***DOWNTOWN*** ~ ***The Mod Musical***

***Production Team****:* *Sid Sidebottom ~ Director; Bronwyn Darvell ~ Vocal Director; Tim Squire ~ Musical Director/Accompanist; Maree Brodzinski ~ Producer and Marketing; Elizabeth Viney ~ Choreographer; Emma Walker ~ Assistant Choreographer; Jenny Slater & Belinda Gunson ~ Set Designers/Painters; Max Darvell, David Dunn, et.al ~ Set /Prop Builders; Michael Westcott & Theo Viney ~ Lighting Design and Operation.*

DCS’ 2019 production is the sensational 60’s tribute musical, **DOWNTOWN**.

Set in England, it’s an all-girl musical, full of songs by female artists, such as Dusty Springfield, Shirley Bassey, Cilla Black., Lulu, Petula Clark, and Nancy Sinatra.

The show itself should be seen as a kind of musical revue. It has very little plot but each of the 5 leading players reflects various characteristics of the era as well as individual traits.

These **5 girls** - who all read and share SHOUT ~ THE MAGAZINE - use letters to its less than sympathetic advice columnist (Gwendolyn Holmes), true confessions, quizzes, and advertisements as a frame to sing classic hit songs such as: *To Sir with Love; Downtown; Son of A Preacher Man; Goldfinger; and You Don't Have to Say You Love Me.*

Headlined by these **5 leading ladies**, our show will also feature a **4-5 piece, all-female singing-swinging backing group (Ensemble),** as well as a **5-piece band**.

Our show will also highlight many of the iconic dance styles of the 60s such as *The Twist, The Frug, The Pony, The Swim and the Go Go.*

In addition to the 9-10 female characters/singers, our production will require **a non-singing, on-stage female character** role of SHOUT Advice Columnist (**Gwendolyn Holmes**), and a **Male Voice Over/Narrator** (TBD later).

The **5 leading female players** are represented by a **COLOUR** (see below) and, as the 60s-decade progresses, we learn more about their individual characters and stories. These brief encounters/stories/jokes et.al., are reflected in some 20+ hit songs of the era.

Below is a description of the 5 female characters in the show. The **ages mentioned are playing ages, and not actual ones**. If you want to audition for more than one part, then please learn the songs for each girl you wish to be considered for. Don’t take too much notice of the Vocal Range. The other 4 leading singers, as well as the 4 on-stage back-up singers (often back the main one) and so this is where the range is taken and can be changed.

**Rehearsals**

**Rehearsals** will be of a workshop nature, inviting player contributions, and involve singing, dancing, and character building and blocking. It is our intention to distribute show materials early so players and musicians can learn lyrics, tunes, and dialogue before formal rehearsals begin in the New Year. It is to be hoped that we can organise and manage rehearsals to maximise output and minimise the time required prior to bumping-in. To begin with we shall rehearse on Sundays (12.00 noon – 5.00pm), and Wednesday evenings (7.00 -9.00pm) and, after discussion within the group, work from there (e.g., depending on the progress of rehearsals and as we get closer to May, Friday evenings may also be required.)

**5 Leading Singers ~ Character Descriptions ~ Vocal Ranges**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Description** | **Playing Age** (Not actual) | **Vocal Range** |
| **Blue Girl** | A blue-blooded fashion model. Sophisticated, poised, cool and aloof. | 25 -30 | Mezzo |
| **Green Girl** | A good time girl. Somewhat blousy, middle class and zany. A bit frayed round the edges, and hopelessly single. | 35 – 40 | Mezzo |
| **Orange Girl** | The ‘mother’ of the group. Orange is domesticated and maternal. Wise, soulful and mature, she is slowly asserting her new-found independence. | 33 – 40 | Soprano |
| **Red Girl** | The baby of the group. Quirky, enthusiastic and naive. A hopeless romantic, she is insecure about her looks. | 20 - 27 | Mezzo |
| **Yellow Girl** | Uninhibited and brash, possibly American. She is a ray of sunshine but with a surprising vulnerability. | 25 - 30 | Alto |

Additionally, an important role will be played by the **4-5 Back-up Singers** (Ensemble) who will be individually characterised by costume, and will be required to sing most of the songs as well as learn choreography. These players will be chosen either from amongst those who audition for specific character roles (as above) or people can nominate to audition for the Ensemble only. **Either way, all auditionees must prepare at least some of 3 of the songs listed on p.5.**

