

# ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW AUDITIONS – a few thoughts...

by Patty Goble

In keeping with tradition, I've compiled a few ideas for you to think about before the upcoming audition for RHPS. You will be asked to sing a total of 32 bars from a song of your choosing in the style of the show. PLEASE, DO NOT SING MATERIAL FROM THE SHOW!

***The Rocky Horror Picture Show*** is a musical written in 1973 with music, lyrics and book by Richard O'Brien. A humorous tribute to the science fiction and horror B movies of the 1930s through to the early 1960s, the musical tells the story of a newly engaged couple getting caught in a storm and coming to the home of a mad gender-bending scientist, Dr Frank-N-Furter, unveiling his new creation, a sort of Frankenstein-style monster in the form of an artificially made, fully grown, physically perfect muscle man named Rocky, complete "with blond hair and a tan." (*Wikipedia*)

**\*You may be asking yourself, "what do I sing?"** When choosing your song, consider the following:

(\*Source: *Rock the Audition* by Sheri Sanders, Hal Leonard, 2011)

- Be sure to like the song you've chosen and it's something you can sing well that shows the best part of your vocal ability! Don't sing something that causes you to strain your voice beyond its capabilities.
- The music from RHPS has a 50's and 60's feel, but it's true musical nature lies in the 1970's rock genre.
- The 1970's rock era is rich with artists whose work is *timeless* that can be sung for auditions for many different eras and genres. Aretha Franklin, for example is a perfect example. Her music stretches over to 50's, 60's and 70's, in the style of the blues, R & B or contemporary rock. Here is a list of *timeless* artists from which to choose:

Stevie Wonder  
Aretha Franklin  
Michael Jackson  
Elton John (with lyricist Bernie Taupin)  
Joe Cocker  
Tina Turner  
Aerosmith  
The Beatles  
Heart

- Other musicals written during this time (1965-75), give or take a few years, from which to choose:

*Godspell*  
*Hair*  
*Hedwig and the Angry Inch*  
*Jesus Christ Superstar*  
*The Me Nobody Knows*  
*Tommy*  
*Two Gentleman from Verona*  
*We Will Rock You*

- If you are looking for a really great songwriter from this era; someone you should know! **Laura Nyro's** songs were recorded by Barbara Streisand, Three Dog Night, Fifth Dimension, Blood, Sweat and Tears, Linda Ronstadt, Peter, Paul and Mary and Thelma Houston. Her influence can be heard when listening to Elton John, Joni Mitchell, Kate Bush, Elvis Costello, Rickie Lee Jones and Carole King.

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## After you have chosen a song:

- Find the best 32 bars of the song! Your 32 bars should have an arch with growth and a climax. Think about where the climax of the song is (generally toward the end) and work from there.
- You must bring sheet music for the pianist to your audition. It must be clearly marked with where you want to start and end. Do not bring in a lead sheet (chord changes only with lyrics). By doing so, you are assuming that the pianist knows the piece which is a recipe for disaster! A great source to purchase music is musicnotes.com - <https://www.musicnotes.com> On this website, you can transpose the piece into the key that fits your range. Let me know if you need help with this.
- You must sing with the pianist provided – NO *a capella* singing allowed (singing without an accompaniment).
- **VERY IMPORTANT:** Make sure the music is in the key you are used to singing in. Too many times, singers will come into an audition with the music in the wrong key. It has never gone well for them.
- Make sure you have sung your song apart and away from the artist you have been listening to before the audition. Make sure you have heard the accompaniment before you get to the audition. Many times, sheet music is not in the same key as the recording you have been listening to and can throw your audition into a panic and a screeching halt. Here is the name of a pianist who can help you with your music: [vocalcoachmat@gmail.com](mailto:vocalcoachmat@gmail.com) (Mat Eisenstein). Mat is a Broadway pianist/conductor and can play every genre of music. He can help you establish a 32-bar cut, supply you with a mp3 piano track of the melody and accompaniment. You will need to supply the music! His fee is very reasonable and a terrific resource for any future auditions you have. *I would generally offer my services to help, but in the safety world of Covid, scheduling a room by which to work is extremely difficult if not impossible.*
- It is highly suggested that you have your sheet music hole punched and in a binder. Trust me, you don't want loose sheets of music flying off the piano while you're singing.
- When singing a cut from a piece of music, have the entire tune playing in your head before the audition so you can jump into the energy of the piece right away. Make sure to practice this!!
- Above all, have fun and be yourself.

## If you need selection suggestions:

- I found this terrific website with great suggestions and a platform from which to bounce ideas around. There is a lot of information here:

<https://www.theatretrip.com/audition-songs-for-the-rocky-horror-show/>

**Callbacks:** If you should be fortunate to be called back, it is highly advisable that you become acquainted with the RHPS score before the initial audition. Start listening to the show now!!

**Do your homework and come prepared to have fun and sing with confidence!!**

**Please feel free to email me if you have any questions:**

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