

THE LARGEST SHAKESPEAREAN COMPANY IN EUROPE THIS SUMMER ASSEMBLES TO REHEARSE



AS FULL CASTING IS ANNOUNCED FOR 2019 SUMMER OF SHAKESPEARE

[20 May, York] Preparations are in full swing for a glorious Summer of Shakespeare for the North and South, as the full company of **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE**, the award-winning pop-up Shakespearean Theatre, comes together for the first time ahead of its triumphant return to York this summer, and its expansion to a second site at Blenheim Palace. The **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE** Company has commenced rehearsals for eight of Shakespeare's most popular plays, which will be performed in repertory by two companies of actors based at each location.

Over the last few weeks a huge tented rehearsal village has sprung up outside York at the **McArthurGlen Designer Outlet**, which becomes a custom-built temporary home to one of the largest Shakespearean companies in Europe, and possibly the world, this summer. The 2100 square metre rehearsal village is made up of seven tents in total: the two biggest acting as the main performance spaces, able to accommodate areas bigger than the eventual stage, and audiences who will be able to attend open rehearsals. Other tents will be used as stage management offices, a green room (holding up to 70 people at one time), wardrobe spaces and break out rooms for dance, fight and vocal calls.

Artistic Director of **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE**, **Damian Cruden** said, *"It's wonderful to have such a unique and bespoke rehearsal space that accommodates the needs of creating eight fantastic Shakespearean productions and encourages strong creative collaboration."*

In total, 75 actors, 22 creatives, 12 musicians and 41 crew have taken up residence in the grounds of McArthurGlen Designer Outlet, the company's home until the two pop-up Elizabethan theatres are constructed at the foot of historic Clifford's tower in York in May and in the grounds of Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire in June.

McArthurGlen Designer Outlet are also hosting an exhibition of costumes and props from **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE**. The items from the 2018 plays of *Richard III* and *Romeo and Juliet* can be viewed all summer in Unit 19 at the South Atrium.

The York season of **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE** will run from Tuesday 25 June – Sunday 1 September 2019, with *Hamlet*, *Henry V*, *The Tempest* and *Twelfth Night*, and the Blenheim Palace season will run from Monday 8 July – Saturday 7 September 2019 with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo & Juliet* and *Richard III*.

Originator of the project and CEO of international theatre company, **Lunchbox Theatrical Productions, James Cundall MBE**, said “*Shoppers at York's Designer Outlet have already been taken aback by blood-curdling war cries and delighted at the beautiful poetic verse emanating from our rehearsal village... I am both excited and proud to have brought together such an incredible company – we may well be the largest in the world right now!*”

Full casting has been announced for the four companies – previously announced cast includes **Maggie Bain** (Netflix's *Black Mirror*, *The End of the F***ing World*, film *Dark Sense* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Shakespeare's Globe) as ‘**Henry V**’; ITV's *Victoria* star **David Oakes** as ‘**Hamlet**’; **Sam Callis** (*Game of Thrones*, *The Bill*) as ‘Prospero’ in **The Tempest**; and returning from last year's **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE**, **Olivia Onyehara** as ‘Viola’, **Mark Holgate** as ‘Orsino’, and **Leandra Ashton** as ‘Olivia’ in **Twelfth Night**.

The Blenheim Palace company includes **Dave Fishley** (recently seen in the West End as ‘William III’ in *Queen Anne* at the Theatre Royal Haymarket) as ‘Richard’ in **Richard III**; **Emilio Iannucci** (son of Armando) as ‘Romeo’ opposite **Ella Dunlop** (recently seen in *The Secret Garden* at York Theatre Royal) as ‘Juliet’ in **Romeo & Juliet**; **Alex Avery** (series regular in *Doctors*, *The Bill* and *EastEnders*) as ‘**Macbeth**’; and **Paul Hawkyard** (multiple West End credits, *Coronation Street*, *Casualty*,) returns to **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE** to play ‘Bottom’ in **A Midsummer Night's Dream**.

FULL CASTING, CREATIVE CREDITS AND PRESS NIGHTS IN NOTES TO EDITORS BELOW.

