

SEEKING VOICE ACTORS FOR THE NEW COLOSSUS

A new audio drama inspired by Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull*
written by Tamara Kissane

A family of frustrated, attention-starved artists flocks to the seashore. One of them has a gun...what could possibly go wrong? A darkly comic reboot of Chekhov's classic, this rollicking tale examines the pitfalls of making art and making love in modern day America.

CAST:

4 W, 4 M

TIMELINE: TBD. Likely late Fall 2019. We will have the calendar confirmed and available when you are offered the role. Actors must be local to the Triangle-area of NC for a limited rehearsal period and for recording days.

PAYMENT: These are paid, but not highly paid roles. We will have the budget confirmed and payment information available when you are offered the role.

CHARACTERS:

IRINA ARKIN (W, 40-50's) - KONRAD's mother and TRIG's lover. A passable starlet since childhood on stage and screen, you'd probably recognize her if you saw her in a cafe. A performer. A survivor. **The actor in this role must be able to sing a show-stopping number. Ideally she is a composer/musician, as well.**

NINA (W, 20's) - KONRAD's longtime neighbor and childhood sweetheart; TRIG's trifle. No one helps her to grow up and she doesn't quite know how. She is the Seagull, of course.

PAULINA (W, 40-50's) - MASHA's mother and KONRAD's neighbor. She is in love with SORIN. Her husband (off-stage) is a blowhard idiot and her daughter makes her sad. She bakes and eats cake.

MASHA (W, 20's) - Deeply infatuated with KONRAD's tormented artistic soul; she settles for a life as MEDDIE's wife. The only one with real talent and soul, she writes songs and accompanies herself on the piano or the guitar. She drinks. **The actor in this role must have strong singer-songwriter experience.**

KONRAD ARKIN (M, 20's) - Crazy-in-love with NINA. Desperate to please his Mommy, IRINA. A frustrated writer with anarchist leanings, he always carries a gun (except when it's confiscated by his mother). He's too broken to be the genius-bad ass-artist he aspires to, but he has charm

and great potential. **The actor in this role must have facility with spoken word poetry and/or rapping.**

SORIN - (M, 40-50's) Brother of IRINA; uncle of his ward, KONRAD. Wheelchair bound and dying thru the course of the play, SORIN is the wise fellow that his family ignores.

TRIG O'RYAN (M, 40-50's) - Lover of IRINA and eventually NINA. TRIG is a best-selling author of the easy-to-digest fiction paperbacks that you'd find in airport bookstores. He used to be a really good writer, now he is a charismatic lech who tries not to think too much about how he's disappointed himself. Everyone wants to sleep with this guy, but no one knows why. Emotional vampire. **Note: this role contains a scene of simulated (solo) sex.**

MEDDIE (M, 20's) - Relentless pursuer of his love, MASHA; KONRAD's neighbor and reluctant friend. He's a martyr and a school teacher. Basically a good guy. He feels sorry for himself.

TO AUDITION:

Deadline:

1. Record your voice using the scripts below and send your audio audition to artistssoapbox@gmail.com by **August 23, 2019**. In the heading of the email, please include the title and the name of the character you are auditioning for. Example: THE NEW COLOSSUS: MASHA. (See below for more info related to the audio recording.)
2. Along with your voice recording, please send a resume or a short bio if you don't have a resume ready.

RECORDING YOUR VOICE:

You don't need a fancy mic as long as it clearly captures your voice in character, so your phone or computer mic will do. If you have a pro vocal reel, I'd be happy to listen to that as well, but the scripts are mandatory. As you'll see below, I cut as much of the other characters' dialogue out as I could, but I left some in for context and to give you something to react to. Don't feel you need to read their parts too, just leave space for them. If you have a friend who wants to read the other parts with you, that would be fine too, but not necessary.

IRINA & MASHA & KONRAD AUDITIONEES:

For these roles, please include an example of your acting+ abilities. IRINA and MASHA: include a recording of yourself singing. If you have links to your music-related performances, send those too. KONRAD: include recording of yourself reading poetry, performing spoken word, or rapping. **Note: Do not let this extra step dissuade you from auditioning. Please send me what you have -- I want to hear you!**

QUESTIONS? Email artistssoapbox@gmail.com

IRINA SIDE:

[IRINA is talking to a crowd at her backyard party. The crowd loves her.]

IRINA

(on mic)

Welcome, to our Fun, Fun, Fun Day!

