 3, we ask that the admitted students choose to participate in only one opportunity. If an accepted student finds themselves in a situation where they are deciding between participating in Summer Academy and participating in another local program or a summer show, it often helps to reflect upon multiple perspectives along with the student's personal goals. One point we believe it is paramount to understand and consider is that Summer Academy is a training program that prepares young artists for their collaboration and involvement in any and all future shows and performing or storytelling

experiences by offering a solid foundation of tools, skills, experiences, and professional networking that extends beyond the four weeks of the program. The Summer Academy program is more about the process of holistic artistic and personal growth, individual learning journeys, and skill acquisition that lends itself to any future opportunity, and less about a singular performance in a singular show. It is important to think about what kind of summer opportunity you are seeking and why, and what your short and long term goals are in making this decision. Please discuss any questions or concerns you may have with us before deciding to enroll. We are always happy to share a conversation to help a prospective student and their family make the decision that will support them and their individual goals the best.

IV. Program Logistics

Are scholarships available?

Yes! Full and partial need-based scholarships are available to accepted students. Our online scholarship application form is only one page and should take less than 10 minutes to complete. A family's need for a scholarship has absolutely no bearing on a student's acceptance into the program. Families should never let concerns about tuition or payments prevent a student from auditioning or attending the program if accepted. In addition to need-based scholarships, we will also work with families to create flexible and manageable payment plans, and we will strive to assist in helping secure carpooling options or bus transportation vouchers to and from Geva for the four weeks of the Academy program should reliable and affordable transportation be a financial concern for families. Aside from flexible clothing (such as sweatpants or similar) that a student can move well in, special dance clothes or shoes are not necessary or expected for participation in this program. The only required document for scholarship application is the household's most recent tax return.

Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

Contact Education Assistant Olivia Spenard at 585-420-2052 or ospenard@gevatheatre.org