

# THE SOUTH DEVON PLAYERS THEATRE & FILM COMPANY

Macbeth (online) - Audition Pack 2020



[www.southdevonplayers.com](http://www.southdevonplayers.com)

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## WELCOME TO THE SOUTH DEVON PLAYERS THEATRE & FILM COMPANY

“The power of the final scene was such that the audience sat transfixed in silence, barely able to comprehend the beauty of what they’d just witnessed ”

**Rick Stone – Audience member, 2019.**

The South Devon Players Theatre & Film Company, offers a new approach to theatre-making. Involving people of all levels of experience, from beginners to seasoned professionals, the Players create full scale dramatic productions primarily focussing on historical events and classical texts, which have attracted local, national, and international awards, as well as glowing audience feedback both online and in person, for the productions performed at a variety of venues centering on, but not limited to, the region of South Devon, in the United Kingdom.

The South Devon Players Theatre & Film Company, offers a truly unique experience; taking a pride in creating excellent productions working to the strength of the venues, with painstaking research and attention to detail in perfecting costumes, props and performance, the shows often have a strong interactive element, making the audience feel part of the action.

Based in the beautiful setting of South Devon, showcasing the diverse and considerable talents of local people, our creative use of performance space allows us to create breathtaking, world-class theatre, with our own unique style, while not compromising the production itself. We bring together talented performers, writers, technicians and costume makers, from the Southwest, with enthusiastic, loyal audiences and together, we create magic.



## What We Do



At the The South Devon Players Theatre & Film Company, we make theatre from some of the world's most powerful history, legends and classical texts; stories that help us see the world in new and unexpected ways, while revisiting both much loved classical texts and known historical events, coupled with also exploring commonly overlooked historical events which are invaluable insights into pivotal events which made our community, and world, as it is now.

With a rehearsal base at Chestnut Community Centre, on the edge of our hometown Brixham, we tour our shows out to a variety of exciting performance spaces, mostly to local theatres, but also to museum spaces, church halls, and even open-air venues, facilitating accessible, approachable opportunities for people to experience theatre.

Our team members are welcomed regardless of initial experience, sexuality, religion or national origin. What we look for is the desire to create powerful new theatre productions in line with our fundamental values of excellence in performance, alongside personal empowerment; mutual respect between team members and the public; learning and improving new skills; and collaboration.

Over the course of a typical year, we produce two to four productions, as well as also collaborating with other theatre & film production companies to help our team members find further work in the area, in the creative industries. We also take our community responsibilities very seriously and support external community events, amateur groups, historical and cultural events with our skills, wherever feasible through time and our team members availability. As we are able to build funds and the organisation, the number of productions and collaborations will be able to increase.

We also seek to build an educational, training arm to facilitate accessible training to local people, of a wide range of diverse backgrounds, enabling them to develop strong performance skills to seek employment in the creative industries, and alongside that, develop excellence in transferable skills in communication, self-presentation, self-confidence, teamwork, literacy, and technical skills.

Our productions have won awards including the Long Island Theatre Award 2019 in New York, the all-England Epic Award 2017, the Torbay Together: Creativity In The Community Award 2014, with national and international film festival nominations for our film and video projects, including the Los Angeles Cinefest, Miami Epic Trailer Film Festival, and UK Screen One International Film Festival.

We are passionate and determined to create high-quality theatre featuring local and regional performers, proving that local people can put on world-class performance.



***“Consistently high-quality shows and films created by a powerhouse of up and coming local talent ” Gerard Christiaans - 5 star Google page rating***

***“It was educational, and entertaining in equal measure ”***

***Simon Parks – 5 Star Google page rating***

## About our production

*This production is a spin-off to our internationally awardwinning production of Macbeth, which toured twice in 2019. Many of the original casts are returning, however, some have been unable to, and these are the roles that we are re-advertising. This is the full, uncut, original Shakespearean text.*

*This is a purely online production, to take place during June. It will be performed inline with the UK lockdown and social distancing laws currently in place, using the video-conferencing platform Zoom. This will be livestreamed to audiences using social media, with a paypal link for donations – any donations obtained for the show, will be shared equally among all cast. The performance will also be recorded and put on youtube (as well as the recording made available to cast for any personal portfolio use).*

*Because of using a solely online medium, actors can be based anywhere in the world, but MUST adhere to our usual high standards of excellence in performance (line learning, characterisation etc) and performance (including being online to start rehearsals and the final performance, promptly and prepared). They will need access to a digital device running Zoom, in order to be involved.*

In the beginning of the play, Macbeth is loyal to the Scottish king, Duncan. However, three witches prophesize he will be king; once he learns of that prophecy, his loyalty wanes.

