



AUDITION NOTICE



Lucky Stiff

A Musical Farce

Book and Lyrics by **Lynn Ahrens**

Music by **Stephen Flaherty**

Key dates

Workshop: 30th April

Auditions: 8th, 10th, 12th May

Show dates: 18th – 22nd September

CREATIVE TEAM

Director: Roger Harwood

Musical Director: Tim Nelson

Choreographer: Jane Saunders

Producer: Clare Harding



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT

From the writers of *Ragtime*, *Once On This Island*, *A Man of No Importance* and *Anastasia*, comes this wacky musical farce about diamonds, dogs, murder and love.

Lucky Stiff is an offbeat, hilarious murder mystery farce complete with mistaken identities, six million-dollars-worth of diamonds, and a corpse in a wheelchair. The story revolves around an unassuming shoe salesman from East Grinstead who is forced to take the embalmed body of his recently murdered uncle on a vacation to Monte Carlo. Should he succeed in passing his uncle off as alive, Harry Witherspoon stands to inherit six million bucks. If not, the money goes to the Universal Dog Home of Brooklyn.

Tony Award winning writing team Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty's first produced show, ***Lucky Stiff***, premiered Off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons in 1988 when it won the Richard Rodgers Award and Washington's Helen Hayes Award for Best Musical. It made its professional UK debut believe it or not at the Bridewell Theatre(!) in 1997 and

more recently was staged at the Union Theatre (2017).



WE WANT YOU!

We want to focus on the comedy and accentuate the absurd. The premise is ridiculously silly but that's the fun of the piece. Our objective is for both the cast/company and the audience alike to have (in dead Uncle Tony's words) *"the time of their life"*.

We are looking for a small but perfectly formed ensemble cast of 10-12. The show has been designed so that some of the company play numerous and diverse roles (from lorry truck driver to supercilious solicitor, from hair curled boarding house landlady to sexy French nightclub singer). In some cases, the transformation will happen in the scene change in full view of the audience.

The creative team will be looking for strong character actors, with good comic timing and accents to match (opportunities to demonstrate your best caricatured New Jersey, French, Italian and British accents to name a few).

We won't be taking anything too seriously but will ensure that the show is well drilled in order to make the gags look spontaneous and easy. We will be looking for actors who can build a rapport with the audience – but at the same time have absolute conviction in their character and what they are doing/feeling.

Some of the main roles also require strong singing. There are two recordings we are aware of – the original studio cast recording (released 1994) and a more recent off-

Broadway (2003) recording. The latter is available on Spotify. There was also a film version made in 2014 (available online), which was produced by Ahrens and Flaherty and perfectly captures the writers' intended style of the piece (and which we hope to honour onstage).

The role of dead Uncle Tony (the wheelchair-bound corpse) is perhaps unsurprisingly a non-speaking / singing role but requires a strong actor with excellent physicality and the ability to draw the audience's eye at exactly the right moment (and not draw attention at exactly the wrong time). He also gets to dance in the nightmare sequence (tap is a bonus but not a prerequisite). With no lines to learn and appearances in most of the scenes, this is a great role for someone up to the challenge!

We will also be looking for 2-4 dancers (men and/or women) - who can tap – and will appear throughout the show, featuring in the two big '*dance*' numbers (a tap dancing dog nightmare sequence and a Monte Carlo cabaret performance) as well as overseeing choreographed set changes and participating in other company numbers/scenes.

This is a small cast and everyone will be kept busy!



LOOK AND FEEL

In terms of look, we will keep it in the decade it was written, so very eighties. Bright and gaudy costumes (think Hawaii-five-oh meets Dynasty on a bad day) and hair styling to match.

A minimal but fun abstract set will provide a wacky backdrop to the onstage mayhem that will inevitably ensue. It's classic farce so expect the ubiquitous door slamming, cross dressing and misunderstandings! Apart from a very few pieces of furniture and props, we will be relying on the cast to create the scenes through the audience's imagination.

THE CHARACTERS

Harry Witherspoon.

Age: 30 to 40

Vocal range top: F#4

Vocal range bottom: Bb2

A shy, sweet-natured and insecure young Englishman, working as an underpaid shoe salesman in a dreary suburban shoe shop. Lonely, and beset by dogs and prying housemates in his boardinghouse, Harry knows that life is passing him by, but feels incapable of making any changes or taking any chances.

Annabel Glick.

Age: 25 to 35

Vocal range top: E5

Vocal range bottom: F#3

A representative of the Universal Dog Home of Brooklyn. Annabel is a young woman with a natural bent for causes. She takes life very seriously, and denies herself any small pleasures, for fear that if she waits for happiness to knock, it won't. Instead, she dedicates herself to good works. Annabel is the type who wears protest buttons and carries a bag full of useful things like tyre gauges and granola bars.

Rita La Porta.

Age: 35 to 45

Vocal range top: D5

Vocal range bottom: F#3

A handsome, hard-edged woman with an extremely volatile nature and a severe case of nearsightedness. She grew up in an Italian neighbourhood in Atlantic City. Rita is passionate, impulsive, jealous, manipulative and very insecure about her looks. She is also putty in the hands of the man she adores. Things often get out of control when Rita is present.

Vincent (Vinnie) Di Ruzzio.

Age: 35 to 40

Vocal range top: F#4

Vocal range bottom: A#2

Rita's brother. An optometrist in New Jersey. A nervous and conservative man, a pillar of the community and a person who would never do anything out of the ordinary, risky or controversial.

Luigi Gaudi.

Age: 40 to 50

Vocal range top: F#4

Vocal range bottom: B2

A boisterous and gregarious Italian. Luigi is a pivotal character, who has the habit of appearing at the right times in the right places!

Dominique du Monaco.

