

# Audio Theater 2020 Visual Ensemble Audition Packet



## Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Audio Theater 2020. On behalf of the entire staff, we want to encourage you to prepare to the best of your ability for auditions. We are looking for mature, teachable, and respectful individuals. Becoming a member of Audio Theater is a big commitment, but it was one that is a fulfilling and life-changing experience. Good luck!

## Auditioning

### *Audition Requirements*

- Everyone planning on auditioning should have basics outlined in this packet memorized, including terminology.
- Be familiar with the visual exercise videos posted in the interest group on Facebook

### *For the audition, you will need:*

- A water bottle/jug
- Solid black athletic, flexible moving clothing. Clothing should not be excessively baggy, with ankles exposed.
- A packed lunch, or money for local fast food
- Hair tied up and out of face
- A pair of comfortable tennis shoes and socks
- Your audition fee (unless previously paid online)
- A great attitude and willingness to learn

### *What to Expect at Auditions?*

At Audio Theater we strive to provide you with a nonjudgmental environment. By keeping the audition process low stress, we hope to provide the auditionees with a positive experience. No matter the outcome of the audition, we promise to provide a fun and educational understanding of the World Class techniques being asked of you for the day. Each audition will start with a stretch and a core strengthening warm up. From there, we will explore some technical aspects being outlined in this packet in the form of combination across the floors. We will keep some from audition to audition the same, to study improvement/consistency, while also introducing a few new combos each audition. Towards the end of the day, we will learn an audition piece. Each audition piece will explore a different style of movement ranging from jazz to contemporary to classical to hip-hop. An acting class and a fundamental marching block are also very possible during the audition process.

## **Practicing with a Purpose**

Not all practice is created equal. By practicing with a specific goal in mind, you will advance much faster than your peers who just rep through things incorrectly, creating bad technique/habits.

- Take time to break things down. When breaking things down focus on going much slower than the tempo being asked. Focus on what you are supposed to look like, what you are supposed to be engaging, where your upper body is in relation to your lower body, if your hips are turned out, foot pointed/flexed, etc. Once you have mastered what is being asked, then you can work on speeding the movement up. Staff would much rather see you rehearse under tempo with proper technique, rather than throwing movement together and creating bad habits.
- Partners. Ask your friends to meet up for help and offer your help as well. Being able to do what is asked is wonderful, however being able to break it down and explain it to a peer, is even better. You may have a different way of explaining something that creates a “lightbulb” to go off for someone else. In order for you to be able to break it down for someone, you must fully understand what is being asked of you. If you are able to explain the movement, it will help you understand the mechanics of what is being asked better as well.
- Take video clips. Have your friends take videos of you so you can see what you look like versus what the movement is supposed to be. Filming yourself, especially in slow motion, will allow you to be able to critique the breakdown of your movement. This is a very effective tool that we as a visual staff highly suggest you do often.
- Video assignments. Similar to video clips, video assignments will be ‘homework’ of a certain exercises/parts of the show. You will submit them on the Audio Theater Vis private page (not interest page) for staff to view and critique mid-week, so you know what you individually need to work on leading up to the weekend. Video assignments will be assigned on Sundays following rehearsal on the Facebook page. Video assignments for Visual Ensemble will be due by Wednesday at 11:59pm CST, every week.
- Practice in front of a mirror.
- Practice just a few things, every single day. Do not wait to practice on the weekends. The weekends are not for you to practice. They are for you to put what you practiced during the week, with everyone else, and rehearse getting everyone to look the same.

