

CASTING CALL:

THE BENCH, A HOMELESS LOVE STORY written by Robert Galinsky
A One Night Only Live Virtual Table Reading of the Off Broadway & Hollywood Show
This is a **Benefit Reading for Trinity Homeless Services**

Announced: September 3, 2020
THE BENCH, A Homeless Love Story
Venue: Facebook Live, Via Zoom
Show Date: Saturday,
10/10/20, 7pmPT/10pmEDT
No Pay, Each Actor Will Receive a
\$50.00 Honorarium

Casting Director: McCorkle Casting
Presenters: Barry 'Shabaka' Henley & Chris Noth
Producers: Terry Schnuck & ActorTrade.com
Writer: Robert Galinsky
Director: Jay O. Sanders
Featured Actor: Barry 'Shabaka' Henley
Audition Submission: 9/3-9/10
Rehearsals: 4 rehearsals TBD
Show Date: Sat. 10/10/20, 7pmPT 10pmEDT
Location: Zoom via Facebook Live

Live Virtual Callbacks Sept 15, 16

SEEKING ALL RACES. SEEKING LGBTQ ACTORS - DO NOT LET CHARACTER AGE, OR GENDER, LIMIT YOU.

PLEASE SUBMIT AUDITION VIDEO VIA VIMEO OR YOUTUBE LINK TO: GALINSKYNOW@GMAIL.COM - IN ADDITION, PLEASE INCLUDE HEADSHOT, RESUME, & CURRENT REEL IF POSSIBLE. IT IS A BIG PLUS IF YOU HAVE MASTERY OF ZOOM & A GREEN SCREEN
Slate: Your name, character name- Frame: As if you are sitting at your computer, reading from script, well lit, green screen an image behind you is preferred.

SIDES ATTACHED SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 10AMedt 09/10/20

STORYLINE:

Based on real people and true stories, The Bench, is set in urban decay and rubble of New York City in the late 1980's and explores the emotional heartbreak of five characters experiencing homelessness, love, and the catastrophic hysteria surrounding AIDS virus.

"Manhattan 1980s and 1990s East Village comes to life onstage in Hollywood... 'The Bench' chronicles the time and passions that still resonate today." *Los Angeles Blade*

"Director Jay O. Sanders has built a career on roles that are inseparable from the worlds that spawned them; that same sensibility is certain to be in evidence on The Bench." *DEADLINE Hollywood*

SEEKING:

[JD] 40's male or female. Homeless. Long, lean, former truck driver, survivor of a head injury in driving accident. Reserved, blunt, sometimes brutal, practical, doesn't like attention, says very little and is straight to the point, part of this small community of homeless, great friend of Graveyard, nemesis of Joe.

[Lorraine] Late 30's early 40's female. Not homeless but living in semi-squalor. Once quite attractive, once a school teacher who was falsely accused of molesting a student. Cleared of all charges in court, but still an outcast in public opinion. Wants to be loved, has different types of intimate relations with each man in this small community. Has hope and a soft spot for Joe.

[Graveyard] 40's male. Homeless. Portly, jovial at times, then easily agitated to the point of melt down. Viet Nam veteran. Lives a hardcore life on the streets with no real shelter, but has mastered it. Southern accent. Friendly to everyone. Great friend of JD, good friend of Mark and Lorraine, love hate with Joe.

[Witness/Passionate Storyteller] 20's Transgender or Female. Excited to tell the audience directly, about the people she has met and who they were before they were homeless. Solid storytelling voice - NOT a voice over style at all.

[Mark] 20's male. In an out of halfway houses, overly medicated, frail, irritable, comes from a rich family who ignored him, tries to be friends to everyone, hard to trust him, Joe is his mentor.

PASSIONATE STORYTELLER SIDES

JD sits behind the wheel of a heavy haul rig, Detroit Diesel, Delta 32 CCr5, 500 Horsepower tractor trailer. JD - Jillian Davis - has been driving for 15 years, is a member of the Coalition of Women Truck Drivers, has all the proper training, follows very meticulous guidelines regarding equipment maintenance, and is unquestionably road tested. She's hauling a load that is 20 tons steel beam, an enormous section of a big sky scraper and tonight she is drowsier than normal after driving 13 straight hours. This span of hours not unheard of in her business, though is over the legal limit by definition. Her rig drifts to the left shoulder of the freeway, strikes a nearby guardrail and careens into a cement bridge pillar. The truck stops with an explosion of steel and cinder and bursts into flames. JD is ejected through the windshield and her head is battered against the bridge. Hours go by. When medics arrive, she is motored by ambulance to the nearest hospital and she remains there for five months. When finally discharged, JD walks forth having survived a traumatic brain injury wherein she has suffered cerebral scarring in the frontal lobe, where the imploding bone fragments scattered. By all appearances JD looks normal but due to her accident, her ability to drive is no more. She loses her truck, she loses her apartment, she loses her bearings, and winds up floating from rehab to rehab facility, ends up in Mexico where the peso to dollars exchange is 2000 to 1 and the meds are affordable. She then eventually makes her way East, where she currently holds it down in a local half way house, collects a meager disability, and lives in an almost perpetual state of opioid insomnia. (beat) JD was always a loner. Now she's always alone.

