



Thank you for your interest in auditioning for the Devonport Choral Society production of *Whistle Down the Wind*.

Auditions will be held for adults and children from 25 – 27 November. All auditionees are encouraged to try out for any role that they are interested in. All roles are open.

Adults and children who would like to be considered for principal roles should be strong singers and actors, with stage experience and the ability to hold a good Southern American accent.

Previous experience is not essential to audition for the adult or children's chorus, but the cast must be good singers, enthusiastic and committed. There will be some movement but this is not a heavy dance show.

### **The Story**

*Whistle Down the Wind* is loosely based on the 1960s film of the same name. The setting has moved from Lancashire to small town Louisiana in 1959. It tells the story of three children, Swallow, sister Bluejay (known as Brat), and younger brother Robin (known as Poor Baby), as they approach their first Christmas since the death of their mother. Discovering an escaped criminal hiding in their barn, they become convinced that he is Jesus, and agree to keep his location secret. The plot contrasts the innocence of the children with the fervour of the town's residents to inflict punishment on the supposed evil in their midst. The musical also portrays the journey of healing and the reunification of the core family.

### **Music & Lyrics**

The emotive score combines hauntingly beautiful love songs and explosive rock music. It contrasts the relentless influence of the modern world with the traditional values of the old days.

Andrew Lloyd Webber requires no introduction and his tunes in *Whistle Down the Wind* are every bit as memorable and stirring as his masterworks. The lyrics, written by acclaimed rock 'n' roll songwriter Jim Steinman (of Meatloaf "Bat out of Hell" fame), bring home the show's central themes.

You may be familiar with a couple of numbers: "No Matter " was made famous by Boyzone and the title number is a lovely ballad which has been sung by Tina Arena. In addition to power ballads there are stirring and dramatic chorus numbers.

## Characters

**The Man** - playing age 25 – 35: demanding lead male role. Excellent singer and experienced actor. A manic, hunted man, who must have the power to move the audience emotionally. Tenor.

**Swallow** - playing older teen. Very demanding lead female role. Excellent, actress and singer. It is envisaged a slightly older girl will have the maturity to cope with this very large role (on stage virtually throughout the show) with many key songs solo duet and group. However it is vital she has the innocence and naïveté to convey and make credible her unshakeable belief in Jesus. Good Southern American accent. Mainly Mezzo-soprano.

**Brat** - Swallow's younger sister age range 8 – 13: experienced young actress, good singer for solo singing and group singing. Lots of dialogue and good Southern American accent required.

**Poor Baby** - Swallow's younger brother age range 8 – 11: experienced young male actor, good singer [an older boy could sing the part if he has unbroken voice] for solo singing and group singing. Lots of dialogue and good Southern American accent required.

**Amos** - late teens, early 20's: Strong singer and good acting skills. Southern American accent required. Amos is the cocky Harley Davidson-riding 'James Dean' type character. The rebel of the musical, keen on Swallow but planning to leave town with equally rebellious girlfriend Candy. Tenor.

**Candy** - late teens early 20's: Amos' girlfriend – a rebel rock chick. Good singing voice and acting skills. Southern American accent required. Mezzo-soprano

**Boone** - the children's father recently widowed and struggling to cope with his young family especially his almost grown up daughter Swallow. Strong singer and required. Southern American accent required. Tenor.

**Edward** - 40s – 60s: the family retainer character who looks out for the kids and family. Excellent singer and actor required. Southern American accent required. Baritone.

**Sheriff** - 35 upwards: Typical small town Sheriff. He is concerned about the safety of the townsfolk with an escaped convict loose in the town. Dialogue and some solo singing. Southern American accent required. Baritone.

**Preacher** - 45 upwards: The leader of the revival meetings. Uses snakes to gain religious recruits! Good actor with some singing. Leads "Wrestle with the Devil" company number. Southern American accent required. Tenor.

**Earl** - age 20's/30's: travelling with the religious revivalists. Snake handler. Some singing. Bass / Baritone.

**The Minister** - age 40 – 60: the town's church minister who promises "The Saviour will Return" – hence why the kids believe the Man is Jesus! Some dialogue, ensemble singing. Southern American accent required.

**Deputy** - 25 +: Some dialogue and company singing. Southern American accent required.

**Townspeople/Snake handlers/Mob/Shop owner/Newscaster** – all ages for various small speaking roles. Lots of company singing. Southern American accent required.

**Children chorus** - boys and girls - aged 8 - 16 - Good character actors/singers required. Some solo lines both dialogue and singing. Southern American accent required.