Age: 20-40

Vocal range top:

Vocal range bottom:

A sexy French nightclub singer with sparkle in her eye and isolations in her hips. She can be very warm and sympathetic, especially where money is concerned. (Doubles with other roles).

The Solicitor.

Age: 30+

A rather Dickensian type, very upper crusty, powpus and overly civilized. Good at dealing with delicate matters. (Double with other roles).

The Dead Body of Anthony Hendon. 45-60.

Tap dancing preferred but no accents necessary! Loads of opportunity for "Uncle-ography".

The Ensemble Players (up to another 4, including some dancers)

These performers double to play a variety of parts. As originally produced, the roles were shared as below (which we may or may not follow!):

MAN 1 (Surly Lorry Driver, Solicitor, Prosperous Man on Train, Clothing Salesman, French Emcee, Croupier, Nun, Old Texan)

MAN 2 (Offstage Telegram Deliverer, Vicious Punk, Mr. Loomis the Eye Patient, French Waiter on Train, Stationmaster's Voice, Bellhop, French Waiter in Club, Dapper Gambler, Leper)

WOMAN 1 (Landlady, Miss Thorsby the Secretary, Puerto Rican Nurse, Southern Lady #1, Dancing Portrait, Drunken Maid)

WOMAN 2 (Spinster, Southern Lady #2, Dancing Roulette Wheel, Dominique du Monaco)



KEY DATES

Workshop: Monday 30th April

Auditions: Tuesday 8th, Thursday 10th May from 7pm, Saturday 12th May from 11am.

Recalls: Sunday 13th May from 10am.

First read-through / rehearsal: Tuesday 3rd July.

Rehearsals will be on Tuesday and Thursday nights, and Sunday daytime. You will be required for both days of the get-in weekend - Saturday 15 September (full run and possible band call) and Sunday 16 September (tech rehearsal). We may add another Saturday (so another full weekend) nearer to production week.

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. This is a small ensemble piece and numerous absences will make progress difficult if not impossible.

The workshop, auditions and recalls will all be held at 1 Brewer Hall Gardens, London EC2V 5BX (off 55 Basinghall St)

Tech Rehearsal: Sunday 16 September

Dress Rehearsal: Monday 17 September

Performances: Tuesday 18 September – Saturday 22 September (incl. Saturday matinee).

Performances will take place at the **Bridewell Theatre** (Bride Lane, Fleet St, London EC4Y 8EQ).

WORKSHOP

Monday 30th April at 6.45pm for 7pm start and aiming to finish by 9pm.

Come along and hear more about the director's vision for the show. Hear some extracts from the script and sing together as a group. Roger will talk about the ensemble nature of the show and will no doubt have a fun group exercise or two to prove his point.

No preparation is required (other than being open to having some fun) and attendance is strictly optional. Attendance will not affect your chances of being cast.

If you are planning on attending the workshop, please sign up via membership.sedos.co.uk

AUDITIONS

Tuesday 8th May from 7pm

Thursday 10th May from 7pm

Saturday 12th May from 11am

Sunday 13th May from 10am (Recalls)

Each auditionee will be auditioned individually for song and dialogue. Audition extracts for your chosen role will be made available to you after you have signed up to audition. Specific music extracts will be allocated to each of the principal roles and the panel will want to hear you perform the song allocated if you are auditioning for a named part. If you are auditioning for one of the Ensemble Players, then you should pick one of the song extracts that best suits your voice. Any additional music for recalls will be provided after the first round of auditions.

There will also be a very short dance/movement audition, which will be done in groups of approx. 6. This short audition will be looking to see if you are a strong mover (as opposed to dancer). Naturally the dancers will be given an opportunity to show off their moves (and tappers should bring their tap shoes)!

Please come prepared. The character notes as well as the dialogue and vocal extracts will offer some important insights into the colourful characters that make up the show. We are looking forward to seeing how you might approach these wonderful caricatures, but we also want to see how you take direction and may ask you to sing or read more than once to try out different approaches.

To register please sign up for an audition slot on membership.sedos.co.uk, once you have signed up you will need to confirm (and pay the £5 audition fee if you are not a member of Sedos) by following the instructions in the email you receive.

Once you have confirmed your audition slot you will be sent the audition materials and audition form. Please complete your audition form and return to luckystiff@sedos.co.uk so that we have full details about you at the auditions including your experience and what part(s) you are auditioning for. If you are only interested in one particular part, then please

indicate this.

If you cannot make any of the audition dates, especially for those who are cast in Pippin, please get in touch and we will do our best to accommodate you.

We will aim to inform you as quickly as possible after the auditions whether you have been recalled/cast. While we will try to take your preferred method of communication into account, we may have to notify you by another method due to time constraints. etc.

RECALLS

Sunday 13th May from 10am

More details will be given if you are recalled. We will only recall if necessary, so don't assume that you have not been cast if you are not recalled! However, please keep this day free just in case we want to see you again.

We will aim to inform you by the evening of Sunday 13th May whether or not you have been cast in the show.

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 you must be a member of Sedos:

Membership is currently £30 per year paid by direct debit / £35 paid as a one-off

- You must also pay a participation fee of £40 to be in the production.
- There is a £5 non-refundable audition fee for non-Sedos members, which will be payable online at the time of confirming an audition slot.

Due to the rehearsal period cross over it is not advised that you aim to be cast in both lucky Stiff and Our Country's Good.

BACKSTAGE

Sedos is always looking for volunteers to help with props/costumes, working Front of House or backstage. If you are interested in getting involved in any capacity please get in contact. Please email Clare at luckystiff@sedos.co.uk if you are interested.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions that can't be answered by the audition notice or at the workshop please email Clare at luckystiff@sedos.co.uk

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

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