

# NITROUS OXIDE

An Evening of Sketch Comedy

DIRECTED BY  
DOMINIC BOSCO AND NATALIE  
TERESHCHENKO

June 3 and 5 2015  
In the Little Theatre

# AUDITION PACKET

Auditions: November 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> in 171

Callbacks: November 12<sup>th</sup> in LT

Please sign up for an audition slot at the callboard by Room 171.

If you have any questions, contact us at

[presidentoxide15@gmail.com](mailto:presidentoxide15@gmail.com) or

[adam\\_brown@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:adam_brown@newton.k12.ma.us)

# **The Nitrous Oxide Process**

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Nitrous Oxide is Newton North's one and only sketch comedy troupe. What are sketches? They are short comedic scenes that focus on telling jokes based around comic situations. For example, *Saturday Night Live*, *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, *Key and Peele*, and *College Humor* are sketch comedy shows.

The troupe is cast in early November and begins rehearsals shortly after casting. Rehearsals usually take place on Saturday (late morning or early afternoon). At rehearsals, troupe members pitch sketch ideas to each other, and turn those ideas into sketches, creating a large body of work between November and April. Cast members also learn how to effectively self-critique their own work (an essential life skill). This process is, of course, a learning one. Cast members almost always come into the troupe without any previous writing experience, so the directors and advisor work with everyone to learn and hone their sketch writing.

After April Break, the troupe begins to stage sketches, continuing to edit them as we go. Eventually, the directors select sketches to form into a June show that the troupe performs in repertory with the Playwright's Festival.

All cast members work as both actors and writers for Nitrous Oxide, but those with little acting or writing experience should not be deterred from auditioning. Nitrous Oxide's is a long process, with plenty of time to become a sketch writer/actor. And rehearsals are an entirely judgment free zone. As always, feel free to ask either Dominic or Natalie for more information.

# The Audition Process

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## READ CAREFULLY:

- 1) Sign up for an audition slot on the callboard by Room 171. You'll be in a half-hour section with other auditioners, but they won't be watching you perform. You'll just warm-up as a group and then go in one by one.
- 2) Fill out this packet and bring it with you.
- 3) Prepare a one-to-two minute comedic monologue. You can find these online or at the library. If you're having trouble, talk to Mr. Brown or the directors for help. We've given you two monologues if you want to use them, but we **STRONGLY** encourage you to look beyond these two pieces, and find a monologue that really highlights your skills as a comedic actor. Never go into an audition without performing for someone beforehand! A friend, a parent, a grandparent, a teacher, an astronaut, or even a king (try and find the king)! Just as long as *someone* has seen and given feedback on your audition.
- 4) Write and bring with you a two or three page original sketch. What might this sketch be about? Maybe it includes normal people confronting a strange world, or strange people confronting a normal world, or a normal person confronting a strange person. Or maybe it includes no people at all, just SPORKS. It's up to you! Sketch format attached.

**SKETCH TITLE**

By Sketch Author

TOMMY: A lowly insurance salesman, up for a big promotion.

CHARLES: The boss.

*Lights up to an office with two chairs and a desk. It is painfully quiet. Suddenly, TOMMY runs in. He's late for a meeting, and he drags a briefcase with papers falling out. He sits down in the chair. CHARLES enters.*

CHARLES: Well, well, Tommy!

TOMMY: *[hesitantly]* Hello, sir.

*CHARLES saunters over to his seat and sits.*

CHARLES: What is this meeting about, anyway?

TOMMY: I think you wanted to see me about a promotion.

CHARLES: No, I don't think so. Goodbye!

TOMMY: Goodbye, sir.

*TOMMY gets up, takes off his jacket, and climbs into Charles's desk. CHARLES puts his feet up and picks up the phone.*

CHARLES: Marcie, send in the next one, please.

*Blackout.*

## Audition Card

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: (    ) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ Cell Number: (    ) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Phone Number: (    ) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

Allergies?

Please list any previous theater experience, onstage and offstage (Feel free to attach a resume if you have one):

Would you be willing to attend night rehearsals from 6pm-9pm? (On days with night rehearsals, the actors would not be called from 3pm-6pm).

Yes    No

## Conflicts

**Please be accurate and honest with your conflicts: this makes scheduling rehearsals much easier for everyone involved. Any conflicts not written here will need to be communicated to the directors at least two weeks in advance.**

### Weekly Conflicts

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

### One-Time Conflicts

**Please record all specific one-time conflicts (i.e., vacations, doctor's appointments) from November 16<sup>th</sup>-May 26<sup>th</sup>.**


**NOTE: We will try to accommodate conflicts as much as possible. However, conflicts are not permitted after May 26<sup>th</sup>.**

## Important Questions

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1) Write captions for the Family Circus cartoons below.



2) Please write a short poem or song describing your opinions on: the ice bucket challenge.

3) You spot your weird, smelly history teacher at the mall and you can tell they are coming to talk to you. What is your plan of escape?



# Monologues

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Here are some suggestions for the comedic monologue you will perform at your audition. Remember, these are options but we **HIGHLY** recommend that you find and prepare a monologue from another source.

