

Little Women - Grandstreet Theatre Audition Information

Louisa May Alcott's classic novel of the March sisters has inspired generations of readers and writers around the world. Now the heartfelt story of Jo and her three spirited sisters comes to the stage in a brand new play that honors the original, while freshly interpreting it for a new era. As Jo, Beth, Amy and Meg approach adulthood, each must balance her private ambitions with society's expectations. In a world defined by gender and class, Jo bravely sets forth to write her greatest story; her own. This sparkling new adaptation, by the playwright who gave us *Sense and Sensibility*, will have audiences falling in love with the March sisters all over again.

Little Women

By: Kate Hamill

Director: Jess Shoemaker

* Jess is one of our favorite guest artists who is returning to Helena to direct this production! Jess was last here to direct our production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Performance Dates

November 19 - 21 / December 1 - 5 / December 15 - 19

* *Little Women* will have weeks off during the run to accommodate the run of *Beauty and the Beast* at the Civic Center

(Wednesday through Saturday evenings at 7:30pm / Sunday matinees at 2:30pm)

Video Auditions

We are only accepting audition submissions via video. Audition Videos must be received by noon on Tuesday, September 14th in order to be considered for casting. Please follow these guidelines when preparing and submitting your audition video:

- * Record yourself performing two of the monologues included in this Audition Packet
- * You are not required to memorize your audition monologues, but you are encouraged to be fairly familiar with your selections
- * Please introduce yourself at the beginning of your video
- * Use a well lit room so we can clearly see your face
- * Submit your Audition Video and Audition Form through the following link by noon on September 14th
- * <https://www.dropbox.com/request/r3MIXLhiDSWUMFSaCGcZ>

Rehearsal Dates

Rehearsals are scheduled to begin the week of September 27th. Rehearsals are usually scheduled during evening hours on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. We will do our best to accommodate your schedules. You will only be called to rehearsal when you are needed.

Audition Form

Those who audition must submit the ***Little Women Audition Form*** along with your audition video. Forms can be downloaded [HERE](#). This form has important calendar and schedule information that is necessary for the casting process.

What to Prepare

This audition packet includes everything you need for your audition. Please choose TWO of the monologues from this packet to prepare for your audition.

Safety Policies

Those who audition for *Little Women* must be willing to follow Grandstreet Theatre's Covid-19 safety policies, which may include wearing a mask at all times for in person rehearsals. All participants must be willing to notify the production team of any possible illness or any possible exposure to Covid-19.

Seeking the Following Roles

Marmie - The matriarch of the March family. A social revolutionary; ahead of her time. Good sense of humor. A warrior; keeps the family together. Tough. Strong. Intelligent. This role may double with Aunt March.

Aunt March - the most unpleasant woman imaginable. Has lots of money, privileged. Strong political and personal opinions, which people endure. Judgmental.

Meg March - The oldest March daughter. Acts as Marmie's second in the house. A romantic at heart - likes to dress up and have little luxuries in life.

Jo March - the second oldest March. Does not fit comfortably within the given parameters of her given gender role. A deep fire within her. Extremely ambitious and frustrated by the distance between where she is and where she wants to be. Impatient. Wants to change the world. Very smart and knows it. A mix of insecurity and aspiration. Boyish and rough and tumble. Sometimes antagonistic. Not the most tolerant of differing viewpoints. Can be quite awkward or abrupt; bad temper when riled. A great sense of humor. Passionate. Ahead of her time. A warrior. Has a special relationship with Beth.

Beth March - the third March. Very sweet and paralytically shy; had to be removed from school because of her paralyzing social anxieties. An extremely special person. Almost incapable of going out in the world; sheltered by her family. Loves deeply and has deep empathy for everyone. Loves the simple things in life - so much that it hurts. Sees much more than anyone realizes. Brave and sensitive; quick to forgive and heal wounds. An observer.

