



Presents

The Devils

By John Whiting

Based on a book by Aldous Huxley

Production team

Director Nick Mouton
Producer Ben Hussey

Synopsis

Father Urbain Grandier is a worldly, charming priest who has a special attraction for his female parishioners. His reputation leads to him being offered the position of head priest at St Ursula's Convent. He turns down the offer and the convent's prioress, Sister Jeanne, takes this rejection personally so she avenges herself by claiming possession by devils whom she claims were set upon her by Grandier. The hysteria becomes widespread. Meantime, he becomes guilty of outrages against several prominent women in his parish and the cry against him grows. His antagonism of the church's hierarchy is the final straw and forces Grandier to trial for reasons beyond his power.

Music

This isn't a musical but there will be some singing in the play. There will be scenes set in Grandier's church so there will be some choral singing. You don't have to be pitch-perfect - just sound like parishioners singing in their local church. The nuns will have a small song together but all of the singing will be based around the actors' abilities so don't be scared if you can't sing! The actors playing Grandier & Jeanne don't have to sing.

Style

The Devils is based on a real trial that happened in seventeenth century France, but I won't set it in that period. It's written in modern language so I'm setting it in a neutral modern period with a stark set. The costumes will be based around the 1950s as the trial has a strong similarity to the McCarthy trials that happened during that era. The priests will wear long, close-collared jackets in different colours depicting their seniority & the nuns will be in simple white habits.

What Are We Looking For

There are 23 characters in total & so that people get a good amount of time on stage, there will be some doubling-up. These will be explained at the Workshop & Auditions. This will be a fun challenge for those actors & I will work with them to help find their different characters – whether it's through accents, walk, stance or attitude.

This is a strong ensemble piece with a lot of character work – that's what attracted me to it. There are great characters that could be taken to the extreme & become a caricature, but I don't want that to happen. The humour & emotions from the play will be driven through the characters working with the script not through going for the obvious laughs or cringey over-performance.

I am looking for 10 male & 6 female actors – most at one point will play a part that doesn't speak. The ages are a guidance so might change during the auditioning process. There are no specific accent requirements.

Female Characters

Sister Jeanne of the Angels - Prioress of St Ursula's Convent. Age 30s+. Slightly psychotic in nature. Unpredictable and dangerous

D'Armagnac - The Governor of Loudun. Age late 30s+. Highly respected by the residents of Loudun. Slightly clouded by her feelings towards Grandier allowing the priest to be a strong influence over her

Trincant - Public Prosecutor. Age 40s / 50s. Bit of a socialite busy body

Phillipe - The Public Prosecutor's daughter. Age 18+. Grandier's naïve young lover

Sewerwoman – Age 20s+. The narrator of the play

Ninon – Age 20s / 30s. Young attractive widow

Sister Claire, Sister Louise & Sister Gabrielle - Sisters of St Ursula's Convent. Age 20s / 30s

Male Characters

Father Urbain Grandier – Age 30s. Charismatic but his commitment to his religion is clouded

Guillaume De Cerisay - The Chief Magistrate of Loudun. Age 40s+. D'Armagnac's closest confidant & adviser. He has a better perspective on Grandier's actions

Mannoury - A surgeon. Age 20s+. Dislikes Grandier's charm & the attention he's getting from the ladies. A comedy character

Adam - A chemist. Age 20s+. Mannoury's partner in crime. A comedy character

Father Barre – The country's lead exorcist. Age 30s+. Has extremists beliefs

Father Rangier – Rangier's right-hand man. Age 20s. Willing to learn but is unsure about Barre's methods

Father Mignon - Priest of St Ursula's Convent. Age 40s+. A spineless individual who is easily won over by Sister Jeanne & Father Barre

Prince Henri De Conde - Prince of France. Age 40s+. Charismatic Prince who dislikes the religious extremists

DeLaubardemont - The King's special Commissioner to Loudun. Age late 30s+. Authoritative member of court who isn't easily influenced

Louis XIII - King of France. Age 30s. A bit dim & has no real authority. A puppet King. Doesn't speak

Cardinal Richelieu – Age 30s & 40s. The puppet-master

De La Rochepozay - The Bishop of Poitiers. Age 40s+. Set in his way & dislikes change

Bontemps - Gaoler & court clerk. Age 30s+. A bit of grunt

Father Ambrose – Age 40s+. A kind Monk who counsels Grandier

There are additional non-talking parts, such as a nurse, priests & a servant.

