

Harvest Faire Auditions!

Its time to start casting for our 2008 productions!!! We will be making final play selections based on the available folks per the auditions, but the plays we have in mind are listed below. We will also accept scripts from groups offering plays or skits at these meetings. We also need some directors for the pieces and practice sessions do not need to be held here at our place (though they can be). It is important for the main dialogue players to get together and practice to learn the lines – staging can be practiced closer to the event. Dialogue can also be run by phone and we encourage practice by recording your lines and listening to them – we are mimics by nature and hearing lines a few times really helps commit them to memory.

Gammer Gurton's Needle – 1533 (Play)

Gammer – feisty old woman (large amount of dialogue)

Hodge – her witless son (main dialogue)

Tib – Gammer's sharp tongued serving woman (less dialogue)

Cocke – the mischievous house boy (very little dialogue)

Diccon – a smooth-talking local villain (less dialogue)

Dame Chat – another old woman, Gammer's mean-tempered neighbor (fair amount of dialogue)

Bailey – local judge in civil matters (less dialogue)

This coarse but authentic comedy is about the Gammer, who loses her needle, and Diccon, the local villain, who sets her, her son Hodge and her servant girl Tib against the neighbor: Dame Chat. The resulting set up, deceptions and the big cat-fight between the two old women is broad but funny.

Stage combat: mostly the two old ladies slugging it out,

The Farce of Master Pierre Patelin – 1469 (Longer Play)

Patelin – clever con and rogue of a lawyer (main dialogue)

Guillemette – his scheming and greedy wife (fair amount of dialogue)

Jocceaulme the Draper – an ambitious and gullible fabric merchant (good amount of dialogue)

Lambkin the Shepherd – a sly but slow shepherd (less dialogue)

Judge – exasperated and stern (less dialogue)

This French comedy is about a clever lawyer who steals some fabric then creates an elaborate ruse to confuse the man he stole it from by pretending he (the lawyer) was ill at home at the time of the theft. Then he agrees to represent a thieving shepherd against the same merchant, the shepherd's employer. He uses the fabric merchant's lingering confusion over the theft of the fabric to make the judge find him an unreliable witness and he gets the shepherd to pretend to such simpleness of mind that the judge swears he will not allow cases against the shepherd in the future. The shepherd (not as dumb as he acts) uses this decision against Patelin when Patelin tries to collect his fee for representing him in the dismissal of the case.

Jack Juggler – 1562 (Play)

Jack Juggler – a vice and a mischief maker (major dialogue)

Master Bongrace – a blockhead of a gentleman (less dialogue)

Dame Coye – his shrewish wife (less dialogue)

Jenkin Careaway – their servant, a fool (main dialogue)

Jack decides to make a complete fool of Jenkin by first confusing him and then getting him in great trouble with his master and mistress by making him get their evening plans in dis-array. It is amusing but the speaking pieces are fairly long – you need to be able to memorize quite a bit.

Stage combat – Juggler pummels Careaway and Dame Coy smacks him around as well

Nail Broth – Swedish folktale adaptation (brief play)

Tramp – cunning but kindly adventurer, well schooled in the ways of people

Old Woman – stingy and miserly old woman, but one who is secretly enamored of the lives of royalty

Two person dialogue – not very long. The tramp gradually gets the woman to add things to make his nail soup into a kingly meal. Light humor and keen introspection.

Get Up And Bar The Door – Medieval Scottish Ballad adapted (brief play)

Man and Wife – grumpy, argumentative and set in their ways.

Two Robbers – incompetent and cowardly

It is a cold night and SOMEONE has to get out of the nice warm bed and go downstairs to lock the front door – neither husband nor wife will. In their stubbornness they agree that whoever speaks first must go do it and they lie in angry silence. Meanwhile two robbers come in and make themselves at home, eating the food and finally discovering the couple lying stone silent in bed. Then they plan some mischief, thinking the couple are frozen in fear – at last the husband leaps up to protest and the wife follows by crowing that she has won the bet. So they chase out the robbers and the husband bars the door. As they settle into bed again, the wife asks the husband to go put out the light... Short and in verse (could be un-versed).

Love is a Battlefield – Nicholas Udall 1550 (Play)

Ralph Roister Doister – a cowardly bragging moron (major dialogue)

Matthew Merrygreek – his mischievous wingman (main speaking role)

Gawin Goodluck – merchant (cameo role)

Dobinet Doughty/Harpax – witless serving men to Ralph (minor speaking parts)

Truepenny – shrewd manservant to Dame Custance (minor speaking part)

Dame Christian Custance – honorable and beset widow and fiancé to Gavin (major dialogue)

Madge Mumblecrust, Tibet Talkapace, and Annot Aliface – gossipy serving women to Dame Custance (minor roles)

Merrygreek plays the vice – constantly egging Ralph Roister Doister to keep upping the ante in his attempts to win the hand of Dame Custance in spite of her existing engagement and because of the absence of her fiancée on a trading trip. Every time she sends him away, Merrygreek winds him up and sends him back at her – for the entertainment. Eventually, he lets Custance in on the joke – so they agree to play it out and receive Ralph's attempt to take her house and heart by storm by beating him over the head with staves until he is forced to retreat in humiliation.

Significant Stage Combat with odd weapons

The Mad Merry Pranks of Robin Goodfellow – Ben Johnson 1628 (Poem)

This is a soliloquy by Robin alone – a poem of his actions to be recited in an animate and enthusiastic manner. Robin Goodfellow is like Peter Pan and a minor demon all in one personae.

The Play of Pyramus and Thisbe – William Shakespeare 1590 (brief play)

Narrator/Moonshine – a simple person with a dog and a tree branch (main role)

Pyramus – our tragic hero (minor role)

Thisbe – our tragic heroine (minor role)

Wall – simple person who introduces himself and then plays the part of the wall...badly, (minor)

Lion – again, simple person: play the part for laughs (cameo)

This is stolen from the script of *Midsummer Night's Dream* – it is used there as a humorous interlude. The play is meant to be done “poorly” – like a bad Christmas pageant, so it is all about overdoing the parts for a laugh. Pyramus and Thisbe meet at a wall between their family homes and speak their forbidden love through a hole in the wall each night. One night Pyramus arrives to find only Thisbe's scarf – bloodied and chewed by a lion! He assumes she has been killed by the lion and takes his own life in grief. But Thisbe was only scared away by the lion and had dropped the scarf the lion chewed in its already bloody maw. She finds Pyramus dead and kills herself. Dark, but the overacting makes it amusing. Think: Larry, Darryl and Darryl from *Newhart for the Wall*, Moonshine, and Lion...It is “The Peasant Guild” doing Greek tragedy.