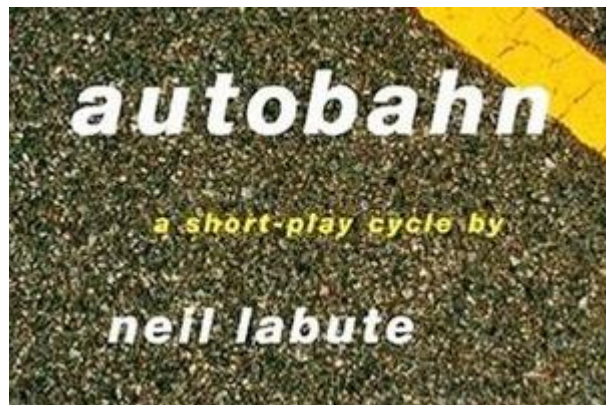




Audition Notice

Autobahn

By Neil Labute



This amateur production is presented by arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH LTD

16th – 21st July, Bridewell Theatre

Director Jacqui Adams

Workshop (optional)

Auditions

Recalls (by invitation)

Monday 25th March 7pm

Monday 15th, Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th April from 7pm

Sunday, 21st April all day

To book an audition please e-mail: autobahnsedos@outlook.com

Autobahn

"We just keep doing lousy things, I guess. That's what it is. All this lousy stuff that seems to finally catch up with us. Right?"

In **Autobahn**, Neil LaBute's provocative collection of one-act plays set within the confines of the front seat, he investigates the tentative apprehension that surrounds the steering wheel. Each of these seven vignettes explore the ethos of perception and relationship - from a make-out session gone awry, to a kidnapping thinly disguised as a road trip, a reconnaissance mission involving the rescue of a Nintendo 64 to a daughter's long ride home after her release from rehab. The result is an unsettling montage that gradually reveals the scabrous force of words left unsaid while illuminating the delicate interplay between intention and morality, capturing the essence of Middle America and the myriad paths which cross its surface.

Autobahn consists of seven short plays: **Funny; Bench Seat; All Apologies; Merge; Long Division; Road Trip and Autobahn**

Each play consists of two characters, fourteen parts in total. Four of these are non speaking roles, but are no less significant for it. Some, perhaps all, of the roles can be cross cast (this may result in heterosexual relationships becoming same-sex ones). In addition, the ages given are guides only – most of the pieces can be performed by actors whose ages sit outside the brackets given.

The characters are:

Funny – Younger Woman, Older Woman

Funny takes place on a young (say early to mid twenties) woman's long ride home after completing her latest spell in rehab. The woman is being driven home by her mother, who doesn't speak throughout the journey.

Bench Seat – Girl, Guy

A girl in her late teens and a boy in his early twenties have parked at a local make out spot. Only he doesn't know that for the girl it's also a local break-up spot, and she, um, has trouble letting go. (This play contains some physical contact between the actors.)

All Apologies – Man, Woman

A man sits in a parked car and rants at his wife about how sorry he is for swearing at her, while she sits in silence.

Merge – Man, Woman

A man in his thirties drives his wife, around the same age, home from the airport as she describes a traumatic experience she suffered while away at a conference. The husband knows from experience though, to dig a little deeper.

Long Division – Man, Other Man

A man is being driven along by his friend. He has recently gone through a break up, and the friend is convincing him – at length – to go to his ex's and wrench back his games console from her undeserving grasp. The man who has recently gone through the break up ('Other Man') has one line.

Road Trip – Man, Girl

An older man and a young teenager are taking a road trip. But as they talk (and, sometimes, don't talk) some rather uncomfortable facts emerge.

Autobahn – Man, Woman

A woman in her thirties, and her husband of about the same age, drive home from returning their adopted or fostered son to the agency from which he came after difficulties with his behaviour. The man drives in silence while the woman does the talking, and we gradually learn just how troubled this teenage boy was.