Lady Macbeth convinces her husband that they need to kill Duncan. She helps him devise a plan to frame the guards outside Duncan's chambers for his murder. Initially, Macbeth isn't sure about killing Duncan, but Lady Macbeth convinces him that he must. She helps him to kill the king, but Macbeth feels guilty after. Duncan's guards are accused, and shortly after, Macbeth kills them so that his crime won't be discovered.

Duncan has two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, who run from Macbeth's castle because they're sure that they will be killed—suspicion has fallen at their feet that they bribed Duncan's guards to kill him, as Malcolm would be the heir to the Scottish throne. With Duncan dead and his sons fled, Macbeth makes himself king. However, he's not in the clear yet. The witches had not only told him that he would be king, but also that Banquo's descendants would have the throne after Macbeth. To secure the kingdom for his own heirs, Macbeth knows he must also destroy Banquo's line. Banquo is a general in the Scottish army. Macbeth sets a trap for him, inviting Banquo to a banquet at his castle and hiring others to kill both Banquo and his son, Fleance. Banquo is caught in the trap and murdered; however, Fleance manages to escape. At the banquet, Macbeth is visited by Banquo's ghost, which causes a scene by taking Macbeth's seat. Macbeth has a fit, and says that Banquo is "crowned" with wounds, which highlights his fear that Banquo's descendants will someday sit on the throne. Macbeth's fit spells trouble because it makes the other lords nervous, though Lady Macbeth is able to pass the event off as Macbeth being sick.

Although the lords believe Lady Macbeth's story, not everyone supports Macbeth. Macduff, one of the Scottish nobles, believes that Macbeth killed Duncan, and so he travels to England to help Malcolm, Duncan's son, reclaim the Scottish crown.

Back in Scotland, Macbeth returns to the witches, intent on finding out what will happen now that he is the king. They give him three pieces of information. First, they warn him to be wary of Macduff. They tell Macbeth that he won't be defeated until Birnam Wood moves to Dunsinane, and that he won't be killed by anyone born of a woman. He believes it impossible for Birnam Wood to move to Dunsinane because forests don't move, but even more so, the prophesy that he won't be killed by anyone born of a woman convinces Macbeth that he can't be killed by anyone at all.

Farther south, in England, Macduff and Malcolm have teamed up to fight against Macbeth. Macbeth punishes Macduff's infidelity by sending men to kill Macduff's wife and children, but this action only makes Macduff want to destroy Macbeth even more. Macduff and Malcolm lead ten thousand English troops into Scotland to march against Macbeth. They use wood from the Birnam forest to disguise themselves as they march toward Dunsinane. When Macbeth hears about this, he remembers the three witches' prophesy and becomes nervous. Macduff is coming for him—a man they told him to beware of—and Birnam wood is moving to Dunsinane.

When Macbeth and Macduff meet, the witches' prophesy comes true when Macduff kills Macbeth, and returns Malcolm to the Scottish throne.

## Auditions

Unusually for our company, but because this is a “Covid 19 lockdown” project, we are casting this via video self-tapes. This will take the form of an initial request from us for a self-tape of your chosen character(s). Most of the sides are dialogue, and if you do not have someone to read in for you, then simply do not speak the other characters lines, but react to them silently as if they are speaking to you. We will look for natural "convincing" performances, rather than obvious expressionless reading, in the same manner as at our "physical" castings. These videos should be submitted to us on email at southdevonplayers@gmail.com, on April 30th<sup>th</sup> 2020 by 11.59pm.

Auditions filmed on your phone without any especial equipment are perfectly acceptable. Please just ensure that we can see and hear you clearly.

We will hold callbacks for all performers who are new to our company, on video-conference; where the show director will provide an appointment date and time to call you via Zoom, or Facebook Messenger (your preference), to discuss the role, the production, find out more about you, and give you the chance to ask any questions you may have.

Castings will be announced at the end of the week following the deadline for the self-tapes, and will be subject to the usual contracts (as available on our website audition page)

Any rehearsals will take place using the Zoom video conferencing app, which is available for PC, and all types of phone/ tablet, on agreed weekday evenings.