# Foot Positions

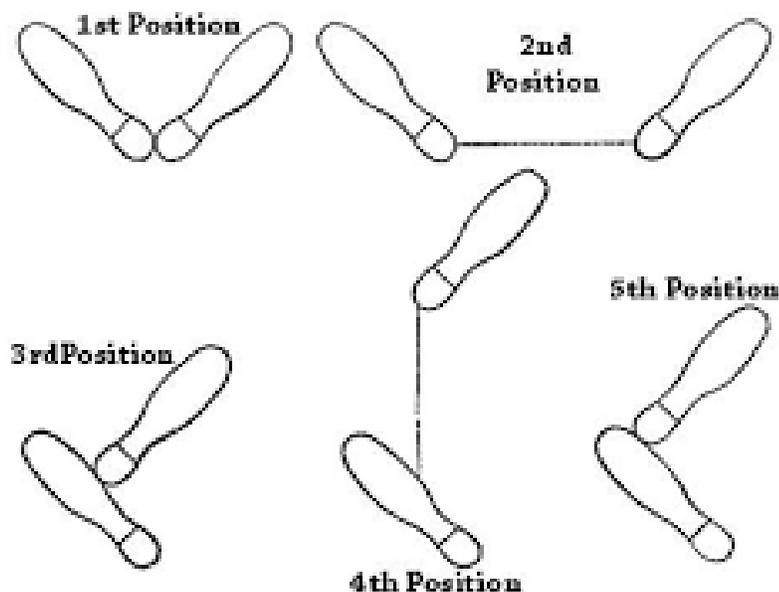
*First position Turned Out-* standing with hips turned out, heels together, toes facing the 45-degree angles. This is the main Ballet position that most of the steps you practice will start from. Your feet should be turned out only as far as is comfortable. It is vital that you feel completely balanced in this position and that all of the sole of your foot and toes are in contact with the floor. Check that your feet aren't rolling forwards or turned out so far that you feel you are going to fall over. And certainly, don't try to get them in a completely straight line.

*Second Position Turned Out-* starting from first position above, slide your working foot directly out to the side from the other. Standing with hips turned out, ankles apart a few inches past shoulders (or two-foot length), toes facing the 45-degree angles.

*Third Position Turned Out-* Now slide your foot back to touch the other, but instead of touching heels together as in first position, this time bring one foot further across the other. The heel of your front foot should be touching the area of the arch of your back foot. Make sure you maintain your hips turned out and your toes facing the 45-degree angles. The foot should resemble a 'T' (T for Third position).

*Fourth Position Turned Out-* From the third position (above) slide your front foot directly out in front of you. Stop when the distance between your feet is equal to about one and a half foot's length. Make sure to maintain your turn out and keep your heels in line.

*Fifth Position Turned Out-* Slide your front foot directly back towards you. Bring your front foot slightly further across your back foot than in third position, so when your feet are touching, your front toe should be roughly in front of your back heel. The 'ideal' of this position is to get your front foot so far across your back foot, that you can't see the one at the back. You are so turned out that you are standing front toe to back heel, and back toe to front heel. But to execute this perfectly takes years of training. Keeping the toes at the 45-degree angles is far more comfortable and perfectly acceptable! Your feet should be creating a "7" or upside down "L" Shape.





## Arm Positions

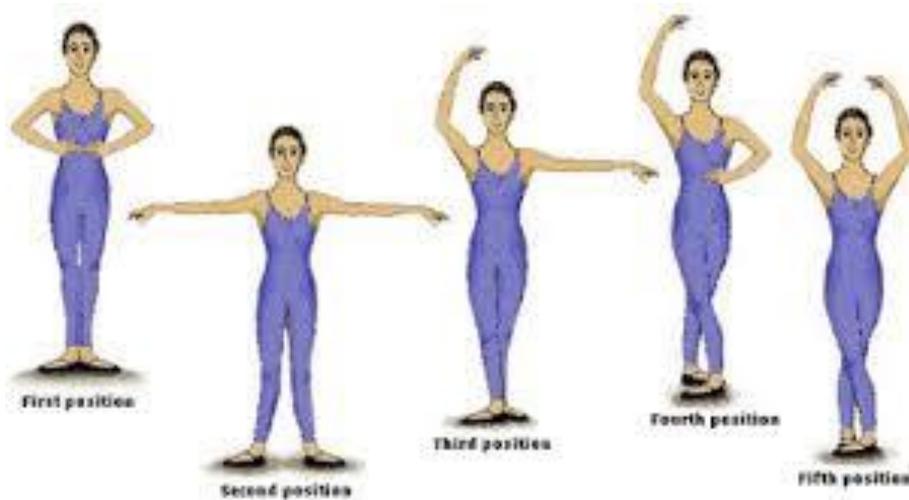
*First Position-* maintaining the curved shape, arms are brought up so that the tips of the fingers are in line with the navel or no higher than the sternum. They should be rounded out, like you are holding a metaphorical beach ball.

