The Bad Seed

Audition Information Packet Ages 13-19

The Beverly Art Center’s Spring drama is *The Bad Seed*. The show is a psycho-drama about a young girl who has inherited the instinct to be a serial killer

About the Casting Process

An audition is required to participate in the program.
Please call 773.445.3838 x216 to reserve an audition slot.

Auditions will be held:  
Monday, March 23, 5:00 to 7:00pm

- Audition slots will be 5 minutes in length.
- **Audition Sides** are included at the end of this information packet. We ask that students be prepared to perform the scene in the sides provided (we will provide someone to read with you).
- Please take a look at the rehearsal, tech, and performance schedule on Page 2 and come to the auditions prepared to note any conflicts on your audition sheet.

Callbacks will be held: Wednesday, March 25, 5:00 to 7:00pm

Please Note: We call back about half of the actors who will be cast. If you are not invited to callbacks, you may still have a role in the production!

The Cast List will be sent out via e-mail and posted on the BAC School of Theater Callboard by Noon on **Saturday, March 28.**

Casting Policy:

- *The Bad Seed* has a cast of 12 characters, and all teen ages are eligible to audition for any of the roles available.
- Those actors that best fit the role will be cast.
- Conflicts with scheduled rehearsals must be presented at auditions and may be a factor when casting.
After the Cast List is Posted

Contract Meeting
All actors cast are required to attend our contract meeting on Monday, March 30 at 5:30pm. Actors under the age of 16 are required to attend with one parent or guardian.

All students who are accepted into the program will be required, along with a parent or guardian, to sign a commitment to the schedule and behavior requirements of the program. On contract night we will also review the schedule, discuss rules and regulations in detail, and answer any remaining questions about the program.

Rehearsals
Most actors will not be needed at all rehearsals. A detailed rehearsal schedule will be provided at the Contract Meeting

Wed April 1 to May 20:
Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30pm

Tech Rehearsals: (attendance mandatory for all cast members)
- May 24: 4-9pm
- May 26: 4-9pm
- May 27: 4-6:30pm
- May 28: 4-9pm

Performances:
Friday May 29 at 7:30pm
Saturday May 30 at 2pm

Participation Fees
The participation fee for The Bad Seed is $125.
Register for an audition before Mar 7 for a 10% early bird discount ($113) if accepted.
Members who register by the early bird deadline pay only $102 if accepted!
In order to participate in The Bad Seed, students who are accepted must be paid in full by Friday, April 3.

This includes:
- Professional-level training in acting from an experienced performer & educator at the top of her field.
- An opportunity for teens to play adult roles and to perform a full dramatic production.
- Use of the spectacular Beverly Arts Center facilities, including our spacious rehearsal rooms, and, of course, performances in our beautiful 400-seat main stage theater.
- Performance on a professional-quality set, with use of our recently improved sound and lighting systems.
- Any specialty costume items.
The Bad Seed: Role Descriptions

**Rhoda Penmark:** The character is 8, but the actor can be older, up to a petite 12 or 13 year old. She should look innocent and act very polite, but it is important that she be mature enough to understand the role. A very large role for a young actress, Rhoda is the title role—the "Bad Seed" who will stop at nothing to get what she wants.

**Christine Penmark:** Rhoda's mother and the leading role of the show. She is a gracious, pretty woman who adores her child and her husband, but she is torn when she realizes the truth about Rhoda. (Age: Late 20's to Mid 30's)

**Col. Kenneth Penmark:** Rhoda's father, and a good-looking, straight arrow military officer. He adores his wife and child. (Age: Late 20's to Late 30's)

**Monica Breedlove:** Tall, imposing-looking, perhaps overweight, no-nonsense, can-do type, but she is also kind and friendly—perhaps too friendly—and offers humor without being a clown. She is a widow who owns the house, which she has converted into apartments and where she and the Penmarks reside. (Age: 40's to Mid 60's)

**Emery Wages:** He is younger than his sister, Monica, with whom he resides. He is usually played shorter and slighter than Monica, but that will be flexible. Monica's younger brother. He is friendly, conversational, tolerant, and stable and is calmer compared to his sister. (Age: 40's-60's)

**Leroy:** Janitor of the building and grounds. He is sly, but he is an embittered man who feels like he's been victimized by the whole world. He dislikes and admires Rhoda at the same time. There is tension between them, but the audience gains the greatest insight of these two characters through their relationship. (Age: 30-45)