LORRAINE SIDES *Lorraine and Joe have an intimate moment at her apt doorway*

JOE

Lorraine... It's Joey. Open the door. Buzz me in.

LORRAINE

What are you doing here Joe?

JOE

I got suntin- Rainey I got somethin for ya.

LORRAINE

Ya got somethin' to for me Jojo you got somethin' for me, huh? (SHE SHOCKS HIM AND GRABS HIS CROTCH, SHE'S ROUGH AS SHE ATTEMPTS TO AROUSE HIM)

JOE

Hey Rainey no. Easy huh...

LORRAINE

Huh huh Joe ya got somethin' for me. (HE GRABS HER BY THE WRIST AND PULLS HER HAND AWAY FROM HIS GROIN. SLOWLY, GINGERLY, HE GUIDES IT UP TO HER FACE AND

LET'S IT GO, GENTLY HE PUTS HIS FINGERTIPS ON HER FACE,
TRACING HER HER CHEEK BONES AND JAW LINE)

JOE (super calm, both of them have shifted into an immediately familiar intimacy)

You're all right.

LORRAINE

I'm a lady all right.

JOE

That's right - you're a lady.

LORRAINE

- pretty lady.

JOE

Yes, a pretty lady.

LORRAINE

That's right.

JOE (slowly and sensually touching her face) You got nice skin Lorraine.

LORRAINE

You like my face?

JOE

Yeah, it's real pretty.

LORRAINE

You like to touch it?

JOE

Yeah.

LORRAINE (Lorraine pulls away)

Don't touch me. Touch me. (He continues)

JOE

It's soft.

LORRAINE
My skin?

JOE
Yeah. It's smooth.

LORRAINE (needing affirmation)
You really like it?

JOE
Yeah I really like it.

LORRAINE
You like the teethmarks?

JOE (surprised at her honesty)
Those are teethmarks?

LORRAINE (breathless)
Yeah.

JOE
I thought those were beauty marks.

LORRAINE
They are... You like 'em?

JOE
Yeah.

LORRAINE
Kiss me. (THEY KISS, IT BECOMES SLOPPY, HARD TO LOOK AT,
LORRAINE GRABS
JOE BY THE CROTCH AGAIN)

JOE
Lorraine, no no, stop Lorraine... I say some rotten things but it don't gotta be like this no more.

LORRAINE

Oh no JoJo, I'm Lorraine the Drain, that's what you call me, remember?

JOE

No, not today, no more. You're my Lorraine. You're my Rainy... You're my rainy day girl on a sunny day.

LORRAINE

No Joe, I'm not. Sorry Joey baby, face it we're both up shit's creek and-

JOE

-AND we can be each other's paddles Lorraine.

LORRAINE

You see how it's been... And you STILL 'wanna hang out tonight?

JOE

Yes. Today is the day. I want to make it right Rainey, I 'wanna make you happy, I want to change our world you and me.... I feel like I'm in a different place, I can't locate myself and I like it.

LORRAINE

You like it?

JOE

Yeah. And I wanna make you content Lorraine.

LORRAINE

I got contempt for your content.

JOE

We had a kid Rainey.

LORRAINE

I had a kid.

JOE

It was still ours.

LORRAINE

It was still born Joe!

JOE

But you had a name Lorraine. You told me you wouldn't tell me it's name.

LORRAINE

I told you I wouldn't tell you his name.

JOE

It was a he...

LORRAINE

He was a he.

JOE (smiling)

He was a he... Please Rainey, tell me my name.

LORRAINE (hesitating)

Daniel.

JOE

Daniel. Coulda been a Danny! Woulda been a Danny!

LORRAINE

Daniel!

JOE

I can feel him Rainey.

LORRAINE

You got feelings Joey?

JOE

Baby I do.

LORRAINE

C'mere baby. (they embrace) You like this feeling?

