

Centre / Stage

WEST SIDE STORY

INFORMATION
BOOKLET



We, CentreStage Pty Ltd, acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation.

We pay our respects to the Elders both past and present. We thank the Traditional Owners for custodianship of the land, and celebrate the continuing culture of the Wadawurrung people acknowledging the memory of honourable ancestors.

We also welcome all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending the virtual information session or reading this booklet.



WELCOME

MESSAGE

Welcome to CentreStage!

CentreStage and Music Theatre International (Australia) are proud to announce the 2023 Geelong production of West Side Story. Hailed as the “No. 1 Greatest Musical of all Time” (The Times), West Side Story is a modern retelling of Romeo and Juliet.

This tragic love story is set in a New York City enveloped by bitter tension between two teenage gangs: the Jets, self-styled “Americans”, and the Sharks, a group of young Puerto Ricans. The genius of its four creators – Leonard Bernstein (music), Jerome Robbins (concept & choreography), Arthur Laurents (book), and Stephen Sondheim (lyrics) – produced a piece whose great artistic quality remains unquestioned to this day.

We thank you for your interest in auditioning for CentreStage’s 2023 major production. As Australia’s largest amateur theatre company, CentreStage originated from a small idea and a lot of energy and support. The company strives to make a positive difference in theatre within Victoria as both a supporter of open auditions and a proud member of the Theatre Guild of Victoria.

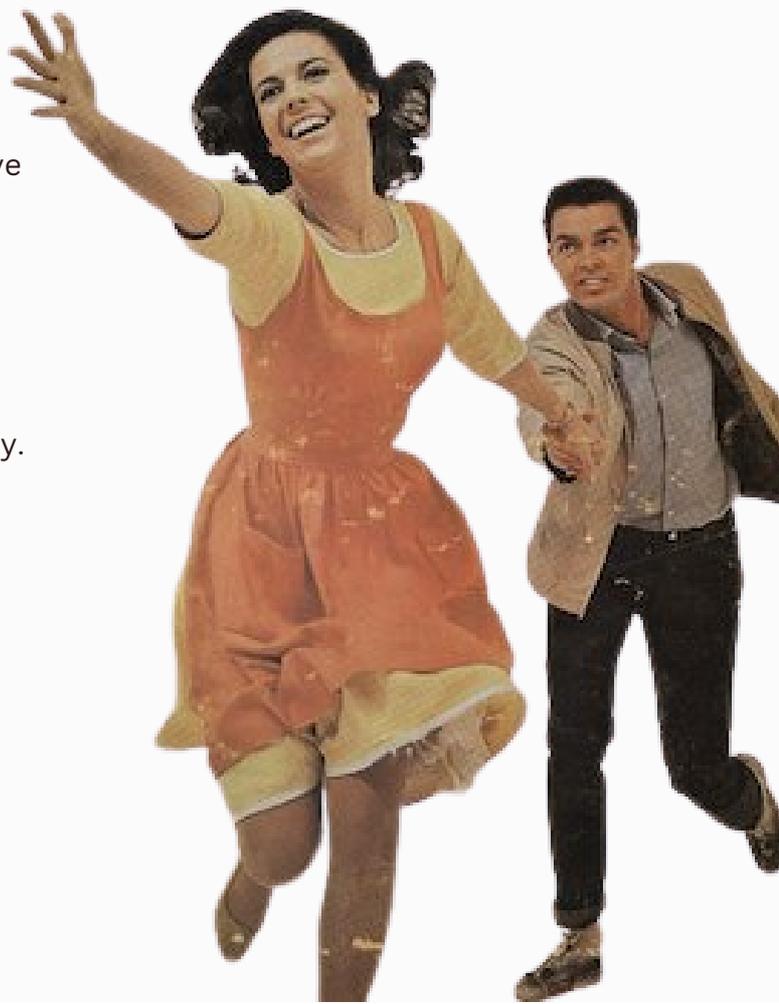
Established in 2010, we have staged numerous musicals in Geelong including: Les Miserables, We Will Rock You, 42nd Street, Oliver!, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Nun-sense, A Chorus Line, The Addams Family, Oklahoma, Evita, The Wedding Singer and RENT!

At CentreStage we...

