

AUDITIONS NOTICE

The Comedy of Errors!

(mostly) by William Shakespeare

Outdoor Theatre: Family friendly knockabout version for Norwich Parks

Please read carefully all the details, in particular rehearsal dates. Please do not audition if you have significant clashes or regular unavailability within the rehearsal period, or any unavailability during the performance period. If you are unsure whether unavailability will be an issue please check first by emailing jez.pike@maddermarket.org

Production Dates*: Park 1: 21st August – 23rd August (4 performances – 2 matinees and 2 evening). Park 2: 29th-31st August (3 performances – all matinees).

Location*: Eaton Park & Waterloo Park

Director: Jez Pike

*[*Potentially subject to minor alterations/additions]*

Rehearsal Dates: The rehearsal process will centre on full days each Sunday from the 21st June onwards, rehearsing in the parks (bring a picnic!) These will always be full cast rehearsals and it's vital that everyone can make virtually every one. On the final weekend of the 15th & 16th August there will be rehearsals on both Saturday and Sunday.

In addition to the weekend rehearsals there will be two evening rehearsals per week mostly at the Maddermarket. Days of the week will be worked out following casting.

In the final week there will definitely be rehearsals on Wed 19th and Thurs 20th August.

Ahead of the second batch of performances at Park 2, there will be evening re-rehearsals in the park, likely to be on Wednesday 26th and Friday 28th.

Audition Dates: *All auditions will be held at The Maddermarket Theatre. There will be signs directing you where to go on arrival.*

Option A: Sunday 8th March - 6.30-8.30pm

Option B: Saturday 15th March – 11.30am-1.30pm

If you are unable to make any of the audition dates but would still like to be seen, contact the director jez.pike@maddermarket.org and alternative arrangements may be possible, though are not guaranteed.

Format of auditions:

The Maddermarket is committed to making its audition process as accessible as possible. Auditionees may request that reasonable adjustments are made to the audition process in order for them to attend and participate. Please contact the Director of Productions, Jez Pike – jez.pike@maddermarket.org to enquire.

The auditions will be in the form of a workshop and all auditionees will be required for the full two hours. The workshop will focus predominantly on group games and exercises designed to explore teamwork, storytelling, physicality and improvisation. In addition there will be some text based exercises in pairs or smaller groups using a variety of extracts from the play. There is no preparation required. Auditionees are requested to come in/bring loose comfortable clothing and footwear appropriate for a bit of running around.

How to sign-up:

Please download the Auditions Submission Form from the website
<https://maddermarket.co.uk/sign-up-for-an-audition/>

Complete and return it as an attachment to the Director of Productions at The Maddermarket Theatre, Jez Pike at jez.pike@maddermarket.org. Your information will then be processed, stored and distributed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The director of the production will then contact you via email to arrange an audition slot.

A scan of the script may be requested by email, or alternatively a reading copy is available at the theatre office to read on-site. For the purposes of the audition process the production will use the 'No Fear Shakespeare' edition which presents a modern accessible version of the text side by side with the original.

There are no extracts required for this audition process.

Please note that all auditionees must complete an 'Auditions Submission Form' **prior** to auditioning, even if they have had existing contact with or made informal arrangements with the director of that production.

About the Play

A fairy-tale farce of everyday miracles and double vision, The Comedy of Errors is probably Shakespeare most accessible and certainly silliest play. One of his earliest works it owes more than a nod to the traditions of Commedia dell'arte and whilst it's full of wit and wordplay it's primarily about physicality and plot....namely twins and everything that could possibly go wrong when identities are mistaken. It's notable for being a natural ensemble piece and for being one of only two Shakespeare plays (the other being The Tempest) in which events take place within 24hrs. It's also one his shortest works!

For a full breakdown of the plot and description of characters see here
<https://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/errors/>

About the Production

Summer fun. This won't be Shakespeare for the purists. It will be one designed to delight even the most Shakespeare-phobic and provide a zesty easily digestible dose of the bard for all ages. As such the performances are free of charge and audiences will be able to just turn up on a whim (and leave on a whim if they're not entertained!)

The production will all be about the ensemble. Auditions will seek to build a multi-talented, opened-minded, generous and mischief-making group who are not afraid of making theatre in an environment in which the only certainty is the unexpected.

Following casting the director will adapt the script to suit the talents of the ensemble, ensuring everyone gets plenty to do throughout. The style will hark back to the spirit of the travelling players with a direct storytelling approach, multi-role playing and masks, imbued with a heavy dose of slapstick and a contemporary cheeky approach. Apart from that, it's all open at this stage, though certain things are worth noting when auditioning.

- **Weather:** Performances will go on in everything but *extreme* weather. That means rehearsals will as well. You need to be able to occasionally rough it whilst keeping up your spirits and energy levels.
- **The right attitude:** It won't be a performing environment with any luxuries. There will be no changing room, no green room and no coffee machine (!) The production will be performing (and often rehearsing) on public land which means a flexible, make-do and self-reliant attitude will be important.
- **Looking silly:** Rehearsing and performing outside includes the guarantee that at some point someone other than an attentive audience member is quite likely to stare at you. A relatively high 'shame threshold' would be a good thing for this production.
- **Giving it a go:** Whilst the script edit will seek to play to everyone's strengths the success of the production will in large part be down to the breadth of the ensemble's contribution. You'll need to be prepared to play everything and anything and have a go at performance skills that may be new to you or outside your comfort zone.
- **Improvisation!** The production will involve audience interaction and therefore a degree of improvisation. If this notion terrifies you then it's probably not the production for you.
- **Mucking in:** There won't be the normal divide between actors and 'crew' on this show. Just like the traditional troupes of travelling players the attitude will be of 'one ownership' – which means being part of the set-up and get-out for each performance, helping to source props, build set and publicise both online and through flyerage.
- **Stamina:** The production style will be fast and dynamic. Physical and vocal stamina will be a must.
- **Going with the flow:** Whilst an edit of the script will be provided before rehearsal start, the style of the show means that it's likely to evolve as ideas come out of the rehearsal room. Actors who find it important to learn their lines in advance or like blocking to be firmed up early may find this process challenging.

- **Even if the thought of Shakespeare makes you twitch!** No experience of or confidence with Shakespeare is required...just a sense of fun, a can-do attitude and a willingness to develop new skills.

- **Commitment:** The style of this production and the enjoyment of creating it are largely going to be dependent on having everyone available for virtually all rehearsals. Please make extra sure that you can confidently commit to the rehearsal period listed.

Casting Information

The Maddermarket is committed ensuring its volunteer community – both onstage and off – reflects and celebrates the diversity of the world of which it is a part of. We welcome interest from actors of all backgrounds and identifications and our productions strive to approach casting with a progressive and flexible mind-set at all times.

There are no age or gender specifications for this casting process. The production welcomes interest from all enthusiastic team-players willing to play characters of any casting bracket.