## **Musical Numbers**

### **ACT 1**

The Vaults of Heaven - Company

Overture Orchestra

What's He Doin'? - Edward/Swallow/Brat/Poor Baby

I Never Get What I Pray For - Swallow/Brat/Poor Baby//kids/Amos/Earl

Home by Now - Swallow/Brat/Poor Baby

Cold On the Radio - Three voices or recorded

It Just Doesn't Get Any Better Than This - Boone

Whistle down The Wind - Boone/Swallow

The Vow (I Always Prayed) - Swallow/Brat/Poor Baby

Cold - Edward/Townsfolk

For the Sake of the Children - Sheriff/Townsfolk

Unsettled Scores [Soliloquy] - Man

If Only - Swallow/Man

Tire Tracks and Broken Hearts - Candy/Amos

Safe Haven - Townspeople/Deputy

Long Overdue for A Miracle - Various named children

When Children Rule the World - All Children

Annie Christmas - Man/Children/Poor Baby

No Matter What – Company

### **ACT II**

Opening Act Two - Ensemble

Try Not To Be Afraid - Man/Swallow

Let's make a Promise - Amos

A Kiss is a Terrible Thing To Waste - Amos/Swallow/Man

Tire Tracks and Broken Hearts [Reprise] - Candy/Swallow/Amos

Over Here - Earl

If Your Mother - Boone

If Only (Reprise) - Swallow/Poor Baby

Charlie Christmas - Man/Swallow/Children

So Many Cries - Man

Off Ramp Exit to Paradise - Candy

Now the Noose/Safe Haven (Reprise) - Townsfolk/ Mob/Poor Baby/ Swallow/ Earl

Wrestle With the Devil - Sheriff/ Preacher/ Townsfolk/ Candy

No Matter What /The Hunt - Townsfolk/ Mob/ Children

There's A Prayer [Reprise] - Swallow

Nature of the Beast - Man/Swallow

Fire sequence/Thunder/Whistle Down the Wind - Kids/Company/Boone

## **Auditions**

All auditionees need to book an individual audition time at some stage over this weekend.

All auditionees are encouraged to try out for any role that they are interested in. All roles are open. Casting will be based entirely on people seen at these auditions.

The audition panel will include the Director (Emil Djakic), Music Director (Petrina Jahnz), Choreographer (Ruby Doherty) and the Assistant Director (Jake Jacobson).

A photograph will be taken of you on entering the audition room. You may be recorded for the purposes of casting deliberations. These will be deleted when the cast has been finalised.

Please ensure you are prepared for your audition:

- Warm up your voice for 15 minutes prior to your audition
- Bring water to drink (especially if you are nervous!)

## **Acting**

- Please prepare a short reading from the recommended list. This does not have to be memorised.
- You will be asked to read a short passage of dialogue. (Panel members will focus on diction, accent, expression and flexibility of vocal tone.)

You may be asked to read the dialogue again, incorporating changes suggested by the Director.

## Vocal

- The panel encourages auditionees to prepare a vocal piece in the style of the show. (ie. Other contemporary musical. Not pop or rock songs. No songs from this show please.) Please provide your own accompaniment (sheet music or CD backing). A piano accompanist will be available.
- Cast members should be generally vocally secure.
- During your audition, panel members will be focusing on the following abilities:
  - Vocal range & pitch
  - Vocal strength
  - Telling of the story
  - Expression
- You may be stopped during your audition. This does not necessarily mean that you have not got the part; it could just mean that the panel has seen enough to base their decision on.
- You might have to do some short exercises to determine your range, ability to hold a part or change your vocal quality.

## Movement

- You may not be required to dance at your audition, however please wear clothes and footwear that you can move easily in.

Do not be afraid to seek clarification on any instruction that you do not understand.

## Please read this information carefully!

- Audition times are by appointment only. If you know someone else who is interested in auditioning then please have them make an appointment.
- Please arrive 10 minutes prior to your scheduled audition time to allow for check in and warm up.
- Bring with you, your completed audition form and any appropriate attachments.
- Auditions may include singing, reading, acting and/or movement.
- Parents and friends will not be admitted into the audition room. A waiting area is available.
- Due to unforeseen circumstances delays can occur, especially later in the afternoon. Please be patient.
- Persons considered suitable for any role may be called back for a second audition.
- All persons who audition for *Whistle Down the Wind* will receive written confirmation via email, outlining the outcome of their audition.
- Rehearsals will be held on Sundays (12noon - 5:00pm), Tuesdays and Fridays. (7:00pm - 9:30pm) from Sunday 12 February. From April, there may also be rehearsals on Saturday afternoons with the band. If you have difficulties with any of these rehearsal times, please make a note of these on your registration form.

- Rehearsal schedules will be given out at regular intervals and will be available on the DCS website – [www.devonportchoral.org](http://www.devonportchoral.org) and through a closed group on Facebook.
- Regular rehearsals will be held at the Uniting Church hall, Steele Street, Devonport.
- All cast members will be required to contribute a minimum of eight hours towards backstage/offstage work on the production. This may include (but is not limited to) assistance with sets or costumes, seeking sponsorship or ushering during performances (parents of child cast members).
- All cast members will be required to become financial members of the Devonport Choral Society. Adult membership \$20.00, concession \$15 or family membership \$40.
- All cast members must be available for every performance: 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 May 2017. All performances to be held at the Devonport Entertainment and Convention Centre.

Please note:

- All ages are approximate. The ages given represent the age that actor must be able to portray, not necessarily their actual age.
- There are no non-singing roles and all characters will be required to sing. All characters will need strong acting skills.