

## **Love, Loss, and What I Wore – Character List**

All actors will play multiple parts and participate in ensemble pieces throughout the show. All parts are considered leads.

### **1. Gingy**

Gingy is the narrator of the show and represents Ilene Beckerman, the woman whose memoirs *Love, Loss and What I Wore* is based upon. Gingy is the nickname Beckerman received in school for her bright red hair. She is the only character that is revisited over the course of the show. Gingy is an innocent, naive little girl who is very impulsive. She craves attention and wants to grow up quickly. Her mother passed away shortly before her 13th birthday, leaving Gingy and her sister Blossom, whom she envies, to move in with her grandparents. Gingy has a best friend named Dora, who she spends her teenage years with. Gingy is a boy-crazy teen and quickly flits from one relationship to the next.

As Gingy grows up, she has her fair share of disastrous relationships. Her first sexual experience ends in a pregnancy scare; her first serious relationship is with her university professor; and her first husband winds up cheating on her with her friend, Penny, who Gingy admired. As a 21-year-old divorcee, Gingy moves to New York with her friend Dora and impulsively remarries. She gives birth to 6 children, with the youngest dying shortly after childbirth. Needing a change, Gingy gets a job at an ad agency. While working, she meets Stanley, an abrasive ad executive, and falls in love. She decides to leave her husband and marry Stanley, who she calls the love of her life. Gingy has a great sense of humor and is often self-deprecating. She loves attention and wants to lead a life that will not be forgotten. The actor portraying this role must be a compelling performer who can keep the audience engaged in Gingy's story.

### **2. Pam, Cathy/Eve/ Mary's Mother**

Pam is a woman who has a favorite shirt. Pam's shirt has disappeared, and she is grieving the loss of her favorite article of clothing. Pam compares the loss of her shirt to experiencing the death of a loved one. The extremes of her comparison make for a very comedic character. As Pam is grieving the loss of her shirt, she is also grieving the end of her relationship. Pam is still hurting from the breakup. She feels cheated out of the sense of comfort she felt while in her relationship, like the sense of comfort she felt when wearing her favorite shirt. Pam insists that she doesn't care about the ending of her relationship as much as she cares about losing her shirt and thinks it will be harder to replace her shirt than to replace her boyfriend. The actor portraying Pam will also play multiple roles.

Additional Roles: Cathy, a woman who hates bra shopping, Eve, a woman who is uncomfortable in her body, and Mary's mother, a woman who hates everything her daughter wears.

### **3. Rosie/Gingy's Mother/Lisa/Nancy's Mother/Doctor/Liz**

Rosie is a woman who doesn't feel like she has any sense of fashion. She blames her lack of fashion on the death of her mother. Rosie thought that as she grew older, her mother would help her to find a sense of fashion. But when her mother passed away at the age of 39, Rosie's life was completely changed. Her father got rid of all her mother's clothing, remarried, and quickly

buried any memories of his late wife. Rosie harbors resentment for her father because of how quickly he moved on. Like her father, she buried memories of her mother and repressed her feelings of grief. Without her mother to guide her through the world of fashion, Rosie never bothered to get attached to clothing. The only article of clothing she has any sentimental value for is the electric blue bathrobe of her mother's. Rosie wonders if her mother hadn't passed away, if she would have a different relationship to clothing. The actor portraying Rosie will also play multiple roles.

Additional Roles: Gingy's Mother, who passes away before Gingy's 13th birthday, Lisa, an unconventional bride, Nancy's Mother, a condescending mother who disapproves of her daughter's clothes, and Doctor, the shrink that talks to Eve.

#### **4. Stephanie/Nancy/Annie/Older Sister**

Stephanie is a young woman who has a memory about her prom dresses. She attended her junior and senior prom under two very different circumstances. For her junior prom, Stephanie wore a dress that she did not like and went with a date that she did not like. She was one of the last girls asked to prom, so she settled for the only guy who asked her out because she didn't want to be left out. For her senior prom, Stephanie wore a dress she loved and went with a date she liked a lot. Looking back on her prom experiences, Stephanie feels the same contrast in her adult life. She has feelings of being unwanted or undesirable, and wants to feel like she is queen of the prom. The actor portraying Stephanie will also play multiple roles.

Additional Roles: Nancy, a young girl caught up in a gang, Annie, who falls in love with Birkenstocks, and Older Sister, a condescending older sister who doesn't like the clothes her sister wears.

#### **5. Merrill/Dora/Alex/Younger Sister**

Merrill is a young woman who has a love for wearing boots. During her monologue, she reflects on her time at university and how her wardrobe changed after she was sexually assaulted. Prior to her assault, Merrill loved to pair her boots with short skirts. She liked feeling tough and tender at the same time. Merrill values being intellectual and likes to present herself as mysterious and thoughtful. **While at school, Merrill was raped and her attacker was never caught.** Her sense of self was completely shaken and she changed her wardrobe completely. She threw away her short skirts but kept her boots as a sense of protection. Her boots represent confidence and a sense of protection.

Additional Roles: Dora, a woman who is uncomfortable in her body, Alex, a girl who hates the clothes her mom picks out for her, and Younger Sister, a bratty sibling who judges her sister's clothing choices.

#### **6. Lynne/Heather/Holly/Alex's Mother**

Lynne is a woman who loves the power of clothing. She met her husband, Ray, when they were both married to other people. When they decided to leave their spouses and be with each other, Ray warned her that he had been arrested and would soon be going to jail. Lynne's family had their fair share of controversy, so Lynne was not shaken by the news. Lynne looked for creative ways to keep their relationship and romance alive while Ray was in jail for 2 ½ years, Lynne would find ways to use clothes to be secretly sexy. Lynne would cut the crotch out of her pants

or wear a raincoat with no clothing on underneath. Lynne uses clothing to feel feminine, sexual and powerful. Lynne feels empowered by her clothing and embraces an alter ego of sorts when she is wearing her secretly sexy clothes. This persona is in deep contrast to the professional life she leads as a state senator and loves being able to use clothing to lead a secret life.

Additional Roles: Heather, a woman who chooses between high heels and thinking, Holly, who deals with her mother being placed in a psychiatric ward, and Alex's Mother, a nagging older woman.

## **7. Geralyn/Nora/Mary/Amanda**

Geralyn is a young woman who has love for baseball caps. Geralyn uses clothes and makeup to give herself a sense of confidence. When she was diagnosed with advanced invasive carcinoma at the age of 27, her life changed completely. Although Geralyn was going through an incredibly worrisome time in her life, she focused on pushing through her cancer treatments because she didn't want to leave her family. It became very important to Geralyn to maintain her feminine identity during her illness. She would always wear lipstick and dress up for her chemo treatments. Once her hair started falling out, Geralyn began to wear baseball caps instead of wigs. She embraced her bald head and found caps that helped her to preserve her self-confidence. After she successfully became cancer-free, Geralyn passed on her baseball caps to other women going through similar illnesses, hoping to provide them with a small comfort during their treatments.

Additional Roles: Nora, a woman who hates handbags, Mary, a girl who hates the clothes her mom picks out for her, and Amanda, a bride in search of the perfect wedding dress.