*Second Position-* arms are out to the sides, angled down and forward, with palms facing forward. Elbows are slightly lower than the shoulders, and wrists are level with the elbow.

*Third Position-* one arm is curved, as in the first position, and raised just above and slightly forward of the head. The other arm will remain in second position.

*Fourth Position-* both arms are curved, just like in the first position. One is raised just above and slightly forward of the head. The other arm will remain in first position.

*Fifth Position-* arms are extended above your head, slightly frontwards, as arms maintain a gently curved line. Shoulders must be kept down, and hands visible if you look up with your eyes (while not moving your head).



*Bras bas-* or preparatory position, both arms are down and rounded with both hands just in front of the hips, fingers almost touching.

# Terminology

These are some basic words and phrases that you will hear throughout the audition process, and throughout the season. More terminology will be added as we introduce more techniques.

- *Arabesque*- a position where the body is supported on one leg, with the other leg extended directly behind the body with a straight knee. The standing leg can be straight or in plie, but the back leg must always be straight.
- *Assemblé*- An assemblé in classical ballet has many different variations, but the basics are always the same: two legs joining together in the air. When one foot slides along the floor before brushing into the air. As the foot goes into the air, the dancer then jumps by pushing into and off the floor with the supporting leg and foot. The supporting leg now meets with the other leg in the air and “assembles” into a fifth position. The dancer then lands on the floor with a plié in fifth position.
- *Attitude*- a position where the dancer is standing on one leg with the other lifted, usually to the front (devant) or back (derrière). The leg in the air is bent at the knee so that it forms roughly a 145-degree angle. It is important for a dancer not to over, or under, bend the leg in attitude causing the lifted and bent leg to look either too short or too long.
- *Battement*- is a classical ballet term which means “beating.” When doing a battement, you are essentially closing their legs in together then opening again or the other way around, starting from a closed position to an open, back to a closed. The “closing” is what’s referred to as the battement or “beating.” There are two types of battements. Grand battements and Petite/Demi battements.
- *Canon*- dancers use this word with the same meaning as musicians. It defines a compositional structure in which one same choreographic fragment is executed by several dancers who space it out in time (usually with regular intervals)

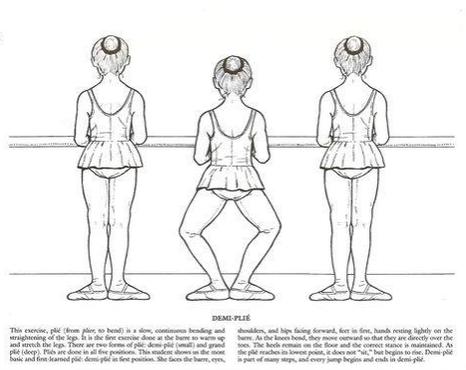
- *Chaînés*- or “chaîné turns” is when a dancer is performing a series of turns on both feet, picking up each foot back and forth in order to keep moving in a line or circle. It could easily be considered one of the most basic turning step or exercise because *chaînés* don't rely on balancing on one leg.
- *Chassé*- is a classical ballet term meaning “to chase.” *Chassé* is considered a basic step and is commonly seen throughout ballet and other forms of dance. When a dancer is doing a chassé, they have one foot extended forward, the back foot then “chases” and meets up with the front for a quick moment before the front foot shoots forward again, all while traveling forward. They are often done one after the other in a series, but not always. The step is called *chassé* because the back foot literally looks like it is chasing after the front. Chassé back or chassé derrière is also possible, where simply the back leg and foot are extended behind the dancer, and the front foot and leg must now chase the back. The dancer would then of course be moving backwards.
- *Contraction*- refers to the forward curving of the spine, starting from the pelvic zone.
- *Coupé*- a French term in classical ballet that means "to cut." As such, it is a changing of the feet, where one-foot cuts either in front of or behind the other. A coupé ends with the new working foot pointed by the ankle of the standing leg.
- *Dégagé*- is a classical ballet term meaning “disengage.” A *dégagé* is when a dancer moves their leg off the floor from a position with a pointed foot and straight leg to the front, side or back. It gets its name *dégagé* because the step is a movement, not a position, where a leg “disengages” from the other. A *dégagé* is considered a basic step that is learned in a beginner's class, but like many other basic steps, later used for more advanced steps by advanced students and professionals. A good understanding of *dégagé* is very important for a strong technique in petit allegro.

