



Casting Opportunities **2025/26 SEASON OF PASSION**

EMMA by Kate Hamill

Based on the novel by Jane Austen

Directed by Kara McLane Burke

Play Description:

Emma Woodhouse is clever, educated, and energetic... and about to go mad with idleness. In a time when respectable ladies are expected to sit quietly at home, Emma desperately longs for projects—and prides herself on matchmaking, much to the chagrin of her friend Mr. Knightley. But where Emma's considerable energies focus, screwball comedy follows! A fresh and funny new take on a treasured classic. Setting is Highbury, England, the early 19th century—but also here, in your theater, right now, today, this year.

Performances:

March 5 (Preview), 6 & 7, 11-15, 18-22 (15 & 22 are matinees)

Auditions:

November 15 & 16 (1-4 pm)

Callbacks:

(if necessary) November 19 (7-10 pm)

Rehearsals:

Sundays 1-4 pm, and Mondays - Thursdays 7-10pm.

Dec 7-11, 14-18, Jan 4-8, 11-15, 18-22, 25-29, Feb 1-5, 8-12, 15-19, 22-26, Feb 28 - March 5

To Audition: Auditions will be held in groups of 10-15 in the following time slots:

Saturday, November 15, 1pm -2:30pm

Saturday, November 15, 2:30-4pm

Sunday, November 16, 1pm -2:30pm

Sunday, November 16, 2:30-4pm

Please email volunteer@livearts.org to request an audition slot.

What to Prepare:

This play requires verbal dexterity and the willingness to embrace the madcap and risk looking silly, while simultaneously telling the human story that is there. Please come prepared to read from one of the scenes below related to a role that interests you. Please give your best regionally neutral posh English accent a try. You will be asked to read your scene and more with other auditioners in the same room, and we will play with different vocal and physical dynamics and treatments. Please wear comfortable clothing that allows you to move freely.

Accessibility:

All roles are open to performers (ages 18+) of any race, ethnicity, gender identity, or ability.

We welcome actors of all abilities and are happy to make accommodations for those with mobility or physical access needs. If you require specific support to fully participate in auditions, please let us know in advance so we can make appropriate arrangements.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are unavailable on the audition dates listed, please let us know. We will consider accepting video auditions under certain circumstances. Callbacks need to be in person.

A conflict calendar will be sent to you when you confirm your audition slot. Please bring a list of any conflicts you would have for the above rehearsal dates.

Please contact Aldrian Argante (aldrian@livearts.org) and/or Bree Luck (bree@livearts.org) if you need assistance and/or would like access to view the script.

SIDES LIST:

- EMMA/KNIGHTLY1 - Pg 1-3
- EMMA/KNIGHTLEY2 - Pg 96-97
- EMMA /HARRIET - Pg 10-12
- JANE/EMMA - Pg 90-91
- MR CHURCHILL/EMMA - Pg 57-58
- MR ELTON/EMMA - Pg 38-41
- MRS WESTON/MR KNIGHTLEY - 97-98
- MISS BATES/EMMA - Pg 94-95
- MR WOODHOUSE/EMMA - Pg 7-8

You can find the sides [here](#). Due to copyright, we ask that you do not share, print, or download these links. There will be paper copies available on site.

Role Descriptions (from the playwright)

(Ages are “playing ages” and flexible. Some roles will be doubled.)

1. EMMA (late 20s-30s)

Almost unbelievably charming; a natural comedienne. Bouncily flirty; possesses more power of manipulation than even she understands; has a certain sunny, charming self-regard—it’s what allows her to get away with so much. Very very VERY clever—and fancies herself even more clever than she is. Capable of getting ahead of herself. Incredibly dexterous, verbally. Capable of being unfair or short-sighted or impetuous; maybe a bit overindulged. Grew up with wealth. Can be a bit overconfident and self-congratulatory. Capable of getting quite competitive. Generous with those she considers family. Eminently lovable and eminently fallible. Has emotional depth. Very educated, but is not allowed a profession, and thus is a bit like a border collie without any sheep. Frustrated, and thus sometimes putting her considerable energies in the wrong places. Ahead of her time. Given the chance, she just might run the world.