Amy March - the youngest March. Opinionated and spunky; popular and quite focused on style. Not the most tolerant of differing viewpoints. Socially intelligent. Sometimes puts on airs. Perhaps a bit spoiled. A perfect little lady - except for her temper, and her not so great command of vocabulary. Grows up to be quite beautiful and elegant. Madly in love with Laurie, around whom she is never cool.

Hannah - Irish. The March's longtime housekeeper, cook and defacto babysitter. A treasure, a terror, a traditionalist. Takes no nonsense. Matter of fact, she's the boss of that kitchen, for sure. This role may double with Mrs. Mingott.

Mrs. Mingott - a very rich, stylish woman. Vanderbilt-eque, condescending, not terribly pleasant, fancies herself charitable.

Theodore "Laurie" Laurence - a sweet and handsome young man. Sensitive, funny, charming, and caring. In his fantasies, he's a white knight, riding in to rescue damsels in distress. A natural musician. Wealthy, thanks to his inheritance, generous, does not have to think about money. Does not always fit comfortably within the given parameters of his gender role - he doesn't want to grow up to be a soldier or tedious man of business. Finds a family in the Marches.

John Brooks - Laurie's sometimes stiff and awkward tutor. A rule follower. A poor man, well educated. Has a very noticeable limp - probably served in the war and was sent home, although may have been disqualified from service altogether. Feels deeply. Quite madly in love with Meg. This role may double with Mr. Dashwood.

Mr. Dashwood - A publisher of cheap newspapers and novels. A businessman, working in a man's world. Fancies himself a realist. Not a nice guy. Fancies himself a nice guy.

Mr. Laurence - Laurie's grandfather, responsible for Laurie's upbringing. A wealthy man. A gentleman in the strictest sense. Not comfortable with emotional language; bad at expressing himself. Has a rigid sense of what is appropriate behavior, especially for a man. Tends towards gruffness or temper. Probably quite unintentionally frightening.

Deeply regretful of incidents in his past, but unable to express it. This role may double with Robert March.

Robert March - father to the March girls. Never speaks, but his presence looms large. Is wounded in the war; never quite recovers. A significant limp, struggles with his injuries, both emotional and physical.

Age

You must be at least 12 years old by September 14th to audition for *Little Women*. Because several of the roles in this play may double, age is somewhat flexible in the casting process. Additionally, since the 4 March sisters and Laurie grow up throughout the course of the play, some of them could be played by young adults, and some of them could be played by high school students. In other words, if you are excited about auditioning for this play, do not let your perception of how old these characters are supposed to be keep you from auditioning. This is true for teenagers and adults of all ages.

Tech Week

November 14, 2021 - November 18, 2021

Tech week is the final week of the rehearsal process where all of the technical elements of the show are put in place.

For Grandstreet Theatre School Students

Little Women is not technically a theatre school production, but you are welcome to audition for *Little Women* AND *Beauty and the Beast* if you would like to be considered for both shows. No one will be cast in both shows. In order to be considered for both shows, you must submit an audition video to both shows and fulfill the audition requirements for both projects.

For questions or more information, please contact Jeff Downing, Artistic Director at 442-4270 or email jeff@grandstreettheatre.com

A Note from the Director, Jess:

Those auditioning should record two monologues from the packet below. The attached monologues are all selections from the show and have been organized by groupings of characters. If you would like to be considered for more than one grouping – use your best judgement about which monologues best represent you and your connection to the characters.

The most important thing I am looking for is actors that sound like themselves: including the silly, awkward, or angry pieces of their hearts. Other than that? I hope you pick the pieces which most connect you with deep comfort and the bittersweet feeling that comes from loving fiercely and growing up.

For those auditioning for Laurie and the March Sisters:

Please submit a play-pretend in addition to your monologues.

And this is very important: the play-pretend has absolutely nothing to do with your strength or capacity as a singer/musician. The key to a good play-pretend is having *fun* with the play-pretend.

