



**Audition Announcement – Providence Players  
Open Auditions for  
“The Shadow Box”**

**3 Male, 4 Female, 1 Male or Female and 1 Male Teenager**  
(Some guitar playing experience desired for this role)

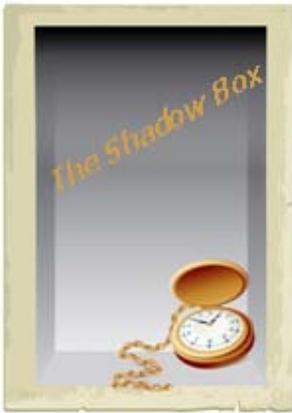
**All Open**

*If you plan on attending auditions, please RSVP to [providenceplayers@cox.net](mailto:providenceplayers@cox.net) to let us know you are coming and which evening(s).*

**The Shadow Box**

By Michael Cristofer

Directed by Barbara Gertzog



Michael Cristofer's timeless drama is a 1977 Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning play that explores one day in the life of three families, each of whom has one member who is living with a terminal illness. With a sense of humor and sensitivity, it explores their relationships and their coming to terms with their circumstances. The Shadow Box is as much about celebrating life, and appreciating the loving relationships that sustain life, as it is about the end of life. This play contains mature language and themes.

**Performance Dates And Times**

**Thursday, Friday and Saturday 7:30 p.m.**

**Apr. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16**

**Sunday Matinees 2:00 p.m. Apr. 3 & 10**

**Audition Dates/Process/Additional Information**

**Monday, November 29, 7-9:30pm**

**Tuesday, November 30, 7-9:30pm**

**Wednesday, December 1 7-9:30 pm\***

\*This date may be used for some call backs as well as initial auditions. The director will not necessarily call back all of those who are being considered for roles.

- Auditions will consist of readings from the scripts in various combinations of actors.
- Please plan on reading more than once. If you would like and are able, you may audition more than one evening although, depending on the number of auditioners, the Director may have to limit this somewhat and will try and communicate that, each evening of auditions.

- Audition sides will be provided at the auditions. We also hope to post them on the Providence Players Website at [www.providenceplayers.org](http://www.providenceplayers.org) so check the website for updates after Nov 12, 2010.
- No monologue or other pre-prepared audition piece is required.
- Resumes and headshots are not required, but are welcome. Forms will be available at the time of the auditions for personal and contact information. If you would like to complete the form in advance it may be downloaded from the website.
- The Providence Players welcomes both experienced and inexperienced actors. We try and make our auditions as relaxing and fun as possible.
- If cast, actors will be asked to become Providence Players members (\$10).
- Email the Director, Barbara Gertzog, at [bgertzog@cox.net](mailto:bgertzog@cox.net) with any questions about the production or auditions.
- **If you plan on attending auditions, please RSVP to [providenceplayers@cox.net](mailto:providenceplayers@cox.net) to let us know you are coming and which evening(s).**

### **Audition Location**

The James Lee Community Center  
2855 Annandale Road  
Falls Church, VA 22042

Please Look For Signs To Direct You To The Room That Auditions Will Be Held in Each Evening.

### **From the Director**

The Shadow Box takes place in three cottages on the grounds of a large hospital. It concerns one day in the life of three families, all of whom have a family member who is terminally ill. The play follows the patients as they deal with the reality of their illnesses and their relationships with their loved ones who try to caretake and deal with their emotions at the same time. All three of the families have large regrets that they confront over the course of the day as well as a great deal of love and moments of joy and acceptance and enjoyment in being together. Although the three families will inhabit the same space, and one cottage will represent all three, they do not interact as characters but there are periods of dialogue that overlap between the three family groups. Those moments in the play have great emotional impact.

The Shadow Box has unusually challenging and exciting roles for actors to undertake; the characters go through transformations, revelations, and there are profane and very funny moments. The play also can be sad due to its theme but the language and relationships between characters guard against bathos and overwrought "scenery chewing". The play is too well written for the characters to be obvious in that manner. The play is also exciting for actors because all of the roles are "major" roles that will require you to fully embrace your character and your craft. Finally the play lends itself to substantial collaboration between actors within their families and the director as the character and relationships take shape.