2. HARRIET SMITH (20s)

a deeply likable girl from the lower classes, who’s been given a basic education. A sweet, naturally affectionate human being, but not the brightest flame in the stove. A born enthusiast; the kind of person who leaps WAY before she looks. Has a strong tendency towards hero worship. A born follower. VERY impressionable. Has a desperate adoring friend-crush on Emma. Wants to be in love. Gets flustered easily. A bit naïve.

3. MRS. WESTON (mid 30s - late 40s)

Emma’s former governess. A very smart woman with a good sense of humor; very perceptive and grounded. Not afraid to tell it like it is. Capable of really teaching deep lessons. Not without edge, when she chooses. Likable and opinionated. Gives great advice. Picture the coolest aunt imaginable.

4. MRS BATES (70s+)

An elderly lady, very opinionated, who communicates exclusively in grunts and hand gestures. Mrs. Bates is completely obscured by bonnet and scarves and shawls; she’s a big pile of fabric, rather like Cousin It. We never see what’s underneath all the layers.

5. MISS BATES (40s+)

Headmistress of a struggling school for girls. An incredibly good-natured, if motor-mouthed and daft, woman. Very very proud of her niece Jane Fairfax, whom she talks about obsessively. Once she starts talking, you can’t get a word in edgewise.

6. JANE FAIRFAX (20s-30s)

You know that girl who always seems to do everything right? Jane is that girl. An overachiever. Very composed. Very beautiful. Very discreet. Very accomplished. Very smart. Every hair in place, and it seems effortless. Works as a governess until she quits under mysterious circumstances. The only girl-child in a family full of schoolteachers, and thus— seemingly—a model of perfect behavior. Maybe a little bit stiff. Under all of this A+ decorum, she's hiding a love affair with Frank Churchill—she doubts he can be faithful. Is hiding deep passions under that flawless exterior.

7. MRS. ELTON (20-30s) / as cast:

Not bright. What's more, she has a laugh that's the auditory equivalent of nails being torn out of your fingers. Is delighted by everything. Her libido is.... quite active. Thinks her new husband, Mr. Elton, is the most desirable, thrilling, brilliant man alive. A truly intolerable woman. May actually be a hyena, wearing a human suit.

8. MR. KNIGHTLEY (30s-40s)

A handsome man; a super charming man; an upright fellow. He's also a bit of a rule follower; maybe sometimes a bit of a stick in the mud. Very clever. Capable of getting ahead of himself and edging towards know-it-all. Can be competitive. Is preoccupied with Emma—they get under each other's skin in the most delightful way. Gets quite jealous of Frank Churchill. Has the best intentions. Feels deeply. A genuinely good guy. Ultimately learns to admit vulnerability and share his feelings.

9. MR. WOODHOUSE (60s+)

An over-anxious, melancholy hypochondriac, but people humor him, as he's a nice man under it all. Obsessed with the healing powers of gruel. Tends to darkly predict fatal illnesses as a sign of concern.

10. MR. WESTON, (40s-50s)

The kind of man who likes to make awkward "dad jokes." Very very proud of his son, Frank Churchill. An unsubtle matchmaker. A good man; not a mean thought in his head. Maybe is prone to blurting out the wrong thing.

11. MR. ELTON (any age)

A clergyman who sometimes gets the wrong idea. ADORES poetry. A born social climber. Fancies himself a great romantic. Thinks ladies are naturally coy and enjoy wordplay. Is determined to woo and win. Thinks he oozes charm; maybe just oozes.

12. FRANK CHURCHILL (20s-30s) / as cast:

an incredibly charming, handsome, mischievous flirt of a man—the kind of man who gets away with almost everything, because he's so irresistible. Not a bad guy, really; just a bit too likable for his own good. Ladies love him. Funny. Gossipy. Clever. A little spoiled and manipulative. Can be callous or

unthinkingly cruel or self-indulgent. Wishes to reform, but can't.... always.... help himself. Enjoys half truths and innuendo. Is, underneath everything, in love with Jane Fairfax—but that doesn't mean other women become uninteresting to him.

13. ROBERT MARTIN:

a sweet groundskeeper, in love with Harriet. Non-speaking.