



ACADEMY OF CREATIVE ARTS



# Audition Essentials

2017 FEMALE MONOLOGUES



*'Strive for Excellence'*

## **1. ROSALIND - As You Like It by William Shakespeare**

ROSALIND

And why I pray to you? Who might be your mother,  
That you insult, exult, and all at once,  
Over the wretched? What though you have no beauty -  
As by my faith I see no more in you  
Than without a candle may go dark to bed -  
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?  
Why what means this? Why do you look on me?  
I see no more in you than in the ordinary  
Of nature's sale-work. 'Od's my little life,  
I think she means to tangle my eyes too!  
No faith proud mistress, hope not after it.'  
Tis not your inky brows, your black silk hair,  
Your bugle eyeballs, nor your cheek of cream  
That can entame my spirits to your worship.  
You foolish shepherd, wherefore do you follow her  
Like foggy South puffing with wind and rain?  
You are a thousand times a properer man  
Than she a woman. 'Tis such fools as you  
That makes the world full of ill-favour'd children.'  
Tis not her glass but you that flatters her,  
And out of you she sees herself more proper  
Than any of her lineaments can show her.  
But mistress, know yourself. Down on your knees  
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love;  
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,  
Sell when you can, you are not for all markets.  
Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer;  
Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.

## **2. HELENA - A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare**

HELENA

Lo, she is one of this confederacy!  
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three  
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.  
Injurious Hermia, most ungrateful maid!  
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd,  
To bait me with this foul derision?  
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,  
The sister's vows, the hours that we have spent  
When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
For parting us - O, is all forgot?  
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?  
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
Have with our needles created both one flower,  
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
Both warbling on one song, both in one key,  
As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds,  
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,  
Like a double cherry, seeming parted,  
But yet an union in partition,  
Two lovely berries moulded on the one stem;  
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;  
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
Due to the one, and crowned with one crest.  
And will you join with men in scorning your poor friend?  
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly;  
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,  
Thou I alone do feel the injury.

### **3. VIOLA - Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare**

VIOLA

I left no ring with her: what means this lady?  
Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her!  
She made good view of me, indeed so much,  
That methought her eyes had lost her tongue,  
For she did speak in starts distractedly.  
She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion  
Invites me in this churlish messenger.  
None of my lord's ring? Why, he sent her none.  
I am the man: If it be so, as 'tis,  
Poor lady, she were better love a dream.  
Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness,  
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.  
How easy is it for the proper false  
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!  
Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we,  
For such as we are made of, such we be.  
How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly,  
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him,  
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me:  
What will become of this? As I am man,  
My state is desperate for my master's love:  
As I am woman (now alas the day!)  
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe?  
O time, thou must untangle this, not I,  
It is too hard a knot for me t'untie.

#### **4. JULIET - Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare**

JULIET

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.  
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny  
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!  
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay;  
And I will take thy word; yet, if thou swear'st,  
Thou mayst prove flase; at lovers' perjuries,  
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo!  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:  
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,  
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.  
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,  
And therefore thou mayst think my haviour light:  
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.  
I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
But that thou over-heard'st, ere I was 'ware,  
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,  
And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

## **5. LADY MACBETH - Lady Macbeth by William Shakespeare**

LADY MACBETH

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be  
What thou art promised.  
Yet do I fear thy nature;  
It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness  
To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great,  
Art not without ambition, but without  
The illness should attend it.  
What thou wouldst highly,  
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,  
And yet wouldst wrongly win.  
Thou'ld'st have, great Glamis,  
That which cries, "Thus thou must do," if thou have it,  
And that which rather thou dost fear to do,  
Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,  
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear  
And chastise with the valor of my tongue  
All that impedes thee from the golden round,  
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem  
To have thee crowned withal.

## **6. KATE - The Taming Of The Shrew by William Shakespeare**

KAT

Fie, fie! Unknit that threatening unkind brow,  
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes  
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.  
It bolts thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,  
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,  
And in no sense is meet or amiable.  
A woman mov'd is like a fountain troubled-  
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;  
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.  
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,  
And for thy maintenance commits his body  
To painful labour both by sea and land,  
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;  
And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
But love, fair looks, and true obedience-  
Too little payment for so great a debt.  
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,  
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;  
And when she is forward, peevish, sullen, sour,  
And not obedient to his honest will,  
What is she but a foul contending rebel  
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?  
I am asham'd that women are so simple  
Continued over page...

To offer war where they should kneel for peace;  
Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway,  
When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.

Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,  
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,  
But that our soft conditions and our hearts  
Should well agree with our external parts?  
Come, come, you forward and unable worms!  
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,  
My heart as great, my reason haply more,  
to bandy word for word and frown for frown;  
But now I see our lances are but straws,  
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,  
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.  
The vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,  
And place your hands below your husband's foot;  
In token of which duty, if he please,  
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