- *Demi-* is a classical ballet term meaning “half.” It is the direct translation of the french word and should always be a part of another term. For example, demi-plie, means “half bend at the knees.” Demi is used less commonly for other terms like *demi-arabesque*, meaning “half arabesque,” or *demi-tour*, meaning “half-turn.”
- *Développé-* is a classical ballet term meaning “to develop,” or “developing movement.” A *Développé* is a movement where the dancer’s working leg is drawn up to the knee of the supporting leg and extended to an open position. As the working leg is brought up, the standing leg is typically straight while also keeping the hips level. The opening movement of the working leg should be seamless, yet still pass through a full *passé*.
- *Grounded-* movement that requires a dancer to have a good sense of gravity, i.e. know how to efficiently use of her/his body’s weight.
- *Improvisation-* this is the action of dancing without defining movement previously; the dancer does not know what they will execute but moves spontaneously and freely, in opposition to composed dance, where the dancer memorizes choreography.
- *Jeté-* is a classical ballet term meaning “throwing” or “thrown.” Though often used with another term, *jeté* usually describes a type of jump where the dancer extends one leg then jumps off the floor with the other. Many jumps are forms of *jetés*.
- *Levels-* this word is used to refer to one aspect of the division of space. Most notably High, Middle/Medium, and low.
- *Line-* is a term that describes the outline of a dancer’s complete body while performing steps or poses. Striving for a “good line” is very essential. The term *line* is sometimes confused with an actual line,

meaning how most people use line as “from point a to point b.” Line in classical ballet is much different. When speaking generally about a dancer’s line, it is meant that you are speaking about the complete look, from toes to top of the head and everything in between.



- *Lunge*- movement in which you transfer the weight forward, and put half of it (or more) on one leg that advances and bends; the leg behind may stay extended or may bend too. It is like going to a wide fourth position, with legs in parallel or in a turnout position. The knee must stay in line with the ankle, never go past it.
- *Plié*- is when a dancer is basically bending at the knees. They are typically done in 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th positions. Correct use and development of a plié is a basic but essential movement to a dancer’s technique. Pliés are often seen before and after many more advanced steps. They act as a sort of springboard for all jumps and are an important key for turns. Most importantly, a *plié* helps provide the proper cushioning when landing from jumps, keeping the dancer from becoming easily injured.