**Main Songs/Singers**

The main singer is listed but often the song is split up between 2 and up to all 5 girls. The majority of songs are also backed by the 4 Back-up Singers.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 England Swings/Round Every Corner/I Know a Place | All |
| 2 Talk About Love | All (Blue with small leading part) |
| 3 I Only Want to Be with You/Tell the Boys | Orange |
| 4 How Can You Tell | Red |
| 5 Wishin' & Hopin' | Orange/Red |
| 6 One Two Three | Green |
| 7 To Sir with Love | Red |
| 8 Wives and Lovers (My Handsome Prince) | Yellow/Red |
| 9 Don't Sleep in the Subway | Blue |
| 10 Son of a Preacher Man | Yellow |
| 11 James Bond Theme/Coldfinger | Green |
| 12 You Don't Have to Say You Love Me | Orange |
| 13 Diamonds Are Forever | Blue |
| 14 Puppet on a String | Red |
| 15 Georgy Girl/Windy | All |
| 16 Who Am I? | Red |
| 17 Don't Give Up | Orange |
| 18 I Just Don't Know What to Do with Myself | Yellow |
| 19 Fashion Show | All |
| 20 These Boots Are Made for Walking | Yellow/Orange |
| 21 I Couldn't Live Without Your Love | Green |
| 22 You're My World/All I See is You | Blue/Orange |
| 23 Those Were the Days | Red |
| 24 Shout! | Yellow |
| 25 Goin' Back | All |
| 26 Downtown | Yellow/All |
| 27 Downtown (Dance Remix) | All |

Yellow – 5 (3, 2 shared)

Green – 3

Blue – 4 (2, 1 shared)

Orange – 6 (3, 3, shared)

Red – 6 (5, 1 shared)

**The Audition Process & Our Version of DOWNTOWN**

What are we looking for? And, how are we hoping to find it?

DOWNTOWN is essentially a revue/tribute performance of some of the biggest hit songs of the 60s ~ made famous by a variety of female singers. Our vehicle to do this is via musical theatre – a special genre of theatre requiring good skills in singing, movement/dance, and characterisation. Unlike concerts and eisteddfods, musical theatre not only involves the above, but is accompanied by a story or narrative. At the heart of each production are **characters**. Characters sing, dance, and act in musical theatre, not singers, dancers, and actors per se. We are looking for characters to perform in DOWNTOWN, and the audition process is a means to find this. We are looking for potential, not just realised talent. The songs of the era oozed energy, clarity of sound, vocal freshness, an edginess, and - in terms of the songs chosen in DOWNTOWN – an emphasis on the lyrical. As one writer on the music of the 60s summed it up: “It was an exciting time. Expressive, lyrical tunes, hip gyrating pieces, and numbers that provoked the thoughts of all who heard them were produced. It was a time when social issues were daringly broached.” We are looking for this feeling of excitement, energy, daring, freshness, and sense of the lyrical in our production and hence, in our auditions. Songs and singers of the 60’s saw a world of possibilities, change, and experiment. See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1960s_in_music> for some insights into this eclectic time.

Our version of DOWNTOWN will seek authenticity in terms of sound, look, and movement. To help achieve this we will be using a **5-piece band**, and adding **4-5 female backup singers** to support the **5 leading players**. The songs will be fantastic, the music vibrant, the choreography reflective of the era, and the look exciting, colourful, and optimistic. Dynamic lighting, a genuine 60’s set, and specially designed 60’s costumes will enhance this search for authenticity.

The Auditioning Panel are well aware that the audition process can be challenging and an anxious time. To assist, all auditions are in private and the panel are keen to assist people to audition as well as they can.

Auditionees will be asked to:

* book an appointment time, fill out the relevant Audition Form, provide a current photograph at the audition,
* indicate which character/role (s) is/are preferred (e.g., Yellow/ Orange Girls and/or Ensemble),
* prepare the required amount of TWO of the SONGS on page 5 (scores will be available via email and online) PLUS the opening verses of the song DOWNTOWN.
* In addition, **all auditionees** should prepare ONE or TWO of the **ACTING** pieces below especially relevant to a particular COLOUR GIRL(S) if that is your preference PLUS prepare RED GIRL’S monologue (using an English accent is recommended)
* Auditionees must be prepared to demonstrate some dance skills as demonstrated on the accompanying video. Available online.
* Piano accompaniment will be provided for auditions – no backing tracks are required.
* Auditionees should dress and present in a 60’s style.

