



# AU D I T I O N S

**\*\*Non-Paying, Non-Equity\*\***

## ***Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice***

**Adapted by Christopher Baker**

Produced by special arrangement with Broadway Play Publishing Inc.

**Directed by Katherine Turner Produced by Darlene Thomas**

**SHOW DATES: Evenings March 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19 and 20, 2020 at 8 p.m.**

**Matinees are March 8, 15 and 21, 2020 at 2 p.m.**

### **The Story**

**"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."**

The brilliant opening sentence of Jane Austen's novel, captures the spirit of this story – clever, witty and bright while focusing the reader/audience on the realities of the day, be it social class, the role of women, the need for marriage and the perils of being alone. Lydia Bennet's reckless behaviour is as serious today as it was in 1800.

*Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* certainly has its romantic moments but there is such sharp wit, good humour, social commentary that even a modern audience delights in the final moments as the couples are engaged to a true life partner – Jane and Mr. Bingley, Elizabeth and Darcy.

Christopher Baker's adaptation of the novel makes some bold choices in eliminating Kitty, the 5<sup>th</sup> sister and making Mary only 12 so the "Janeites" may be up in arms. However, he has captured the spirit, the youthful energy and exuberance of the story while honouring some of Austen's best lines. The play moves like an English country dance. The country dance was a part of the social fabric of the community – where everyone knew everyone and what were the accepted norms- the proper steps. The country dance is comprised of the repeated execution of pre-defined sequences or figures designed for a length of music, which provide interactions with a partner but also the other dancers through a progression so that by the end, a dancer has interacted with everyone in the set. The scenes in the play move quickly and seamlessly from one sequence to the other.

So what happens when the sequence is disrupted? How will they recover and will the dance be changed?

**CAST (the ages noted do not need to reflect the age of the actor- spirit is what counts!) The play has 20 speaking roles - 11 f/9 m**

### **The Bennets**

**Elizabeth Bennet**, early 20's, bright, lively, intelligent, witty, lovely. Jane Austen delighted in her creation and so she should. Lizzie is the one literary character who many young women aspire to be. Though with few prospects for marriage, she is confident in her values, feelings and choices. Lizzie does not want to settle for an unhappy union even if it means losing Longbourn. Lizzie is confident when speaking to Darcy or Miss Bingley or Lady Catherine. As real truths are revealed, she is prepared to reconsider her opinions and prejudices.

**Jane Bennet**, the oldest sister, mid 20's, beautiful, kind and graceful. Jane loves her sister, Lizzie for her spirit. Jane walks through the world seeing as much good in people as she can. She is careful and measured when considering Lizzie's criticisms and will caution her. Jane does love Bingley but as she is measured and not as open, her true feelings can be mistaken.

**Mrs. Bennet**, was a beauty in her youth, charming and irresistible but from the merchant class and, therefore, not a "lady". Her imperative – find husbands for her daughters. They will inherit little so they must seduce suitors with their charms - as she did! Mrs. Bennet does not have a filter whether in public or private. She says what she feels without consideration of its impact.

**Mr. Bennet**, a gentleman, current “owner” of Longbourn- He inherited Longbourn – the land makes him a gentleman. On his death, the estate must go to a male heir, Mr. Collins. This accounts for the number of daughters – 4 in the play, 5 in the novel – the hoping for a son.

Mr. Bennet needs his books, library, intelligent conversation. Elizabeth is his favourite. However, too often he gives into the pleadings of his daughters and wife for the sake of his peace and quiet.

**Lydia**, late teens, a flirt and her mother’s daughter. She cares about the latest fashion, dancing, being the centre of attention and a man in uniform. There is no self-reflection or concern about the impact of her behaviour on her family. With little fortune, she can be and will be taken advantage of by the likes of Wickham.

**Mary**, early teens, studious, reads, serious-minded and plays the piano. (If older, she should be the potential choice for Mr. Collins but not in this adaptation.) As she is the youngest, she observes all the goings-on and is not yet truly out in society.

### The Others

**Mr. Darcy**, a handsome, proud, VERY rich man – single – He is the archetype of the romantic ideal but with Austen twist. He is proud but within his world at Pemberley, he is known as the best man and master. He loves his sister and looks after her. He is also capable of great love and generosity. He utterly understands the impact of Lydia and Wickham’s behaviour on the Bennet family and on Elizabeth. He did what needed to be done to make things right even with the prospect that Elizabeth would not accept him.

**Mr. Bingley**, a lovely, sweet, handsome rich man – single – He is just what a young man should be –kind, generous of heart and spirit and rich. He truly is taken by Jane and does love her. However, both Darcy and Caroline can convince him that he will be broken hearted as his love is not reciprocated. He is then convinced of the truth and returns to Netherfield and Jane.

**Miss Caroline Bingley**, Mr. Bingley’s sister who prefers London society - Caroline is the realist in the family. She also likes having status and wealth. She can appreciate the goodness of Jane but is happy to participate in separating her from her brother. The Bennet family is unacceptable. Does she have designs on Darcy? Does she want Bingley to marry Georgiana Darcy?

**Mr. Collins**, Mr. Bennet’s cousin, a clergyman who will inherit Longbourn- oh, such a man. He is not a clergyman because of a deep spiritual calling but because it was what was available. A chance recommended him to Lady Catherine. “His veneration of her rank... mingled with his very good opinion of himself...made him altogether a mixture of pride and obsequiousness, self-importance and humility.”

