

Auditioning for an Ensemble Role: Ages 16+

Singing/Acting:

Please prepare one song of your choice. It can be from *Tommy*, or another song of your choice. Remember to choose a song in a style similar to the show! *Tommy* is primarily sung, so it would be great to see how you act and convey meaning through song.

Ensemble roles:

Minister, First Officer, Second Officer, Nurses, Allied Soldiers, Lover, Judge, First Barrister, Second Barrister, Relatives (Kevin's Mother and Father), Minister's Wife, Local Lads (Security Guards), Local Lasses, Harmonica Player ^, Specialist's Assistant, News Vendor, Mrs Simpson, Mr Simpson, DJ, Ground Crewman, Flight Crew, R.A.F Officers, Young English Women, Aide, Airborne Troops, German Foot Soldiers, Allied Prisoners, German Guard, Policemen, Policewoman, Inspector, Military Officers, Constables, Doctors, Lab Technicians, Hospital Staff, Church Choir, Barkeep, Psychiatrist, Psychiatrist's Assistant, Thugs, Harlots, Drunks, Reporters, Interviewers, Crowd.

Dancing

There is a lot of high intensity dance/movement in *Tommy* and everyone will be required to do a movement audition, this will be done in groups, so please wear something appropriate.

Important notices for all auditionees:

Please bring sheet music (in the correct key). There will be an accompanist at the audition; however, you may bring your own accompanist if you wish. Backing tracks are acceptable as long as they are exactly that.... a backing track. e.g. Please be aware that you may not get to sing all of your song. We are expecting large numbers of people to audition, so if the Audition Panel feels they have heard enough to determine your vocal quality they may stop you mid note. This should not be taken as any indicator of whether you will or will not be cast!! We have an aux chord available to use.

Can you sing and play guitar or bass? Are you a Harmonica virtuoso? We are looking for high-energy rock guitar and bass players, as well as a harmonica player, to be part of our show. If you can play guitar, bass or harmonica we strongly encourage you to bring along your instrument and perform one of your favourite rock songs for us. Bass players are encouraged to bring a backing track if required (just without the bassline please). Please also ensure you bring a portable amp if required.

Important Notes for all Auditionees

- Audition time is strictly limited, so use your time to show the panel what you can do. No extra time will be available. The panel will be looking for vocal quality, range and pitch as well as dramatic and movement ability.
- Audition pieces should be well prepared. Remember, it is in your own interests to present yourself well.
- An accompanist will be provided but you may bring your own if you wish.
- Singing unaccompanied is **not acceptable**.
- All auditions are private and may only be attended by the panel and auditionees.
- Please don't apologise to the panel for the state of your health, your voice or your performance. We have heard (and tried!) all these excuses before!
- And most of all enjoy it!! This is your moment to shine!

Please note that Canberra Philharmonic Society reserves the right, at its sole and absolute discretion, to not cast any role from these auditions if, in the opinion of the Audition Panel, the right person for the role is not found. In this event the Society may pursue other means to fill a vacant role.

Rehearsals

Rehearsal will start on **Sunday 3 November** and will be

Monday and **Wednesday** evenings 7 -10 pm and

Sundays 1- 5pm initially and 10am – 5pm after that, depending on schedule.