At both the York and Blenheim Palace sites, the Shakespearean theatres will be constructed using state-of-the-art scaffolding technology, corrugated iron and timber. Inspired by the famous London Rose Playhouse built in 1587, 12 years prior to The Globe, **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE** will house an audience of 900, with 560 seated on three tiered balconies around an open-roofed courtyard with standing room for 340 ‘groundlings’.

Both theatres will be located within a Shakespearean village, bringing an authentic Elizabethan ambience and theatricality to the event, and will feature:

- ‘wagon’ performances of Elizabethan-style entertainment, including comic mini-plays, speeches and medieval musicians
- the best Yorkshire and Oxfordshire food and drinks, housed in the oak-framed and reed-thatched Bear Arms pub
- in York, an Elizabethan garden created by Yorkshire garden designer Sally Tierney, with ornate box-edged beds of roses, cottage flowers, herbs and vegetables. Mrs Tierney is the winner of a Silver-Gilt medal at the Royal Horticultural Society's renowned Chelsea Flower Show, and created the Elizabethan garden for **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE** in York last year to great acclaim.
- in Blenheim, a village pond, with farm wagons and carts, evoking a rustic rural scene
- tables and benches around the village, enabling visitors to enjoy the historic atmosphere.

SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE and Shakespeare's Village are produced by Yorkshire-based Lunchbox Theatrical Productions. The Blenheim Palace season is presented in association with Raymond Gubbay Ltd and Blenheim Palace.

Grand Central Rail, an established train operator on the East Coast line linking York to London, returns in 2019 as title sponsor of **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE** in York. Other returning sponsors are **Fenwick** luxury department store; the **Grand Hotel and Spa**, York's only five star hotel; and Yorkshire's daily national newspaper, The Yorkshire Post, back on board as official media partner. In addition to this, the McArthur Glen York Designer Outlet joins as a brand new sponsor for 2019 and are the hosts of the Rehearsal Village.

For more information on **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE** or to book tickets at York please visit:

www.shakespearesrosetheatre.com

To book tickets at Blenheim Palace please visit : www.blenheimpalace.com/shakespearesRT

YORK PRESS NIGHTS

Wednesday 3 July 2019 – Hamlet @ 2pm / The Tempest @ 7.30pm

Thursday 4 July 2019 – Henry V @ 2pm / Twelfth Night @ 7.30pm

NB these are matinee and evening shows, so reviewers can do both in one day.

BLENHEIM PALACE PRESS NIGHTS

Monday 15 July 2019 – Macbeth @ 7.30pm

Tuesday 16 July 2019 – Romeo and Juliet @ 7.30pm

Wednesday 17 July 2019 – Midsummer Night's Dream @ 7.30pm

Thursday 18 July 2019 – Richard III @ 7.30pm

NOTES TO EDITORS – CAST AND CREW CREDITS

Making up the 19-strong *Macbeth/A Midsummer Night's Dream* company at Blenheim Palace are **Nana Amoo-Gottfried** (*Ross & Lysander*), **Alex Avery** (*Macbeth & Snug*), **Ellie Burrow** (*Lady Macduff/Young Siward & Fairy Queen/Peaseblossom*), **Charlie Cameron** (*Witch 3/Murderer 2/Scottish Doctor & Puck*), **Christopher Chilton** (*Witch 1/Murderer 1/Messenger & Snout/Fairy*), **Suzy Cooper** (*Lady Macbeth & Peter Quince*), **Claire Cordier** (*Hecate/Gentlewoman/Messenger/Seyton & Hippolyta/Oberon*), **Maria Gray** (*Donalbain/Witch 2/Murderer 3 & First Fairy/Cobweb*), **Paul Hawkyard** (*Macduff & Bottom*), **Adam Kane** (*Malcolm & Fairy*), **Tom Kanji** (*Old Man/Siward/Apparition 3 & Theseus/Titania*), **Mark Peachey** (*Banquo & Demetrius*), **Shane Quigley Murphy** (*Lennox & Starveling/Fairy/Moth*), **Adam Slynn** (*Captain/Apparition 2/Servant & Philostrate/Mustardseed/Fairy King*), **Paul Stonehouse** (*Duncan/Porter/English Doctor & Egeus/Fairy*), **Toby Vaughan** (*Swing/Cover & Flute/Fairy*), **Elexi Walker** (*Angus/Lord/Messenger & Helena*), **Jenny Wall** (*Apparition 3 & Fairy*), and **Francesca Zoutwelle** (*Apparition 1/Menteith & Hermia*).