- Respect our volunteers, staff and performers
- Create ongoing and sustainable theatre
- Use benchmarks and surveys to constantly improve
- Remain ethical and true to Geelong spirit
- Never pre-cast
- Create a ‘buzz’ for theatre in Victoria
- Improve the standards in amateur theatre

We vow to treat every individual with respect, and that’s why you’re part of the CentreStage family.

David Greenwood
Managing Director



SHOW INFO

Inspired by the timeless story of Romeo and Juliet, West Side Story takes Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers, and places them in the vibrant battleground of New York City's West Side in the 1950s. In the midst of the deep-seated rivalry between the Puerto Rican gang, the Sharks, and the white gang, the Jets, Maria and Tony discover that ancient grudges are no match for true love. Their warring factions, however, refuse to back down, and the "rumbles", romance, and resentment lead the bloody path to the lovers' ultimate, tragic conclusion with soaring, sophisticated, and diverse melodies, energetic and athletic dance battles, and its remarkably salient social message, West Side Story remains one of the American musical theatre's most revolutionary and most loved treasures.

Rehearsals will commence on Feb 26th at CentreStage's North Geelong facilities. Standard rehearsals will be on:

- Sundays - 12pm - 5pm
- Mondays - 7.30pm - 10.30pm
- Wednesdays - 7.30pm - 10.30pm

Throughout the rehearsal period, you can assume you will be required for most rehearsals. In fairness to all and to ensure this production of West Side Story is of the highest standard and something everyone involved can look back on with pride, it is expected that everyone will be available for scheduled rehearsals. PLEASE record any known absences, honestly, on your audition form.

Centrestage, with the kind support of our sponsors, will waive all actor membership fees for West Side Story to allow greater access to the arts for all performers including minority representation.

We believe this is a small step that will allow a performer not to have the burden of how they may afford to pay the nominal fee normally associated with community theatre.

There will be 1 additional rehearsal on Saturday 29th April for all performers (photoshoot)

There are no rehearsals on the following dates:

- Labour Day Monday 13th March
- Easter Sunday 9th April
- Easter Monday 10th April

A Fundraiser for all cast, creatives, and families will occur on Friday, May 5th

Production Week Requirements

- Sunday 4 June: 10.00am - 7.00pm - Bump In (All Cast in shifts)
- Monday 5 June: 5.30 pm - 11.00 pm - Lighting Plot / Sound (Some Cast Required)
- Tuesday 6 June: 5.30 pm - 11.00 pm - Tech Rehearsal - Core Orchestra pieces only and All Cast
- Wednesday 7 June: 5.30 pm - 11.00 pm - Dress Rehearsal (All Cast)
- Thursday 8 June: 5.30 pm - 11.00 pm - Dress
- Friday 9: 5.30 pm - 10.30 pm - Opening Night

Cast Requirements for performances

- Week 1: Cast required 5.30 pm -11.00 pm (Tuesday - Thursday)
- Week 2: 2-hour call prior to performance

PERFORMANCE

INFORMATION

Imagine the feeling of performing in front of 1400 people. It doesn't get any more surreal in Geelong Theatre. We're delighted to return to Costa Hall on the Geelong Waterfront

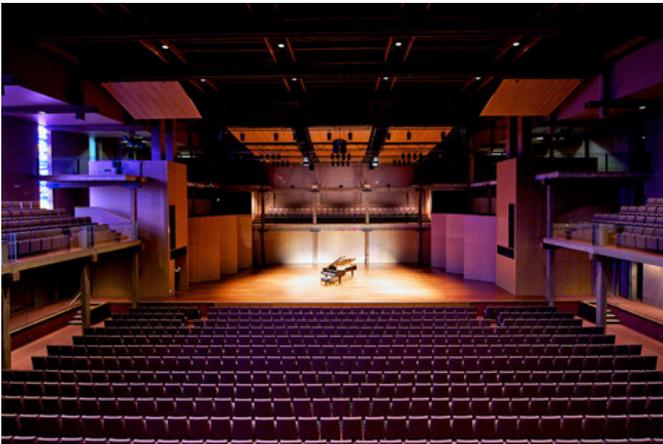
Performance Dates:

- Fri, 09 Jun 2023 at 7:30 pm
- Sat, 10 Jun 2023 at 1:30 pm
- Sat, 10 Jun 2023 at 7:30 pm
- Sun, 11 Jun 2023 at 5:00 pm
- Thu, 15 Jun 2023 at 7:30 pm
- Fri, 16 Jun 2023 at 7:30 pm
- Sat, 17 Jun 2023 at 1:30 pm
- Sat, 17 Jun 2023 at 7:30 pm

