



BROWNSEA
OPEN AIR THEATRE

— AT —

CANFORD

SUMMER 2025



OPEN EVENING & AUDITION INFORMATION

OPEN EVENING & AUDITIONS – Thursday January 23rd and Friday January 24th 2025

Performance Dates – August 9th – August 23rd 2025

If you have never been involved with BOAT before, the following information is essential for you to read.

This applies not only to those auditioning for a role in the play but to those wanting to work backstage, making costumes and props, set building or working front of house.

Even if you are an 'old hand' please read this carefully as it includes **information specific to 2025 as we embark on a new venture at Canford.**

All this information is important, but particularly take note of the key dates below.

As always - Auditions are open to EVERYONE over the age of 16 (unless stated otherwise. There is ONE role in The Winter's Tale for an under 16). No previous experience is required, just enthusiasm and talent.

ABOUT BOAT

BOAT is one of the biggest theatrical productions in the south, until now usually performing annually on the National Trust's Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour, Dorset. Like Brownsea we hope that Canford will provide beautiful surroundings for BOAT to continue providing wonderful entertainment and a fantastic evening of traditional Shakespeare.

The company is professionally run, but all of those involved with BOAT, whether on stage, backstage or front of house are unpaid volunteers. Since 1964 BOAT has involved more than 1,700 volunteers, entertained more than 100,000 people and raised over £300,000 for the National Trust.

Every production takes many months to prepare each year, but it is an experience that the cast, crew and audience remember for a long time, and relish coming back to year after year.

Make 'Brownsea Open Air Theatre at Canford 2025' the production that lures you to join us!

WHEN ARE THE AUDITIONS AND OPEN EVENINGS?

On: THURSDAY JANUARY 23RD & FRIDAY JANUARY 24TH

- Pre-booked auditions between 5:30pm and 9:00pm
- Anyone turning up without pre-booking will be seen **if** a slot becomes available before 9pm. (There may be some late availability at the end of the night.)

If you are interested in auditioning but can't make these dates, please contact the BOAT 2025 Production Manager - boatproductionmanager@gmail.com

WHERE ARE THEY?

At: The Centre, Barns Road, Ferndown. BH22 8XH



SIGNING UP AS A MEMBER OF THE CREW?

Would you like to join the Backstage, Front of House, Costume, Props, Sound, Lighting or Set Building and Painting teams?

If you would like to apply to volunteer as a member of one of the Behind-The-Scenes teams, please submit your application form online.

You are very welcome to also come along at any time during the evening of either of the Open Evening dates (Jan 23rd or 24th between 6pm – 9pm) to meet and ask questions of the various Head of Department and chat with other volunteers.

The WINTER'S TALE

The Heads of Department will be there to meet you, answer any questions, give you a clearer idea of what is involved in each department, and will find out your special interests and experience.

We are very happy to introduce you to new skills and, rest assured, we are delighted to welcome people without any experience of theatre - you might like to be active in more than one department. If you volunteer **three or more times** throughout the season, you will be entitled to a complimentary ticket to watch the play.

Set Building (and some Props making) will take place on site at Canford School on designated dates, and access will be controlled. Even if you are not part of the official set-build team, when the season begins you will be given a membership card that enables you to attend at Canford at specific dates/times to help with all the tasks that are involved in mounting and dismantling a huge open-air production. This is a time when everyone is essential and, as well as working hard, we also aim to make it an enjoyable social occasion when cast and crew meet and mingle.

You can choose to complete your sign-up forms ahead of time or do that on the night instead.

The forms can be found here:

- If you have access to a Google/Gmail account: <https://forms.gle/P5skmCXDwmDCvp9k6>
- If you DO NOT have access to a Google/Gmail account: <https://forms.gle/GkC3dXJHT8xqT65RA>

Paper forms will also be made available on the night for those who need them.

AUDITIONING FOR AN ACTING ROLE?

If you would like to audition for an acting role (speaking or non-speaking) please read the following.

PRE-BOOKED AUDITIONS: To save auditionees from waiting around a long time for their audition BOAT have introduced audition slots.

For both audition evenings you can book a time slot as follows:

- 5:30pm – 6:15pm This slot is initially for under 16 auditions, but will be opened up nearer the time if slots are still available (there is only ONE under 16 role in the production)
- 6:15pm - 7:15pm
- 7:15pm - 8:15pm
- 8:15pm - 9:00pm

Please note - there are only a limited number of the pre-booked audition slots available so don't delay if you would like one!

