

Saratoga Shakespeare's *TWELFTH NIGHT* - AUDITIONS FOR PERFORMERS

Saratoga Shakespeare Company is seeking both Equity and non-Equity local performers for a July production of *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare in Congress Park, Saratoga Springs, NY. *All roles are Paid.*

Audition Date(s): **May 20, 2023: 10 am - 6 pm**
 May 21, 2023: 10 - 4 pm (Callbacks only)

LOCATION: Skidmore College, Janet Kinghorn Bernhard Theater

Please prepare two one-minute Shakespeare monologues. Appointments will be scheduled every 5 minutes, starting at 10 am. Please email helena@helenabinder.com to request a time and put "Twelfth Night EPA" in the subject line.

ACTORS EQUITY CONTRACT: SPT 3

PERSONNEL: Director, Helena Binder

DATES: First Rehearsal: June 26, 2023, Performances: July 13-16 and 19 – 21, 2023

BREAKDOWN:

VIOLA - A young woman of aristocratic birth, who, having been washed up on the shores of Illyria decides to make her own way in the world. She disguises herself as a young man, calling herself "Cesario," and becomes a page to Duke Orsino. Viola exhibits strength of character, quick wit, and resourcefulness. Although her disguise puts her in an impossible position, she maintains self-control and a quiet dignity that contrast with the over-the-top emotional performances of love and mourning by the other main characters, Orsino and Olivia. While those two characters seem almost to be play-acting, Viola truly feels pain when she believes that her brother Sebastian is dead and when her love for Orsino seems impossible. Her poignant plight is the central conflict in the play.

SEA CAPTAIN/FABIAN (Double cast) - The Captain of the ship that sank while carrying the twins Viola and Sebastian. The captain survives along with Viola and assures her that the last he saw of Sebastian, her brother was alive. Loyal, helpful, and a native of Illyria, he gives Viola information about the region that helps her devise her plan to find work with Orsino. **FABIAN** - An attendant in Olivia's household, presumably often participating in the antics of Sir Toby. Earnest and straightforward.

ORSINO - A powerful nobleman in the country of Illyria. Orsino is lovesick for the beautiful Olivia, but becomes more and more fond of his new attendant, Cesario, who is actually a woman—Viola. Orsino is a vehicle through which the play explores the absurdity of love. His constant, self-indulgent complaints about his lovesickness also display his extreme self-centeredness and considerable ego. It is the self-indulgence and the conquest that appeal to him.

OLIVIA - A wealthy, beautiful and noble Illyrian lady, Olivia is courted by Orsino and Sir Andrew Aguecheek, but insists that she is in mourning for her brother, who has recently died. She and Orsino are mirror characters in that each seems to enjoy wallowing in his or her own misery and self-involvement. Viola's arrival in the masculine guise of Cesario enables Olivia to break free of her self-indulgent melancholy. Olivia seems to have no difficulty transferring her affections from one love interest to the next, however, suggesting that her romantic feelings do not run deep.

SEBASTIAN - Viola's twin brother whom she believes is lost at sea, and who likewise, thinks she's dead. He is an aristocrat and capable of deeply felt emotion for his sister. The constant, powerful love he shows while grieving

and when reunited with Viola contrasts with Orsino's and Olivia's relatively frivolous emotions. He is also the only major character in the play who is completely truthful. He is also pragmatic, as when the beautiful, wealthy Olivia proposes to him, and he accepts, despite the fact that he has never met her before.

MALVOLIO - The straitlaced steward—or head servant—in the household of Olivia. Malvolio is supercilious and looks down on others, particularly those who engage in drinking and having fun. Priggish and haughty, he is a self-righteous killjoy who annoys the other members of the household by his constant condescension. In return, Toby, Sir Andrew, and Maria, play a cruel trick on him, making him believe that Olivia is in love with him. In his fantasies about marrying his mistress, he reveals a powerful ambition to rise above his social class. However, Malvolio is not an evil character and his eventual downfall should evoke some ambiguity as to its fairness. Though the prank on Malvolio adds to the comic relief of *Twelfth Night*, it also reveals Malvolio's ambition, arrogance and deluded self-love and he remains, in the end, bitter and lacking in personal insight.

FESTE (FOOL)- The clown, or fool, of Olivia's household, Feste is a free-spirited singer who moves between Olivia's and Orsino's homes. He earns his living by making pointed jokes, singing songs, being generally witty, and offering good advice and he functions, in a sense, as a Greek chorus. In spite of being a professional fool, Feste is the wisest character in the play, highlighting the foolishness of the others. But he is a sympathetic rogue and not judgmental or condescending. Some singing required. Ability to accompany self on guitar, a plus.

SIR TOBY BELCH - Olivia's uncle/cousin. Olivia lets Sir Toby live with her, despite his rowdy behavior, practical jokes, heavy drinking and late-night carousing. He has managed to finance his excessive eating and drinking by latching on to the rich but clueless Sir Andrew. Carefree and insolent, Toby represents the chaotic spirit, and is a foil for the controlling, self-righteous Malvolio.

MARIA - Olivia's clever, feisty and daring maid, she is protective of the delinquent Toby, whom she loves. Unlike, Malvolio, Maria succeeds in bettering her social position through her insight and wit and is essentially the gears that keep the household running.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK - A friend of Sir Toby's and an aristocrat, Sir Andrew attempts to court Olivia, but he doesn't stand a chance. He wants to regard himself as witty, brave and good at languages and dancing, but it is his money that keeps him in Toby's, and thereby Olivia's, good graces. A clueless innocent.

ANTONIO - A man with a dubious past who rescues Sebastian after his shipwreck. Steadfast, earnest and loyal but having had some run-ins with the law, Antonio has become very fond of Sebastian, caring for him, accompanying him to Illyria and furnishing him with money. Antonio's attraction to Sebastian, however, never bears fruit. Despite the ambiguous and shifting gender roles in the play, Antonio's love for Sebastian cannot be fulfilled.

CURIO – Gentleman serving Orsino. Member of the aristocracy devoted to Orsino's service. May be double cast with ANTONIO.

OFFICER – Official police of Illyria.

Saratoga Shakespeare Company is committed to an inclusive casting policy and encourages all actors to audition regardless of an individual's sex, race, color, religion, age, disability, status as a veteran, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. Please refer to breakdown for details.