Role and Vocal Range Details

Character Name	Gender	Vocal Type	Role Type
<p>Tommy/Narrator An embittered young genius stricken deaf, dumb, and blind after a childhood trauma. Tommy discovers that he is a natural master of pinball, and later becomes a cult-like hero figure to masses enthralled by his story. Captain Walker and Mrs. Walker’s son.</p> <p>Requires strong singing and dancing skills and acting ability. (Age: 18-25)</p>	Male	Tenor	Lead
<p>Mrs. Walker: A weary middle-class woman. Mrs. Walker is tired and frustrated from trying to care for and cure Tommy. Tommy’s mother and Captain Walker’s wife.</p> <p>Requires strong singing and acting ability. (Age: 20-35)</p>	Female	Mezzo-Soprano	Supporting
<p>Captain Walker: A former soldier with lingering guilt. He murders his wife’s lover after coming back from a POW camp, resulting in Tommy’s trauma-induced blindness, deafness, and dumbness. Father to Tommy and husband to Mrs. Walker.</p> <p>Requires strong singing and acting ability. (Age: 25-40)</p>	Male	Tenor	Supporting
<p>Uncle Ernie: A lecherous, drunken bachelor. Ernie molests a young Tommy and later runs a children’s camp seeking to profit from Tommy’s popularity. Mrs. Walker’s brother and Tommy’s uncle.</p> <p>Requires strong singing and acting ability. (Age: 30-45)</p>	Male	Tenor	Supporting
<p>Four-Year-Old Tommy Four-Year-Old Tommy witnesses a horrific act of violence and as a result of the trauma, becomes deaf, dumb and blind.</p> <p>Requires singing ability, strong performance skills and confidence (Age: Early primary school age)</p>	Either		Supporting
<p>Ten-Year-Old-Tommy Ten-Year-Old Tommy continues the story as his parents desperately seek a cure to his infliction. Ten-Year-Old Tommy experiences highs and lows as he meets with doctors, Gypsies, nasty relatives and discovers his hidden pinball talent.</p> <p>Requires strong singing skills and acting ability (Age: 9-13)</p>	Either		Supporting
<p>Cousin Kevin: A bully with sadistic tendencies. Tortures his cousin, Tommy, when they’re young and later seizes the opportunity to profit from Tommy’s success.</p> <p>Requires strong singing and dancing skills and acting ability. (Age: 18-25)</p>	Male	Baritone	Supporting

<p>Gypsy: A brazen drug dealer and prostitute. Tommy's parents bring him to the Gypsy to experiment with unusual cures.</p> <p>Requires strong and bold singing and dancing ability (Age: 25-45)</p>	Female	Alto	Featured
<p>The Specialist: A doctor with modern ideas about how to cure Tommy. Tommy's parents hire him/her in their desperation to find any cure for their son.</p> <p>Requires strong singing and acting ability (Age: 30-45)</p>	Male/Female	Baritone	Featured
<p>Sally Simpson: A bold, sensitive, and excitable teenybopper. Sally develops a fan crush on Tommy and rushes to stage to be close to him.</p> <p>Requires strong singing and dancing skills and acting ability (Age: 15-18)</p>	Female	Top: D5 Bottom: F3	Featured
<p>Ensemble/Minor Roles: Minister, First Officer, Second Officer, Nurses, Allied Soldiers, Lover, Judge, First Barrister, Second Barrister, Relatives (Kevin's Mother and Father), Minister's Wife, Local Lads (Security Guards), Local Lasses, Harmonica Player, Specialist's Assistant, News Vendor, Mrs Simpson, Mr Simpson, DJ, Ground Crewman, Flight Crew, R.A.F Officers, Young English Women, Aide, Airborne Troops, German Foot Soldiers, Allied Prisoners, German Guard, Policemen, Policewoman, Inspector, Military Officers, Constables, Doctors, Lab Technicians, Hospital Staff, Church Choir, Barkeep, Psychiatrist, Psychiatrist's Assistant, Thugs, Harlots, Drunks, Reporters, Interviewers, Crowd</p>	Male and Female		Multiple featured roles

Synopsis

Act I

A slide projects the date: 1940. The Prologue begins with Captain Walker, a handsome English officer in his mid-twenties, waiting as his plane is being fuelled. Walker tries to get the attention of a masked Welder who is working nearby. After a few unsuccessful attempts, Walker taps the Welder's back. The Welder removes the mask; the Welder is a woman. Walker offers her a cigarette, which she accepts before walking away. He follows her. Using World War II in London as a backdrop, the Prologue continues to chronicle Captain Walker and Mrs. Walker's marriage, then Captain Walker's deployment to parachute into Germany ("Overture"). The Prologue ends with two German foot soldiers firing their machine guns at Captain Walker.

A slide announces the location: London. Uncle Ernie appears and knocks on the front door of the Walker house; he presents the pregnant Mrs. Walker with sardines, eggs, milk – all contraband food items. She thanks him and, as he leaves, he runs into two officers who are approaching the house. The officers tell Mrs. Walker that Captain Walker is missing and they don't expect to find him ("It's a Boy"). Mrs. Walker takes the official papers from one of the officers and steps back into the house, closing the door. The officers see Ernie and hand him a bottle of whiskey as they leave. Ernie slowly opens the bottle and takes a quick drink. He stands uncomfortable, alone. He reopens the bottle and takes a longer drink; the doorway to the Walker's house disappears, and Ernie is left alone onstage. A section of barbed wire appears, and a German guard pushes along a line of Allied prisoners, including Walker.

