

# Character Breakdown and Synopsis

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## (Youth Cast Information Included Below)

### Show Synopsis

At the height of the Great Depression, Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow went from two small-town nobodies in West Texas to America's most renowned folk heroes and Texas law enforcement's worst nightmares. Fearless, shameless and alluring, the Tony-nominated Bonnie & Clyde, from the legendary Frank Wildhorn (Jekyll & Hyde, Civil War, Dracula) is the electrifying story of love, adventure and crime that captured the attention of an entire country. When Bonnie and Clyde meet, their mutual cravings for excitement and fame immediately set them on a mission to chase their dreams. Their bold and reckless behaviour turns the young lovers' thrilling adventure into a downward spiral, putting themselves and their loved ones in trouble with the law. Forced to stay on the run, the lovers resort to robbery and murder to survive. As the infamous duo's fame grows bigger, their inevitable end draws nearer. Bonnie & Clyde is a thrilling and sexy musical with a non-traditional score, combining blues, gospel and rockabilly music - an exciting opportunity to showcase strong contemporary singers and actors. Music by Frank Wildhorn / Lyrics by Don Black / Book by Ivan Menchell.

### Character Breakdown

#### Clyde Barrow

- Gender: Male
- Stage Age: 18-25
- Vocal Range Top: C5
- Vocal Range Bottom: A2
- Dance Experience Preferred

Clyde is a small-town man in his early 20s, who has been getting into trouble with the law since he was a kid. Clyde harbors a deep hatred for 'the law' and authorities as he feels that even when he is doing the right thing, he gets blamed for crimes occurring anyway. After a traumatic jail stint, Clyde completely disregards efforts to live normally, and instead favours crime. From his youth, Clyde has idolised outlaws such as Billy the Kid and Al Capone and seeks to follow in their footsteps, and is an accomplished driver. Auditionees for Clyde will need to be able to master his charm and arrogance, whilst also able to portray the anger and hate for authorities. They will need to also show the fondness he has of Bonnie and the excitement and enthusiasm he has for motor vehicles and driving. Those considering auditioning for Clyde should consider their vocal stamina for the role. The Production Team are looking for someone with high energy levels, exceptional vocal ability and can convincingly portray an endearing but misguided young man completely convinced of the merit of his actions. It would be preferred if Clyde has some dance experience, as the show is physically demanding and may require substantial stylised movement.

## **Bonnie Parker**

- Gender: Female
- Stage Age: 18-25
- Vocal Range Top: F5
- Vocal Range Bottom: G3
- Dance Experience Preferred

Bonnie is a small-town girl dreaming of a bigger life, and has aspirations to become a movie star like her idol, Clara Bow. Bonnie is smart, and enjoys writing poetry, and gets married at the age of 15 but the marriage does not last. Bonnie falls in with Clyde Barrow, an escaped convict and falls in love. She is seduced by his disregard for authority, and grandiose ideas that align with her aspirations, and joins him in his crime spree. The role of Bonnie is vocally demanding and requires an extremely skilled vocalist as well as someone who can convincingly portray the innocence and naivety of Bonnie's youth paired with her sense of greed and ambition. Bonnie is at times very sensual and this will need to be portrayed in the audition.

## **Marivn 'Buck' Barrow**

- Gender: Male
- Stage Age: 20s-30s
- Vocal Range Top: G4
- Vocal Range Bottom: B2
- Confident Mover

Buck is Clyde's older brother, and he idolises his sibling's confidence and devil-may-care attitude. Buck is also an outlaw troubled by his wife's distaste for his lifestyle. He is adventurous and loyal. Buck is killed in a shoot-out with authorities. Auditionees for Buck will need to master Buck's conflict for his love of both his brother and wife who both try to control his decisions.