SELECTION PROCESS – the selection process is detailed on our website but in short, we look for excellent characterisation, the ability to work with others in the scene, as well as pleasant socially acceptable behaviour at the audition. [About the characters](#)

While characters are organised according to original gender in the table below, we are not averse to altering them for the production, if needed, indeed, with our original production, we did just that!

**Actors of all ethnicities are welcomed – we love (and prefer) to have a diverse team.**

We are very flexible on age, therefore no ages are stated, however we do not have child roles available in this production, as they are taken by returning cast.

Macduff – Thane of Scotland, whose wife and children are murdered by Macbeth.

Duncan – King of Scotland, murdered by the Macbeths

Donalbain – a prince of Scotland

Ross - a Thane of Scotland (this role may be taken but is remaining as a “maybe” due to technology!)

Various small messenger roles (can be split between two people).

## Where it all began: Brief history & Background of the South Devon Players

We were founded during the winter of 2005-2006, by four local actors. Struggling to find opportunities beyond those offered by annual amateur musicals, we decided to start our own.

We started with very little; one of us, who owned a car, was recruited to transport as much as the rest of us could “clear out” at home to a car-boot sale. This gave us starting funds of £80. In the meantime, we also found a small rehearsal space at the local Royal British Legion social club. Researching local history and discovering the court records of a 17<sup>th</sup> Century scandal in the nearby town of Totnes, provided material for our first script. And thus we began our journey.

Over the years we have encountered many challenges. Despite good reviews for our work, we found it very difficult, as a new organisation, for many years, to find good venues, and were heavily limited by public perceptions of what the quality of a show in a church hall would be like, thus finding ourselves usually performing to audiences of around 10 or 12 people, and unable to attract the programme managers of actual theatres so that they could see our work.

The first big change came in 2013, when we first performed our production of Les Miserables; The Memoirs of Jean Valjean; a script we wrote ourselves, based on Victor Hugos novel. During our tour to local church halls, a producer from London came to see our show. Within 24 hours, he had emailed us, telling us how impressed he was with the show and how more people should see it. He paid for us to take the show to the Palace Theatre in Paignton. We reprised the show, to excellent full-house audiences, who now willingly came, now that they could see us in a theatre instead of a church hall.

The glass ceiling of finding venues was broken. We were slowly able to move away from church halls, and into theatres. More and better venues began to accept us, although some continued to avoid us until more recently, due to our small beginnings, and we continued to slowly grow.

While we have never been able to successfully obtain grant funding to expand as we would have liked, we have survived and managed to grow with scrimping and saving from having stands of plants & bric a brac at table top sales, sponsored activities, etc, and learning how to recycle and repurpose clothing and items obtained from charity shops and on websites such as Freecycle.

We have worked with a number of other local organisations, providing actors, historical recreations, photographers, voiceovers, and anything that we could help with, towards a shared goal of increasing participation and opportunity in the local arts.

The ultimate aim is to continue to grow into a successful self-sustaining regional theatre company which is not only providing work for local creatives, but also provides a significant contribution to the creative community of our home region. We welcome anyone who would like to join us on this journey.

# Our Audiences & Marketing Reach

## Awards:

Our productions have won international, national and regional awards including the Theatre Partner Award at the Long Island Theatre Awards New York in 2019, the BrixAward for community contribution in 2019, the All-England Epic Award in 2017, the Torbay Together: Creativity In The Community Award in 2014, with national and international film festival nominations for our film and video projects, including the Los Angeles Cinefest, Miami Epic Trailer Film Festival, and the UK Screen One International Film Festival.

**Audience Figures** for The South Devon Players Theatre & Film Company are growing:

- Between June 2018 and Oct 2019, our physical audiences increased by 490%.
- Online followers on social media increased to over 22,000 from 44 countries.
- Audiences grew with both many new attendees, and a high retention of returning audiences from previous shows.
- Audiences are also building abroad with those who cannot attend our shows in person, viewing our stage productions online. These include private individuals, and schools, primarily in the Americas, Middle East, and Asia.

## Marketing Reach:

- Online newsletters and social media posts reach over 23,000 people internationally, directly, and many more with shared posts and forwarded messages.
- Printed theatre programmes for each show reach all audiences, around 63% of audience members purchase one. They are often shared when people make group bookings.
- Online sales have increased year on year although box office sales “in person” remain popular.

