

Dear All,

Thank you ever so much for your interest in the open auditions for our theatre production of Jack the Ripper. I wanted to update everyone on the project, and the adaptations/ changes to the production plans due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

First of all, I would like to assure everyone that the production is going ahead; simply with some changes, and that we will all need to be flexible to work with one another, as the situations with government & scientific advice, and venues, change. This document is dated May 20th 2020. If there are sudden changes between now and the audition date, we will update both our website (www.southdevonplayers.com) on the audition page, and on our facebook page (www.facebook.com/sdevonplayers). After that time, for those who join our cast/ crew, further updates will be made in the cast and crew Facebook discussion group.

Changes in audition process.

While we do not know if we would be able to meet formally for auditions on Sunday July 19th, as originally planned; with guidance changing from the government, and also taking into account people's own personal preferences, we are, for this project only, very happy to accept self-taped auditions*, along with an audition application form. These should be submitted to us as downloadable links, no later than July 20th 2020. These can be recorded on a camera, your phone, or webcam. We are not interested in how expensive or basic your camera is, we are interested in your your performance. If you are new to the world of professional performance, and need help with what is expected in a self-tape, please see the attached document with how to prepare your self-tape. (This is nothing to fear or panic about!) If you are unable to prepare a self-tape, please email on southdevonplayers@gmail.com to arrange an alternative method of audition.

Self-taped auditions must be using script side(s) for the character(s) whom you ideally wish to be considered for. We cannot accept generic showreels or monologues. If you do not have character sides yet, please email us on southdevonplayers@gmail.com for the (original) audition pack and the sides.

Changes in early-mid rehearsals

Rehearsals will commence on Sunday July 26th 2020. It is likely that the first rehearsals will take place in a digital format, if it is not possible to meet in person. This uses the Zoom video-conferencing system. It is free for you to join, and allows for us all to work together. Rehearsals will stick to the usual rehearsal times at The South Devon Players Theatre & Film Company, which are Wednesday Evenings – 7pm – 9.30pm (when we are back to our rehearsal hall, arrivals at physical venue from 6.30pm in order to run through production and company notices to be prepared for “curtain up” at 7pm), and Sundays 1pm-5pm (arrivals from 12 midday for company notices/ getting ready for “curtain up” at 1pm).

- please note that any minors are required to have a parent or licenced chaperone with them, and that zoom rehearsals may be recorded for cast & crew-only use.

When we are back to physical rehearsals

Remote rehearsing over Zoom will continue to be available even once we are back in our physical rehearsal hall, but strictly only for those team members who are * ill, *self-isolating due to possible exposure to Covid, *working away and unable to attend the specific rehearsal. Online rehearsals will not, and cannot, completely effectively substitute attendance at physical rehearsals, because of learning blocking, working together etc and therefore will be permissible only in the above situations. If you are ill and unable to rehearse, please let us know. If this takes longer to happen, we will be especially strict on attendance to ensure costume fittings, blocking, and choreography all happen in good time.

Returning to the physical rehearsal space (Chestnut Community Centre, 1-3 Poplar Close, Brixham, TQ5 0SA) will take place only when government guidance and scientific advice permit this.

- Social distancing and safety, may require changes to blocking, use of the physical space. We will require that all guidance and regulations relevant at the time, with regard to distancing, are adhered to, and failure

to do so, may result in dismissal, due to endangerment of others. Beyond this, our usual company requirements for rehearsals are unchanged, as set out in the original audition pack.

In between rehearsals (both digital and physical) we will have a dedicated, locked, cast and crew Facebook group for all team members in this production to discuss, work, update etc.

Show Dates.

Show dates are as currently listed on our website (www.southdevonplayers.com – box office tab) . Please note that as venues respond to Covid, and official guidance, there is a possibility that some or all of these could change, to January/ February 2021. (again performance dates are always on the website and updated as soon as we know). They are highly unlikely to change from the Friday-Saturdays when we normally perform; as these are the days we get the best ticket sales. If any weekdays should happen, they will be evening performances only. We also have no plans to change the venues and would only do so as a last resort.

The only foreseen addition is that while in lockdown, we have been developing live stream and live broadcast systems, and at least one performance is likely to be available online as a livestream, to reach those prospective audience members who either live too far away to attend in person, or who still are unsure about attending physical venues after the pandemic, and would feel safer viewing from home.

Actor locations

In a self-tape audition situation, it is often very easy for prospective actors to ignore the physical locations of the shows and rehearsals.

This is further complicated by the fact that during lockdown, we are creating solely online theatre, where it does not matter where in the world an actor is based (indeed, we have been working with actors from not only across the UK, but also Ireland, the USA and Canada, for our online-only projects!)

For Jack The Ripper, the main onus will be on physical shows. Therefore actors **MUST** be able to attend physical rehearsals (when they restart) in Brixham, Devon, and the live performances in Devon and Bristol. Therefore we strongly advise that actors are based in the South Devon area. While we do often have actors from further afield, conversations have happened ahead of time, to ensure that they are able to fulfil these requirements. (if you are outside the Devon area but still able and willing to commit to the rehearsals/ shows, please let us know in the email with your self-tape).

Pay

Plans remain unchanged. As with all our shows, the minimum guaranteed, is an equal profit-share from ticket sales (total amount shared equally between all cast and crew. This is less show-venue hire cost, but NOT less costumes/ props/rehearsal hall hire as those are able to be covered from our market second-hand book stall). While we continue to apply for funding to increase this to a full union-minimum wage, this is a lot harder at the moment, as many funding bodies have either closed to anything that is not a direct Covid-19 response, or a regular portfolio company. Ticket sales reports and costs of venue hires are made available as screenshots/ PDF's in the cast and crew Facebook group after the events, as soon as received from venues. You will also receive copies of show footage, any promotional photos or other media featuring yourself, reviews, for use in your performance portfolio. These details are as set out on our website (www.southdevonplayers.com – auditions tab) and in the actors contracts (sample also available on the same page).

I hope this has answered most of the questions you may have about the unexpected changes and adaptations forced on the production, by the Covid-19 pandemic – we would love to have you audition, and can't wait to see your audition.

All the very best, and hoping to hear from you soon,
Laura Jury (show director, South Devon Players Theatre & Film Company owner/ founder).