

MEN ON BOATS

by Jacklyn Backhaus,
Directed by Emily A. Rollie (guest artist, she/her)

About the play

Men on Boats is a (somewhat) true theatrical exploration of the Green and Colorado Rivers in 1869, with a one-armed captain and their dedicated crew, who weather the twists and turns of a river and adventure of a lifetime. Using comedy and ensemble-based movement, the play is history reconsidered and re-imagined, featuring a diverse cast of women, non-binary, gender nonconforming, and transgender performers in positions historically filled by cis white men.

Audition Dates & Information

Auditions on November 21 & 22

Callbacks on Tuesday, November 29, from 6:30-9:30 pm CST

Actors of diverse identities, backgrounds, and experience levels are welcome and encouraged to audition.

Actors called back for *Men on Boats* should come prepared to move, play, and read from scenes from the play.

Men on Boats Character Information and Content Disclosures

From the playwright (& enthusiastically supported by the director):

“The characters in MEN ON BOATS are historically cisgender white males. **The cast should be made up entirely of people who are not.** I'm talking about racially diverse actors who are female-identifying, trans-identifying, genderfluid, and/or gender nonconforming.”

Ideally, Tsauwait and The Bishop (doubled as OG and Seneca Howland) will be played by Native actors. Per the playwright, “If there are no Native actors in your production, the Howlands/Utes must at least be cast as non-white.”

Character Information

All roles are female-identifying, trans-identifying, genderfluid, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary.

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| POWELL | One-armed captain of the great expedition. Enjoys being in charge, making plans, making speeches and pursuing bold solutions. Optimistic, sometimes to a fault. |
| DUNN | A hunter and trapper, Powell's second in command. Practical, capable and strategic. Has a tendency to have a glass-half-empty perspective. |
| SUMNER | A former soldier, current explorer. Known to be the Bear Grylls of this era. Resourceful, observant, & ready for any adventure. |

- OLD SHADY Powell's older brother, Civil War vet. A person of few words.
- BRADLEY Lieutenant, incredibly youthful. Youngest member of the group filled with optimism, eagerness, and an abundance of excitement – sometimes to excess.
- OG HOWLAND. A printer and hunter with a wry sense of humor. Protective of their little brother, Seneca. Little patience for nonsense. Also doubles as TSAUWAIT, a Ute chief who is composed and wry in contrast to the explorers.
- SENECA OG's quiet, younger brother. Scrappy and jumps in to help where they're able. Also doubles as THE BISHOP, Tsauwait's wife
- GOODMAN Very British and soooo excited. Tries hard but is new to this (evidenced by all new gear) and often puts their foot in their mouth. Also doubles as MR ASA, a settler
- HALL Mapmaker and old soul. Values precision and the splendor of the natural world.
- HAWKINS The cook who shows care through food (as cooks might). Likes having the inside scoop.

Content Disclosure:

Men on Boats includes profanity and discusses/portrays references to ableism and racism. (i.e. The language in the play includes an ableist slur said by a disabled character about themselves.)

There is also one moment in which one character removes their pants in an effort to save another character; however, undergarments will be discussed and negotiated within the actor's boundaries.

The play involves numerous ensemble-based movement opportunities to convey the characters' journey down a river, navigating through rapids. Movement is important but will be created to work with the ensemble members' abilities.