

West Hartford Summer Arts Festival

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the West Hartford Summer Arts Festival?

The West Hartford Summer Arts Festival (SAF) began 34 years ago as a venue for West Hartford high school and college students to perform in high caliber productions of some of Broadway's most famous musicals and plays. Since its inception, the program has expanded to include participants outside of West Hartford and found its focus centering on musicals. The program employs professional designers and directors from the greater Hartford area, who are held to the highest standards set forth by its founder and now Executive Producer, Haig Shahverdian. SAF prides itself on being a learning experience for those who are interested in various aspects of musical theater including acting, singing, dancing, orchestra, and technical theater.

The West Hartford Summer Arts Festival is a joint venture between the Board of Education and the Human and Leisure Services Department.

What is this year's SAF production?

The 2010 SAF production is the classic musical ***Gypsy***. Written in 1959, with music by Jule Styne, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, and a book by Arthur Laurents, *Gypsy* is based on the 1957 memoirs of Gypsy Rose Lee, the famous striptease artist. The show focuses on her mother, Rose, whose name has become synonymous with "the ultimate stage mother." In particular, it follows the dreams and efforts of Rose to raise two daughters to perform onstage and casts an affectionate eye on the hardships of show business life. The musical contains many songs that became popular standards, including "Small World," "Everything's Coming up Roses," "You'll Never Get Away from Me," and "Let Me Entertain You."

When are the auditions? What do I prepare?

Initial vocal and reading auditions will be held on Saturday, May 22 at the Elmwood Community Center, and Saturday, June 5 at Northwest Catholic High School. Elmwood Community Center is located at the corner of New Britain Ave and South Quaker Lane, 1106 New Britain Ave, West Hartford, CT 06110. Northwest Catholic High School is located off of North Main Street at 29 Wampanoag Drive, West Hartford, CT 06117.

Dance auditions and callbacks will be held on Sunday, June 13 at Northwest Catholic High School.

Please prepare one song in the style of the show. We highly discourage pop songs or classical vocal pieces. Choose a song you know well and will show your vocal potential. An accompanist will be provided.

Please call 860-561-8160 for an audition time. There is a \$15 (non-refundable) audition fee for SAF.

What is the fee for participating in *Gypsy*?

Upon being cast in the show, there will be an \$85 registration fee. This payment must be received by June 18th. Payment can be made in person at the Elmwood Community Center or by phone with a VISA or MasterCard.

What is the 2010 production schedule for *Gypsy*?

Rehearsals are Mon-Fri from 6-10pm at Hall High School in West Hartford beginning June 21 (snow days permitting). There will also likely be rehearsal Saturday, July 17th and Saturday, July 24th.

The production will run July 28-31 at Hall High School. Curtain time is 7:30pm.

I am going on vacation for a couple of days during the rehearsal schedule. Should I even bother to audition?

Yes. At the auditions, you will be given a form to fill out that lists any conflicts you may have. The directors will be able to make an informed decision on your casting based on your conflicts.

I am more interested in the technical aspects of the show – building sets, painting, costumes, etc.

Who should I call?

You can email your questions to one of the Artistic Directors of SAF, Sara Avery, at savery@nwcath.org, and she will pass your information on to the appropriate staff member.

You still haven't answered my question. What do I do now?

Email your question to Marc Kaplan (mlkaps@yahoo.com) or Sara Avery (savery@nwcath.org), co-Artistic Directors of SAF.