GSA 2023 APPLICANT GUIDE

Drama

I. Program Description

GSA's **Drama** program involves intensive actor training with an emphasis on Stanislavski based acting techniques, vocal production for the actor, and physical actor training; moving the actor towards expressive storytelling, creative collaboration with an ensemble, developing original devised material, and promoting positive change through theatre.

Drama students receive instruction in acting, movement, and voice and speech with an emphasis on monologues, scene study, and creating original devised works.

Drama students have the opportunity to train with a number of theatre professionals, attend summer theatre productions, collaborate with other GSA disciplines, and are provided with insights into educational and career opportunities in the theatre. While the program is process-oriented, Drama students work toward a final showcase of monologues, scenes, and ensemble pieces for the final day of the Summer Program.

*_Click here_ to view the Drama program photos from GSA 2022. *
Click here for a How To Video guide for taping auditions.

II. Preliminary Round Application Requirements (due January 8th @ 11:59 p.m. EST/10:59 p.m. CST)

Submit the materials in this section through the online platform Acceptd no later than January 8th.

NOTE: Applicants will be prompted to pay a $30 application fee when submitting their materials (or $35 if applying in two artforms). Students on free/reduced lunch may opt to have this fee waived when payment is requested.

For the Preliminary Round, submit the following (_see below for more detail_):

      a. Two Recommendation Forms
      b. Personal Short Essay
      c. Personal Question Video
      d. Artform-Specific Questions
      e. Monologue Video
      f. _Optional:_ Special Skill Video

a. Two Recommendation Forms (_do this first!_)

Identify two people who will complete recommendation forms in support of your GSA application (_each person will complete the same form separately_):

2

NOTE: previous GSA application cycles have required recommendations from a teacher and a school administrator. The recommendation guidelines have changed in recent years to broaden the scope of who may complete these forms. Please review the new guidelines below.

The recommendation form includes questions about your artistic abilities/potential, how you contribute to your learning environment/community, and your overall fit for GSA. If you can select two recommenders who can speak to your artistic abilities, we encourage you to do so. However, we understand not every applicant will have one or two recommenders who have experienced the student's artistry. In this case, select recommenders who can speak to your character, accountability, and/or work ethic. Recommenders can be teachers (from inside or outside of your school and in any subject), school administrators (i.e., guidance counselor), mentors, or other people involved in your personal or artistic development such as a coach, youth minister, or staff at an organization for which you volunteer.

You will enter the names and email addresses of each recommender in your online application, and those individuals will receive emails instructing them on how to complete the recommendation form, which will take about five minutes.

<u>Before</u> submitting your recommenders' information, we strongly encourage the following:

1. **Inform them you are applying for GSA and would like to list them as a recommender.** Tell them they will complete a short form via email, and that their responses are confidential (you will not have access to them). Ask if they have any questions about GSA and/or your desire to apply.
2. **Confirm what email address you should list for them**; double check that you have the correct spelling.

Submit your recommenders' information as soon as possible so they have plenty of time to complete the forms prior to January 8th. <u>After</u> you have submitted their information, we strongly encourage the following:

1. **Tell your recommenders to check their email.** The email will come from <u>do-not-reply@getacceptd.com</u> and be titled "<u>Documentation Request from {{your name}} for Kentucky Governor's School for the Arts.</u>"
2. **Ask them to confirm with you when they have submitted the form** – and then tell them thank you! If they have not received the form, ask them to check their junk folder and ensure you entered their email address correctly in the application. Contact GSA if you need to correct an email address.

<u>NOTE</u>: Once you submit your recommenders' information, you will have to click back into your profile to access the remainder of the application; *Acceptd* will refer to this next section as "Application Part 2."

<u>Additional information about recommendations:</u>
- No letters of recommendation are needed, nor should you submit any. Recommenders simply need to complete the form they receive via email.
- Applicants are not able to review the contents of their recommendations.
- Applicants' parents/immediate family may <u>not</u> fill out their recommendation forms.
- While we encourage you to secure the best recommenders possible within the guidelines listed, know that we rely on your personal application materials (essays, artistic work, etc.) as the primary tools to assess your fit for GSA. Recommenders have the option to choose "unknown" if they are not aware of the answer to a question, and this will not be held against you as an applicant.
- If you are applying for two artforms and using the same recommender(s), they must complete two forms (one for each artform), even if their answers are identical.

b. Personal Short Essay (250-word max)
Provide an answer to the following question in <u>essay</u> form:

How can/why should the artform you are applying in be of importance to your community or society as a whole? *Provide an answer that is specific to the artform you are applying for.*

- Be open, honest, and authentic in your response – let us learn something about you.
- Upload this essay response as a document file; type out the question at the top of your response, so the question and answer are both in the document (the question restatement does not count toward the word count limit).
- When uploading your essay, title the file, "Personal Short Essay."

c. Personal Question Video (90-second max)
Provide an answer to the following question in <u>video</u> form:

Why is the artform you are applying in important to you? What are your goals for yourself as an artist in this artform? *Provide an answer that is specific to the artform you are applying for.*