To assist in preparing for the singing component of the audition, **DOWNTOWN/SHOUT ~ THE MOD MUSICAL**  songs can be found on Spotify and online at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_kmwwjKhLUs6KkkgJ-rDjIMHGBivnI6ac4>

**Songs to Prepare for Audition Per Colour/Ensemble**

Auditionees for one or more of the COLOUR GIRLS and/or Ensemble/Backup Singers are asked to prepare the required amount of **TWO** of the **SONGS** below **PLUS** the opening verses of the song DOWNTOWN. The requisite song scores will be emailed upon request.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| “To Sir with Love “ | Red Girl | Prepare bars 70-112 |
| “Don’t Sleep in the Subway” | Blue Girl | Prepare bars 43-91 |
| “Son of a Preacher Man” | Yellow Girl | Prepare bars 35-90 |
| “You Don’t Have to Say You Love Me “ | Orange Girl | Prepare bars 6-29 |
| “I Couldn’t Live Without Your Love “ | Green Girl | Prepare bars 1-58 |
| In addition, everyone is to prepare the first couple of verses of “DOWNTOWN” | All Auditionees | Prepare bars 64-88 |

**DOWNTOWN ~ Audition Pieces ~ Libretto**

\*Apart from Yellow Girl, the use of an English accent is desirable.

***Auditionees should choose a Colour Girl Recitation from the following for their audition. ALL Auditionees ~ whether auditioning for a specific Character /Colour or for the Ensemble ~ should also be familiar with # RED GIRL’S recitation. An English accent is preferred.***

**Orange Girl**

**Orange Girl is required to read/recite and act out/characterise the following:**

Mimes pouring a drink. Drinks and continues to tidy up her ‘house’

*Tonight, Miles and I celebrate two whole years of wedded bliss. I’ll never forget the day Miles proposed. He took me to tea at the Ritz and put my engagement ring in the clotted cream. Unfortunately, I put the clotted cream on a scone and swallowed it whole. Of course, I accepted the proposal...And the ring cleaned up very nicely!*

*I feel as though I live in a fairy land*

*Every morning my handsome prince goes off to slay the corporate dragon and I stay in the palace cooking and cleaning.*

she downs the remainder of her drink

*Well, it’s now half past seven. I though Miles would be home by now*

Makes herself a martini

*He’s obviously been delayed... Delayed in the office.*  
drinks  
*Again.*

**Orange Girl is required to read/recite and act out/characterise the following:**

Note – Gwendolyn Holmes is the Agony Aunt at the magazine. The below is several years after the above monologue:

*Dear Gwendolyn Holmes, I have been a devoted reader for more than a decade. When I learned the truth about my husband, you graciously shared with me your recipe for treacle tart. Although it was tasty, it was rather stupid advice. You, Miss Holmes, are a silly cow and I hate you. For years I have allowed you to convince me that I am nothing but a gormless baby dispenser. No more. I have told my husband to sod off. I am taking the children and moving to a flat in Earl’s Court. I am going to practice free love. And I am going to have an orgasm even if you don’t believe they exist. I feel sorry for you Miss Holmes, if your world of antiquated frippery weren’t already dying I’d take a gun and shoot you dead.*

*Sincerely, someone in Guildford*.

**# Red Girl (plus all auditionees)**

**Red Girl is required to recite/read and act out/characterise the following:**

The following is a monologue of Red Girl’s Most Embarrassing Moment.

*“My most embarrassing moment. It would never have happened, but my boyfriend, Edward, wouldn’t fondle my charlies, if you know what I mean. But I knew he was obsessed with Petula Clark of all people. And I thought, “Any girl with four years of school choir could do what she does”. So, I went to the Leeds Town Hall and auditioned for the amateur talent night with my rendition of “Downtown” and I got in! “Stuff Edward” I thought, “I’m going to be a pop star!”. So, I put on my Dynel wig, like Lulu, white lipstick like Dusty, and stuffed by bra with tissue like Marianne Faithfull. I was so nervous I had to make a quick trip to the ladies. And as I was finishing up, they started banging on the door! I was on! And before you could say Bob’s Your Uncle, I was standing centre stage and the band began to play....”*

Freezes, unable to remember the song

*“It was the title of the bloody song and I just stood there like a prat! The audience started to laugh, which made me cry. Maybelline was dripping down my chin. I had to take the tissues out of my bra to wipe the tears. It was so embarrassing and that’s when I felt Edward take me by the hand and lead me off into the wings. He lifted my chin, looked into my eyes and said “the back of your dress is tucked into your knickers”. And then he kissed me. And then he kissed me again. And he’s been fondling my charlies ever since.”*