- *Passé*- is a classical ballet term meaning “passed.” It refers to the movement when a dancer goes through a retiré position, which is when one leg is bent so it looks like a triangle with the foot placed near the other leg’s knee.
- *Piqué*- term meaning “pricking” and is a descriptive word to be used with other ballet terms. For example, a piqué turn would describe a “pricking turn.” It is meant to describe how a dancer transfers weight onto a leg on full pointe or high demi-pointe.
- *Pirouette*- is a classical ballet term meaning “spin.” It describes when a dancer is turning around one leg with the other off the ground and in a position, most commonly in passé. A pirouette can be done either en dedans (turning in towards the supporting leg that the dancer is turning on) or en dehors (which is turning away from the supporting leg)
- *Projection*- refers to the skill of bodily expression and communication in the upward trajectory toward the box.
- *Relevé*- is a classical ballet term meaning “raised.” It describes the action when a dancer rises up and seemingly is standing “on their toes” in a demi-pointe.
- *Rond de Jambe*- is a term meaning “round of the leg” or “circular movements of the leg.” Starting from a first position, extending chosen leg into a tendu to the front, round out the leg to hit a tendu in second, then to the back before closing back in to first. Essentially, you should be tracing a ‘D’ or Semi-circle from the first position starting point.
- *Sauté*- is a classical ballet term that can be used alone or with another term to mean the step is performed while jumping. When used alone, it simply means “jump chassé, chassé, Sauté, sauté” and may be often repeated during a combination.



- *Split Leap*- is a sequence of body movements in which a person assumes a split position after leaping or jumping from the floor, respectively, while still in the air. Split leaps and split jumps are both found in various genres of dance including acro, ballet and jazz dance, and in gymnastics.
- *Spotting*- is a ballet term that describes the action of a dancer's head while turning. Learning how to spot correctly is a very important part of technique in all forms of dance. When spotting correctly, a dancer becomes much less dizzy (if at all) while turning, allowing for many turns in sequence. When spotting, dancers will try to hold their head in place and fix their eyes on a "view" or picture (whether that is a wall of a classroom or the dark audience on a stage) as their body turns. Once a dancer physically can't keep their head in the same position, they turn it around and try to see that same picture as before. Dancers try to hit a perfect balance between using muscle to turn their head around and "help the turn" without gripping or tightening muscles too much. Having good spotting technique is important for both technical and aesthetic reasons.
- *Sus-sous*- term that translates to "over-under" and describes when a dancer springs onto releve, quickly placing the back foot more closely behind the front in fifth position with fully stretched legs. The look a dancer having finished a sus-sous is a releve in a fifth position with legs tightly together. Sus- sous is also the position you will hit in the air during a chassé.

- *Sickling*- a term that is used to describe a dancer's foot that is incorrectly placed or pointed, causing it to look curved inwards when looking at the front view of the leg. A dancer will often receive the correction of sickling. A sickled foot is somewhat common during training because the amount of flexibility in a person's foot and ankle is generally greater on the inside of the foot. If a dancer thinks of simply "pointing your feet as hard as you possibly can!" the foot almost naturally goes into a sickled position. You must keep your big toe, ankle and knee in line- engaging all three.
- *Triplet*- name given to a way of walking that is executed in three counts: one in demi plié and two and three in relevé. It can be executed with different rotations of the legs, arm combinations, turns and so forth.
- *Turnout*- a position of the legs in which the feet are pointing outwards. It is an external rotation of the limb that is executed with the whole leg, including the hip.



## **FAQ**

### ***I have never been in dance or color guard before. Can I still audition?***

Absolutely! We have plenty of veteran members of the visual ensemble that started years ago as horn players, front ensemble players and even people who had never been in marching band before. While having a basic understanding of movement is helpful, it is not required.

### ***What is the age cut off for me to do WGI?***

you can not be over the age of 22 years old as of 12:01am on April 1<sup>st</sup> of any given competitive year.

### ***How can I get better prepare myself for the audition?***

Stay active! starting strength training with your core now. Cardio is also very important. Go over the packet, videos, and stretch every day.

### ***Where are rehearsals?***

We rehearse at Sycamore High School in Pleasant View, TN.

### ***I have spring break the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April... Can I still go out of town?***

Unfortunately, the night April 14<sup>th</sup> is when we depart from Sycamore High school to go to Dayton, OH to compete for World Championships. April 15-18, attendance is required to be in the ensemble.

