

AUDITION

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Lake. "The first time it's kind of scary, but after you've done it for a while, it's like nothing," said Kornak, who has been involved with the theatre company for 10 years.

The girls prepare for productions, particularly musicals, by singing at home. They also practice foreign accents and accentuating their voices. Sod listens to British Broadcasting Corporation shows to familiarize herself with English accents.

"Every time I get a big role, I keep bouncing off the couch and yelling 'Yes!'" Sebolka said.

All were in agreement that summer productions in the Back Mountain Youth Theatre are a great way for children to get their feet wet in theatre. Ackerman says the summer productions cater to the younger, less-experienced actors, although there are more difficult roles available to accomplished youth performers. Anyone ages 8 to 18 is welcome to audition, but Ackerman would consider involving an even younger child.

Spotting talent in children is a simple task for Ackerman.

"It's really pretty easy," she said. "When you're in a script audition, it pretty much finds you. When I cast the lead parts, I'm looking for somebody who reads well, for somebody who isn't afraid to develop their own character. If kids aren't showing character or are beginners, we do improvisation as a group."

Aside from learning to act, the girls have made many friendships through Back Mountain Youth Theatre in addition to overcoming shyness and becoming more confident in themselves and at school.

"It's a great experience," Sod said. "It kind of helps you in school because you get better memorization skills."

Some children develop real careers in the acting industry. One former actor in Back Mountain Youth Theatre is a stage manager on Broadway. Another is pursuing acting full-time in Los Angeles. Caitlyn Metz, of Dallas, landed a role in Kidz Theater's show "Seussical, Jr." in New York City.

The 10 girls auditioned by reading from script and this reporter watched as they read from



ASHLEY WEINSTEIN OBSERVES THE AUDITION PROCESS.

CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/FOR THE DALLAS POST



ALLYSON SEBOLKA, LEFT, AND AMANDA KORNAK WATCH AS OTHERS AUDITION FOR ROLES IN THE UPCOMING PRODUCTION OF "FOLK TALES FROM AROUND THE WORLD" BY THE BACK MOUNTAIN YOUTH THEATRE.

"The Tongue-Cut Sparrow," a Japanese fairytale. Ackerman had the girls switch roles so she could see who excelled the most in each one.

Sebolka performed lines of the "Sparrow" in a mystical, lyrical, almost singsong voice.

"I want everybody to pay attention to what Allyson is doing differently," Ackerman said. "And when we're done, I want you to tell me what she did to make it feel different."

Ackerman says the turnout at the auditions was low because

many children were on vacation or busy with other activities. She was scheduled to have a second audition opportunity for the summer production on July 30.

Rebecca Bria, a staff writer for The Dallas Post, can be reached at 970-7436.

ARTWORK

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the Auction: Daytime" was purchased for \$500 by Michael and Lucy Messersmith of Dallas.

"It's really exciting because No. 1, you never get the opportunity to get an item auctioned off that you created," Levandoski said. "But to know that it went for a really high price, it's really exciting."

Romanowski's grandmother, Ruth Orloski, attended the first Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction in 1946 and did not miss one until 2005, the year after her death.

In honor of her grandmother, Romanowski painted her four times into her piece "Bringing Grandma Back to the Auction." Throughout the painting, Romanowski had her grandmother sitting in a chair watching the auction, watching Hand paint, in the antique booth and sitting on an

auction item.

"She hasn't been at the auction for four years so I put her in there four times," Romanowski said.

Romanowski's parents bid on the painting and purchased it for \$625.

"I had no idea it was her grandmother in the picture," Hand said. "I teased her parents and said, 'Wow! If I had known that, we would have said that on the block' and it would have cost them a lot more money."

Lenny Romanowski purchased Hand's auction in painting in 2003 as a gift for his wife, who was unable to attend the auction that year. This year, the couple was one of the remaining two bidders on Hand's auction painting but did not place the winning bid. Hand's 2003 auction painting and Lily Romanowski's 2008 auction painting hang side by side in the Romanowskis' living room.