A slide announces the date: 1941. Walker, seen in silhouette, paces back and forth. Uncle Ernie puts away the whiskey bottle as a Nurse pushes Mrs. Walker in a wheelchair. Another Nurse enters holding a small bundle, a baby boy, which she gives to Mrs. Walker ("It's a Boy – Part 2"). As Ernie continues swigging from the whiskey bottle, slides announce the passing years: 1942, 1943, 1944; we continue to see Walker pace back and forth. After a slide announces: 1945, Allied soldiers enter the complex in which Walker is kept. One of the soldiers leads Walker away, telling him that the Allies have won the war.

Inside the Walker home, Mrs. Walker, her lover and Four-Year-Old Tommy are preparing to celebrate her 21st birthday: a cake with 21 candles, a bottle of champagne and two glasses sit on a table in the living room. The room also has a large wardrobe with a full-length mirror on its face. The lover, dressed in t-shirt and trousers with suspenders, watches tenderly as Mrs. Walker blows out the candles and cuts the cake. Both express the hope that the coming year will be a good one ("Twenty-One"). Mrs. Walker puts the boy in bed and enters the living room to join her lover. Captain Walker, accompanied by two officers, approaches the front door of the Walker house. After the officer's leave, Walker enters as Mrs. Walker and the lover embrace. When Mrs. Walker moves to touch Walker, the lover pushes Walker back toward the door, which precipitates a fight and awakens Four-Year-Old Tommy. The boy enters the room, and Mrs. Walker turns him toward the mirror, thinking that this will keep him from witnessing the scene. The lover and Walker continue fighting. When Mrs. Walker tries to separate the men, the lover slaps her; he picks up a chair to throw at Walker. Walker, enraged, pulls out and fires his revolver, hitting the lover in the head and killing him. After Walker lowers the gun, they notice Tommy, who has watched it all in the mirror. They hysterically tell Tommy, who is still facing the mirror, that he hasn't seen or heard anything, and they demand that he never tell a soul what happened.

The police arrive as Mrs. Walker assures Tommy that everything will be alright. Tommy doesn't respond to her questions and continues to stare into the mirror; the room takes on an unreal quality – doors take new positions and chairs fly through the air. As the police question Mr. and Mrs. Walker and military policemen arrive, the Narrator – or Adult Tommy – flies down. He will be Four-Year-Old Tommy's guide, even as the young boy's mind is occupied with recording everything that it sees and hears ("Amazing Journey"). Uncle Ernie enters and tries to embrace his brother but is held back by a policeman. After taking another drink, Ernie puts his arm around young Tommy, who is still staring into the mirror. The Narrator vanishes as the house disappears. Captain Walker, in uniform, is standing in court before a Judge and Barristers. The Judge pronounces the Captain "Not Guilty" of murder, and Mrs. Walker and Uncle Ernie celebrate the finding with the rest of the courtroom. When the Judge addresses Four-Year-Old Tommy, we hear what Tommy hears: the language becomes unintelligible and he stares straight ahead. Tommy's parents realize what they may have done to him.

Tommy is taken to a hospital, where he is rushed from room to room for a series of tests and evaluations. A Young Doctor delivers Tommy to a Nurse, who takes his pulse and gets a urine sample as another Doctor waits nearby; another Nurse checks his reflexes and takes blood; a Doctor unbuttons his shirt and listens to his heartbeat; another Doctor looks into his eyes and ears. After studying Tommy's charts, a Doctor addresses the Walkers, shaking his head. The Walkers go away, leaving Tommy with the Doctors ("Sparks").

Canberra Philo – The Who's Tommy

A slide announces: 1950. Ten-Year-Old Tommy, a balloon tied to his wrist, appears with a Nurse to meet his parents. The Narrator floats down ("Amazing Journey – Reprise"), takes the balloon from the boy and floats away with it.

The Walker family – including Ten-Year-Old Tommy, Mr. and Mrs. Walker, Uncle Ernie, Cousin Kevin and other relatives – attend church at Christmas. The Minister and his wife listen as a choir sings. The family comments that Tommy isn't able to appreciate Christmas ("Christmas"). Although they try to enjoy the party, they can't help but think that Tommy doesn't know that it is Christmas or understand its meaning. Everyone is stunned when Tommy responds to Uncle Ernie's playing the French Horn. Mr. Walker, in a desperate attempt to reach his son, shouts, "Tommy, can you hear me?" multiple times. Older Tommy, only visible to young Tommy, sings to him ("See Me, Feel Me").