Making up the 19-strong *Romeo & Juliet/Richard III* company at Blenheim Palace are **Bonnie Baddoo** (*Prologue/Balthasar & Lady Anne/Messenger 2/Soldier/Oxford*), **James Bradwell** (*Friar Laurence & Archbishop of York/Bishop of Ely/Priest/Oxford*), **Matthew Brown** (*Peter/Page & Soldier/Sheriff/Blunt*), **Daniel Burke** (*Paris/Officer & Brackenbury/Ratcliffe*), **Jonathan Christie** (*Mercutio/Officer & Dorset/Soldier*), **Grace Cooney-Gam** (*Princess Escalus & Duchess of York/Herbert/Soldier*), **James Coutsvlis** (*Swing*), **Ella Dunlop** (*Juliet & Rivers/Messenger 3/Page/Surrey/Soldier*), **Dave Fishley** (*Sampson & Richard III*), **Mathilda Holland** (*Swing*), **Emilio Iannucci** (*Romeo & Grey/Messenger 4/Brandon/Soldier/Citizen 3*), **John Macaulay** (*Capulet & Clarence/Lovel*), **William Mannering** (*Abraham/Friar John/Constable & Buckingham*), **Doireann May White** (*Benvolia & Hastings/Alderman/Messenger/Soldier*), **Anna Northam** (*Lady Montague/Apothecary & Catesby/Soldier*), **Amanda Ryan** (*Lady Capulet & Queen Elizabeth*), **Jay Saighal** (*Tybal/Officer & Richmond/Tyrell/Murderer 2/Corpse*), **Nicola Sanderson** (*Nurse & Derby/Gaol Keeper/Soldier/Citizen 1*), and **Simon Startin** (*Montague & Edward IV/Lord Mayor*).

Making up the 18-strong *Hamlet/Twelfth Night* company in York are **Leandra Ashton** (*Courtier/Soldier/Sailor & Olivia*), **Antony Bunsee** (*Player King/Courtier/Soldier & Priest*), **Clare Corbett** (*Horatio & Feste/Sailor*), **Marcello Cruz** (*Laertes/Soldier & Sebastian*), **Fine Time Fontayne** (*Ghost 1/Player 1/Digger 1/Lord & Sir Toby Belch/Sailor/Musician*), **Hannah Francis-Barker** (*swing*), **Mark Holgate** (*Marcellus/Fortinbras/Player 3 & Orsino*), **Gordon Kane** (*Polonius/English Ambassador & Captain*), **Rina Mahoney** (*Gertrude & Maria/Sailor*), **Serena Manteghi** (*Ophelia & 1st Officer*), **David Oakes** (*Hamlet & 2nd Officer/Sailor*), **Olivia Onyehara** (*Osric/Courtier/Soldier & Viola*), **Alex Phelps** (*Courtier/Reynaldo/Priest/Soldier & Sir Andrew Aguecheek/Sailor/Musician*), **Richard Standing** (*Claudius & Curio/Musician*), **Claire Storey** (*Ghost 2/Player 2/Digger 2 & Malvolio/Sailor/Musician*), **Cassie Vallance** (*Guildestern/Bernardo & Fabien/Sailor*) **Wreh-asha Walton** (*Rosencrantz/Francisco & Valentine*) and **Declan Wilson** (*Voltimand/Captain & Antonio/Sailor*).