Ticket Prices

Tickets available via
www.geelongartscentre.org.au

- Full Price - \$51.90
- Concession - \$47.90
- Child Under 12 years - \$42.90
- Student - \$43.90
- Group 10 + - \$45.90



CREATIVE TEAM



Producers: Michele Marcu and David Greenwood
Assistant Producer: Marnie Parkinson (Mental Health, Wellbeing & Inclusion)
Assistant Producer: Dara Karlusic (Corporate Relations and Procedures)
Assistant Producer: Kefie Amlaku (Volunteers and Rehearsal Support)
Assistant Producer: Brett Greenwood (Costume and Production Support)

Director: Robbie Carmellotti
Assistant Director: Jess Zintschenko
Musical Director: Brad Treloar
Vocal Director: Tania Grant
Choreographers: Ali Simpson and Jesse Simpson
Stage Manager: TBC
Assistant Stage Managers: Rachael McKinnon and Remi Chandler
Sound Design: Nick O'Connor
Lighting Design: Jason Bovaird
Properties: Tegan Robertson
Hair and Makeup: Zoe Smith
Costume Design: Sharon Clearwater
Sets and Construction: Keith Greenwood, Paul Lane, Rodney Bennett,
Chris Lim, Joel Lane, Brett Greenwood
Front of House Manager: Jo Cook
Photography: Peter Foster

AUDITION

INFORMATION

Auditions are by appointment only and will be approximately 5 minutes in duration. Please prepare two (2) contrasting audition songs of 16 bars (up to 1 minute each). This song is not to be from West Side Story but in a style similar to the show.

Auditionees are required to bring sheet music in the correct key with any cuts and changes clearly marked. Please have your music in a display folder or taped together. No backing tracks are permitted. For audition song ideas, visit <https://www.theatretrip.com/audition-songs-for-west-side-story>

Please choose a song that best demonstrates your acting ability and vocal range. A separate vocal range test may be requested. In addition, you may be requested to perform part of the script (cold-read) during your initial audition.

Doc, Krupke, Schrank, and Glad Hand:

The roles of Doc, Officer Krupke, Detective Schrank, and Glad Hand are acting roles only and therefore auditionees are not required to attend an initial dance audition or prepare 2 songs. Scenes from the show will be available for download (www.centrestage.org.au/auditions) and are to be prepared for the initial audition. Acting audition times can be booked among the vocal audition times. Scripts can be downloaded from www.centrestage.org.au/auditions. If you are auditioning for an ensemble or alternative roles not listed in this section, you must complete a full dance audition and vocal audition.

Off-Stage Singers and Non-Dancing Ensemble:

We are looking to assemble a chorus of off-stage on on-stage singers for this production with no dance requirement. If you are interested in auditioning for the Chorus only, you will not be required to attend the dance call, and will only need to prepare a vocal audition

Vocal Auditions (Age 15+ years by Jan 1, 2023)

All auditionees must book a private 5 min vocal audition via **www.centrestage.org.au/auditions** or by calling 52721775. Vocal Auditions will be located at 22 Princes Highway, Norlane (opposite Bunnings) at CentreStage's new location.

Audition times (5 min segments). Sessions can be booked at

- Sunday 29th Jan (12pm-5pm)
- Monday 30th Jan 7pm-10.30pm
- Wednesday 1st Feb 7pm-10.30pm

To book visit www.centrestage.org.au/auditions

Dance Auditions

Dance calls are **COMPULSORY** for all cast. If you are auditioning solely for Doc, Krupke, Schrank, and Glad Hand, you will only be required to attend Session 1 (movement/warm up).

Every potential cast member **MUST** attend this to be considered for casting. There will be different phases of the dance call, to cater to the basic, intermediate and advanced dancer. Each auditionee will have the opportunity to show off their dance ability in each phase but the initial movement in this dance call is character based, so please do not be afraid if you are in the 'non-mover' club! Please note the dance audition will be done in stages, you may not be required for the full duration of the dance call.

The dance audition is on Monday, Jan 23 at 26 Rodney Road, North Geelong. The dance audition will commence at 7pm and we encourage auditionees to arrive at 6.30pm to allow you to have your headshot taken, audition form completed, and stickers allocated to you for identification.

