



AUDITION NOTICE

KEY INFO

Dates and venues

auditions will be held at

Hampstead Parish Church, Church Row, London NW3 6UU

First round auditions: 7.30pm Tuesday 1 September, 7.30pm Thursday 3 September,
2pm Saturday 5 September

[Link to audition material](#)

Recalls: by invitation as needed

Show week

[Performances:](#) 26-28 November at the Hampstead Parish Church

Compulsory rehearsals: week of 15-20 November,
tech on Sunday 22 November, dress rehearsals on Monday 23 and Tuesday 24 November

Sign up for auditions

[Book your spaces here](#)

Any questions or want to know more?

Email lucreziaphifer@gmail.com | Visit hampsteadplayers.org.uk

ABOUT THE SHOW

Polixenes, King of Bohemia, is anxious to return home after a nine-month trip to Sicily to visit his lifelong friend, King Leontes. Dismayed, Leontes begs his friend to delay his departure, but Polixenes refuses. When Leontes's pregnant wife, Hermione, succeeds in persuading Polixenes to stay, Leontes becomes suspicious that his wife has been unfaithful with his friend. His obsession grows until Leontes asks his cupbearer, Camillo, to poison Polixenes. Camillo instead warns Polixenes. Together they flee the country, leaving Hermione and her beloved son, Mamilius, to face the King's wrath.

As one of Shakespeare's latest plays, *The Winter's Tale* keeps the curtain up even after the tragedy has occurred: in refusing to fade to black after Leontes's cruelty leads to both Mamilius and Hermione's deaths, it forces us to consider what happens when, instead of dying majestically like the classic tragic hero, you are condemned to wake up every day and remember again what you have done.

This production will be ensemble-focused and full of movement. The play has a tragic first half and comedic second half that jumps forward sixteen years in time. As such, it will require a cohesive effort from the ensemble in order to tell an embodied, linear narrative. The set will be minimal and stripped-back, so we will rely heavily on movement, sound, and physicality to make the world come to life – including the bear!

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

We are looking for a company of imaginative, collaborative performers who are excited by physical theatre and storytelling. We are particularly interested in actors who enjoy working closely with others, who can shift fluidly between different characters and energies, and who can use movement as part of the storytelling. We value curiosity and a playful approach in the rehearsal room to workshop the production. Previous experience with Shakespeare is not required.

We are looking for a cast of 11-15 broken down as follows:

6 standalone roles:

- Leontes: King of Sicilia | (M) 30+
 - Leontes' jealousy drives the first half of the play, accusing his pregnant wife of adultery with his friend. He reconciles with his wife and his child at the end of the play. He needs to portray all aspects of this character: loving, suspicious, and authoritative, with true reconciliation at the end.
- Paulina: friend to Hermione, wife to Antigonus | (F) 30+
 - Paulina is the only one who calls out Leontes for his behaviour towards his wife. One of only two characters in the first half who seem to be thinking straight, she should be plain-speaking, and be able to deliver the humour in the part.
- Polixenes: King of Bohemia | (M) 30+

- Along with Hermione, the focus of Leontes' rage – thankfully, he escapes before Leontes can enact his plan to have him killed. In the 2nd half, he follows his son, Florizel, and is upset to find him courting Perdita – who he believes is a shepherd girl.
- Hermione: wife to Leontes, mother to Mamilius and Perdita | (F) 30+
 - A faithful wife who gets caught up in her husband's mad jealousy. She has to justify herself in court, but Leontes refuses to believe her. When she learns that her son has died, promptly also 'dies'. She is then brought back to life in the form of a statue at the end of the play, reconciling with her husband and meeting her adult daughter.
- Camillo: Sicilian lord | (any gender) 30+
 - travels with Polixenes to Bohemia. The puppetmaster of the second half, helping to reconcile the estranged Leontes and Polixenes. Their quick thinking saved Polixenes' life sixteen years ago, but it cost him exile from his home which he loves. An honest fellow. Perhaps too honest for their own good.
- Antigonus: Sicilian lord, Husband to Paulina | (M) 40+
 - The lord who speaks for the newborn Perdita. rather than see her killed, he faces banishment—and delivers some wonderful speeches before exiting 'pursued by a bear.'

Ensemble (roles may be doubled):

- Mamilius: child of Leontes and Hermione | (any gender) 18-20
 - quite a small role, but with some fun lines. They should be played young.
- Perdita: daughter to Leontes and Hermione, adoptive daughter to the Shepherd (F) 18-30
 - Brought up as the daughter of a Shepherd, Perdita doesn't know her true identity until the end of the play. She is warm, tomboyish, and the life and soul of the party. Not afraid to tell off Florizel when he doesn't reveal his identity sooner
- Old Shepherd: adoptive father to Perdita | (any gender) 50+
 - Reliable and earthy. They are part of the drive of the second half. A lot of their humour revolves around not quite understanding what's going on, but must be likeable and sympathetic rather than dull.
- Shepherd's Son: Clown, adoptive brother to Perdita | (any gender) 18-30
 - Earnest and likable, they are quite gullible, and are tricked by Autolycus. They function as one of the fools in the play, but unknowingly. A fun part: comic timing a must!
- Cleomenes: Sicilian lord/lady | (any gender) 18+
 - Their primary role is traveling to Apollo's Oracle to prove the Queen's innocence.
- Autolycus: a rogue | (any gender) 30+
 - A former courtier in the Bohemian court turned pickpocket. The equivalent of a fool in the play. A wheelerdealer. **Singing role.**
- Florizel: son of Polixenes | (M) 18-30
 - A prince who dresses as a shepherd to meet Perdita. Once his father finds out about this relationship, he tries to separate them, but Florizel runs away to Sicilia with Perdita.
- Time (any gender/age)

- the personification of time, who moves the play forward 16 years in the interval. A narrator role, with the potential to weave throughout the story. Strong mover preferred. Likely to be doubled with Mamilius.
- Servant

The bear will be portrayed by two of the ensemble using animal study and possibly puppetry. If you are interested in helping to embody the bear, please let us know at your audition.

SCRIPT

We will be performing [this version of the script](#) cut by the director using [Elsewhere Shakespeare](#) as a reference. All cast members will be given a copy of this script.

Audition form:

Please complete the [AUDITION FORM](#) when you sign up for an audition.

REHEARSALS and PERFORMANCES

Rehearsals will start on 15 September with a readthrough and then will be held on Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday evenings.

Not everyone will be called to every rehearsal. Please be honest about your availability on the audition form so we can build the rehearsal schedule. You must be fully available for the show week and the week prior.

Show week including compulsory rehearsals

Final rehearsal: Friday 20 November

tech rehearsal: Sunday 22 November

Dress rehearsals: evenings of 23 and 24 November

Performances: Thursday 26 to Saturday 28 November at 7.30pm, matinee performance on Saturday 28 November at 2.30pm

PARTICIPATION COSTS

Please note that actors in Hampstead Players shows are not paid and do not receive expenses.

If you are cast in *The Winter's Tale*, you must become a member of The Hampstead Players (membership is currently £20 per year). There is also a participation fee of £10, which goes towards the cost of putting on the show.