

Gorilla Rep Acting Company 2012 Position Paper

When Gorilla Rep started in 1991 or so (incorporated 1992), we needed help. The way we got it was to create what we called a “collective” separate from the board of directors. Membership in this collective was made up of five female and five male actors. A simple, clear, one-page contract spelled out the basic agreement with the members: in exchange for two hours per week of administrative or technical service to Gorilla Rep at the director’s discretion, the actors would be offered a role in each Gorilla Rep show that happened that year. These former members are the actors who can put “founding member” on their resumes.

Over the years, membership in the company for actors has changed and evolved. I propose to offer something very much like the original collective for the period of January to December 2012, potentially renewable. Now, I believe Gorilla Rep has more to offer to actors in what I want to call the “acting company.” And, again, we could use the help.

And I think this represents a clear expression of Gorilla Rep’s artistic culture: we have achieved so much and with the acting community in New York to thank for it. And, I will be a member of the troupe, just the only member who happens to be a director. My point is that I’ll be working hours each week, too, carrying lights and so on, as I always have. All of this care and hand-made quality shows in the work, I am convinced of that.

So, this letter is meant to introduce you to the idea of the Gorilla Rep Acting Company 2012. You are an actor I want to invite, or a leader in the theatre that I want to ask for nominations. This is a great opportunity for the right artists to find the kind of artistic home that can help and support careers. The collective did that, and that is the primary notion on offer here. It takes a particular personality to understand the value of doing small roles in some shows and big roles in others, and to see that being associated with a strong, positive company can mean a lot in this world.

Gorilla Repertory Theatre Company’s mission is to provide the highest-quality productions of classical dramatic material with the flavor of contemporary immediacy for people where they are for free. That’s the official mission statement. Clearly, at this point, the execution of this mission is bound up with my art, with my directing, developmental dramaturgy and in some cases my writing and composing. Not unlike Richard Foreman’s association with his company, The Ontological Hysteric, Gorilla Rep is “branded” as associated with my work. And that’s through a lot of successful work by many reasonable measures. That’s understood to continue and even to be supported and helped with and by the 2012 Gorilla Rep Acting Company.

Also, as the company and I create work this year, we will clearly need additional help. Once parts have been offered and accepted or declined by company members, we will still need more actors to complete the shows. If you’re reading this and company membership is not for you: not harm, no foul! We may still end up working with you. That said, it will be incumbent upon me to choose material to engage with that optimizes company members over the course of the year.