



## AUDITION NOTICE

### THE CHAMPION

By Amy Evans

Directed by Rebecca McDonald

**ABOUT THE SHOW:** Inspired by untold, true events in the life of music legend Nina Simone. It's 1962 and Nina and her band are holed up from a snowstorm in a greasy spoon somewhere in North Carolina. As tempers flare and secrets surface, it seems the waitress at this small-town diner may soon be the only witness of a historic meltdown. Suddenly, the door swings open, and the famous outsiders discover they're truly in unfriendly territory. A sharply drawn, exciting new play that intimately portrays a cultural icon and the turbulent era during which she rose to fame. Directed by Rebecca McDonald. #BATCthechampion

**WHO:** Equity & Non-Equity Actors are encouraged to attend.

**WHEN:** Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup>; 6:00 – 9:00 PM; Monday, August 27<sup>th</sup>; 7:00 – 7:40 PM

To schedule your audition, please follow this link: <http://signup.com/go/kbERMUT>

**CALLBACKS:** Monday, August 27<sup>th</sup>; 7:45 – 10:00 PM

**WHAT TO BRING:** Please bring résumé & headshot/snapshot as well as your calendar. You will be asked to provide scheduling conflicts.

**WHAT TO PREPARE:** The audition will be cold readings. Be prepared to provide schedule conflicts on your audition form.

**WHERE:** Bishop Arts Theatre Center is located at 215 South Tyler Street, Dallas, Texas 75208. If you are traveling to our venue and are coming from Interstate 35, Exit 12th Street toward Beckley Avenue. Travel west on 12th street for about 3 minutes and then take a right on to Tyler Street. Bishop Arts Theatre Center will be on your left in 2 blocks.

**REHEARSAL SCHEDULE:** August 29<sup>th</sup> – October 10<sup>th</sup>. Mon-Thurs. 7-10pm. Sun. 2-5pm. Labor Day off.

**PERFORMANCES:** October 11 – 28, 2018; Friday evening performances at 7:30 PM; Saturday & Sunday Matinees at 3:00 PM.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL:** [Marketing@BishopArtsTheatre.org](mailto:Marketing@BishopArtsTheatre.org).

**ABOUT BISHOP ARTS THEATRE CENTER:** Nestled in the heart of Dallas' Oak Cliff community, the Bishop Arts Theatre Center is an award-winning, multicultural, multi-discipline theatre company. Founded in 1993, BATC's mission is to cultivate a diverse and vibrant arts community while creating opportunities for local and emerging artists through performances and education. The BATC offers a full season of theatre

performances, jazz concerts, a speaker series and year-round arts education programs. Each year, the theatre impacts nearly 30,000 people nationwide.

**THE CAST: Seeking 7 Performers; 2 Women, 5 Men.**

**NINA SIMONE** (*Late 20's/Early 30's*) *African-American Woman*. Born in rural North Carolina, Nina moved to Philadelphia and later New York to pursue her music career, becoming an overnight success. Her furs, jewelry, and fashionable clothes mask a girl who was never quite able to shed the markings of a 'backwoods' country upbringing. A tall, dark-skinned woman, with a strong build and toned arms, Nina struggles against the beauty standards applied to high-profile Black entertainers. Nina Simone was, by all accounts, a perfectionist. As an artist, she was extremely demanding and ruthlessly critical of other musicians who were unable to meet her standards. She was also prone to fits of intense rage, prompted by a condition which may have been bipolar disorder or paranoid schizophrenia; no decisive diagnosis seems to exist. While her illness made it very difficult for her to function socially, it undoubtedly contributed to her power as an artist, performer and political activist.

**AL SCHACKMAN** (*Late 20's/Early 30's*) *White Man*. *This actor should play some guitar*. Tall and 'skinnier than a skinned snake.' Al Schackman was born in East New York, the second-generation son of Russian and Polish-German Jewish parents. He completed a tour in the US Army in the early fifties, his career as a professional guitarist took off; he played gigs with Dinah Washington and Wynton Kelly before meeting Nina Simone in 1957. This meeting began an intense friendship that would last over forty years. Open-minded and uncompromising, fiercely independent and profoundly loyal, Al is a person very much at ease in the role of outsider, unperturbed by his position as the only white guy. He is restless, eager to find focus and unwilling to be tied down. In 1962, in an effort to either repair or escape his fast-paced lifestyle, he is considering leaving New York for the wildlife of Big Sur, California, where he expects to find peace - even if it means distancing himself from Nina.

**CHRISTOPHER WHITE** (*Mid to late 20's*) *a Brooklyn-born Caribbean Man*. Well educated, tall, handsome, and capable in equal measure of playful mischief and righteous anger. His father was a baker from Trinidad and his mother a pianist from Barbados, both of whom had to give up their trades in order to do the only kind of work allowed Black people in New York in the 1930s: housekeeping and elevator operating. After losing his father to cancer at the age of 11, Chris found solace in the band room of his high school, where he learned to play every instrument, finally settling on the bass. He was classically trained, and, like Nina, boasted perfect pitch. He was managing his own bands by the end of the 1950s, when he first began playing with Nina Simone. By 1962 Chris has been married for six years and has a daughter who is a year old. He has been playing with Nina for three years and brought his high school friend Bobby into the band; however, he is not as musically challenged playing with Nina as he would like to be and is looking forward to testing his mettle in a jazz ensemble, much to Nina's dismay.

**BOBBY HAMILTON** (*Mid 20's*) *African-American Man*. *Some percussion experience a plus*. The youngest and newest member of the trio, Bobby was born to parents who migrated to New York from the south. His mother worked in an unemployment office and his father in a factory. Neither was musical; however, from an early age, Bobby was exposed to leaders in the jazz world who lived and worked in the neighborhood where he grew up. He played with Nina for the first time in 1959, at the age of 22, and remained with her until 1968. By 1962, Bobby married and had a child. He is not heavysset, but sturdy, approaching life from a practical perspective. Determined to take care for his family, he is a hard worker and willing to take on whatever jobs come his way. He is in a successful band with two friends, and despite having to negotiate Nina's temper, he is there to earn his keep.

**THERESA** (*18 years old*) *African-American Woman*. Deeply devoted, both to her religious affiliations and her desire to fight segregation, Theresa is afraid of allowing her political views to endanger those close to her.

**McNEIL** (*Late 40s*), *White Male*. First Sergeant in the North Carolina State Highway Patrol.

**FRASIER** (*22*), *White Male*. State Trooper, McNeil's trainee.