4

- **Be open, honest, and authentic in your response – let us learn something about you.** While you are encouraged to prepare your thoughts before shooting the video and you may consult notes as you speak, please do not just read off a transcript. We want to get a sense of your personality.
- **Begin your video by stating "Hello, my name is (first/last name)."** Record your answer in an interior space that is free from interruptions, noise, etc. Do not edit or splice the video. You do not need to include an introductory frame or any effects such as fades, etc.
- **Shoot straight on, leaving the camera in one location.** Review the video to ensure you can be seen AND heard. Ensure the video plays all the way to the end.
- **When uploading your Personal Question Video, title the file, "Personal Question Video."**

d. Artform-Specific Questions

Applicants will be asked questions about their specific interests in their artform and their level of access to training/classes/lessons in their artform. Applicants can review the specific questions for their artform once they have submitted their recommender information. There are no right or wrong answers for these questions, nor are we looking for one profile of a student over another – rather, we ask these questions to understand the applicant in the fullest context possible.

e. Monologue (1 video, max 90 seconds)

Introduce yourself by stating your name, the character's name, and the name of the play. For example: "Hello, my name is Barry. I will be playing the role of Mortimer from *Failure: a Love Story*."

Your monologue:
- should be spoken by a character from a produced and published play that you have read entirely, rather than a piece of poetry or prose.
- Should be active, not telling a memory or story from the past (a person speaking about a present situation)
- should be memorized
- should not rely on props, costumes, make-up or any other technical elements
- should not contain material or language that others might find offensive
- should be a character close to your own age. 12-25 is a good character age range for most high school performers.
- should not require a dialect
- can portray a character of any gender identity as long as the guidelines above are followed

Consider this as you prepare your material: what does this character want from the other character(s)? How is this character different at the end of their monologue? E.g. Where does the character start? Where do they end up? It's important to think about how the character changes over the course of a monologue or what is realized.

For more tips on selecting the right monologue for you, see section V of this document.

How to make the best-possible video:
- Record your monologue in an interior space that is free from interruptions, noise, etc.
- Shoot at eye level, leaving the camera in one location.
- Do not speak directly to the camera. Pick a point of focus for the character you are talking to that is to the right or left of the camera (not too far away).
- Do not edit or splice your video. You do not need to include an introductory frame or any effects such as fades, etc.
- Review the video to ensure you can be seen AND heard. Ensure the video plays all the way to the end.
- Name your video file "(Your Name)_Monologue"

f. Optional Special Skill Video (max 60 seconds)

If you choose, you can include a video demonstrating a special skill (e.g. performing a dialect, singing, dancing, telling a joke, roller skating, or whatever else you'd like to share). The purpose of this video is simply to get to know you better; this video is NOT scored or measured against criteria. If you choose not to submit this video, it will not be held against you. Name your video file "special_skill_last name".

III. Final Round Requirements

Some applicants will be invited to participate in the Final Round of GSA Auditions/Reviews, which will consist of the elements described below. All applicants will be notified on February 17th of whether they are invited to the Final Round. **The final round auditions/reviews for** _Drama_ **on March 17th and 18th will be in-person at the University of Kentucky.**

The Final Round for Drama will include:
a. Pre-Review Questionnaire *(see below for more information)*
b. Group Audition
c. Group Interview

a. Pre-Review Questionnaire (due via *Acceptd*)

Applicants who advance to the final round will be forwarded to a new section of their

application in *Acceptd* (called **"Application Part 3"**). This new part of the application will include a short questionnaire. This questionnaire may cover a range of topics, including your previous experience in your artform, your favorite artists, and/or your college and career goals. The questionnaire is not a quiz and is not scored, but it is a way for adjudicators to get to know you. The questionnaire may be used to customize questions in your interview.

b. Group Audition (on March 17th or 18th)

You will participate in a group audition. *The audition lasts approximately 45 minutes.*

During the audition, you will participate in:
- Ensemble theatre games and exercises
- Improvised scene work

c. Group Interview (on March 17th or 18th)

Applicants will participate in a brief group interview with the adjudicators.

Please note: You will **NOT** perform your monologue in the live audition.

Finalists will receive the time/date for their audition/interview. This will be sent through Acceptd's messaging system.

IV. Criteria

The work of each student will be given an objective review by the adjudicators as to how they fulfill each of the following criteria. The Drama class will represent a variety of talents, experience levels, and backgrounds from across the state.

Acting: Connection/Creative Choices/Skill

An ideal applicant has a strong connection to the material they have chosen, allowing them to make inspired character choices that bring the material to life. An ideal applicant has the skill of moment to moment, in character thinking and understands the arc of the monologue/character over the course of the 90 seconds.

Voice: Breath Support/Clarity/Pacing

An ideal applicant will take their time, speak clearly and with intention, and will be aware of how their voice is serving the material they are performing. An ideal applicant will keep their voice grounded and will not rush their material.

Movement: Clear/Expressive/Freedom of Movement

An ideal applicant exhibits freedom of movement that expresses a character's behavior. We do not want to see hands hidden inside sleeves, nervous habits, stiffness or habitual movements that don't serve the material you are performing.