**Miss Fern:** A spinster who runs a tight ship as head of one of the most aristocratic schools in the state. She expects others to cooperate and to contribute. (Age: 50's to 60's)

**Reginald Tasker:** A crime writer with an air of mystery who has become somewhat of an expert in the history of crime. He is a friend of Christine and Monica. Should have an air of mystery. (Age: 35-50)

**Mrs. Hortense Daigle:** A later-in-life mother, relative to other women of her time, who has suffered the murder of her only son whom she adored. She is grief-stricken and very confused and self-conscious around Christine. She drinks. (Age: Early 30's to Mid 40's)

**Mr. Daigle:** Quiet, but apologetic for his wife's obsessive grief and embarrassed by her drinking and assertions about the murder. (Age: 45-55)

**Richard Bravo:** Christine's father, once a well-known homicide detective who became an author. He is also a well-known radio journalist, but he hides the secret of his daughter's past. He adores his daughter and granddaughter. (Age: 50-65)
Plot Synopsis

"Rhoda Penmark is a sweet, tidy, well-mannered girl aged eight, and the pride and joy of her mother Christine. She seems absolutely perfect and full of charm which she can turn on at any time to get what she wants. At the same time she is apparently unable to make friends, and some people think there is something odd, even sinister, about her. In order to give her a new start, her anxious parents have just relocated to a new town where nobody knows them, and enrolled her in the best school they can find.

An outing at the school sends the family's house of cards tumbling down. One of Rhoda's classmates, Claude Daigle, has just won a prize which she believed was hers by right, and on a picnic he is "accidentally" drowned. She seems strangely unaffected by the tragedy, and everyone thinks there is something very disturbing about her reactions. The school janitor, Leroy, suspects he knows the answer, and threatens to tell them. Gradually Christine realizes that she might have had something to do with other unexplained deaths of people around her.

Then the truth becomes chillingly clear. Christine's dear little child is no angel, but an ice-cold, calculating serial killer. Although adopted, she traces the identity of her biological mother, and in doing so stumbles across a dark secret."

Below is the You Tube site where you can see the original movie trailer.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHwztnNrvmM
The Bad Seed  Sides for Kenneth & Rhoda

KENNETH: Why, morning, Rhoda!
RHODA: ‘Morning, Daddy.
KENNETH: Up and dressed and ready or the day! Wearing your best perfume?
RHODA: Yes, I am Daddy
KENNETH: That’s right; this is the day of the picnic. I hope there’s a breeze of the water
RHODA; Miss Fern says there always is
KENNETH (examining plane ticket which he takes from breast pocket.) She says it never rains on the first of June, too. Don’t count on it
RHODA: Are you leaving today, Daddy?
KENNETH: My plane goes in an hour. Back to Washington and the Pentagon and a climate that coddles eggs.
RHODA: I like coddled eggs.
KENNETH: You like everything. You’re just too good to be true. (he gently tugs her braids, and she smiles at him)
RHODA: How long will you be gone?
KENNETH: Sealed orders, darling. All I know is I’ll be home as soon as I can (He turns and kneels and holds out his arms to Rhoda.) Now what will you give me if I give you a basket of kisses?
RHODA: I’ll give you a basket of hugs. (Rhoda jumps into father’s arms and hugs him.)
KENNETH: I like your hugs.
RHODA: I like your kisses. Daddikins! You’re so big and strong!
KENNETH: I’ll miss you. The general doesn’t have one pretty girl on his whole staff!
RHODA: I wish he didn’t have my daddy! I’ll miss you every day!
KENNETH: Will you write to me?
RHODA: Do you want me to.
KENNETH: Of course I want you to
RHODA: Then I’ll write to you every day.
KENNETH: Every time I write you Mother I’ll put in a note for you!
RHODA: Will you really?
KENNETH: Really and truly. And every time the general tells a good joke I’ll send you an official report!
RHODA: Oh, Daddy, that won’t be very often! You’d better send me the bad ones too!
The Bad Seed  Sides for Monica, Christine, Rhoda & Leroy

RHODA: Aunt Monica! Dear, sweet Aunt Monica! (Monica is completely captivated, but Christine knows Rhoda isn’t really affectionate just acting)

MONICA: I know I’m behind the times, but I thought children wore coveralls and play-suits to picnics. Now you, my love, look like a princess in that red and white dotted Swiss. Tell me, aren’t you afraid you’ll get it dirty? Or you’ll fall and scuff those new shoes? (Rhoda shakes her head slowly “uh, uh.”)

