



WATER BY THE SPOONFUL

by Quiara Alegría Hudes

Directed by Rhonnie Washington

November 5-14

Audition Requirements:

Please prepare a 1-2 minute reading, from the text, for your chosen character(s):

Water by the Spoonful is available from SFSU's J. Paul Leonard Library (must login with your SFSU ID):
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sfsu/reader.action?docID=997361>

Rehearsal & Performances Days/Times:

Rehearses M-F, 6-10pm

Tech begins October 26th

Dress begins November 2nd

Preview November 5th

Performances November 6-8th and 12th-14th

Direct questions to Rhonnie Washington: rhonnie@sfsu.edu

Show Summary (From Wikipedia):

A sequel to Hudes' previous play *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue*, *Water by the Spoonful* picks up seven years after the events of its predecessor. War-wounded Elliot Ortiz has returned to his home town of Philadelphia, where, between coping through recurring bouts of posttraumatic stress disorder and interactions with a mysterious Arabic-speaking ghost, he now works at a local Subway sandwich shop. Whilst his "mother" Ginny nears death, Elliot's cousin Yazmin, a Swarthmore College music professor undergoing a divorce, urges him to work with a documentary filmmaker who wants his help making a movie about the Iraq War. Meanwhile, Elliot's birth mother, and Ginny's sister, Odessa, a recovered heroin addict, runs and moderates an anonymous online message board for recovering addicts like Orangutan and Chutes & Ladders under the alias Haikumom. The safeness of the space is compromised when a wealthy fellow Philadelphia native and addict-in-denial Fountainhead sows discord in the chat; Odessa wants to welcome him, but Orangutan and Chutes & Ladders doubt his intentions.

Ginny passes away, leaving Yazmin and Elliot with limited funds to organize her funeral and eulogize her. They confront Odessa, who is meeting with Fountainhead at a café, for her failure to financially contribute, and Elliot explodes at her, revealing to Fountainhead that his flu-stricken younger sister died from dehydration after a using Odessa neglected to give her water by the spoonful. Shamed, Odessa gives Elliot permission to sell her computer for funeral money, which he does, but not before posing as her on the message board and insulting Orangutan and Chutes & Ladders. Odessa relapses, leaving Fountainhead to nurture her as Orangutan and Chutes & Ladders finally meet in Japan. Yazmin and Elliot scatter Ginny's ashes in Puerto Rico, and Elliot vows to leave Philadelphia.



Character Breakdown:

Elliot Ortiz: A twenty-four-year-old Puerto Rican aspiring model and Iraq War vet with a limp. The biological son of Odessa and adopted son of Ginny, he is plagued by hallucinations from his violent past.

Yazmin Ortiz: Elliot's twenty-nine-year-old cousin, niece to Odessa and adjunct professor at Swarthmore College.

Odessa Ortiz: Elliot's birth mother, thirty-nine, who goes by the alias Haikumom on her Narcotics Anonymous site. Lives in poverty and works as a janitor.

Fountainhead: Real name John, a white Philadelphia Main Line resident, aged forty-one. Married with children.

Chutes & Ladders: Also known as Clayton "Buddy" Wilkie, a fifty-six-year-old African-American IRS employee in San Diego. Develops a close bond with Orangutan.

Orangutan: Born Yoshiko Saki, now known in real life as Madeleine Mays. Adopted from Japan by white parents as a baby, she has now returned to discover her identity.

A Ghost: A manifestation of Elliot's first kill, repeats the line "Can I have my passport back?" in Arabic. Also plays a Japanese policeman and Yazmin's colleague at Swarthmore College, Arabic Studies Professor Aman.