



AUDITION NOTICE

The Winter's Tale

by William Shakespeare

Director: Simon Bartlett

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In the austere "Edwardian" court of Sicilia, Queen Hermione is accused of infidelity by Leontes. His ungovernable jealousy leads to catastrophic repercussions. A dramatic change of scene transports us across sixteen years and to the bucolic idyll of Bohemia with young lovers, homely shepherds, a singing trickster and a bear. Ultimately Shakespeare's magic weaves all these strands into a harmonious resolution as what was lost is found.

Key dates -

On your Audition Application form please list all dates you cannot attend.

Reading:

Monday 23 June 7:30pm at the Mary Wallace Theatre.

Auditions:

1. For the roles of Leontes, Hermione, Paulina, Antigonus, Mamillius, Polixenes, Camillo:

Sunday 29 June 11:00am at the Mary Wallace Theatre.

Registration 10:30am

2. For the roles of, Perdita, Florizel, Old Shepherd, Young Shepherd("Clown"), Autolycus, Cleomenes, Dion, Archidamus, Emilia /Mopsa, Lydia/Dorcas: **Monday 30 June 7:30pm** at the Mary Wallace Theatre.

Registration 7:00pm

Audition pieces will be available on the R.S.S. website

at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk/acting - or please contact Simon.

Rehearsals:

From Tuesday 26 August - Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evenings at 7:30 - and Sunday afternoons at 2:30. There may be a read-through and/or some small-group sessions in advance of this, depending on availability.

Playing dates:

Saturday 25 October to Saturday 1 November, 2025

Get out:

Full company call on **Sunday 2 November**.

Characters

Leontes - King of Sicilia: In his ungovernable jealousy he accuses his wife, Hermione, of infidelity with his best friend, Polixenes. His unfounded rage leads to tragedy, but he later repents and is redeemed by the play's end. Has some of Shakespeare's knottiest speeches

Hermione - Queen of Sicilia: Leontes' virtuous and loyal wife, of royal blood in her own right, she is wrongfully accused of adultery whilst pregnant with Perdita. She is put on trial, conducts herself with calm dignity, only collapsing on the news of her son's death, and is seemingly dead for years before a miraculous "resurrection."

Mamillius - Leontes & Hermione's young son (playing age around 10): His death from grief over his mother's trial shatters Leontes, marking the play's tragic turning point.

Perdita - Daughter of Leontes and Hermione. Abandoned as a baby in Bohemia, she is raised by a shepherd and grows into a charming, feisty young woman. Her love for Florizel and eventual reunion with her family restore harmony. Has some wonderful lyric poetry.

Polixenes - King of Bohemia. Leontes' childhood friend and the target of his baseless jealousy. After fleeing Sicilia, he later becomes harsh toward his son's love for a shepherd's daughter (Perdita).

Florizel - Polixenes' son. He falls in love with Perdita despite her apparent low birth. His devotion helps reunite the two kingdoms.

Paulina - Leontes' sister. Hermione's fiercely loyal ally who boldly condemns her brothers' tyranny. She secretly protects Hermione and orchestrates her dramatic return.

Camillo - A loyal lord, initially serving Leontes but flees to Bohemia to avoid carrying out immoral orders. Later, he helps Florizel and Perdita escape Polixenes' wrath.

Antigonus - Paulina's husband. A close advisor to Leontes and tasked with abandoning Perdita in Bohemia, he is famously pursued and killed by a bear at the end of the first half. (May appear in Bohemian festivities.)

Autolycus ** - A roguish peddler with a strong touch of the vaudeville. A witty, thieving trickster who, playing many roles, provides comic relief while inadvertently aiding in Perdita's reunion with her family. Sings - and potentially plays an instrument of some kind.

The Old Shepherd ** - The elderly, kind shepherd who raises Perdita. Provides gentle humour and pathos in a pastoral contrast to the royal drama.

The Young Shepherd ** (Clown) – Son of the Old Shepherd. More gullible and broadly comic and often a comic double foil for Autolycus and Mopsa and Dorcas

Emilia/Mopsa, Lydia/Dorcas - Ladies of the Sicilian court doubling with two delightful and earthy shepherds in Bohemia (these will be larger roles than in the standard printed text). Singing a plus.

Cleon/Diomedes/Archidamus ** - Courtiers in Sicily (and doubling in the Bohemian festivities) these will be larger, rather different roles to those in the standard printed text.

Other roles will be played by the company.

** indicates that these parts in particular are open to actors of either gender.

This is a play of "family" relationships - in Acts 1-3 Hermione, Leontes, Paulina, Antigonus and Polixenes are all parents of young children. They, along with Camillo (and, to an extent, the courtiers - but not Antigonus) are all 16 years older on their return to Sicilia in Act 5.

The production will use a Movement and Intimacy Coordinator, who will work with the cast to establish physical relationships. The roles of Leontes and Hermione and of Perdita and Florizel will certainly involve physical intimacy. Paulina and Antigonus and Hermione and Polixenes could do so, as could the Young Shepherd, Mopsa and Dorcas. If you are considering one or more of these roles and would like to know more, please email Simon.

The RSS actively encourages diversity, and casting will not be constrained by any perceived ethnicity of the roles being auditioned.

While auditions are open to all, please be aware that, if cast, you will be expected to become a member of the R.S.S. before the first rehearsal.

Audition Application forms are available in the theatre, can be downloaded from the auditions page of the R.S.S. website, or can be completed online: www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk/acting.

Please return these to the Hon. Secretary at the theatre or by e-mail to secretary@rss-mwt.org.uk