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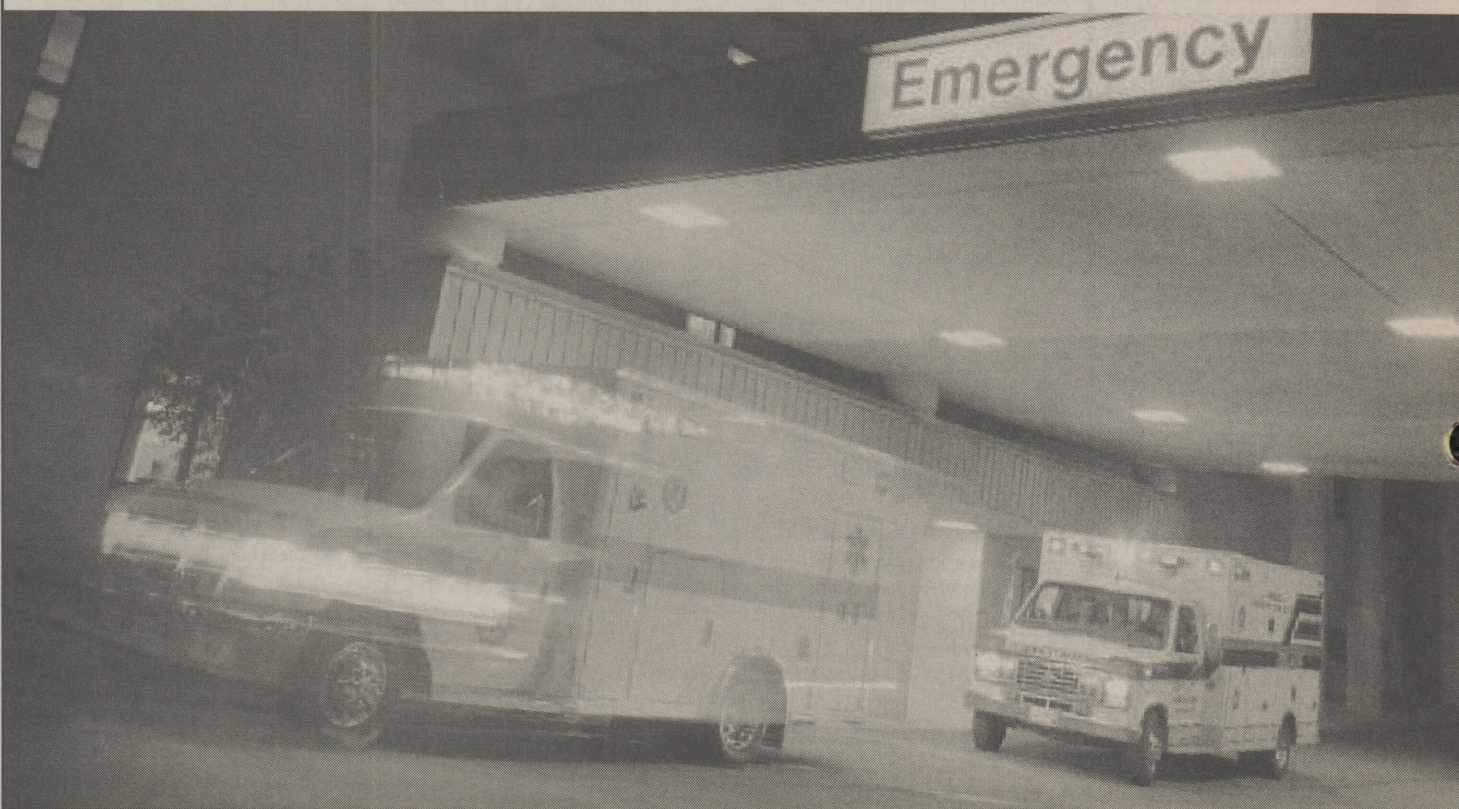
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