### ***What is the rehearsal Schedule like?***

We will rehearse on the weekends on Friday nights, all day Saturday, and Sunday mornings. There are 2 exceptions to this which are drill camp (during Christmas break) and WGI championships during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April.

### ***I am coming from out of town, is housing provided on the weekends?***

Yes! Staying with the idea of providing our membership with a safe, stress free and positive experience- Audio Theater does provide housing for the entire ensemble EVERY rehearsal weekend. Including drill camp and WGI Championships week in Dayton, OH.

## Meet the Visual Ensemble Staff



**Shelby Hargrave** has a strong dance background starting when she was just two years old. She began her dance training at Betty Weber's School of Dance in Jeffersonville, IN. From there, she continued to dance and also began participating in theatre/drama.

Shelby Hargrave began her color guard career in 2008, where she marched in band and winter guard at Shelby County High School in Shelbyville, KY- until she graduated in 2013. Once she graduated, she auditioned for Lexis Winter Guard and marched from 2014-2018. She also was able to march at Troopers Drum & Bugle Corps in 2015 until she aged out in 2016.

In 2015, Shelby moved from Shelbyville, KY to New Albany, IN to be the dance choreographer/tech at Floyd Central High School where she taught from 2015-2018. Now, she lives in Lexington, KY and teaches dance to different schools in the tristate area (KY, IN, OH). She is currently the color guard Director at Henry Clay High School in Lexington, KY, where she has taught for the last 2 years.

Shelby currently resides in Lexington, KY. She is incredibly excited to be with Audio Theater for her third consecutive season and work with such an amazing group of kids!



**Shelbye Willard** began her color guard career in 2005, where she marched in band and winter guard at Shelby County High School in Shelbyville, KY- until she graduated in 2010. Once graduated, she marched Colts Drum and Bugle Corps in 2010 & 2011, before aging out in 2013. Shelbye also marched WGI in 2011 & 2012 with Juxtaposition World Class Winter guard.

Over the years, Shelbye has taught/consulted numerous scholastic and independent groups in the KY/IN/AL/TN/FL areas including North Hardin HS, John Hardin HS, and Sycamore HS. This winter, in addition to Audio Theater, she will be working with the Butler Traditional High School color guard (Louisville, KY) and North Hardin High School color guard (Elizabethtown, KY).

She currently resides in Louisville, Kentucky. Shelbye is grateful for yet another opportunity to work closely with such a great team of people. This marks her 6th consecutive year with Audio Theater. "I am very humbled, and excited to be a part of the Audio Theater Visual Staff, and cannot wait to see what the future holds for this organization in 2020!"



**Patrick McGehee** grew up in Peoria, Illinois, where he earned his bachelors in Music Education degree at Bradley University. While in Illinois, he worked with the East Peoria High School Marching Band and the Illinois Valley Central Marching Band. Since moving to Tennessee in 2016, he has been on staff with the Clarksville High School Marching Band.

Patrick began his drum corps career in 2008 as a baritone player in the Colts Drum and Bugle Corps, where he stayed until his age out in 2014. He returned to the organization in 2015 as part of the visual staff for both Colts and Colt Cadets. In 2016, he served as the visual caption head of the Colt Cadets. Since 2017, Patrick has spent his summers as a visual technician with the 10 time- DCI world champion- The Cadets. Patrick is currently in his fourth year as the choir director at Springfield Middle School, in Springfield, TN. He resides with his girlfriend, AJ in their home of White's Creek. The 2020 season will be Patrick McGehee's fourth season as visual caption head at Audio Theater.

**Thank you again for your decision to audition for the 2020 Audio Theater Visual Ensemble! If you have any questions about the auditions, or technique, do not hesitate to email us/message the interest page on Facebook!**



Shelby Hargrave- *Visual Ensemble Technician*

[hargraveshelby@gmail.com](mailto:hargraveshelby@gmail.com)

Shelby Willard- *Visual Ensemble Technician*

[shelbywillard@yahoo.com](mailto:shelbywillard@yahoo.com)