He manages to embarrass and bore his cousins. Lizzie will not marry him but he finds a partner in Charlotte Lucas.

**Charlotte Lucas**, Elizabeth’s close friend who marries Mr. Collins – Charlotte does not have romantic notions. She is an intelligent young woman and Lizzie’s equal in many ways. Her home is more settled as her father’s estate will not be lost. But she is getting older and there are not many choices out there.

**Lady Catherine de Bourgh**, Darcy’s wealthy aunt and patroness to Mr. Collins – She is steeped in her status, her place in the world and is an authority on all things. Her direct manner does not deem to take in the feelings of others. She is not to be crossed. She believes her daughter is to marry Darcy and join the two households. She cannot fathom that Darcy might see something in Elizabeth – not possible!

**Mr. Gardiner**, brother to Mrs. Bennet, uncle to the Bennet girls – Mr. Gardiner is a very successful business man with a lovely home in London though not up to Caroline Bingley’s requirements of a suitable address. He is a good father, a good husband and a good uncle who will look after his family. He is not at all like his sister.

**Mrs. Gardiner**, married to Mr. Gardiner, aunt to the Bennet girls – Mrs. Gardiner is a cherished aunt who is the opposite of Mrs. Bennet, her sister-in-law. She enjoys the company of her nieces, Jane and Elizabeth and will provide thoughtful counsel.

### **The Militia**

The army or navy was a position for a young man to aspire to in order to have standing- a respected manner to earn a living. Wickham, Denny and Brandon are Militia which means they are not regular army and only called upon in times of war but confined to home defence. There were not barracks, so the Militia was billeted in towns like Meryton. If to go into the regular army as an officer, they would need to purchase their commission. This was often the path of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> son who would not inherit property.

**Mr. Wickham**, a new militiaman and known to Darcy and his family – he is very charming and seductive that even Lizzie could not see through him at first. He will seem very romantic. He is looking for an easy way out and will lie and cheat though seeming to be the best of men. Heaven only knows his real intent in running off with Lydia- perhaps he thought someone would rescue her resulting in money for him.

**Mr. Denny**, a militiaman, a friend of Lydia's

A genuine young man trying to make his way in the world. He is enjoying his time in Meryton.

**Mr. Brandon**, a militiaman, a friend of Lydia's

Another genuine young man like his friend Mr. Denny.

Both Denny and Brandon would have been disturbed by Wickham's behaviour. They likely also enjoyed Lydia's vibrant personality but would have been respectful.

**The Servants** – Mrs. Hall (the Bennet's housekeeper), Mrs. Reynolds (Darcy's housekeeper), Hopkins (Bingley's servant- male in livery) – The servants could also be part of the dances and balls.

**Others – militia, dancers and ball guests**

## **BOOKING AN AUDITION**

### **AUDITION DATES:**

**Monday, November 18, 2019 7:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.**

**Tuesday, November 19, 2019 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday, November 20, 2019 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.**

**CALLBACKS: (IF NEEDED) Saturday, November 23 from 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**(CALLBACKS ONLY: PLEASE BE PREPARED TO BE AVAILABLE FOR THE FULL 3 HOURS)**

**Requirements:** Please prepare a short comedic monologue or light dramatic monologue – no more than 90 seconds. Be prepared to be re-directed. There will be cold readings from the play. **Please read the play.** A copy of the play will be on hold at the 5th floor ARTS Desk, Toronto Reference Library. Please bring headshot/photo (photocopy will do) and resume.

**Auditions must be booked in advance**

**TO REQUEST AN AUDITION, SEND AN E-MAIL TO [audition4sp@gmail.com](mailto:audition4sp@gmail.com)**

**OR by phone (416) 439-1104 - Please leave your name & number VERY clearly.**

**By email or telephone, please indicate your preferred audition date and time(s).**

**Please note: Email is the most efficient way to book an audition**

**Auditions are booked in 10-minute slots. Please indicate the role(s) in which you are interested.**

**Auditions and Rehearsals will be held at 780 Birchmount, Unit 5** (West side of Birchmount, south of Eglinton, beside the Alison's Fine Foods. TTC accessible by #17 Bus from Warden Station or any Eglinton West bus from Kennedy Station. However, Eglinton is under construction and traffic is very slow from Kennedy. Some north/south streets like Birchmount and Warden can be closed at Eglinton causing transit to re-route. Please check with TTC for updates.

**First read-through will be Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 7:30 p. m.**

**Most rehearsals will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 7:30 – 10:30 p.m. and Sundays, 1 – 5 p.m.**

**Some rehearsals and all performances are at Scarborough Village Theatre, 3600 Kingston Road (at Markham Road).**

**Additional rehearsals may be added as we move closer to the production opening.** There may also be the need to incorporate other rehearsal days to schedule other parts of the play, i.e. Dancing rehearsals

**You will be asked to please list ANY potential conflicts from December 3, 2019 through March 21, 2020**

**This production will be entered in the Act-Co Festival for adjudication.**

Scarborough Players is an inclusive community theatre company and encourages all interested individuals from all backgrounds to audition.

Those auditioning must be Non-Equity performers and understand that this is a non-paying production.

We do not enter into any contracts or agreements with CAEA or ACTRA.