

**The Last Trial of Alfred Packer
Audition Packet**

Actor's Information:

Name: _____ Age: _____ Male/Female: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____

Magic Circle Theater is providing T-shirts for all cast and crew members. Please indicate your T-Shirt size:

Small Medium Large XL XXL

Previous Acting or Reader's Theater Experience:

Preferred Role: _____

Are you comfortable reading multiple characters? Yes No

Are you comfortable using different voices or accents? Yes No

Are you willing to accept any role? Yes No

Why are you interested in this production?

What unique skill or talent do you bring to the cast?

Are there backstage jobs you would like to learn? Circle all that apply.

Props Stage Set Construction Stage Set Painting Stage Crew Costume
Hair and Wigs Make-up Light Booth training Sound Booth training

Availability

We plan to rehearse August 17 & 31, September 21, 23 & 24

Tech week is September 28-30

Performances are October 2, 3, and 4

Due to the expedited rehearsal schedule, all rehearsals will be mandatory for the whole cast. Please list any potential conflicts with rehearsal or performance dates/times.

The Last Trial of Alfred Packer

Audition Monologues

Magic Circle Players Theatre proudly presents The Last Trial of Alfred Packer by Michael Brooks and Paul Edwards, an interactive theatrical experience that brings one of Colorado's most infamous true stories to life. Directed by Kenny and Jennifer Easton, to be performed in celebration of Colorado's 150th anniversary of statehood and America's 250th anniversary, the play explores the mystery surrounding Alfred Packer's ill-fated expedition through the San Juan Mountains, blending historical fact with theatrical imagination. In this unique production, audiences become part of the story, helping determine the verdict and shaping the ending each night as they wrestle with questions of survival, morality, and justice. We will be casting 10 people total (4 females, 6 males). Age ranges for each character may vary. The character descriptions are listed below. Auditioners will be asked to read one of the monologues.

Character Descriptions:

Narrator/Judge- (Female) She is a matter of fact, but feisty presenter of the facts of the case.

Polly Pry- (Female)- She is the original journalist/reporter of the case to the national newspapers, and calls into question the fairness of the 2nd Trial of Alfred Packer. She is fiery and opinionated.

Otto Mears- (Male) - Acts as the prosecuting attorney for the State. He steps into accuse Mr. Packer of being obviously guilty. He should embody the characteristics of a typical man of the 1800s.

Court Bailiff- (Male or Female) - Brings the prisoner into the courtroom in shackles. Helps keep order.

Jury Foreman- (Male or Female) - In charge of selecting the members of the jury from the audience and leads the jury. Foreman needs to be able to interact well with others and improv some small situations.

Alfred Packer- (Male)- The “accused”. Likes to refer to himself in 3rd person. Found guilty in two previous trials. He is erratic, angry, and unhinged at times. He plays the victim well.

Preston Nutter- (Male)- He was a prospector with Packer’s guided part in the original trip out of Provo, Utah. He left the party and helped in the search for the missing members of Packer’s team. He witnessed a lot.

“General” Charles Adams- (Male)- Not really a general. He is the agent in charge of the Los Pinos Indian Agency. He recorded both the first and second conflicting confessions of Alfred Packer.

James “Larry” Dolan- (Male)- The saloon keeper in Saguache, CO. He acts religious and pious. Is it real or an act? He has a lot to say about Packer. He sometimes gives conflicting testimony and changes his story.

Constable Herman Lauter- (Male)- He is the constable and good friend of Otto Mears. Lauter had custody of Alfred Packer while the search for the missing men was being conducted. Lauter does some physical acting as he demonstrates events for the court.

Character Monologues:

Please prepare one monologue for the audition. Note that we might ask you to read for another character.

Alfred Packer:

(P. 23- Packer’s interruption of the court proceedings)

(rising, furious) That’s enough! You all talk about Packer like he’s not even here! I’m not crazy. No one can tell me I’m crazy.. Land as for this fit business.. Packer was working and got leaded– poisoned. Miners know all about bein’ leaded... bein’.. poisoned. Packer was sick in Bingham. Packer bought a suit of clothes. I was leaded a third time– that was the thing that throwed me into fits, don’t know what this... epilepsy thing is. They thought I was going do die. My friend Dr. McMann gave me a dose of castor oil and then I got better. That’s all this “fits’ business is about. Don’t know anything about epilepsy.

(P. 39– Packer’s response to Polly, from the witness stand)

Right there is my last feeling. I went back and ate this meat. This is what hurt me, eating this meat, and it hurt me for years. I was not responsible for what I eat. I had no fear of freezing. I was just happy. I cut that piece of meat – boiled it in a tin cup and eat a little ... the meat was a little salty. (In a sudden passion, jumping to his feet) Yes, I ate human flesh, and I’m ready to die for it if I have to, but I did not kill those men! (He sits) I made a tent. I laid down and slept like a baby without a care. I don’t know how long I was in that fix. I wanted to leave there.. I thought of the men.. Thought of everything.

Polly Pry:

During much of my later life, I had to endure the falsehoods and tall tales about Mr. Packer. This has continued to the present day, I fear. The general public has been mislead long enough about what actually happened. Quite simply, I come here tonight with the intention of setting the record straight.

Alfred Packer was not the sort of person that popular history has made him out to be. To begin with, he never received a fair trial. Some of the more inferior newspapers printed lies about him before he even went to trial. Many of those lies are in your notes. I am certain of that.

Narrator:

In the winter of 1873, Alfred Packer travelled with a party of twenty-one men from Utah to Chief Ouray's camp near what is now Montrose, Colorado. Packer and five others from the party left camp in early February, bound for the Los Pinos Agency. Packer was the only member of the party to appear at the agency on April 16, 1874. While there, he gave his first confession regarding the death of his companions. He was placed in the Saguache jail, from which he would escape, with assistance, in early August. Nine years passed before Packer was captured in Wyoming in March 1883. He then made his second confession about the deaths.

Packer's first trial occurred in the Hinsdale County Courthouse during April. He was found guilty, although his conviction was reversed in 1885.

Male Roles:

(Taken from Otto's opening remarks and interacting with the audience)

Is there some way to get a little more light in here? (Lights come up) That's better. How did they do that, I wonder? (He begins to look through the audience to select male jury members) Now, let's see... How about you, sir? And what about you? ... and you, young man, you're close to old enough... There, let's get you settled.

(Taken from Nutter's statement towards the jury).

Uh, well, that'd be at the Los Pinos Indian Agency, on , uh, April 16th, bout two months later. Shook hands, said he never expected to see me again. I asked him where the others were, and he says he didn't know, that they had left him with frozen feet. When I asked him what he'd lived on for so long, he tol' me "beaver"... heh.... beaver. ... what was interestin', though was that Packer had Miller's skinnin' knife. I ask him about it an' he says that Miller had stuck it in a tree an' up and left it... ow, that didn't sound right to me, you know.

(Taken from Adams statement to the jury).

Packer said that after leaving Ouray's camp they got lost and wandered around for several days. Swan died from hunger, so the rest of the party cut a piece from his body

and ate it. Humphrey died of starvation five days later, and they then fed off him. Packer also admitted to taking Humphrey's pocketbook, which contained about \$133. Anyway, sometime after that, Miller died and was eaten. Several days following, Bell killed Noon and his corpse suffered the same indignity as the others. Finally, Packer killed Bell— in self defense, he said— and lived on his flesh until a day or so before he reached the Agency.