**Blue Girl**

**Blue Girl is required to recite/read and act out /characterise the following**:

*I am the quintessential dolly girl. From my Mary Quant mini to my Vidal Sassoon bob, I’m totally mod. I should be a Bond girl like Ursula Andress or Shirley Eaton. I’d look fab stripped naked and spray-painted gold. I would play a super-secret agent named Fanny Goodsnogger, and after a good punch up with Sean Connery. we’d.... for the good of the free world.*

*It would be smashing. I’d be in all the magazines: SHOUT, TATLER, VOGUE....*

*My cheekbones are a work of art. Wait and see, nothing can stop me from becoming the face of 1968.*

Voiceover – Who is the face of 1968? Twiggy!

*An emaciated boy in a dress!*

**Yellow Girl**

**Yellow Girl is required to recite/read and act out/characterise the following:** preferably using an American/USA accent.

Looking through binoculars

*Come on baby, ya gotta come out sometime!*

Addresses the audience

*I came all the way from Cincinnati just to getta look at Paul McCartney. I’ve spent the past three weeks hiding behind these maple trees staking out his house. So far, he hasn’t come out once.*

*Don’t you think that’s weird? Hold the phone, there he is. What’s he doing? Oh. My. God... He’s taking out the garbage. Isn’t that the absolute end? Paul McCartney taking out the garbage.*

*Don’t they have Ringo do that?*

Spots a number of girls off in the distance

*Hold the phone, where did all those girls come from? They’ve all been waiting behind maple trees just stalking him! Well that’s just sick! Wait, they are going after his garbage! Oh no you don’t!*

*That garbage is mine!*

She runs off after them!

**Yellow Girl is asked to recite/read and act out/characterise the following Letter to Gwendolyn Holmes:**

Note – Gwendolyn Holmes is the Agony Aunt at the magazine. The below is said, and then Yellow girl reacts to the reply

*Dear Gwendolyn Holmes. My husband is a handsome bloke. He looks a bit like Paul McCartney. We got married seven months ago. Things were fine at first, but lately, he’s been coming home drunk. We fight, and he hits me.*

*Last week, I had to go to Hospital. Now I’m having his baby.*

*They say I have to wait three years for a divorce in this country, but he says he’d kill me before he’d let me leave.*

*What should I do?*

*Frightened in Brixton.*

**Green Girl**

**Green Girl is required to read/recite and act out/characterise the following:**

With magazine in hand

*According to this SHOUT survey, 73% of women experience some form of anxiety when severing relations with men*

Laughs and tosses magazine aside

*I don’t care what the studies say, breaking up is NOT hard to do. I do it all the time. The trick is knowing what method to use with what bloke. If he’s an Oxford or Cambridge type, be rational*

*(Sweetly) “It’s not you love. It’s me. You’re port and pate, and I’m meat pies and beer. It would never work. No. don’t speak, just go”*

*See what i mean? But if he’s an East end bloke, an all-out attack works best*

*(Hysterical) “You’re shagging that tart, aren’t you? Don’t lie to me – I saw you give her the eye! I can’t take this anymore! It’s tearing me apart!”*

*And he’s out of the door before the blighter knows what’s hit him*

*Now breaking up with one of those sweet, sensitive chaps is a bit trickier. Its best to some right out with it and lie.*

*Melodramatic “The doctor (cough) says six months at most. (coughs) It’ll be a painful, messy, messy death. I couldn’t put you through it. (Coughs up and shows it to boyfriend) Pray for me?*

*If none of that works of course, just get fat.*

**Some things to remember!**

Auditions will be held at the Forth Primary School, Wilmot Road, Forth.

Auditions will be held at 15 minute intervals at the following times:

* Friday 21 September, 6.30 – 8.45pm
* Saturday 22 September, 9am – 4.45pm
* Sunday 23 September, 9am – 12.45pm

To book your audition call Maree on 0408 079 805 (after hours) or email dev\_choral@hotmail.com

Please ensure you are prepared for your audition:

* Warm up your voice for 15 minutes prior to your audition
* Bring water to drink
* Bring your completed audition form, photo and any appropriate attachments

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 DOWNTOWN! will receive written confirmation via email, outlining the outcome of their audition.

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: 17, 18, 24, 25, 30, 31 May and 1 June 2019. All performances to be held at the paranaple arts centre (Town Hall Theatre).