

AUDITION INFORMATION

Title of show: F. Scott Fitzgerald's *THE GREAT GATSBY*

Adapted by Simon Levy

Audition Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 (*please see Ms. Bryant if you have a conflict*)

Audition Time: 3:25 PM (*audition order: seniors, juniors, sophomores, freshmen*)

Audition Location: LACS Room 3304

Roles: 5-8 Men, 4-7 Women **Recommended**

Audition Preparation:

1. Read the novel. **2.**
Read the script.
3. Watch a film adaptation.
4. Watch at least one documentary covering The 1920s, aka The Jazz Age.
5. Learn your monologue lines.

About the Play:¹ The Jazz Age comes alive once more in Simon Levy's delicate and haunting stage adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's classic novella. When a young man, Nick Carraway, arrives at a guest cottage on Long Island, he is quickly drawn into the glamorous world of selfmade millionaire, Jay Gatsby, whose dangerous obsession with the beautiful Daisy Buchanan threatens to cast a dark cloud over one brief, decadent summer. Caught up in a whirlwind of lavish parties, extravagant wealth, and smoldering passion, Nick bears witness to an era of excess. Fueled by money, ambition, and a belief in what Fitzgerald called "The [wild] future that year by year recedes before us," Gatsby's meteoric rise and precipitous fall remains a cautionary meditation on the ever-elusive nature of the American Dream.

Character Breakdown: Unless otherwise indicated, all characters are in their late 20's to early 30's.

Jay Gatsby (male) - A romantic idealist with a disarming smile. Rich, charming, yet sincere under the extreme wealth. Money is only a tool to him; Daisy is all he truly wants.

Daisy Buchanan (female) - A flighty southern beauty with a voice like money. She is delicate, indecisive, and disillusioned. She longs for a different life, yet is trapped within the safety of wealth.

¹ Source citation: <http://www.gwctheater.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/AUDITION-INFORMATION-GREATGATSBY.pdf>

Nick Carraway (*male*) - Midwestern, with a kind and gentle manner. Out of his depth in this company; a simple, honest, sincere man.

Tom Buchanan (*male*) - Arrogant, opinionated, and powerfully built; a rich, bigoted bully of a man.

Jordan Baker (*female*) - Confident, and attractive with an athletic body; graceful, yet strong, with a masculine energy. She does what she wants.

Myrtle Wilson (*female*) - Poor, but ambitious. Sexy, sensual, passionate. She believes she is destined for better things.

George Wilson (*male*) - Poor, spiritless, and thoroughly beaten down by life. He has no idea how the world works. A victim of circumstance.

Meyer Waldheim/Mr. McKee/Cop (*male*) - Multi-Character Role 30's - 50s

Mrs. McKee/Mrs. Michaelis (*female*) - Multi-Character Role 30's - 40s

NOTE: Depending on audition turnout, the last two Multi-Character roles may be broken up into individual roles. In addition, some non-speaking extras may be cast.

You may choose up to two monologues for the audition.

Nick Carraway: In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. "Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had." He didn't say any more, but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that. Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this story, represented everything for which I had an unaffected scorn. But if personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something ... gorgeous about him ... some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life. He had an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person ... and which it is not likely I shall ever find again. /

I remember the rest of that day and that night and the next day only as an endless drill of police and photographers and newspaper men. Most of the reporters about Gatsby were a nightmare --- grotesques, circumstantial, eager, and untrue. I found myself on Gatsby side, and alone. No one else cared. No one. Where were the party people NOW? I called up Daisy to see how she was taking it ... but she and Tom had gone away that afternoon, leaving no return address. I wanted to get somebody for him. I wanted him to know that somebody cared. I went into the room where he lay to reassure him: "I'll get somebody for you, Gatsby. Don't you worry. Just trust me and I'll get somebody for you." / The day of the funeral ... nobody came. Daisy never even sent a message ... not even a flower. / I couldn't forgive any of them. After Gatsby's death, the East became haunted for me, distorted. It was time to go back home, back West where the blue smoke of the brittle leaves stirs in the air, and the wind blows, the laundry stiff on the line.