CHRISTINE: She won’t soil the dress and she won’t scuff the shoes. Rhoda never gets anything dirty, though how she manages it, I don’t know.

RHODA: I don’t like coveralls. They’re not – (she hesitates.)

MONICA: You mean coveralls aren’t quite ladylike, don’t you, my darling (she embraces the tolerant Rhoda again.) oh, you old-fashioned little dear!

RHODA: (Looking at the locket.) Am I to keep this now?

MONICA: You’re to keep it till I find out where I can get the stone changed.

RHODA: Then I’ll put it in my box.

LEROY: Guess I’m pretty early, Mrs. Penmark, but it’s my day for doing the windows on this side.

MONICA: Oh, yes, you can begin in the bedroom, Leroy

LEROY: Excuse me, ma’am. (he spills something on Rhoda and it looks deliberate)

MONICA: Leroy!

LEROY: I’m sorry, Mrs. Breedlove

MONICA: Leroy, I own this apartment house! I employ you! I’ve tried to give you the benefit of every doubt because you have a family! I’ve thought of you as emotionally immature, torn by irrational rages, a bit on the psychopathic side. But after this demonstration I think my diagnosis was entirely too mild. You’re definitely a schizophrenic with paranoid overtones. I’ve had quite enough of your discourtesy and surliness-and so have the tenants in the building! My brother Emory has wanted to discharge you! I’ve been on your side, though with misgivings! I shall protect you no longer!

CHRISTINE: He didn’t mean it, Monica. It was an accident. I’m sure it was.

RHODA: He meant to do it. I know Leroy well.

MONICA: It was no accident, Christine! It was deliberate – the act of a spiteful, neurotic child

RHODA: He meant to do it. You made up your mind to do it when you cam in the room

CHRISTINE: Rhoda!

RHODA: I was looking at you when you made up your mind to get us wet.

LEROY: Oh, I never, I never, I’m just clumsy (takes a cloth to wipe Rhoda’s shoes)

CHRISTINE: Oh, Leroy, please, please! (pulls Rhoda away)

MONICA: My patience is at an end, and you may as well know it. Go about your work

LEROY: Yes, ma’am (he exits)

MONICA: He has a mind of an eight-year-old, but he has managed to produce a family so I keep him on.
The Bad Seed  Sides for Miss Fern & Christine

CHRISTINE: (commenting on Rhoda’s perfect curtsy after she’s exited) She does such things well.
MISS FERN: She does everything well. As you must know better than I.
CHRISTINE: And, as a person she fit in well – at the school?
MISS FERN: Let me think – in what way, Mrs. Penmark?
CHRISTINE: Well, Rhoda has been – I don’t quite know how to say it. There’s a mature quality about her that’s disturbing in a child. My husband and I thought that a school like yours, where you believe in discipline and the old-fashioned virtues – you might perhaps teach her to be a bit more of a child.
MISS FERN: Yes – yes, I know what you mean. In some ways, in many ways, Rhoda is the most satisfactory pupil the school has ever had. She’s never been absent. She’s never been tardy. She’s the only child in the history of the school who has made a hundred in deportment each month in every class, and a hundred in self-reliance and conservation on the playground each month for a null school year. If you had dealt with as many children as I have, you’d realize what a remarkable record that is. And she’s the neatest little girl I’ve ever encountered.
CHRISTINE: Kenneth says he doesn’t know where she gets her tidiness. Certainly not from him or me.
MISS FERN: And she has many good qualities. She’s certainly no tattletale
CHRISTINE: Oh?
MISS FERN: One of our children broke a window across the street and we knew that Rhoda knew who it was. When we questioned her about it, and told her it was her duty as an honorable citizen to report the offender, she just went on eating her apple, shaking her head, denying that she knew anything about it – and looking us over with that pitying, calculating look she has a certain times
CHRISTINE: Oh, I know that look so well!
MISS FERN: But that was admirable too for she was merely being loyal to a playmate
CHRISTINE: Then – do other children like her? Is she popular?
MISS FERN: The other children. Well, I – (she hesitates, trying to think of something to say, and is saved from having to answer by the re-entry of Monica & Rhoda) Ah, I suppose we should go, for my sisters and the others will be waiting. Good-by, Mrs. Penmark. Come along, Rhoda
CHRISTINE: Good-bye! May it be everything a picnic should be!