When I was a girl growing up here, we threw so many wild parties -- singing, dancing, playing, laughing. And love affairs, of course! My big brother was a real Don Juan back then. A heartbreaker. (to SORIN) So many women tripping over their tongues for you. You remember, darling?

SORIN

How could I forget?

IRINA

(on mic)

Yes, I'm happy to report that our dear Sorin is much improved! If he follows doctor's orders, he'll be right as rain. Maybe we can even get you out of that chair for some dancing?! (laughs)

Sadly, Trig and I will be returning to the City tomorrow. We have enjoyed our visit here so much, but we both have important business elsewhere. Now we can rest easy with the knowledge that Sorin is on the mend and that my lovely boy, Konrad, will continue to care for him. Thank you, Konrad.

For those of you who were in attendance at Konrad's play last week - I'd like to clear up any confusion. I continue to be very proud of my Konrad and his "art". My comments and Konrad's subsequent behavior were the result of some minor misunderstandings. We have put that all firmly behind us. Haven't we, Konnie? Put the camera down, dear. Put. It. Down. (clears throat) Yes. Now, this shindig was not cheap, so you'd better enjoy it! Cue the music. Everyone, dance!

NINA SIDE:

NINA

Konrad, I'm here to tell you I'm not your seagull anymore. I don't want your love. I did once, but I don't now. I just want to rest. I'm very tired. Ok?

KONRAD

Nina-

NINA

Is he here too?

KONRAD

Trig is inside with Mother.

NINA

Of course, they're together.

He wrote that book about me. He made me into his seagull too. What a silly thing to make me! How stupid we all were. Well, that's going to stop. Do you hear me?

KONRAD

Nina-

NINA

He laughed at me. (laughs) I laughed too, but I didn't know what we were laughing about. Me, I guess. And then the baby...and the worry and the grief over losing them...one, then the other. It was his baby. You both made jokes about me sleeping around. You both made slutty Nina jokes, but they weren't funny and they weren't true. It was his baby. There was no one else. I only loved him. I keep saying, 'it' but I had a girl baby. Not an 'it,' a 'she.' She died. He didn't want her anyway. I can't tell if you are hearing me, Konrad. Can you listen without your camera?

KONRAD

Yes. I hear you - I'm sorry -

NINA

I understand why he didn't want us. But I wanted her and she died. It was hard to know what to do after that. My body ached. Everyone was looking at me. I couldn't feed the baby, the baby flew away. My skin hurt. My eyes. Every day I got worse and worse. Everyone was watching and I was a terrible actress! People took photos. They made jokes. Even you did. It was a blood bath. I felt like I was dying every day. Do you remember when you shot that seagull? My god, you shot two! "Can you believe it?" you said, "Can you believe it?"

PAULINA SIDE:

[Scene with Paulina, Konrad, Masha, Sorin.]

PAULINA

Konrad, I think you should concentrate more on writing what you want to write rather than trying to be some great artisté. I didn't recognize a bit of you up there. How's your Uncle?

KONRAD

Fine, I guess. He's right there.

PAULINA

Oh.

Tell him to cut back on the smokes and the hip flask. I know he sneaks. You're supposed to be taking care of him.

SORIN

I can hear you, Paulie. I want a cookie.

PAULINA

Be quiet, you old thing. You already got a cookie.

Masha, your father called. Don't be much longer. It's family night.

MASHA

Since when?

PAULINA

Since your father said. Konrad, please say something nice to Masha. It would make her day.

MASHA

Mom-

PAULINA

She really likes you -- She's always talking about you.

MASHA SIDE:

KONRAD

Mash, what did you think of my play?

MASHA

The music was fabulous. That was my favorite part.

KONRAD

You wrote the music.

MASHA

I know. That was a joke.

KONRAD

You're the only one with real talent around here, Masha.

MASHA

No. Thanks. I mean -- You went to school for this stuff, so there's really no comparison. Um. I mean I did like the music - but I was making a joke -- I liked other things too - that you did.

KONRAD

What did you like, for example?

MASHA

For example, I really liked your introduction... "The world is wiped clean of disappointments...and all is quiet for a thousand more years, until one day the world is new again..." You're a poet, Konrad. For real. When you speak, your voice gets so sad and your eyes and your skin... It's very...moving. Your ideas and your words all resonate in me. Right here...like in my heart and my, you know, brain....