Dedication to Artform, Growth, and Community

An ideal applicant demonstrates a commitment to and passion for their artform, as well as a desire to learn and grow as an artist. The applicant can thoughtfully and authentically explain why they want to attend GSA and how they will contribute to a robust, diverse community of artists.

Ensemble Attitude (Final Round only)

An ideal applicant works creatively and collaboratively as part of the ensemble; supporting consensus based on mutually agreed upon ideas; contributing input about group process and offering positive energy to the workspace. The actor is encouraging of others and exhibits an understanding of how their role is "a part of a whole." The GSA summer program relies heavily on creative collaboration.

V. Tips

These tips are suggestions. They are NOT eligibility requirements for admittance to GSA.

Here are suggested general tips about your interview, audition, and monologue performance:

- We want to get to know you as an artist. Let your personality shine through.
- Do not use a monologue that is not from a complete play. If you find a monologue on the internet and the site does not name the source of the play, it is most likely not from a complete work and is not to be used.
- Be sure to read the play and develop your intellectual understanding of the words and meaning of your selected monologue. Develop an understanding of your character's objectives, tactics, obstacles, and word choice.
- Memorize the lines accurately and thoroughly; rehearse the monologue until you feel absolutely confident to play it easily.
- After you introduce your monologue, take a moment to connect with the person/thing you are speaking to in a way that allows the viewer to see you transition from you to your character. Do not look at the floor or turn your back to the camera for this transition.
- Don't rush the final moment of your monologue. Take a moment at the conclusion of the piece, and then acknowledge that you are finished with a simple "thank you" to your audience.
- Be sure to dress appropriately in clothes that are presentable, yet do not restrict your movement.

- If you submit a special skill video, do so with intention and care (just like you would with your monologue video). Share something that lets us learn more about you, your hobbies, and/or your personality, as opposed to something random just for the sake of submitting another video.
- Pay close attention to the adjudication criteria. Demonstrating that you can follow directions is a great way to show that you're a good candidate for an advanced program like GSA.
- Avoid overdone material, including anything by Neil Simon, the play *Our Town*, the musical *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and anything listed at this link.
- Remember the adjudicators are very excited to see your work and they want you to do well! We know it takes hard work to submit this application, and that it can be scary to "put yourself out there." We have faith in you, so put your best foot forward and don't be afraid to show us the wonderful artist you are. You prove a level of dedication just by submitting your application, and you should be proud of yourself.

Having trouble finding the monologue, or even plays to read? These tips will help you search for monologues:
- First off, know that finding the right monologue for you can be time-consuming and challenging – but you can do it! Schedule out time for your monologue search, in addition to time you put aside for monologue rehearsal.
- Look for plays to read in libraries, used bookstores, or online resources like playscripts.com. If you find a monologue from a monologue book (which we do not recommend) you MUST read the play that it is from.
- Ask teachers if they can help you find scripts (your English teacher may be a great resource if there isn't a Drama teacher at your school).
- Some streaming services like Netflix and Amazon (and especially BroadwayHD.com) have recordings of live theatre performances. Watching these is a great way of seeing theatre inexpensively.
- Research actors who you admire/are a similar type as you – look online for their resumes to see what stage work they have done; read the plays that they have done and any reviews of their performances.
- Research theatre companies with good reputations and read plays they are producing or have produced during the last five years.
- Read less popular plays by important playwrights.
- Go to the theatre whenever you have the chance! See plays!

VI. Application Timeline/Deadlines

9

January 8, 2023 - GSA Application Due

All applicant materials must be submitted via *Acceptd* by **11:59 p.m. EST/10:59 p.m. CST**. We encourage you to submit early and not to wait until the last minute, as the application portal runs slowly when many people try to upload at once.

February 17, 2023 – GSA Finalists Announced

All applicants will be notified of whether they have advanced to the final round of adjudication. Those who've advanced to the final round will also be given instructions on how to complete "Application Part 3" via *Acceptd*.

March 17 & 18, 2023 – Final Round Auditions/Reviews

All Finalists will attend an audition/review. Some artforms will hold their auditions & reviews in-person at the University of Kentucky, while others will be held virtually. Friday and Saturday auditions/reviews run from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST.

Friday, April 14, 2023 – Announcement of GSA 2023 Accepted Students and Alternates

All Finalists will be notified of whether they have been accepted into the summer program. Alternates will also be listed. In addition, accepted students will be sent their assigned summer session.

Sunday, June 11, 2023, to Saturday, July 1, 2023 – Session One of GSA Summer Program

- *Architecture + Design* will be held in Session One only

Sunday, July 9, 2023, to Saturday, July 29, 2023 – Session Two of GSA Summer Program

- *Dance* will be held in Session Two only

For technical support with the application, contact *Acceptd*:
Acceptd Email: support@getacceptd.com
Acceptd Phone: 1(888) 725-2122, *press 2*

For questions about the content and/or requirements of the application, please contact *GSA*:
GSA Office Hours – Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST
GSA Info Box (Email) – gsainfo@kentuckyperformingarts.org
GSA Helpline (Phone) – (502) 566-5192