Callbacks

At the completion of all private vocal auditions (Wednesday 1st Feb at 10.30pm), our producers will notify you by email and text message if you are required for a callback and supply you with relevant information. If the creative team feels you are a good fit for a role in the show that coincides with their casting concepts for this particular production) you will be given material (song and scene) to prepare for. If you are called back, be prepared to be available from **10.30am to 5pm on Sunday 5th Feb** as our process involves for various dance, vocal and scene workshops. Callback auditions will be located at 26 Rodney Road, North Geelong (Standard rehearsal venue)

Recapping:

Dance Audition - Jan 23 at 26 Rodney Road, North Geelong
Vocals - Sunday 29th Jan (12-5) at 22 Princess Highway Norlane
Monday 30th Jan 7-10.30 at 22 Princess Highway Norlane
Wednesday 1st Feb 7-10.30 at 22 Princess Highway Norlane
Call Backs Sunday 5th Feb 12-5 at 26 Rodney Road, North Geelong

Our Commitment to Diverse Casting

As members of the creative performing arts community, we all have a role in creating stories that reflect the diversity of the world in which we live. To that end, and in an effort to deliver more diversity in Australian musical theatre, CentreStage members will, wherever possible, include and engage with diverse thinking and actions in all aspects of the casting process. In our pursuit to stage the highly acclaimed production of West Side Story, we aim to cast consciously, and to keep performers from historically underrepresented backgrounds visible and valued in the casting process. Our goal is to ensure the representation of the following:

First Nations / Women / African / South Asian / East Asian / South East Asian Diaspora people / Mixed race people / other global majority people of colour / Neurodiverse people / People from a lower socio-economic background / LGBTQ+ people | Deaf and Hard of Hearing people / Disabled people.

We understand terminology and labels can be problematic, and while we have tried to be sensitive to this we welcome feedback on how our clarification of who is under-represented is phrased. West Side Story gives us the opportunity to represent minority groups in an authentic way. Our understanding of identity and inequality has become more complex and therefore the need for authentic storytelling.

It's important to recognise the historical drama of the Puerto Rican and Ethnic American groups that West Side Story portrays. Throughout our audition process, CentreStage commits to conscious casting and diversity in casting. We will make creative decisions that support the notion of telling the story of an immigrant's journey. We hope that our casting is realistic, authentic and gives this beautiful show the integrity it deserves. Puerto Rico has a rich cultural history – it is quite a mixing pot of cultures as a result of invasions and immigration. The native people – 'Tainos' were invaded originally by the Spanish which resulted in the huge Latina influence on the country. Other cultures that have immigrated include German, French, Irish, Greek, Italians and Sicilians just to name a few. This resulted in Puerto Rico in the 1950's as a multicultural nation that had a very complex cultural and racial history.

CentreStage and its staff/volunteers also strive to enable the casting of actors from all backgrounds, regardless of socio-economic status and to engage with producers and directors to create opportunity and access. The team will continue to engage in collaboration and discussion around the subject of diversity with our industry colleagues and other professional organisations.

With that statement at the forefront of our organisation, Centrestage, with the kind support of our sponsors, will waive all actor membership fees for West Side Story to allow greater access to the arts for all performers including minority representation. We believe this is a small step that will allow a performer not to have the burden of how they may afford to pay the nominal fee normally associated with community theatre.

Furthermore, Accountability is key, and we have reviewed our complaints procedure, and continue to work on creating a safe space for all. Our Executive Group also now provides points of contact for anyone wishing to disclose concerns. Additionally, mental health resources and cultural procedures can be publicly accessed via www.centrestage.org.au/health. A dedicated email (wss@centrestage.org.au) will be used for this production.

Above all else, West Side Story is a story of love trying to rise above hatred.



Kindest Regards,
David Greenwood (He/Him/They)
Managing Director

CHARACTER

INFORMATION

CHARACTER: MARIA

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: 15-17

VOCAL: Soprano with a high C

DETAILS: Lovely young and obedient girl, excited and enthusiastic about her new life in America, but with a stubborn inner strength that allows her to evolve into a strong woman.

CHARACTER: TONY

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: 18-21

VOCAL: Tenor with a solid Bb

DETAILS: Handsome, sandy-haired, older teenager who has outgrown the Jets.

CHARACTER: RIFF

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: 18-21

VOCAL: Tenor with strong dance abilities

DETAILS: Glowing, driving, intelligent, slightly wacky leader of the Jets.