## **General Rehearsal Schedule**

Intensive rehearsals in the theater will take place in the month of March. Due to the limited theater time before April 2nd opening, the rehearsal schedule will be all consuming in that month and it will be necessary for all actors to be available as much as possible. In addition, during January and February there will be rehearsals scheduled in other venues, such as the director's home. These rehearsals will be scheduled following casting. Fortunately the rehearsals can be divided into the three family groups initially which will be more efficient and productive for the actors. Due to the size of the roles and importance of character above plot and action, it will be expected that the actors will be "off book" prior to March rehearsals in the theater.

## **The Shadow Box Character Summary**

### **Cottage One**

**Joe (age 40's-50's- lead role)**, Joe is a working man from the Northeast. Strong, but gentle family man, very close to his son, Steve. Joe is relatively inarticulate about his own feelings toward his illness. All of his emotion is focused on his family. He is very worried about his wife's acceptance of his terminal illness and how they will share this news with their son. Joe has no visible signs of illness or infirmity.

**Steve (can act, look 14 to 16 yrs- featured role)**. Actor should be able to play the guitar, but doesn't need to play well, just chords and strumming as he is practicing a song during the play. Steve has a mix of emotions, he is excited to be visiting his father, is perplexed by his mother's erratic behavior and this role involves interacting with his parents during this visit to his father's cottage.

**Maggie (age 40's-50's-lead role)**. Maggie is a complex character, primarily a loving wife and mother, funny and warm, but wraps it up in a no nonsense, bossy demeanor as she comes for a visit to the cottage. But Maggie is very conflicted and has not accepted the terminal nature of her husband's illness. She would like everything to be back to normal. She also bears the burden of not having told their son about the severity of his father's illness. Also from the Northeast.

### **Cottage Two**

**Brian (age 40's-50's- lead role)** Brian is a cerebral, literate man who is trying to reason his way through acceptance of his terminal illness. He generally keeps his tone light, but erudite, and his emotions in check. He is surprised and moved by a visit from his ex-wife who has always been more

emotional, spontaneous, physical. He has to manage the hostility between his partner Mark and his ex-wife, Beverly. Brian has no obvious signs of illness except for tremors until the end of the play when he faints; the character also has a dancing sequence with Beverly

**Mark (age 30's-40's- lead role)** Mark is very good looking. He is Brian's caretaker and lover. Mark is dealing with his emotions about Brian's illness by pretending that he doesn't have any. He has a great deal of conflict with Beverly who tries to make him confront his fears and, as a result, be a better, more loving caretaker to Brian.

**Beverly (age 40's-50- lead role)** Beverly is Brian's ex-wife, she is funny, full of life and fun, profane, sarcastic, prone to dancing and discussing her love life. Her brittle humor masks her love and concern for Brian. She is also someone who goads Mark and her scenes involve conflict with Mark and quick witted humorous interactions with Brian. Beverly is a life force, with an edge. Beverly is responsible for a lot of humor in the play.

### **Cottage Three**

**Felicity (ages 60's-70's- lead/featured role)** Felicity is the character most obviously impacted by her illness. She is blind and in a wheelchair. She is an earthy, feisty, take no prisoner old lady who morphs from quick witted, no nonsense acceptance and lucidity to confused rambling due to her pain and illness. She often challenges her daughter and caretaker, Agnes.

**Agnes (ages 40's-50"s- lead role)** Agnes is a repressed, restrained woman who is devoted to her mother but often frustrated by her behavior. She has been under a lot of tension as her mother's illness has been protracted. She is also concealing a secret that is revealed during the play. Agnes is a character who surprises with her passion and representation of the challenges of being a caretaker for a parent.

**Interviewer (featured role)** Usually played off stage by a male, in this play the interviewer will likely be both off and on stage and acting as a counselor. Can be male or female, age range undetermined, but likely best to be 40's or older. The Interviewer interacts primarily with the patients, Joe, Brian, and Felicity, but has some scenes with the caretakers as well. Interviewer is generally empathetic but can seem detached and clinical at times as well. Interviewer is present throughout the play and it is a large featured role.