We're looking for high-energy actors, who are unafraid to take big risks with their monologues and act outside their comfort zone. We may have you read your monologue again with a completely different intention, just to see how you can switch up your monologue.

## **From *Moon Over Buffalo* by Ken Ludwig**

ETHEL: No I don't. It stinks. If it wasn't named for an animal, it would have nothing going for it. I don't mind so much for myself, really, but it's quite a come-down for your mother. She played Broadway, you know, in the forties. Then your father dragged her down to this level...Revivals of tired old plays. B-movies. You should have heard him doing Cyrano just now at the dress rehearsal. The man is a walking ham. They should stick cloves in him and serve him with pineapple.

## **From *The Drowsy Chaperone* by Bob Martin and Don McKellar**

MAN IN CHAIR: Percy Hyman was a wonderful performer. I like to think of him panting and sweating after a long dance routine. He's still alive, you know. I saw him on the news recently, "celebrating" his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. To say that the passing years had taken their toll on him would be a grotesque understatement. They wheeled him out and he had that wide-eyed expression of pained confusion that God reserves for the very, very old. You know, the one that says "Who are you, who am I, and why is this cake on fire?"

# Theatre Ink Casting Policy

Both student and staff Directors always strive to cast fairly, with the guiding objective of assembling the overall cast that will best serve the directorial vision for the show. This requires many hours of careful analysis by the Directors and Mr. Brown, who take their responsibility in this area very seriously. Mr. Brown watches every audition and participates as a mediator and guide through every casting process.

Theatre Ink casting decisions are not based on seniority (grade level in school), or years of participation in the program. This is a firm programmatic value arrived at after years of assembling casts, and seeing the exciting results that come from having students collaborate across the grade spectrum from freshman to senior, each cast solely on his or her fit for a given role as revealed through a rigorous and thoughtful audition process. Auditioning for a show can be competitive and sometimes daunting. In keeping with the program's emphasis on theatre as a vehicle for learning and individual development, Mr. Brown is available to coach and support students as they seek to improve their speaking, presentation, and performance skills through the audition process.

**DIVERSITY:** Theatre Ink values and celebrates diversity of all kinds. Encouraging diversity of participation is an overall goal of the program. Theatre Ink actively encourages all students to participate in productions as members of cast or crew. All students who audition are considered equally in an inclusive environment and in accordance with Theatre Ink casting principles. Theatre Ink hopes to be a reflection not only of the varied backgrounds and experiences of Newton North's staff and students but also of diverse world cultures, life experiences, and theatrical traditions. By carefully selecting a range of different shows each year we strive to tell theatrical stories that represent the richness of our world while offering a wide range of opportunities for all students.

**ON CASTING:** Casting is a very complex process. **In the end, the Directors must choose the students who best fit the roles in many dimensions, both by the individual skills they present in audition, but also in the dynamics that develop between actors who will be creating the driving energy of the show in scenes together.** Such dynamics are a large part of what is explored in the "Callback" round of auditions. For students, auditioning is an exciting, yet difficult, process that can bring about greater success, whether cast in the production or not. The more a student auditions, the better they will become, especially if they seek and receive feedback and guidance. The feeling of "rejection" over not getting cast seems disappointing at first, but we strongly urge you to encourage your child to get right back to work as soon as possible so they can sharpen their skills for a future audition. In theatre, as in life, all of us experience both disappointment and success. Our goal is to teach our students how to deal with both, so when they leave Newton North High School they will be well prepared to navigate their way toward success in a complex world.

**TO PARENTS:** Due to the large audition pool Theatre Ink shows typically experience, your child's audition does not guarantee him or her a role in the show. If your child is not cast (and also if he or she is cast), we strongly suggest that (s)he meet with the Directors and/or Mr. Brown to obtain valuable feedback while it is freshly in mind, in order to further develop skills for future auditions. While disappointment for some is an inevitable part of the experience in any competitive tryout situation, be it an academic, athletic or artistic pursuit, one of the hallmarks of Theatre Ink is that **there are many other ways to get involved** working on the production if you are not cast in an on-stage role. These include technical crew (set design and construction, lights, sound) working with Mr. Barrington-Haber, Theatre Ink's Technical Director; or on the many other teams, such as props, costumes, publicity and makeup. There are also opportunities to be a student producer or stage manager, which you can discuss with Mr. Brown or the Directors. If slots of interest are not available in the current show, please consider looking into such opportunities in an upcoming show. The wide range of types of shows, and the large number (11-12 per year) is designed to make as many theatre arts opportunities available to as many students as is feasible within the resources provided by the Newton Public Schools. We also strongly encourage each student to take a Theatre Arts and Speech class -- offered as an elective to all grade levels-- and go to

Improv Club during X-blocks. These theatre education experiences will further enhance your child's skills in these areas and give them more confidence for the audition process. The wonderful spirit of camaraderie and collaboration that develops during shows is equally shared by on- and offstage participants. Talking to students who have worked in various roles and jobs will confirm this for your student. Keep an open mind, and seek out a new experience!