## Audience Profile:

- We have a local physical audience based on regional demographics.
- The average local age is 44, with a higher number of retired people
- An average of 91% of residents are UK born, however in the summer we see an increased footfall from people on holiday due to being a high-tourist area.
- We have a large international following, who follow our shows online using such tools as YouTube or social media feeds. Our current social media following is over 22,080, before counting an organic reach.

## Location & physical footfall:

- While our rehearsal venue is a small community centre out-of-town, we ensure that our performances take place at central locations in towns and cities, close to public transport as well as parking.
- Show / project advertising in physical locations is centred on, though not in any way limited to, the town centres & city-centre locations where the shows are taking place. Current shows typically tour South Devon, and then go on to Bristol. We are hoping to expand further as funding and venues permit.

# Performer and crew policy

Everyone in our team (actors, crew, admin) is integral to maintain the day-to-day operation of the South Devon Players Theatre And Film Company.

(Thereafter referred to as “The Players”.)

The Players recognise the rights of team members to:

Know what is (and what is not) expected of them

Have adequate support in their role

Receive appreciation

Have safe working conditions

Be insured

Know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong

Receive appropriate training, if necessary

Be free from discrimination, bullying, or other socially unacceptable behaviour.

Be offered the opportunity for personal development.

Be respected in the same manner as anyone else in our organisation.

The Players expect all team members to:

-Be reliable, honest and trustworthy at all times.

-Respect confidentiality

-Carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of The Players, and our reputation for excellence.

-Work within agreed guidelines

-Respect the work of the Players and not bring us into disrepute

-Comply with the Players policies, and the law, including health & safety, equal opportunities, workplace respect, child protection, and data protection.

-Treat other members of the organisation and members of the public, as you yourself would wish to be treated.

-To maintain the confidential information of the organization and its clients

-To meet time commitments and standards agreed to, and, when this is not possible, to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made.

-Attend rehearsals and performances in a reliable, consistent manner.

Team members are required to adhere to the policies and procedures of The South Devon Players Theatre & Film Company, and to legal requirements of entertainment law, in order to ensure everyone's well-being, foster a sense of respect, safe-space, learning, and creativity. Anyone who breaches the policies and procedures, may have their involvement immediately terminated .



**The Players commit to the following:**

## Clarity and communication

- To explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.
- To make every effort to avoid lone-working. In the vast majority of situations you will be working with an experienced member of our organisation.

## Provision to our team

- All team members are entitled to free tea/ coffee/ squash, and light refreshments while working on a task with us.
- Any specialist equipment (including, but not limited to, tech, costume, notebooks, scripts, craft materials) is supplied.
- We ask team members not to spend money on our behalf ,without checking in advance. We ask that any expenditure for which you wish to receive reimbursement, are discussed with, and approved by our admins, prior to the expenditure being made, and subject to the provision of receipts. Expense incurred outside of this agreement cannot be reimbursed.

## Health & Safety

- To provide adequate feedback in support of our Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which is available from the The Players website, a production director, or a committee officer.

## Equal Opportunities

- To ensure that all team members are dealt with in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy, a full copy of which is available from The Players website, a production director, or a committee officer.
- In essence, our equal opportunities policy stipulates that no person involved with our organisation, will be discriminated against, on grounds of race, religion, sexuality or gender identification.

## Problems

- To try to resolve fairly any problems, grievances and difficulties you may have while you work with us.
- In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer the opportunity to state your case to officers of the committee.

The Players aim to treat all team members fairly, objectively and consistently. We seek to ensure that team members views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and aim for a positive and amicable solution. The committee is responsible for handling problems regarding complaints or conduct, please refer any complaint/concern to them at the earliest opportunity. If the problem involves a member of the committee, the problem should be referred to any other committee member. In the event of a problem, all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible. Support will be provided by the Players to the team member while it endeavours to resolve the problem.

- All team members are subject to our members rules of conduct, and the disciplinary procedure laid out therein.

## Zero Tolerance

The South Devon Players Theatre And Film Company has a zero tolerance policy in respect of aggressive verbal or physical behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual impropriety, bullying, gaslighting, harassment, antisocial conduct, theft, rehearsal disruption, or other behaviour not in keeping with the norms of socially acceptable behaviour, at any event, or location (physical or digital), towards any of our members or any members of the public. Any such behaviour, or clear evidence of such behaviour, may result in the immediate ejection from the premises, termination of your involvement and a lifetime ban from the premises and all events managed by South Devon Players Theatre And Film Company.