And if you're not auditioning for the March Sisters or Laurie, but want to share a play-pretend? I'll gladly watch your play-pretend too!!

Play-Pretend Instructions

- You will sing the chorus of Battle Hymn of the Republic, three times.
- You will sing as though you, *yourself*, are eight years old again, and at a big party, trying to attract the (positive) attention of your friends and family.
- You will take a moment between each round to notice that nobody is listening to you singing. In fact, no one is paying you any attention at all...
- As with all play-pretending, but especially the play-pretend of children, this endeavor must be taken very seriously.

Play-Pretend Lyrics/Text

Glory, Glory Hallelujah
Glory, Glory Hallelujah
Glory, Glory Hallelujah
His Truth is Marching On

Link to Entire Song for Learning Play-Pretend

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irshiU70SnA>
- (relevant section from 00:23 – 00:46)

THE MARCH SISTERS: MONOLOGUE OPTIONS

Please select two monologues, in addition to your play-pretend

- These boots are dainty little tortures - but as Aunt March says, Let Us Be Elegant Or Die. I'm a businessman - person, I mean, so I wait on my great aunt for wages, and she's a nasty old cat. But she's taking me to Europe in the new year! Wouldn't bring me along til I could pay for my own board, but I've finally saved up enough to go. And who knows what I can become in Europe?

- No, no, I think we should sit on our hands and shut our mouths, lest we disturb others! Civility at all costs, that's what I say! Civility before humanity. We should have no objections, isn't that it, no egocentric aspirations to change the world! We should be adults! And the adult thing is to do nothing and say nothing - and if we accomplish nothing, then that's for the best! We should just stay at home, and close our eyes, and accept the SAME EVILS FOREVER! *(The following phrase should be uttered like a swear)* Christopher Columbus!

- I'm always losing. But today - today! They finally took a nap at the same time and it was so quiet and I sat and thought, what if I could have anything I wished in the world right now? And I thought I want - all I want is - JAM. *(she cries)*. So I tore through our cupboards, and I found some dusty old pot of raspberry and ate it right out of the jar, like a child, and was happy for one moment. Just one little peaceful moment, just for me ... And then JUST THEN like she SENSED it, Daisy woke up and started wailing and that woke Demi and HE started wailing and then I should have gone and picked them up, but then I just couldn't, I started wailing and that's how John found me.

- You - YOU'RE THE MORON, YOU STUPID INKY STUPID OLD STUPID JOSEPHINE STUPID! When I grow up I am going to run away with a - a prince, that's all! And I shall NEVER spoil MY hands with working! How are you going to become a famous writer? You're just a penniless girl with a nasty temper and a pasted on mustache. Really, Josephine, you are positively *(mispronouncing delusional)* delusual!

LAURIE / JOHN BROOKS: MONOLOGUE OPTIONS

Please select two monologues, in addition to your play-pretend

•No, no, I think we should sit on our hands and shut our mouths, lest we disturb others! Civility at all costs, that's what I say! Civility before humanity. We should have no objections, isn't that it, no egocentric aspirations to change the world! We should be adults! And the adult thing is to do nothing and say nothing - and if we accomplish nothing, then that's for the best! We should just stay at home, and close our eyes, and accept the SAME EVILS FOREVER! *(The following phrase should be uttered like a swear)* Christopher Columbus!

•You don't - you don't have to make money, you know. Perhaps someone could just... give it to you. Don't laugh. A sort of knight, maybe, like brave Valentino? Or just a friend, Somebody who loves you—I've loved you ever since I first saw you. It's perfect, you must admit that - I'm one of the family already! And I have money, so you'll never have to work again! I told you, I would take you to Europe - it'll be our honeymoon! I don't want to change you, Jo! I want you to be you, and me to be me, and us to be together. I can't pretend that we're still only - little children, playfellows. I need something more. Don't you?

