



Thank you for auditioning for

YELLOW FACE

With THEATRE RALEIGH

ROLE: STUART OSTROW & OTHERS

PLEASE PREPARE:

- This entire packet of material.

NOTE: For Side #1, read CAMERON MACKINROSH, and give us a British dialect if you are comfortable, do not shy away from a heightened interpretation of this theater titan!

Be sure to bring your picture and resume, otherwise we will not have one in the room!

Thanks so much!
Wojcik Casting Team

STUART OSTROW & OTHERS SIDE #1

his last name wouldn't sound Asian or maybe he's one of those Korean adoptees, or —

BD. David, it's Jonathan Pryce. *(Pause.)* The producer's saying they conducted this worldwide talent search, and they couldn't find any Asian qualified to play the part.

DHH. They can't do that.

BD. That's what a lot of us think.

READ CAMERON MACKINTOSH

DHH. Yellow face? In this day and age? It's — it's — did someone suddenly turn the clock back to 1920? Are we all going to smear shoe polish on our faces, and start singing "Mammy"?

BD. We thought if you'd be willing to write a letter —

DHH. You bet I will. Trust me, they won't get away with it. *(Sound of keys tapping on an IBM Selectric.)* Dear Actors' Equity:

THE ANNOUNCER. The national union for stage actors.

DHH. I learned some news today, which left me feeling surprised and dismayed ...

THE ANNOUNCER. *New York Times*, July 13, 1990:

NEW YORK TIMES, JULY 13, 1990. *Miss Saigon* casting protested. Asian American[s] ... [have complained about] the casting of a Caucasian in one of the show's principal [Asian] roles ... David Henry Hwang, the Tony Award-winning playwright of *M. Butterfly*, registered his protest ... in a letter sent to Actors' Equity.

DHH. I had dared to suppose that the yellow face days of Charlie Chan and Fu Manchu had been relegated forever to the closets of historical kitsch ... Mr. Pryce is an excellent actor, but I would be equally upset were he cast as [an African American character like] Boy Willie in [August Wilson's play] *The Piano Lesson*.

~~THE ANNOUNCER. Cameron Mackintosh, producer of *Miss Saigon*:~~ **START**

CAMERON MACKINTOSH. This is a tempest in an Oriental teapot.

DHH. *(To the audience:)* Actors' Equity Union took my side in the casting dispute and arranged a meeting with the *Miss Saigon* team, including producer Cameron Mackintosh.

CAMERON MACKINTOSH. The gall of it, the sheer hypocrisy! This is all because BD Wong wants a job, isn't it? And the fact that you have made a public spectacle of the issue — I don't believe we can work any longer in this atmosphere. How can you support such a blatant restriction of artistic freedom?

THE ANNOUNCER. Vinnie Liff, casting director, *Miss Saigon*.

VINNIE LIFE. David, if you know any Asian actor who'd be right for that part — forty to fifty years old, classical training, worldwide stature — please, give me his name. We have searched literally around the world.

DHH. Actually, I called John Lone.

THE ANNOUNCER. Star of *The Last Emperor*.

DHH. He said his manager had contacted your office to say he was interested in the part, but no one ever called them back.

THE ANNOUNCER. Bernard Jacobs, president of the Shubert Theatres:

BERNARD JACOBS. This man is trying to stir up trouble. That's why you sent that letter of yours to the papers.

DHH. No, I —

CAMERON MACKINTOSH. If you were really seeking to do something constructive, why would you have turned this into a circus?

BERNARD JACOBS. You sent your letter to that reporter. To stir up trouble.

DHH. No, I — didn't.

BERNARD JACOBS. Now you're lying. This man is a liar. I don't know why we're even listening to him.

CAMERON MACKINTOSH. The atmosphere is poisoned. Unless conditions improve, I don't see how I can bring this show into New York. **END**

~~THE ANNOUNCER. *New York Times*, August 8, 1990.~~

NEW YORK TIMES, AUGUST 8, 1990. [Actors' Equity] union bars white in Asian role.

THE ANNOUNCER. *Washington Post*, August 9:

WASHINGTON POST, AUGUST 9, 1990. The Broadway production of *Miss Saigon* ... has been canceled, producer Cameron Mackintosh announced today.

