

We are thrilled to announce that our Spring production will be :-

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR by William Shakespeare.

Directed by Vince Sutton

**To be performed at Barbican Theatre in the week beginning
20th April 2026.**

Audition Information

The Merry Wives of Windsor is a Shakespearean comedy where two witty wives, Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, team up to humiliate the boastful, financially struggling knight Sir John Falstaff after he sends them identical love letters hoping to swindle their money. They orchestrate elaborate pranks, hiding him in laundry baskets, throwing him in the Thames, and eventually dressing him as the "Fat Woman of Brentford," all while his rival, Master Ford, spies on his wife, and Anne Page secretly marries her true love, Fenton, amidst her parents' mismatched suitors. The play concludes with a grand, final prank in Windsor Great Park, exposing Falstaff as a buffoon and uniting the community in laughter.

I'm planning on setting our version of this fabulously funny play in a 'Downton Abbey' era. We will be using an edited text largely based on a version produced by Shakespeare's Globe in London.

There are lots of roles to audition for. I am aiming for a company of around 12 members with many of the cast double-roling to add to the humour. That said, I can adapt if there are people who would prefer a smaller role.

There is no need to be worried about the text. It is one of Shakespeare's easier plays and if you are a Shakespeare novice there will be plenty of support on hand to help. So if you've always wanted to have a go at 'The Bard' this would be a good starting point. Equally we will be needing some more experienced actors for the more meatier roles.

Above all, I want this to be a fun play to rehearse and leading to an entertaining and accessible production for our audiences.

Main Characters.

Sir John Falstaff Falstaff thinks he can get away with seducing married women to gain access to their husbands' cash. Hence, he launches a plan to seduce Mistress Page and Mistress Ford. However, they are cleverer than he is and humiliate him on three separate occasions.

Mistress Page A resident of Windsor, Mistress Page is married to Master Page and is a friend of Mistress Ford.

Ford The husband of Mistress Ford, Ford is very jealous of his wife.

Mistress Ford A resident of Windsor, Mistress Ford is married to Master Ford and is a friend of Mistress Page.

Mistress Quickly Caius's servant. Mistress Quickly is everyone's messenger. She goes to Falstaff at the behest of Mistress Page and Mistress Ford. She also speaks to Anne Page on behalf of all three of her suitors, though she prefers Fenton.

Page The husband of Mistress Page, Page is not jealous of his wife. Thus, when he hears about Falstaff's plan, he doesn't think she's likely to find Falstaff interesting.

Sir Hugh Evans The local parson. He's Welsh, so he speaks in an accent that the other English citizens find very amusing. They make fun of him constantly for it.

Caius The local doctor. Caius is French, so he suffers the same humiliation as Evans because of his accent and broken English. He hopes to marry Anne Page.

Anne Page The daughter of Page and Mistress Page, Anne is sought for marriage by several suitors, including Caius and Slender.

Fenton A local gentleman and one of Anne's suitors.

Slender A local gentleman and one of Anne's suitors. Slender is urged on by several others in his pursuit of Anne, including his uncle, Justice Shallow. However, he is unable to speak anything but nonsense to Anne.

Shallow A visiting justice of the peace. However, he is a foolish character with comically misplaced authority. He urges Slender to try to seduce Anne Page.

Nym One of Falstaff's men.

Pistol One of Falstaff's men.

Host The manager of the Garter Inn.

Simple Slender's servant

Provisional Rehearsal Schedule

Week Beginning 26th January.

Monday 26th January and Wednesday 28th January – Auditions

Week Beginning 2nd February

Rehearsals begin. We will be rehearsing three times a week on Mondays and Thursdays and either Tuesdays or Wednesdays whichever is best for the majority.

From 2nd February I aim to call actors for 2 rehearsals a week.

From 16th March the majority of the cast will be called for all rehearsals.

On audition nights there will be a form on which you can indicate your availability. If you think availability might be a problem but would like to audition, please mentioning it when requesting an audition place.

Auditioning

To apply to audition please contact me directly at svince009@gmail.com

I will then send you some more details and the audition pieces. These will consist of some short 2 person scenes and some short monologues. You just need to focus on one of each. These will then form the main part of a workshop style audition. Expect the audition to be fun and lively.