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Is It Stage Fright? Ally Sheedy Misses Heaps of Hedwig Shows

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During the Off-Broadway glam-rock musical hit *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, the main character Hedwig Schmidt may have had a rough life—as a German man who, as a result of a botched sex-change operation,

was left with a “one-inch mound of flesh where my penis used to be” and whose former lover is now a huge rock star while Hedwig wobbles on heels singing in sleazy dives—but one thing is never in question: Hedwig loves to perform. Singing, dancing, telling stories of his cold East German mother, tossing his blond wig, there is no doubt that Hedwig lives for the nights when the lights go down and the spot-

light is on. The show, which opened in February 1998 at the Jane Street Theater, has done well, with critical raves and a solid downtown following. And when it was announced in August that indie movie actress

and former Brat Packer Ally Sheedy would be taking over the title role on Oct. 13, advanced ticket sales increased by about \$50,000, according to Tom D’Ambrosio, the publicist for the show. Not only was

Ms. Sheedy famous, she was the first woman, after three men, to play the role.

There’s one problem: Ms. Sheedy does not seem to share her character’s love for the spotlight, at least in this show. As of Oct. 13, after 35 preview performances, Ms. Sheedy had performed in only 17 of them, after pushing back her preview debut by a week. The other 18 have featured her understudy, rock singer

and former Calvin Klein model Donovan Leitch. Although Ms. Sheedy certainly intends to perform on opening night, Oct. 13, and throughout her scheduled run through



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