Please arrive at least 10-15 minutes prior to your allotted time to make sure that your audition forms have been completed and submitted correctly.

The forms can be found here:

- If you have access to a Google/Gmail account: <https://forms.gle/qtr5GiKqAvbkrV7N9>
- If you DO NOT have access to a Google/Gmail account: <https://forms.gle/TsY2XccwytKHjyAW6>

Paper forms will also be made available on the night for those who need them, but please email boatproductionmanager@gmail.com as soon as possible to make sure you have an audition slot booked.

About The Audition

Before coming to audition, please download the "Audition Pieces". Select which role(s) you want to audition for and prepare the relevant audition pieces.

Individual auditions will take place in a separate room in front of a panel of 3 people - the director and two other BOAT actors / directors. We are all used to the experience of auditioning, so we know how nervous this makes people feel. Be assured, we are not looking for a polished performance - our aim is to create an atmosphere in which you feel you can do yourself justice. If you make a mistake, it's fine. If you want to start again, that's not a problem either. Just relax and enjoy yourself.

The panel may ask you to do the piece again and may suggest you try something different. This doesn't mean you did it wrong, they just want to see you try different aspects of the role.

Some characters have more than one audition piece to look at. You may be asked to perform just one or you may be asked to perform them all. Where there are other characters speaking in your audition pieces those words will be delivered by someone on the panel to assist you.

You are very welcome to stay for the rest of the session after your audition, to catch up with friends, meet the other people auditioning and talk to the various Heads of Department who will also be there.

YOU MUST BE 16+ by 8th May 2025 to audition for a part unless otherwise stated.

The BOAT Experience

Performing for BOAT is a unique and wonderful experience, but it does require a big commitment from all the cast - from the initial read through all the way through to the dismantling of the set once the production is finished. Please read the following before deciding to audition ...

Rehearsals

Rehearsals will be up to 3 evenings a week (the pattern of evenings will vary but will all be between Monday and Friday). If cast, you will not have to attend every rehearsal in the early stages as these will be scheduled in accordance with a detailed rehearsal plan involving specific scenes or actors.

Most actors **will** be required for **all** rehearsals from mid-July

The rehearsals will be held in three stages. Specific dates will be confirmed as soon as possible after the auditions. All rehearsals will be in the Bournemouth / Poole area.

- 1) Indoor rehearsals: - from mid-May until near the end of June. In these rehearsals we will explore the play, learn the lines and basic blocking, and experiment with ideas.
- 2) Outdoor rehearsals Stage One: - ALL out of doors rehearsals will be onsite at Canford. For Stage One from June 30th until July 24th there will be 3 scheduled rehearsals per week with possible contingency for bad weather. Rehearsals will be in the vicinity of where the set is being built – and on the set once safe to do so

The
WINTER'S
TALE

3) Outdoor rehearsals Stage Two: - Stage Two will take place from July 29th after the erection of the auditorium and (soon after) the lighting rig. Everyone should expect to be called for all rehearsals and available, if needed, for EVERY evening up until the final Dress rehearsal date of August 8th

All cast will be responsible for getting to rehearsals on time. Indoor rehearsals will be from 7pm - 10pm. Outdoor rehearsals may start earlier and in the initial stages, due to the light, finish earlier.

Performances

All cast will, of course, need to be available every evening for the full run of the play from August 9th to August 23rd

Although performances are scheduled more or less every other day, the other evenings are designated as contingency nights should a performance be called off for bad weather.

Cast Member Expectations

As a cast member you would, of course, be expected to:

- Turn up to every rehearsal you are called for – at the scheduled time.
- Take direction and write notes.
- Learn your lines by an agreed point in the rehearsal schedule.
- If you are successfully cast in the play, in addition to your role we also expect you to volunteer **three or more times** throughout the season as part of one of the following teams: Set Building/Painting, Props Making and/or Costume Making. No special expertise is required. Everyone finds this an enjoyable experience as they see different aspects of the play coming together and meet other members of the company.

You will also be expected to:

- Help dismantle the set (scheduled for the weekends immediately after the final performance).
- Help publicise the show as much as you can.