Jay Gatsby: Look here, old sport. What's your opinion of me? / Be frank, old sport. / I'm going to tell you something about my life. I don't want you to get the wrong idea of me from all these stories you hear. This is the God's honest truth --- I'm the son of some wealthy people in the Middle West --- all dead now. I was brought up in America but educated at Oxford because all my ancestors have been educated there for many years. It's a family tradition. / My family all died and I came into a good deal of money. After that I lived like a young rajah in all the capitols of Europe --- Paris, Venice, Rome --- collecting jewels, chiefly rubies, hunting big game, painting a little, things for myself only, and trying to forget something very sad that had happened to me long ago. Then came the war, old sport. It was a great relief and I tried very hard to die but I

seemed to bear an enchanted life. I accepted a commission as first lieutenant when it began. In the Argonne Forest --- you were there? / This was near Souilly. I took two machine-gun detachments so far forward that there was a half—mile gap on either side of us where the infantry couldn't advance. We stayed there two days and two nights, a hundred and thirty men with sixteen Lewis guns, and when the infantry came up at the last they found the insignia of three German divisions among the piles of dead. I was promoted to be a major and every Allied government gave me a decoration. /

Your wife doesn't love you. Alright? She's never loved you. She loves me. / She never loved you, do you hear? She only married you because she was tired of waiting for me. It was a terrible mistake, but in her heart she never loved anyone except me! / Daisy, that's over now. It doesn't matter anymore. Just tell him the truth --- that you never loved him --- and it's all wiped out forever. / You never loved him.

Jordan Baker: Daisy Fay ... the most popular girl in Louisville. We all envied her. She dressed all in white and had a little white roadster and all day long the telephone rang in her house --- *Imitating Daisy:* 'If you behave yourselves, I'll spare each of you exactly one hour!' / And excited young officers from Camp Taylor demanded the privilege of monopolizing her nights. Well, one night I'm walking by her house, this was nineteen-seventeen, and she's on the porch dancing with a lieutenant I'd never seen before. They were so engrossed in each other that they didn't see me, and he was looking at her in a way that every young girl wants to be looked at. And because it seemed so romantic to me I have remembered the incident ever since. His name was Jay Gatsby --- / and I didn't lay eyes on him again for over four years. Even after I'd met him at one of his parties I didn't realize it was the same man until the other night. Anyway, they became inseparable, promises were made, and then he left for the war. She changed after that, became distraught, withdrawn. I don't know what happened, something to do with her family, but after the war was over she just up and suddenly married Tom Buchanan of Chicago. He arrived with an entourage with more pomp and circumstance than Louisville ever knew before. The day before the wedding he gave her a string of pearls valued at three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. I was a bridesmaid. Half an hour before the bridal dinner I went into her room and found her lying on her bed as lovely as the June night in her flowered dress. / And drunk as

a monkey. She had a bottle of champagne in one hand and a letter in the other. / I was scared; I can tell you. I'd never seen a girl like that before. / I didn't know what to do. I locked the door and got her into a cold bath. / She wouldn't let go of that letter. She took it into the tub with her and squeezed it up into a wet ball and only let me leave it in the soap dish when she saw that it was coming into pieces like snow. But she didn't say another word. I gave her spirits of ammonia, put ice on her forehead, hooked her back into her dress, and half an hour later we walked out of that room, the pearls around her neck and the incident over.

Daisy Buchanan: The war took a lot of young men away. I've had a very bad time, Nick, and I'm pretty cynical about everything. / Pammy? Oh yes. Listen, Nick, let me tell you what I said when she was born. Would you like to hear? It'll show you how I've gotten to feel about ... things. Well, Pammy was less than an hour old and Tom was God knows where. I woke up out of the ether with an utterly abandoned feeling and asked the nurse right away if it was a boy or a girl. She told me it was a girl, and so I turned my head away and wept. "All right," I said, "I'm glad it's a girl. And I hope she'll be a fool – that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful, little FOOL." You see, I think everything is terrible anyhow. Everybody thinks so --- the most advanced people. And I know. I've been everywhere and seen everything and done everything. Sophisticated ... God, I'm so sophisticated! /

Oh Jay! ... They're such beautiful shirts. It makes me sad because I've never seen such ... such beautiful shirts before! ... If only it were possible to reverse time --- erase it! --- just erase it and begin again --- do you think that's possible, Jay? --- to erase time as if it had never happened? -- you said you'd come back from no matter where you were and here you are --- gleaming like silver! --- and I said I'd be waiting --- remember? --- and my hair was damp that night --- yes! --- and you! --- so handsome in your Brooks Brothers uniform --- smelling like new goods --- the garden smelling of wisteria and pine forest – and you told me you loved me and I thought you the sweetest person in the whole world --- and the music --- music everywhere! --- filling the pine forests fragrant with our future --- we were gold and happy --- weren't we! --- gold and happy --- and you trusted me with the dearest heart of all and it's so much more than anybody else in all the world has ever had!

