

AUDITION NOTICE

THE CRUCIBLE by Arthur Miller

Director: Simon Bickerstaffe
simonb62@aol.com 07971 153102

Reading: Monday 27th July 2026 at 7.45pm at the Mary Wallace Theatre
Auditions: Monday 3rd August 2026 at 7.45pm (registration from 7.00pm)
Playing dates: Saturday 24th October - Saturday 31st October 2026
Rehearsals: Starting from Sunday 30th August 2026. There will be some blocking rehearsals before this date. Then on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday evenings & Sunday afternoons.

Synopsis

When bored teenage girls are seen dancing by the local pastor, in order to escape punishment, they feign demonic possession. This sparks massive hysteria in the local town where superstition and religiosity are rife. The girls' leader, Abigail Williams, having had an affair with John Proctor, a local farmer who now rejects her advances, seeks to destroy his wife by accusing her of witchcraft. What follows is a total unravelling of the local community, as the town initiates public accusations, executions, and a catastrophic loss of integrity.

The play is set in Salem, Massachusetts in 1692-3 and based upon recorded events. It is not only one of Miller's finest works in respect of reputation, commercial success, scope and legacy but also one of the most seminal plays of the entire twentieth century. Thematically, it is as relevant today as the period in which it was set and the time it was written.

Characters

I am happy to consider all auditionees for any role, albeit within the limitations of the text. Doubling is possible.
(Key L = Large Part M = Medium C = Cameo)

John Proctor – One of the main protagonists. A local farmer; Elizabeth Proctor's husband. At heart a decent man, but he can be stern and hates hypocrisy. He has a hidden secret that becomes pivotal to the narrative and ultimately results in his downfall. **Playing age 35 – 50 L**

Abigail Williams - Reverend Parris's niece. Abigail was once the servant for the Proctor household, but Elizabeth Proctor fired her after she believed that Abigail was having an affair with her husband. Abigail is smart, wily, a good liar, and vindictive when crossed. **Playing age late teens - early twenties L**

Reverend John Hale- A minister reputed to be an expert on witchcraft. His arrival sets the hysteria in motion. **Playing age ideally 30 - 40 but flexible. M**

Elizabeth Proctor- John Proctor's wife. Elizabeth fired Abigail when she discovered that her husband was having an affair with her. Elizabeth is supremely virtuous, traditionalist, but often cold. **Playing age 30 – 50 L**

Reverend Parris - The minister of Salem's church. Reverend Parris is an obsessive, power-hungry, yet oddly self-pitying figure.. **Playing age 40-60. M**

Rebecca Nurse - Francis Nurse's wife. Rebecca is a wise, sensible, and upright woman, held in tremendous regard by most of the Salem community.. **Playing age 50+ M**

Francis Nurse - A wealthy, influential man in Salem. Nurse is well-respected by most people in Salem, an enemy of Thomas Putnam and his wife. Landgrab politics is a key theme of the play. **Playing age – mature. C**

Judge Danforth - The deputy governor of Massachusetts and the presiding judge at the witch trials. Honest and scrupulous, Danforth is convinced that he is doing right in rooting out witchcraft. **Playing age 40 - mature L**

Giles Corey- An elderly, opinionated farmer in Salem, known for his tendency to file lawsuits. Giles's wife, Martha, is accused of witchcraft, and he himself is eventually held in contempt of court. **Playing age – mature M**

Thomas Putnam - A wealthy, influential citizen, Putnam holds a grudge against Francis Nurse. His overbearing attitude may be mitigated by his wife's loss of seven children in childbirth. **Playing age 40 – mature M**

Ann Putnam - Thomas Putnam's wife. Ann Putnam has given birth to eight children but lost seven before they were a day old. She is convinced that they were murdered by supernatural means. **Playing age 40 – mature M**

Tituba - Reverend Parris's black slave from Barbados. Superstitious, spiritual. Tituba agrees to perform voodoo at Abigail's request. Pivotal scene in confession to Hale. Will also appear in pre-scene. **Playing age flexible M**

Mary Warren -The servant in the Proctor household and a member of Abigail's group of girls. She vacillates between timidity and feistiness, easily influenced by those around her, who tries unsuccessfully to expose the plot's central hoax. **Playing age teens M-L**

Ezekiel Cheever - A man from Salem who acts as clerk of the court during the witch trials. He is upright and determined to do his duty for justice. **Playing age flexible C**

Judge Hathorne - A judge who presides, along with Danforth, over the witch trials. Lofty, acerbic, ambitious. Aggressive towards Mary Warren in court scene. **Playing age 40 – 65 M**

George Herrick/John Willard (depending on edition) - The marshal of Salem court; sympathetic and kind to the accused who are under his watch; attentive to his duties but not overzealous. **Playing age – flexible C**

Betty Parris- Reverend Parris's ten-year-old daughter. Betty falls into a stupor after Parris catches her and the other girls dancing in the forest with Tituba. **Playing age low to mid-teens (in fact she was 10). C**

Mercy Lewis, Susanna Walcott - Girls in Abigail's group; easily manipulated. **Playing age teens C**

Sarah Good- A homeless woman and one of the first accused of witchcraft; eccentric, slovenly, and prone to inappropriate outbursts, estranged from the rest of the community. **Playing age – mature C**

Audition Pieces are available a) on the RSS website, b) in the theatre or c) by emailing the director simonb62@aol.com

RSS is committed to inclusive casting and providing fair and equal access to all. Casting will not be constrained by any perceived characteristic of a role, e.g. gender or ethnicity, unless specified by the playwright or a condition of the licence. Our auditions are conducted in the presence of a panel of members of the RSS General Committee; the role of the panel includes ensuring that auditions conform with the Society's Code of Conduct for Members.

While auditions are open to all, any offer of a part is conditional. You must be a member of RSS before the offer can be confirmed.

Audition Applications are online at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk/acting. Alternatively, forms are available in the theatre or from the RSS website and should be returned by e-mail to secretary@rss-mwt.org.uk.

Dogs: please note that dogs (except trained and insured service animals are not permitted in any part of the theatre at play readings, auditions, or performances, or other events.