JOE

Yeah. (he nestles his head into her neck, she holds him like the baby they

Yeah. (he nestles his head into her neck, she holds him like the baby they lost)

LORRAINE

Yeah Joe. Joe really like that huh Joe?

JOE

Yeah. Lorraine.

LORRAINE (pushing him away, then touching her heart)

Well that's all I got for ya Joey. That's all I got for ya. Take it or leave it. There ain't no feeling here. It's dead. I'm dead.

CONFIDENTIAL - BENCH

JD SIDES (JD begins by toying with his friend, acting non-chalant, making him work for the deep fry and by the end JD is angry at the news Graveyard tells him about their deep fry hook up.)

GRAVEYARD
Give me a thigh JD.

JD
No.

GRAVEYARD
What you mean no? I said give me thigh.

JD
No.

GRAVEYARD
Well then let me have one of them wings then.

JD
No way Graveyard.

GRAVEYARD
I want some more deep fry JD.

JD
No more deep fry for you tonight Graveyard. Gabby gave these left overs to me, you had no part in this deal.

GRAVEYARD
What you mean I had no part in this deal? I was standin' right behind you.

JD
So?

GRAVEYARD
So I was givin' Gabby my best in sorrowful looks. (standing) I was standin' right behind you, you know. I was standin' there with my hands hangin' low down by

they sides, you know-

JD

Graveyard! No means no. No!

GRAVEYARD

Now look hear brother, I was ready to knuckle up for you JD! Now we both kicked out the shelter for a week, you got the chow, I don't care how, and I wants some.

(JD THROWS HIM A PIECE, GRAVEYARD ALMOST FUMBLES IT AS HE CATCHES IT)

Thank you.

JD

Jerk.

GRAVEYARD

You welcome Graveyard for stickin' with me and bein' my friend when everybody else treated me like a dog.

JD

No not you jerk, Joe jerk. The bloodclot with the cane. Pushing up on me today at the kitchen, on the attack with his walking stick. Talkin' shit about Lorraine and me...? (couple beats) Right. JD did what? JD's doing who? If I'm doing anything or anyone it's none of that little turds business.

GRAVEYARD

Aww man you know they just lies Joe's tellin' about you an' Lorraine. Why you let that take such a bother to ya'? That's a hard sight.

JD

Cause he's lyin' just to make himself feel better. He cares about Lorraine and she cares about him. Yet he's out here castin' slurs and trashin' her, trashin' me... He trashes everyone around here! And then he takes a swing at me?!! With his cane?

Callin' me a 'bean flicker' over Lorraine...!? (beat, almost drifting) If it was me...

GRAVEYARD

(momentary silence, JD loses his train of thought, Graveyard tries to get him on track) Yeah if it was you JD?

JD

I don't know. I would either run for it or run from it. Lorraine's pullin' herself back together and Joe's out here just tearing her apart. (Vacant pause) I need a cigarette Graveyard. Give me 25 cents.

(GRAVEYARD SHAKES HIS HEAD "NO")

What you mean no, I said gimme 25 cents.

GRAVEYARD

You can't get none from Gabby no more, he don't sell no loosies no more.

JD

What?

GRAVEYARD

Yeah he say he ain't sellin' 'em loosies to you no more.

JD

Gabby said that?

GRAVEYARD

Gabby said that. He sayin' when you come in his store all high, you scare off the lady customers.

JD

That jerk! That son of a...

GRAVEYARD

...No more. I think its for the best JD, he'll call the cops on ya and they'll pinch ya just for breathin'...

JD

-he says that after we cleaned out all the trash from behind his store. We bleached our hands cleanin' out his pails...! And he won't even sell us a single cigarette?

GRAVEYARD

'Least he make eye contact when he talkin' to you...

JD

Yeah he looks you in the eye and he gives ya chicken? I don't need his chicken

Graveyard. (Pause) I need a cigarette!

GRAVEYARD SIDES (Graveyard is teasing his buddy JD about how JD's behavior has made the store owner, Gabby, ban JD from buying cigarettes. Graveyard relents by the end but with cautions for JD.)

GRAVEYARD

No. It's a good thing you didn't finish him, else right now your butt ben up in bookings, catchin' cases, waitin' to eat some cold ass jack mack and getting' the grips with some other fools, instead a' sittin' out here eatin' this here leftover rotisserie with me. You don't get no spread like this from Rikers Island JD. You remember that. Gabby's okay sometimes.

JD

Yeah, so long as you give him the right look.

GRAVEYARD (proudly to himself)

I call that my money-shake.

JD

I need a cigarette Graveyard. Give me 25 cents.