## **7. ANNA PETROVNA - Wild Honey by Anton Chekhov**

ANNA

How can you say that? How can you lie to me, on such a night as this, beneath such a sky? Tell your lies in autumn, if you must, in the gloom and the mud, but not now, not here. You're being watched! Look up, you absurd man! A thousand eyes, all shining with indignation! You must be good and true, just as all this is good and true. Don't break this silence with your little words! There's no man in the world I could ever love as I love you. There's no woman in the world you could ever love as you love me. Let's take that love; and all the rest, those so torments you - we'll leave that to others to worry about. Are you really such a terrible Don Juan? You look so handsome in the moonlight! Such a solemn face! It's a woman who's come to call, not a wild animal! All right - if you really hate it all so much I'll go away again. Is that what you want? I'll go away, and everything will be just as it was before. Yes...? (She laughs) Idiot! Take it! Snatch it! Seize it! What more do you want? Smoke it to the end, like a cigarette - pinch it out - tread it under your heel. Be human! You funny creature! A woman loves you - a woman you love - fine summer weather. What could be simpler than that? You don't realise how hard life is for me. And yet life is what I long for. Everything is alive, nothing is ever still. We're surrounded by life. We must live, too, Misha! Leave all the problems for tomorrow. Tonight, on this night of nights, we'll simply live!

## **8. HEAVENLY - Sweet Bird of Youth by Tennessee Williams**

### HEAVENLY

Don't give me your "Voice of God" speech, Papa, there was a time when you could have saved me, by letting me marry a boy that was still young and clean, but instead you drove him away, drove him out of St. Cloud. And when he came back, you took me out of St. Cloud, and tried to force me to marry a fifty-year-old money bag that you wanted something out of - and then another, another, all of them ones you wanted something out of. I'd gone, so Chance went away. Tried to compete, make himself big pas these big-shots you wanted to use me for a bond with. He went. He tried. The right doors wouldn't open, and so he went in the wrong ones, and - Papa, you married for love, why wouldn't you let me do it, while I was alive, inside, and the boy was still clean, still decent? You married for love, but you wouldn't let me do it, and even though you'd done it, you broke Mama's heart. Miss Lucy was your mistress long before Mama died. And Mama was just in front of you. (pause) Can I go now, Papa? Can I go in now, Papa? I'm sorry my operation has brought this embarrassment on you, but can you imagine it, Papa? I felt worse than embarrassed when I found out Dr George Scudder's knife had cut the youth out of my body, made me a childless woman. Dry, cold, empty, like an old woman. I feel as if I ought to rattle like a dead dried-up vine when the Gulf Wind blows, but, Papa - I won't embarrass you any more.

## **9. BRIT IN NEW YORK - Stuff Happens by David Hare**

BRIT

'America changed.' That's what we're told. 'On September 11<sup>th</sup> everything changed.' 'If you're not American, you can't understand.' The infantile psycho-babble of popular culture is grafted opportunistically onto America's politics. The language of childish entitlement becomes the lethal rhetoric of global wealth and privilege. Asked how you are as President, on the first day of war which will kill around thirty thousand people: 'I feel good.' I was in Saks Fifth Avenue the morning the bombed Baghdad. 'Isn't it wonderful?' says the saleswoman. 'At last we're hitting back.' 'Yes,' I reply. 'At the wrong people. Somebody steals your handbag, so you kill their second cousin, on the grounds they live close. Explain to me,' I say, 'Saudi Arabia is financing Al Qaeda. Iran, Lebanon and Syria are known to shelter terrorists. North Korea is developing a nuclear weapons programme. All these you leave alone. No, you go to war with the one place in the region admitted to have no connection with the terrorism.' 'You're not American,' says the saleswoman. 'You don't understand.' Oh, a question, then. 'You're not American. You don't understand' is the new dispensation, then why not 'You're not Chechen'? Are the Chechens also now licensed? Are Basques? Theatres, restaurants, public squares? Do Israeli milk-bars filled with women and children become fair game on the grounds that 'You don't understand. We're Palestinian, we're Chechen, we're Irish, we're Basque'? If the principle of international conduct is now to be that you may go against anyone you like on the grounds that you've been hurt by somebody else, does that apply to everyone? Or just to America? On September 11<sup>th</sup>, America changed. Yes. It got much stupider.

## **10. SECRETARY - Special Offer by Harold Pinter**

SECRETARY

*(at a desk in an office)*

Yes, I was in the rest room at Swan and Edgars, having a little rest. Just sitting there, interfering with nobody, when this old crone suddenly came right up to me and sat beside me. You're on the staff of the B.B.C. she said, aren't you? I've got just the thing for you, she said, and put a little card into my hand. Do you know what was written on it? MEN FOR SALE! What on earth do you mean? I said. Men, she said, all sorts, shapes and sizes, for sale. What on earth can you possibly mean? I said. It's an international congress, she said, got up for the entertainment and relief of lady members of the civil service. You can hear some of the boys we've got speak through a microphone, especially for your pleasure, singing little folk tunes we're sure you've never heard before. Tea is on the house and every day we have the very best pastries. For the cabaret at teatime the boys do a rare dance imported all the way from Buenos Aires, dressed in nothing but a pair of cricket pads. Every single one of them is tried and tested, very best quality, and at very reasonable rates. If you like one of them by any of his individual characteristics you can buy him, but for you not at retail price. As you work for the B.B.C. we'll be glad to make a special reduction. If you're at all dissatisfied you can send him back within seven days and have your money refunded. That's very kind of you, I said, but as a matter of fact I've just been on leave, I start work tomorrow and am perfectly refreshed. And I left her where she was. Men for sale! What an extraordinary idea! I've never heard of anything so outrageous, have you? Look - here's the card.

*Pause.*

Do you think it's a joke... or serious?