



Waterloo Community Playhouse
announces auditions for its production of

The Royal Historian of Oz

By

George Brant

Produced by Special Arrangement with The Gersh Agency

Director: Alan Malone

Thank you for your interest in auditioning for The Royal Historian of OZ. You will be asked to perform both audition sides. While fully memorizing the audition sides is not required, I recommend trying to memorize some sections or paragraphs. The script is 22 full pages of monologue with the character of Dorothy appearing briefly in the last 2 pages. Being able to show memorization skills will be taken into consideration.

The first audition side is from the opening of the show after the Great OZ voice-over and character is revealed from behind the curtain and through the smoke.

The second side is how Baum lost the rights to his Oz characters by investing everything in his live touring show that failed.

In performances your audience will be the audience in the theatre every night, house lights may be low so you can see who you are speaking to. Is it a theatre audience? Is it his audiences from long ago in his parlor? We will decide in rehearsals but play to the house, play to the individual seats you see. The ability to connect earnestly will be key. And have fun.

Any questions, please feel free to reach out - alan.malone@wcpbhct.org

Thank you!

Side 1 - Opening Intro

"The great Oz has spoken! The great Oz - (revealed behind the curtain) - has spoken.

Uh, pay no attention to the man behind the curtain! Although, I suppose that's why you're here. Excuse me. (coughing from the fog, trying to disperse it)

My apologies – can't resist a bit of stagecraft now and then. Well. Good evening and welcome. You know, I suppose I should issue a caveat straight off: if you came here tonight hoping for the story of a drunkard, drug addict, or adulterer, I'm afraid I am bound to disappoint you. Mine is a simple story of love and devotion, of discovering a road and following it.

There is sorrow, here and there, to be sure, but no more than any life can be expected to possess. There are triumphs, and I hope you will not think me boastful for speaking of them. Twists and turns? More than a few. I share with you my tale not as a model for your own life or to inspire pity in your heart, but merely because I love to tell a story, and that is what you have come to hear.

Once upon a time – you know my young readers often wrote to me to ask me why so many fairy tales begin with "Once Upon a Time." Well, when the world was young, there were no autos, no airplanes to make a child wonder, nor were there railway trains. There were no telephones or mechanical inventions to keep people keyed up to a high pitch of excitement. Men and women lived quietly and simply. They breathed clean air into their lungs instead of smoke and coal gas. They tramped through green meadows and deep forests instead of riding on streetcars and buses. They went to bed when the sun set and got up when it rose – which is vastly different from the present custom.

The fairies felt sorry for the simple people of those times and helped them to look after their simple wants. Sometimes the fairies even showed themselves to those persons they had befriended. But today, the fairies are shy because Man believes his inventions are more wonderful than the wonders of fairyland. For that reason fairy stories have to go back to the days when boys and girls saw the fairies more often than they do today. And that is why such stories often start with "Once Upon a Time."

Side 2-

We closed a few months later. I had failed to accurately estimate the costs of the production, a production I had financed completely by myself. As the play's tour wore on, I assumed the sell-out crowds were paying off my investment, but it took me some time - too much time - to realize that even when the show was playing to full houses, it was losing money. The film equipment, the screen, the steel projection booth, the orchestra, the actors, it was all too expensive. I had miscalculated; it turned out Dorothy wasn't destined to be a film star after all. I had tried to create something new and different for children, and I suppose in that regard I succeeded. But my wallet was less happy. Terminally so.

You know, while writing you can't help but jump into your characters' skins for a while. I've already mentioned my Santa Claus complex, and I often felt like the Wizard as well, a magician who amazed children. But at this time in my life, I felt like no one so much as Dorothy's old, beleaguered Uncle Henry. "Uncle Henry grew poorer every year, and the crops raised on the farm only brought food for the family. Therefore the mortgage could not be paid. At last the banker who had loaned him the money said that if he did not pay on a certain day, his farm would be taken away from him.

When Dorothy told about the riches of Oz, Uncle Henry would sigh, for he knew that a single one of the great emeralds that were so common there would pay all his debts and leave his farm free. But Dorothy never brought any jewels home with her, so their poverty became greater every year."

I found I had to sell off my rights to many of my previous books, including the original "Wizard." My literary children were no longer my own; they were in the hands of strangers who cared nothing for them.