CHARACTER: BERNARDO

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: 18-21

VOCAL: Baritone with strong dance abilities

DETAILS: Handsome, proud, fluid leader of the Sharks, with a sardonic chip on his shoulder.

CHARACTER: ANITA

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: 18-21

VOCAL: Alto/mezzo-soprano with strong dance abilities

DETAILS: Older and wiser in the ways of the world, flashy, sharp-tongued, and with a knowing sexuality.

CHARACTER: LIEUTENANT SCHRANK

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: Early 40s – Mid 50s (male)

VOCAL: Non-singing role

DETAILS: Plainclothes policeman used to being in charge, superficially pleasant to cover his venom, fear, and bigotry.

CHARACTER: OFFICER KRUPKE

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: Mid 40s – Mid 50s (male)

VOCAL: Non-singing role

DETAILS: A not-too-bright street cop; aggressive; hard-nosed. Will understudy the rest of the Adult roles.

CHARACTER: DOC

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: 50's + (male)

VOCAL: Non-singing role, strong acting skills required

DETAILS: Drug Store Owner, Tired and worn out.

CHARACTER: GLADHAND

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: Late 30's-mid 40's (male)

VOCAL: Non-singing role

DETAILS: Nerdy, overly cheerful and ill-equipped social director at the local gym dance. Will understudy the rest of the Adult roles

CHARACTER: JET BOYS

CHARACTER APPEARANCE AGE: 15-19

VOCAL: Strong ballet/jazz dancers who can sing

DETAILS: American gang members. Urban, economically depressed with a sense of empowerment, aggressive. Desperately holding on to their little bit of street.

- ACTION - Angry, volcanic temper with a chip on his shoulder. Wants to be the leader of the gang.
- BABY JOHN- Innocent, naive, still a child trying to keep up with the older boys.
- A-RAB - Energetic, volatile, a boy trying to be a man. Takes care of Baby John.
- SNOWBOY - Cocky in attitude. A follower.
- BIG DEAL - Quick with the jokes. Has a conscience. A follower.
- DIESEL - Size matters. The muscle of the gang. Not much of a talker.
- ANYBODYS - (17-20 yrs old) Desperately trying to be one of the Jet Boys. Sexually ambiguous, venerable, a fighter and a survivor. Singing a plus. The character can be male or female identifying, non binary or other.

CHARACTER: JET GIRLS

AGE: 17-25 yrs old

VOCAL: Must be strong ballet/jazz dancers. Singing is a plus.

DETAILS: Girlfriends to the Jet Boys. Urban, attractive and aggressive. Featured female identifying ensemble include Graziella and Velma.

CHARACTER: SHARK BOYS

AGE: 15-19yrs old

VOCAL: Must be strong ballet/jazz dancers. Singing a plus

DETAILS: Shark gang members. Angry, strong, and fighting against the racism they face from the Jets.

- CHINO - Character appearance - 15 - 20. Vocal - singing a plus Details - Introvert, shy, trying to find his place in the world. Bernardo's preferred choice in partner for Maria. Strong actor, dancing a plus
- Multiple named ensemble roles available

CHARACTER: SHARK GIRLS

AGE: 17-25 yrs old

VOCAL: Must be strong ballet/jazz dancers. Singing is a plus.

DETAILS: Girlfriends to the Shark Boys. Vivacious, sexy, strong, and loud. Featured female identifying ensemble is Rosalia who sings 'America' with Anita

- Multiple ensemble roles available

ALL ETHNICITIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT.

THE DETAILS

Fees

At Centrestage, we constantly are seeking to make amateur theatre more accessible to the community of Geelong. With that statement at the forefront of our organisation, Centrestage, with the kind support of our sponsors, will waive all actor membership fees for West Side Story to allow greater access to the arts for all performers including minority representation. We believe this is a small step that will allow a performer not to have the burden of how they may afford to pay the nominal fee normally associated with community theatre.

We thank Geelong Travel for supporting each cast member with this generous offer (normally \$120 per performer)

Sponsorship

We are always looking for businesses and individuals who are willing to sponsor our productions. CentreStage is able to offer an attractive array of advertising and marketing opportunities (starting from \$350) for prospective sponsors, on both short and long-term bases. If you, or anyone you know, may be interested, Please email us at wss@centrestage.org.au

**AUDITION BOOKINGS AT
WWW.CENTRESTAGE.ORG.AU/AUDITIONS**





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