KONRAD SIDE:

KONRAD

I'm not obsessed with my gun, Mother.

IRINA

I didn't say you were, dear. You can have it back after we've gone.

KONRAD

Trig is a coward. I told him I wanted to fight him, now he's leaving.

IRINA

He's leaving because I said we're leaving. No more accidents, Konnie -- concentrate on getting better and taking care of your Uncle.

KONRAD

When I was a boy it was just you and me. I'd come with you to the set. I'd sing and dance for you. I loved that, Mother. You loved it too. You'd put your hand on my cheek so gently before tucking me in at night. Nina doesn't love me anymore and Uncle Sorin will die soon. Then I'll only have you, but you won't be here anymore.

IRINA

I'll be back.

KONRAD

How can you tolerate that horrible man!? He walks around here like he's some kind of genius, salivating after Nina, and lording it over me. His books make me sick. You both make me sick.

SORIN SIDE:

SORIN

Aren't you going to ask me what I thought of your play?

KONRAD

What did you think of my play?

SORIN

You don't think I have an opinion? Or is my opinion meaningless because I'm a sick old man?

KONRAD

No —

SORIN

You all treat me like a piece of furniture to be shifted around periodically until I die. I'm no potted plant, goddammit. I'm still here. (SORIN coughs a bit.)

KONRAD

Easy, Uncle. Ok, what'd you think?

SORIN

Konrad, there are two things I wanted in life — to be a published author and to marry a good woman. I failed on both counts.

I've carried around the idea for my novel for forty years. Almost twice your lifetime. I haven't written down a word of it, but I wrestle with it every day, polishing turns of phrase, dialogue... I have written that goddamn novel in my head hundreds of times. I tell you, nephew, it's a goddamn masterpiece.

KONRAD

It's never too late, Uncle, you —

SORIN

I won't! That's the point, goddammit. I missed my window. I've run out of time. I'm too goddamn tired now, anyway.

You asked me what I thought of your play. It was very strange, Konrad, but the piece had heart, you know? I really liked it. You expressed yourself. You struggled with big ideas that mean something. Freedom! Rebirth! You put yourself out there. I'm saying you have potential, nephew. You could make something of yourself - even more so than your mother. Keep going with your work -- (SORIN coughs and is overcome.)

TRIG SIDE:

[TRIG writes, mumbles to himself, tears out paper. He is by himself and struggling with writer's block.]

TRIG

Ahhhh! Goddamn fucking Jesus christ shitty writers' fucking block! What the fuck, Trig? What. The. Fuck. You've written alotta books, man. Lots. Just put the words on the paper. Just man the fuck up, you fucking baby. Time to phone a friend.

(TRIG dials cellphone.)

TRIG

(on the phone)

Hey babe, Trig here. Yeah it's been awhile. How are yah? Yeah, listen I'm about to duck into a meeting, - yeah a late meeting - but I got a quick question for you about my last book. You haven't? Well, you're probably the only one. It's on the best seller list. You got a copy though right? Oh, fabulous. There's a character in it who reminds me of you. The sexy one, of course. Let's talk after you read it, ok? Ok, well, they're waving me in so, yeah call me after you read it -- yeah, fantastic to hear your voice too -- yeah, I gotta run. Ok.

(TRIG hangs up.)

TRIG

Well, she was no fucking help. Trigster. Trigster. Get yourself together, man. Everybody loves your work. You still got it. Phone a friend.

(TRIG dials cellphone.)

TRIG

(on the phone)

Hey, sweetie. Yeah. How are yah? Good. No, don't come over, I'm not in the City, just ah tell me what you liked about my last book again, would yah? A little writer's block. Just need to grease the wheels a bit. Can you help me, sweetheart? No, I like it on the phone.

MEDDIE SIDE:

MEDDIE

Listen. Masha, I love you, but Konrad doesn't love you, and I feel like there's a chance that you'll come around to loving me, but Konrad will never come around to loving you. So I just want you to think about that. I might be your one best chance to get out of your house and be with someone who'll really cherish you. And you can keep making your music cuz I'll pay for your life - I'll work three jobs if I have to -- and we can be happy. Because I may not be fireworks and poetry, but I am a grown-ass man and Konrad will never be more than a child who can hardly take care of himself.

Masha, when you wake up to that, I'll still be here for you and it'll be like we never had this conversation. I'll just be happy that you chose me and we'll go on like that just really happy together.