Making up the 19-strong *Tempest/Henry V* company in York are **Ali Azhar** (*Male Spirit & Dauphin/French Soldier*), **Maggie Bain** (*Antonia & Henry V*), **Raphael Bushay** (*Caliban & Montjoy/Chorus*), **Sam Callis** (*Prospero & King of France/Erpingham*), **Niall Costigan** (*Alonso & York/Governor/Bourbon*), **Richie Daysh**, (*Boatswain & Pistol*), **Leander Deeny** (*Ariel & Constable/Grey*), **Jessica Dennis** (*Female Spirit/Ceres & Chorus/Williams/Nym*), **Charlyne Francis** (*Iris & Katherine/Boy*), **Alexandra Guelff** (*Miranda & Alice/Scrope/Court/Chorus*), **Scott Hoatson** (*Francisco & Westmoreland/Chorus*), **Alexander Knox** (*Ferdinand & Bates/Gloucester*), **Christopher Logan** (*Trinculo & Orleans/MacMorris/Cambridge*), **Amy Loughton** (*Adrian & Fluellen/Chorus*), **Peter Moreton** (*Stephano & Canterbury/Bardolf/Burgundy*), **Johanne Murdock** (*Juno & Duke of Exeter*), **Marilyn Nnadebe** (*Female Spirit & Duke of Berri/Soldier*), **Paul Sockett** (*Sebastian & Gower/Chorus*) and **Flo Wilson** (*Gonzala & Ely/Hostess/Isabel*).

Damian Cruden, artistic director at York Theatre Royal for 22 years, returns to **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE**, having directed *Macbeth* last year in York. This year he will direct *Hamlet* and will serve as overall artistic director for the Company. Award-winning writer **Joyce Branagh**, who has directed *Measure for Measure* at Lancaster Castle as well as *Much Ado About Nothing* at Vienna's English Theatre, and is the sister of acclaimed Shakespearean actor and director Kenneth Branagh, will join the company to direct *Twelfth Night*; **Philip Franks**, best known for playing the role of Charley opposite Catherine Zeta Jones in *The Darling Buds of May*, and more recently Associate Director at Chichester Festival Theatre, will direct *The Tempest*; and **Gemma Fairlie**, recently Associate Director at Pitlochry Festival Theatre and award-winning director of outdoor physical theatre company Light the Fuse, will direct *Henry V*. **Sara Perks** also returns to **SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE**, this year as overall season designer as well as scenic and costume designer for *Hamlet* and costume designer for *Twelfth Night*. **Adrian Linford** will be scenic and costume designer for *The Tempest* and costume designer for *Henry V*. **Max Dorey** will be scenic designer for *Twelfth Night* and *Henry V*.

Tom Wright will be Associate Director for *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and **Juliet Forster**, who was the original director of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* last year, will turn her skills to directing *Romeo & Juliet* this year. **Amy Yardley** will be associate scenic designer for both *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and scenic designer for *Romeo & Juliet*. **Sarah Mercade** will be associate costume designer for *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo & Juliet*. **Lucy Pitman-Wallace** will direct *Richard III*, which will have scenic and costume design by **Adam Nee**.

About Lunchbox Theatrical Productions

Lunchbox Theatrical Productions, founded in 1992 by James Cundall, has established an unrivalled reputation for producing top quality international entertainment in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, The Philippines, Europe and South Africa.

Producing West End and Broadway musicals, plays, boutique shows, spectaculars, concerts, children's shows, ice shows and events across five continents, Lunchbox Theatrical Productions sells over one million visitor experiences per year.

In addition, from the company's UK headquarters, Lunchbox Theatrical Productions has been delivering events in the York region for over 13 years. This includes the award-winning *Yorkshire's Winter Wonderland* incorporating *The Ice Factor*; productions by The Imperial Ice Stars' at Castle Howard, Royal Albert Hall, Chatsworth House and Hyde Park Winter Wonderland; *THOR'S tipi bars* in York, Leeds, Sheffield, Lincoln, London's Hyde Park Winter Wonderland and Brighton; the *Vintage Fun Fair* in York City Centre; and *Christmas at York Museum Gardens*. In 2018, the company created SHAKESPEARE'S ROSE THEATRE in York, which this year returns to York and makes its debut at Blenheim Palace.

About Blenheim Palace

Home of the 12th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough and the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill, Blenheim Palace is a World Heritage Site that boasts over 300 years of history, more than 2000 acres of landscaped Parkland and Formal Gardens, and a wealth of events, tours and exhibitions throughout the year.

About Raymond Gubbay Ltd

Founded in 1966, Raymond Gubbay Ltd is recognised as being at the forefront for promoting and producing popular classical music, opera, ballet and major events worldwide. In partnership with world class venues, including Blenheim Palace, Forestry Commission England, National Trust, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, RGL Ltd regularly produce Christmas light trails around the UK and Europe. Additionally, the company annually presents over 500 concerts. raymondgubbay.co.uk

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