Key Dates

Workshops – Thursday 27 November 2014

Auditions – Monday 8, Tuesday 9 & Wednesday 10 December 2014

Recall – Saturday 13 December 2014

First read-through (depending on cast availability) – Saturday 3 January 2015

First rehearsals (depending on cast availability) – Monday 5 January 2015

Rehearsals will be on Mondays & Wednesday nights

Weekend days will alternate from Saturday to Sunday

Dress rehearsal – Monday 16 March 2015

Performance dates at the Bridewell Theatre – Tuesday 17 – Saturday 21 March 2015 (inc matinee)

Workshop

Thursday 27 November - 1 Brewers Hall Gardens, Moorgate, EC2V 5BX

6.30pm for 7pm start. Finish 8.30pm / 9pm

The workshop will include:

- Introduction to the team & the play
- Sing-song with the Musical Director
- Group activities
- A look at some scenes
- Please email TheDevils@sedos.co.uk if you want to attend (BTW - you can still attend if you don't email us – this just gives us an idea of numbers)

Auditions

Monday 8 & Wednesday 9 December - 1 Brewers Hall Gardens, Moorgate, EC2V 5BX

Tuesday 9 December – St Bride Foundation, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, EC4Y 8EQ

Each night will be divided into two one-hour sessions - 7pm & 8.15pm

No need to pre-prep before the auditions

You will have time to prep the scenes prior to performing

- Group scenes
- Monologues – not everyone will do one

Recall – invitation only

Saturday 13 December - 1 Brewers Hall Gardens, Moorgate, EC2V 5BX

10am – 2pm. Times may vary

Currently no need to pre-prep before the auditions. This may change depending on the number of auditionees

You will have time to prep the scenes prior to performing

- Group scenes
- Monologues – not everyone will do one

I will want to use this time to see the chemistry between actors so some people may be asked to stay longer than others

Booking An Audition

To book an audition, please email the team at TheDevils@sedos.co.uk stating:

- Name
- Telephone number
- Preferred date & time slot (either 7pm or 8.15pm) on 8, 9 & 10 December
- Second preference of date & time slot in case we are over subscribed
- Role preference, if you have one
- Availability on Saturday 13 December, 10am – 2pm in case we want to recall you

There will be a cap of 15 people per slot so you will be notified if they are full & we will refer to your second preference.

Things to note:

- Please email us asap if you have to cancel
- Monday 8 & Wednesday 10 December auditions are at 1 Brewers Hall Gardens
- Tuesday 9 December auditions are at St Brides Foundation
- You will be notified about any changes
- You will not have to prepare anything for the auditions

Please be aware that there is a crossover in the rehearsal period between The Devils and Legally Blonde so it is not possible to do both. If you also intend to audition for Legally Blonde please make the production team aware of this by email.

Fees

Established in 1905, Sedos is the City of London's premier amateur theatre company. Auditions are free for Sedos members and £5 for non-members (refunded if cast). If cast you will be required to become a Sedos member (currently £30 per year) and pay a participation fee of £30.

Backstage

Sedos is always looking for volunteers to help with set building, sewing costumes, working Front of House or backstage. If you are interested in getting involved in any capacity please contact the team at TheDevils@sedos.co.uk.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals will be held at 1 Brewers Hall Garden, EC2V 5BX on Mondays & Wednesdays from 7pm – 9:30pm and on Saturdays or Sundays from 12pm – 5pm.

We will try to schedule rehearsals based around cast availability as much as possible but please indicate on your audition form any dates you are unavailable. Please be honest - this will not necessarily stop you from being cast.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the workshop & auditions!