**GET INVOLVED!** If you and/or your child are/is not satisfied with the casting decision and wish to inquire as to the reasons for it, the first step is for the student to meet with the show's Directors. If further discussion is desired, the student should then meet with Mr. Brown. If, after those meetings, you and/or your child do not feel you received valuable feedback or information you are satisfied with, you are then encouraged to make a joint parent/student appointment with Mr. Brown. Please be assured that a student's future participation in Theatre Ink will not be jeopardized in any way by seeking to have concerns addressed according to this established process.

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Theatre Ink Production Agreement

*(Please read and fill out the following Theatre Ink Agreement)*

I agree to the following terms in this agreement and promise to abide by the conditions and expectations set forth by my director, choreographers, music director, technical director, producer, and fellow cast and crewmembers. I will dedicate myself as a true team member to this production process in order to present a show that we as a cast, crew, and production team will be proud of.

**1. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians should have fun working on this production as collaborative artists.** We expect a positive attitude, open communication, and ownership from beginning to end.

**2. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians must be in good academic standing to participate in and remain in this production.** All actors, technical stage crewmembers, and musicians are expected to be in school during the day in order to participate in rehearsals and performances after-school. It is also required that a progress report be completely filled out every two weeks and returned to Mr. Brown via your stage manager. You will not be allowed to attend rehearsal if this is not turned in on time.

**3. All participants must be passing a minimum of 20 credits each marking period or they will be removed from the process when the report card is issued.** N's in a class do not count as passing.

**4. All actors, technical stage crewmembers, and musicians must be on time to all scheduled rehearsals and technical crew duties.** If late for three rehearsals, you may be cut from the production.

**5. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians must be present at all scheduled rehearsals.** Rehearsals will generally be Monday through Friday from 3:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Some weekend rehearsals may be requested in advance. If you have three unexcused absences from rehearsal, you may be cut from the production. *In order to be excused you must have a legitimate note explaining why. Valid excuses are an illness, a death in the family, etc. It is also important to turn in all notes to the director and notify them directly in advance if you cannot attend a rehearsal. In case of emergency, you must call 617-559-6306 and leave a message.* Communication is the key to good relationships during a production.

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**5. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians must be present at all scheduled rehearsals. Rehearsals will generally be evenings 6:00PM to 10:00PM, Fridays 2:30PM to 6:00PM, some weekday afternoons 3:00PM to 6:00PM and some Saturdays 12:00PM to 4:00PM. \*Tech week rehearsals will go to 11PM**

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**6. All actors, technical stage crewmembers, and musicians will keep the rehearsal spaces, stage, dressing rooms and costume room clean throughout the rehearsal and performance process.** There will be no food or drink allowed on the stage at anytime. Water only!

**7. All actors, technical stage crewmembers, and musicians are responsible for their props and costumes.** If props or costumes are damaged or lost while in your possession, you are responsible for the replacement cost.

**8. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians will use the rehearsal process productively.** Actors who are waiting to work on stage should be memorizing lines, reviewing blocking, dances, music, or reading materials related to the production. *Remember: you are a student first , so you must stay current with your class assignments. We strongly encourage you to do homework at rehearsal if there is time.* Please bring snacks and water in case you are hungry.

**9. All actors, technical stage crewmembers, and musicians must stay in the rehearsal area during a rehearsal unless given permission to leave.** Your presence may be called upon at anytime while you are at rehearsal.

**10. All actors, technical stage crew and musicians must be supportive of each other's roles in this production.** It is important to communicate with one another in a respectful manner. Whether onstage or offstage, all roles in this production are equally important.

**11. All actors will complete 4 technical theatre shop/stage crew hours during the rehearsal process.** This may include painting, set construction, lighting, costumes, props, or other related areas as designated by the technical director or producer.

**12. All actors, technical stage crewmembers, and musicians are required to take part in a full stage strike directed by the technical director, Michael Barrington-Haber, on the Monday after the production.** All cast and crew will remain until the strike is complete and the stage, costume room, dressing rooms, music rooms and shop are cleared and cleaned. *Any cast, crew member or musician who misses strike will not be allowed to work on the next show unless they put in the hours they missed with the technical director.*

### **Responsibility Regarding Alcohol and Illicit Drugs**

*Theatre Ink will follow the NNHS student rights handbook policy in this area. In addition, if a student violates this policy the Chair of Theatre will also meet with the student's parents and guidance counselor. At that time it will be determined whether the student should continue being involved in a production process or the program. Our goal is to support the needs of our students. We will work collaboratively with students, parents and staff in order to support students and ensure their safety both physically and emotionally.*

The spirit of this agreement is to ensure that all actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians are treated fairly as creative, collaborative artists who are working towards the same goal. Mr. Adam Brown, Director of Theatre Ink; Mr. Michael Barrington-Haber, Technical Director, and your directors will enforce this agreement to the best of their ability in the spirit of a high quality theatrical production process.

**This production can be an incredible experience if the entire cast, crew, musicians, and production staff work together, create together, and have fun together!**

**Actor/crew/musician name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Actor/crew/musician signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank your for being an important part of  
Newton North's Teaching and Working Theatre***