Why Autobahn?

Autobahn is a play cycle with a lot of assets – first and greatest of these is the writing. Neil LaBute can WRITE. These plays are funny, dark, heartbreaking, shocking. They are full of uncomfortable silences, stolen looks, rising tension, awkward laughter, and hidden secrets. The best thing about the writing however is how ambiguous it is. Take All Apologies – a man rants at his wife in a parked car about how sorry he is for swearing at her, while she sits in silence. Now, on the face of it we have an angry man and an upset wife, perhaps? Read it again though – what if he's begging forgiveness, what if it isn't sarcasm, and what if her silence isn't shock or timidity, but stony defiance? It's playing with interpretations in that way that I want to spend a good deal of time exploring; I want to wring everything out of these texts.

Who are you, anyway?

I have previously directed a workshop production of Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde by Moises Kaufman with Sedos, and a production of Shakespeare's Measure for Measure with KDC, before directing Man of Destiny by Bernard Shaw in last year's Sedos Summer Festival. I have also previously assistant directed Hapgood with Sedos, Don Juan in Soho with Tower, and produced an In the City production of The Importance of Being Earnest.

What will the audition process be like?

The first stage auditions will take the form of performing sections from the text, which will be made available ahead of time. We will also have some reading of scenes that contain dialogue for two characters, and some work on pausing and silence. Recalls will be very similar – with a different section of speech to prepare and perform, plus more sections of dialogue to look at, and more work on varying interpretations. The audition process should be seen as much as an opportunity for you to become familiar with the text and the characters, as it is for me to see what you can do.

Prepared speeches? But I only found out about the auditions yesterday!

Don't worry or panic, speeches will be made available for you to look through and have a bash at on the day – let me know if you haven't had a lot of time and it'll be taken into account. Again, anyone can perform any speech they wish, and we'll narrow down character choices at the recall stage, so you'll have plenty of time to familiarise yourself with the text.

What if I can't do an American accent? Should I still audition?

YES! I'm not going to pretend that the writing isn't designed to fit the rhythm and speech pattern of an American accent, but if you are the perfect fit for the role but the accent isn't quite cutting it, one way or another we'll work around it. Plus – four characters don't speak, so no accent troubles there.

What's the deal with the non-speaking roles?

Well, they're non-speaking roles, in that the character doesn't speak, but if you've ever been in a room with two people who have had a row you'll know that that doesn't mean you can't have an impact! There'll be as much acting to do as the speaker, as much background work, as much movement. You'll be directed as much and you'll be performing as much. However, everyone will be given the opportunity to state whether or not they would be happy with a non-speaking role, so no-one will be offered one if they don't want it.

Summer Festival audition restrictions

Autobahn is the second show in Sedos's three-week Summer Festival. Because of clashing rehearsal times it is only possible to appear in one Festival show, so while you are welcome to register to audition for Autobahn if you are also auditioning for Enron and/or A Man of No Importance; if you are cast in either of those shows you cannot then audition for Autobahn. Full details of the other shows and their auditions on the Sedos website, sedos.co.uk.

Sedos: audition, participation and membership fees

Sedos is one of London's pre-eminent amateur theatre societies, with the aim of producing quality amateur shows to the best artistic quality possible. Please note that performers are not paid — not even expenses. To perform in Autobahn you must be a member of Sedos (membership is currently £30 per year) and pay a participation fee of £30. There is a £5 audition fee for non-Sedos members. If you are cast in the show, your audition fee will be deducted from your participation fee.

For more information about Sedos, please visit our website, www.sedos.co.uk.

Rehearsal Schedule

As this is less one play and more a series of two-handers, the rehearsals will be tailored to the actors' respective availabilities, with rehearsals taking place as and when necessary and possible. The schedule is likely to consist of one evening session and one Sunday session per week, per play. There will be regular 'show and tell' sessions where everyone can see everyone else's plays, these will usually be held on a Sunday.