DHH. It has certainly never been my intention to see a show canceled. I simply felt that an important point had to be made, and this has clearly been achieved.

THE ANNOUNCER. *New York Times*.

NEW YORK TIMES, AUGUST 8, 1990. Last night, Equity ... received a petition from one hundred and fifty of its members ... to reconsider its decision.

THE ANNOUNCER. *New York Post*.

NEW YORK POST. Asian American and other protesters demon-

STUART OSTROW & OTHERS SIDE #2

MARCUS. Good, cuz I'm still struggling with English.

NEWMAN. Really.

MARCUS. Huh? No, I was making a —

NEWMAN. — a joke, of course.

MARCUS. Not very —

NEWMAN. I got it, I got it! See, Marcus, I like to be direct.

MARCUS. Okay.

NEWMAN. We are — how should I put this? Oh god — we are looking to cast this role with an Asian.

MARCUS. As you should.

NEWMAN. So that's ... all right with you?

MARCUS. Well, my background is so mixed-up, it's hard to keep track. My father is Jewish, and you know, there're some people who believe that the Lost Tribe of Israel wound up in China. (*They laugh. Newman is unimpressed.*) No. Actually, I spent a lot of time in the International District with the issei, the nisei, the old-timers. They told me their stories. Which, you could say, made me who I am today. "Shikata ga nai."

NEWMAN. (*To the audience:*) December 29, 1992. Marcus G. Dahlman's audition for *Face Value*.

MARCUS. Chinese folklore tells of the man who dreamt he was a butterfly. When morning came, the man awoke, and remembered he was not a butterfly, but a man. And that he knew, not a butterfly's joys and pains, but those of a man. He could only ask himself: Am I really a man who dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly now dreaming he's a man?

NEWMAN. Could you step outside for a moment, Marcus?

~~(Marcus exits the dressing room.)~~ **START**

DHH. That was amazing!

NEWMAN. He's funny, vulnerable, strong.

DHH. I think he's a future star.

STUART. But guys, does he — ? Does he look Asian to you?

DHH. What do you mean, "look Asian"?

STUART. Well, he doesn't seem to possess — any Asian features ... at all.

DHH. And what exactly are "Asian features"?

STUART. He's got dark hair, but —

DHH. Short, high cheekbones, slanty eyes?

STUART. David —

DHH. I gotta say, I find your question sort of offensive. Asian

faces come in a variety of shapes and sizes — just like any other human beings. Which we are, you know.

STUART. Miles, is he Asian?

NEWMAN. We managed to have a little conversation on the subject. He's not full-blooded —

DHH. He's Eurasian. You want to start discriminating against *them* now?

STUART. David, if our leading man, who's supposed to be an Asian dressing up in white face — if when he takes off his makeup, he still looks white — would that bother you?

DHH. "Looks white" — to whom? Other white people?

STUART. Just to put this on the table — you're certain you're not jumping at this actor because we're ten days away from the start of rehearsals and we don't have any other choices?

DHH. I'm excited because I think Marcus could be the next John Lone or BD Wong.

STUART. At least *they* both look Asian.

DHH. I have to cast this in a way that feels right to *me*. And I can tell an Asian when I see one. **END**

~~THE ANNOUNCER. *Boston Globe*, January 1, 1993.~~

BOSTON GLOBE, JANUARY 1, 1993. Rehearsals have begun for David Henry Hwang's new play, *Face Value*, which will have its pre-Broadway tryout here, February ninth through twenty-eighth at the Colonial Theatre. The cast includes —

JANE. Jane Krakowski.

MARK. And Mark Linn-Baker. (*To the audience:*) We all enjoyed working with Marcus immensely, he was a nice guy and very talented.

JANE. We did notice that he didn't look particularly Asian.

MARK. But it wasn't the kind of thing you come right out and ask someone.

JANE. And everyone else said he was Asian.

MARK. I did notice one other thing about Marcus, that he kind of kept to himself all through rehearsals.

JANE. But I remember — at the opening night party, out of town in Boston — it's like he was trying to tell me something.

MARCUS. You know, Jane, I — I haven't really had a chance to tell you this, but you're really great in the show.

JANE. Thanks, you too!

MARCUS. Really?

JANE. Believe me, I've worked with some so-called stars who