(GRAVEYARD SHAKES HIS HEAD "NO")

What you mean no, I said gimme 25 cents.

GRAVEYARD

You can't get none from Gabby no more, he don't sell no loosies no more.

JD

What?

GRAVEYARD

Yeah he say he don't like when you come around his store no more so he ain't sellin'

'em loosies no more. And he ain't gonna let you return no cans 'n bottles too.

He ain't gonna accept it.

JD

Gabby said that?

GRAVEYARD

Gabby said that. He sayin' when you come in his store all high, you scare off the lady customers so - No return and no deposit! No more...

JD

That jerk! That son of a...

GRAVEYARD

...No more. I think its for the best JD, he'll call the cops on ya and they'll pinch ya just for breathin'... what's they call that, a luxury law...? vagrancy law... broken window...They'll violate you JD!

JD

-he says that after we cleaned out all the trash from behind his store. We bleached our hands cleanin' out his pails...! And he won't even sell us a single cigarette?

GRAVEYARD

'Least he make eye contact when he talkin' to you...

JD

Yeah he looks you in the eye and he gives ya chicken? I don't need his chicken Graveyard. (Pause) I need a cigarette!

GRAVEYARD

Oh man.... there ain't nothin' in the whole world like a cigarette fillin' up your lungs with that blue smoke. S'like blue blood flowin' all through ya veins. You know what I mean JD?

JD

I know what you mean Graveyard.

GRAVEYARD

That's a good feelin' ain't it?

JD

Sure is. So give me the 25 cents.

GRAVEYARD

Yo I'm tellin' you you ain't 'gon get no cigarette and Gabby ain't gon' take none 'a your bitch lip.

JD (demanding, hand out stretched)
Give me the quarter Graveyard.

GRAVEYARD (taking his time, digging for the quarter)
I'm gon' give you the case quarter, but You 'gonna be sorry JD. (gives him the quarter) Gettin' into fights with Joe and now you wanna be aggravatin' agitatin' our steady flow of leftovers...?
Well don't come expect no sympathy from ole Graveyard you come back with a busted lip, cuz you ain't gonna get no love from me!

JD
Thank you.
(JD EXITS)

MARK SIDES (Mark is sheepishly confessing that he has been spending time with Joe's love interest, Mark is scared to tell the truth, Joe is upset at the truth)

MARK
You really want to know the truth Joe?

JOE
Yeah go on.

MARK
Well Joe, Lorraine got this friend, Jeanne.

JOE
"He She" Jeannie?

MARK
Jeannie.

JOE
Yeah I know Jeannie.

MARK

Well I got this crush on Jeannie and was asking Lorraine if she'd help me in getting'
to know Jeannie, you know, get Jeannie to be receptive to me and just like kinda teach me and sometimes she'd kiss me-

JOE

You kissed Jeannie?

MARK

No I kiss Lorraine. Like movie kisses though Joe, like fake kisses, like Hollywood kisses and sometimes she'd show me how to touch her but we never did nothing Lorraine and me-

JOE

You touched her?

MARK (speaking quickly, nervously)

Just like holding hands and brushing her hair cuz I got a crush on Jeannie and stuff

like that Joe. Just pretending she was Jeanne and she was make believin' I was you... And I didn't want to bring it up to ya about me and Lorraine, cause I thought you'd get the wrong idea and I know you like Lorraine an' I thought-

JOE

The hell you talkin' about I like Lorraine? I never say nothin' like that.

MARK

I know you didn't never say nothin' like that, but she did. (nervous beat)

Lorraine's

telling me all kinds 'a things. She's always telling me how you romance her Joe...

JOE

What?!

MARK (speaking fondly)

Yeah and I should be bringing her flowers, I should be bringing her gifts, bring her her coffee the way she likes it the way you do. Pick up her prescriptions and cigarettes.

... and her scratch off tickets. (beat) I thought if I showed love to someone, then maybe someone would love me back. She even told me to call her Rainey like you do Joe and she called me JoJo, like she calls you. So I could get it right

for Jeannie.

JOE

Da fuck?!

MARK

But I never said nothin' 'cause I knew how you felt about Lorraine, and I thought you'd think I was lyin', you'd think I wasn't bein' truthful and you'd get mad at me. (beat) I thought you wouldn't want to hang out no more.

JOE (pause as Joe takes in what Mark told him)

Well you're right Markie. I don't want to hang out no more.

MARK

You serious Joe?

JOE

Dead ass serious. (beat) Dead ass.

CONFIDENTIAL - BENCH