•I know something about doing the bidding of cross old people. I get tutored. My grandfather has great plans for me, and bought me out of the draft. I am someday to be a tedious titan of industry! So I must grind away til college, where I will learn how to do what I don't wish to do, in order that I may do MORE of what I don't like in the future. I'm sorry, I'm being - I'm so awkward, I always talk too openly.

•I'll make something of myself, for you. But promise me something in return. Promise me that you won't just mope around. Promise me that you'll finally finish that novel you've been scribbling away at for years, and send it out in the world. We'll both get what we wish for, if we only try. And if you send out that whopping novel - I'll give you what you've always wanted. I will take you to Europe. We'll go together! If Aunt March doesn't take you first. I have the money! We'll have an adventure, you and me - just as long as we stay true to each other. Do you promise?

MARMEE / AUNT MARCH / HANNAH: MONOLOGUE OPTIONS

Please select two monologues

•I'm always losing. But today - today! They finally took a nap at the same time and it was so quiet and I sat and thought, what if I could have anything I wished in the world right now? And I thought I want - all I want is - JAM. (*she cries*). So I tore through our cupboards, and I found some dusty old pot of raspberry and ate it right out of the jar, like a child, and was happy for one moment. Just one little peaceful moment, just for me ... And then JUST THEN like she SENSED it, Daisy woke up and started wailing and that woke Demi and HE started wailing and then I should have gone and picked them up, but then I just couldn't, I started wailing and that's how John found me.

•He ought never to have gone to the war! But then, we should never have had a war at all. Why should we poke our noses down South? Lincoln ought never to have pressed his agenda! We ought to focus on the Union - and put the homeland first! But your parents are both the same - your father and his radical abolitionism. And your mother, and her immigrant trash! I told her, I said, you go amongst that filthy boat rabble, you never know what will come trailing home after you! And look ... she nearly killed your half wit sister! Miss Amy, I have long planned to make a European tour, and since Josephine is so cross-patched against leaving home - or keeping a civil tongue in her head - I wondered if you might like to be my lady companion?

•Here's a violet, they like things calm - not too hot or cold. And they like the shade of other plants, so we pot them with their relations. And here's a rose, you have to put it where the sun is. And it's delicate, so you have to give it support, or it won't thrive. The rose would wilt if we gave it the care of another flower, and the violet too. One isn't better than the other. They just need different things to grow. So if Beth is a violet and Amy or Jo, a rose - what is Meg?

MR LAURENCE / MR DASHWOOD / MR MARCH: MONOLOGUE OPTIONS

Please select two monologues:

•He ought never to have gone to the war! But then, we should never have had a war at all. Why should we poke our noses down South? Lincoln ought never to have pressed his agenda! We ought to focus on the Union - and put the homeland first! But your parents are both the same - your father and his radical abolitionism. And your mother, and her immigrant trash! I told her, I said, you go amongst that filthy boat rabble, you never know what will come trailing home after you! And look ... she nearly killed your half wit sister! Miss Amy, I have long planned to make a European tour, and since Josephine is so cross-patched against leaving home - or keeping a civil tongue in her head - I wondered if you might like to be my lady companion?

•I'm not in the market for ladies' novels. I'm interested in works of literature. Not sentimental pieces. I assume you're a woman? Then this is a ladies' novel. Don't matter how you dress it up. Listen, Miss March, there's a legitimate place for women's voices - bring me another sweet little story, it helps sell powder if I run it next to the ads. Fifteen for a story. Some gentleman won't pay a lady at all - but I'm forward thinking. Miss March - a little advice: next time you step into this world, you bring that "agent" or your father - or your husband. Remember, I'm one of the good ones.

•In spite of the curly crop, I don't see the 'son Jo' whom I left a year ago. I see a young lady who pins her collar straight, laces her boots neatly, and neither whistles, talks slang, nor lies on the rug as she used to do. Her face is rather thin and pale just now, with watching and anxiety. I rather miss my wild girl. But in all of Washington I couldn't find anything beautiful enough to be bought with the twenty-five dollars my girl sent me.