Back home, the Walkers worry about whether to leave Tommy with his alcoholic Uncle Ernie ("Do You Think It's Alright"). Once alone with Tommy, Ernie molests him ("Fiddle About"). Tommy's next babysitter, cousin Kevin, bullies and abuses Tommy mercilessly ("Cousin Kevin"). Cousin Kevin and his friends then take Tommy to a youth club, where, to everyone's astonishment, he plays pinball brilliantly ("Sensation"). Encouraged, the Walkers try yet another doctor, a psychiatrist, who tests Tommy without success ("Sparks – Reprise").

A desperate Mr. Walker is approached by The Hawker and Harmonica Player, who promise a miraculous cure for Tommy ("Eyesight to the Blind"). They take Mr. Walker and young Tommy to the Isle of Dogs to find a prostitute called The Gypsy. She tries to convince Mr. Walker to let her spend time alone with Tommy, introducing him to sex and drugs ("Acid Queen"). Mr. Walker, horrified by the Gypsy's methods, snatches the boy and runs away. The act ends in 1958 as Cousin Kevin and a group of teenagers await 17-year-old Tommy's appearance at the amusement arcade ("Pinball Wizard").

Act II

It is 1960. Tommy has become the pinball champion and hero of the neighbourhood gang ("Underture"). Mr. Walker, still in search of a cure, convinces his wife to try once more ("There's a Doctor I've Found"). They take Tommy to specialists for elaborate tests, but to no avail ("Go to the Mirror / Listening to You"). The doctors discover that Tommy's senses do work but are, for some reason, not processing what he sees or hears, and that no one can free Tommy from his catatonic state... but himself. On the street, a group of local louts surround Tommy and carry him home ("Tommy, Can You Hear Me?"). The Walkers, at their wit's end and considering having Tommy institutionalized, compassionately confront one another ("Believe My Own Eyes"). Tommy stares into the mirror as his mother tries desperately to reach him ("Smash the Mirror"). Out of rage, frustration and desperation, she shatters the mirror into which Tommy continually gazed for years. With the mirror in pieces, Tommy becomes conscious and leaves home ("I'm Free").

From 1961 to 1963, Tommy's cure hits the news ("Miracle Cure"). He is idolised by the public and the press ("Sensation – Reprise"). He begins appearing in stadiums, playing pinball with a helmet that temporarily blinds and deafens him ("I'm Free / Pinball Wizard – Reprise"). Uncle Ernie tries to capitalize on Tommy's newfound stardom by selling Tommy souvenirs in a carnival-like setting ("Tommy's Holiday Camp").

Teenaged Sally Simpson manages to sneak out of her parents' home to attend Tommy's appearance. She gets onstage and tries to touch Tommy but, in the commotion, he unknowingly pushes her off the stage. She falls and is pummelled by the guards ("Sally Simpson"). Tommy, in horror, stops the show and tends to her. Realizing how caught up in the celebrity machine he is, due to the remarkable recovery of his senses, Tommy wishes to do something in return for his fans and invites them all back to his house ("Welcome"). Once there, Sally asks Tommy how she can be more like him ("Sally Simpson's Question"). He is confused and insists that there is no reason for anyone to be like him when everyone else already possesses the gifts that he was deprived of most of his life. He suddenly realizes that, although he had thought his fame came from his miraculous recovery, in fact, it arose because others hoped that he would assume the role of a kind of spiritual leader, based on his knowledge of what it is like not to hear, see or communicate for so long. Now, disenchanted with their hero for failing to provide the answers that they wanted to be told, the crowd turns on him and leaves ("We're Not Gonna Take It").

Now in despair, Tommy begins hearing the voice of his ten-year-old self and, for a moment (and to the horror of his family), he seems to be reverting to his old state ("See Me, Feel Me – Reprise"). Instead of reverting, he turns to his family, whom he has ignored during his stardom, embraces them in acceptance and reunites with his younger selves ("Listening to You – Reprise"). The entire ensemble joins him and his family on stage. As the curtain falls, we find the Four-Year-Old Tommy, the Ten-Year-Old Tommy and Adult Tommy are left all alone on stage.