## **Blanche Barrow**

- Gender: Female
- Stage Age: 20s-30s
- Vocal Range Top: Eb5
- Vocal Range Bottom: G3
- Confident Mover

Blanche is Buck's wife, and a deeply religious woman who disapproves of the criminal lifestyle of her husband and his brother. She is honourable and righteous and strives to make an honest man out of Buck. She is disappointed that the life she shares with Buck isn't enough for him, and that he aspires to the infamy of Clyde. Auditionees for Blanche must be able to convey Blanche's range of emotions including her piousness, her discomfort and judgement of the criminal lifestyle and her grief and sorrow in mourning Buck.

## **Ted Hinton**

- Gender: Male
- Stage Age: 18-25
- Vocal Range Top: A4
- Vocal Range Bottom: C3
- Dance experience not required

Ted is a local police officer struggling to separate his feelings from his duties. He is kind and honest, but develops a hatred for Clyde due to being madly in love with Bonnie.

## **Peacher**

- Gender: Any
- Stage Age: Any, +30 Preferred
- Vocal Range Top: C5
- Vocal Range Bottom: A2

The Preacher is the town's evangelist. He is loud, passionate, boisterous and strives to provide religious advice to the townspeople as the Great Depression sets in and people are questioning their faith.

## **Emma Parker**

- Gender: Female
- Stage Age: 40-55, +30 Preferred
- Vocal Range: Any
- Dance not required

Emma is Bonnie's widowed mother. She is fragile, caring, sensitive and tries repeatedly to set Bonnie on the right path.

## **Cumie Barrow**

- Gender: Female
- Stage Age: 40-55, +30 Preferred
- Vocal Range: Any
- Dance not required

Cumie is Buck and Clyde's mother. She is a kind woman among those suffering in the Depression. Loyal and selfless.

## **Stella, Tricia and Eleanore**

- Gender: Female
- Stage Age: 20 to +50
- Dance experience preferred/confident movers

Stella, Tricia and Eleanore are Blanche's hairdressing customers. Stella and Tricia both have incarcerated husbands and tell Blanche and Buck all about the merits of absent husbands. They are featured in 'You're Goin' Back To Jail.' Each will need to be competent singers with mastered Texan accents. They should be able to blend well, and should be able to sing with a country lilt.

## Ensemble and Other Roles

There are several other named roles in the show that will be cast from the ensemble.

These include:

- **Governor Miriam Ferguson** (an enforcer of the law and Governor of Texas; tough and harsh)
- **Captain Frank Hamer** (a retired Texas Ranger who joins the hunt for Bonnie and Clyde)
- **Bob Alcorn** (the best sharpshooter in Texas. Recruited by Frank Hamer, he helps hunt down Bonnie and Clyde)
- **Henry Barrow** (Buck and Clyde's father)
- **Bud** (a local police officer, shot by Clyde)
- **John** (attends the café Bonnie works at)
- **Joe** (Trish's husband, prisoner)
- **Judge**
- **Police Officers**
- **Prison Guards**
- **Funeral Attendees**
- **Church Goers**
- **Shopkeepers and Assistants**
- **Breadline customers**

## Information for Youth Auditionees

### Young Clyde

- Gender: Male
- Stage Age: 8 - 15
- Vocal Range: A5
- Vocal Range Bottom: B3

### Young Bonnie

- Gender: Female
- Stage Age: 8 - 15
- Vocal Range: C5
- Vocal Range Bottom: C#4

The Production Team will be seeking to cast 2 young people in the role of **young Bonnie** and the role of **young Clyde**. The Production Team are seeking young people from the age of 11 upwards to audition for the role. Parents and guardians of auditionees should note that Bonnie & Clyde features mature themes including sex, violence, theft, domestic violence, murder and robbery. There will be 'gruesome' scenes within the show that the young cast will need to perform in and around, and the youth cast will be required to handle replica weapons (nothing operational) and cigarettes. Parents and guardians should consider how their child will cope with these themes and make a decision on attending auditions accordingly. Parents and guardians with questions about the content of the show are encouraged to contact the Ashtabula Arts Center (440)-964-3396 or emailing [adkins@ashtabulaartscenter.org](mailto:adkins@ashtabulaartscenter.org) to have a confidential discussion about their child's suitability.