

## Audition Notice

### *Our Country's Good*



Our Country's Good by Timberlake Wertenbaker, original cast at Royal Court Theatre, 1988 – David Haig, Jim Broadbent, Jude Akuwudike, Lesley Sharp

*From distant climes, o'er wide-spread seas we come,  
Though not with much eclat or beat of drum,  
True patriots all; for be it understood,  
We left our country for our country's good;  
No private views disgrac'd our generous zeal,  
What urg'd our travels was our country's weal;  
And none will doubt but that our emigration  
Has prov'd most useful, to the British nation.*

#### THE SHOW

30 years on from its premiere at the Royal Court, *Our Country's Good* is a modern classic, exploring themes of crime, punishment and the unifying and civilising power of theatre.

Set in 1787, it tells the true story of a group of convicts transported to Australia who, faced with the appalling realities of life in a penal colony, come together to rehearse and perform a play. With around 20 fantastic and varied roles there's great opportunities for a wide range of actors looking to get their teeth into this award winning script.

- Directed by Chloë Robertson – Chloë has been part of Sedos since 2004, she has performed or directed around 20 shows. Directing credits include: RENT, Macbeth, Guys & Dolls, Shape of Things, The Wild Party, Comic Potential. Performing credits include: Don Carlos, Hapgood, Little Night Music, Noises Off, Jekyll & Hyde, Merrily We Roll Along, A Man of No Importance, Arcadia, Company, City of Angels.
- Produced by Rebecca Kendall – Rebecca has been involved in Sedos since 2002 and has produced or directed around 40 productions. Directing credits include: One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Don Carlos, Romeo & Juliet, Much Ado About Nothing, Merchant of Venice. Producing Credits include: Jekyll & Hyde, RENT, Sweet Charity, Les Liaisons Dangereuse, Little Shop of Horrors, Festen, The Libertine.

WORKSHOP/AUDITION/ PERFORMANCE / REHEARSAL DETAILS:

Workshop	28 <sup>th</sup> June
Workshop Venue	1 Brewers' Hall Garden, London, EC2V 5BX
Auditions:	15th July – 10am-5pm
Recalls:	16 <sup>th</sup> July 7-10pm
Audition Venue:	1 Brewers' Hall Garden, London, EC2V 5BX
Get In weekend	20 <sup>th</sup> 21 <sup>st</sup> October
Tech/Dress	22 <sup>nd</sup> October
Show Dates:	23 <sup>rd</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
Venue:	The Bridewell Theatre, Bride Lane

Rehearsal Dates: Starting 21<sup>st</sup> August 2 week nights and 1 weekend day mostly Tuesday Thursday Saturday. Full schedule available on request. Not all cast called for all rehearsals but as this is a big ensemble show we would request availability and flexibility for as much of the rehearsal period as possible.

WORKSHOP

The workshop will take the form of an informal round table reading of the script with time for questions. You can come along a read a part or just listen in.

AUDITIONS

The auditions will take the form of a workshop with pairs / groups given short sections to work on and perform together. Auditionees are invited to read the play (or attend the read through) and come with ideas of whom they would like to play; but remain flexible as not all combinations / doubles may be possible – you may be asked to read for other roles as well or instead. For a copy of the script please email [OCG@sedos.co.uk](mailto:OCG@sedos.co.uk)

Recalls:

If recalls are needed, they will most likely take the form of a second workshop as above, with different or extended sections of the play and trial doubling.

REGISTER

To register for the workshops please email [OCG@sedos.co.uk](mailto:OCG@sedos.co.uk).

To register for audition please visit <https://membership.sedos.co.uk/>

You are welcome to let us know which parts are most of interest and if there are any parts you would not consider but we would ask you to remain flexible during the process.

THE CAST

Almost all parts will be doubled. We are looking for an ensemble cast of about 10-12, who will change character on stage and effect any set changes during the play.

All parts are open to actors of any ethnicity, age and physical type. Women actors will be asked to double with male roles and we will consider cross casting some female roles if asked. There is no nudity in the play, but some male characters may be asked to appear topless.

CHARACTERS

- **An Aboriginal Australian:** observes and commentates on the British settlers, reflecting the experiences of native Australians under colonisation.

The Royal Marines

- **Captain Arthur Phillip, RN:** Called out of retirement to take on the position of Governor of the first fleet to Australia, Phillips is a calm and controlled leader, intellectual, understanding, and authoritative.

- **Major Robbie Ross, RM:** Angry, ruthless and domineering man, who intimidates the convicts and believes that their punishments should be severe. Ridicules the idea of the play throughout and tries to stop it happening.
- **Captain David Collins, RM:** Acts as Judge in the colony, has a measured, balanced and logical approach, thinks of things from a legal perspective.
- **Captain Watkin Tench, RM:** Sarcastic. Hates all convicts on principal, dismisses them as barbarians and disregards any possibility of their being redeemed.
- **Captain Jemmy Campbell, RM:** open to interpretation, either a drunkard or so posh as to sound drunk! Provides light relief to Ross's darkest moments.
- **Reverend Richard Johnson:** preoccupied with the convicts' moral and sexual behaviours and presenting Christian values rather than dealing with practicalities.
- **Lieutenant William Dawes, RM:** The colony's astronomer, mind always on the stars.
- **Lieutenant George Johnston, RM:** ostensibly a compassionate man, engages in illicit relations with the women of the camp.
- **Second Lieutenant Ralph Clark** (doesn't double) : Through the process of directing and staging *The Recruiting Officer*, Ralf transforms from a frustrated, anxious lower officer, wary of the convicts, who tease him for being a 'mollie' (gay), into someone who unites and leads the players and falls in love with Mary Brenham, eventually fathering a child with her.
- **Second Lieutenant William Faddy:** Dislikes Ralph – possibly sees him as direct competition – and opposes his every effort for no obvious other reason.
- **Midshipman Harry Brewer:** Lowest ranking RM. Obsessively jealous in his relationship with Duckling, Harry's mental health deteriorates throughout the play, as he is tormented by the ghost of a young man he had hanged.

#### The Convicts

- **John Arscott:** defeated and inept, finds solace in playing Sergeant Kite.
- **James "Ketch" Freeman:** Despised by the other convicts for accepting the job of Hangman in the colony, Ketch repeatedly tries to ingratiate and justify himself. Plays 'Justice Balance' in the play
- **John Wisehammer:** Jewish autodidact who loves words. Plays Captain Brazen and – reluctantly – doubles as Bullock in the play. Asks Mary to marry him.
- **Black Caesar:** Originally from Madagascar, slightly bullish, Talks himself into a silent role as 'servant' in the play.
- **Robert Sideway:** Londoner, skilled pickpocket, hugely enthusiastic about acting and the theatre. Plays 'Worthy' in the play.
- **Mary Brenham:** Young, shy, thoughtful, plays Silvia (romantic lead) in the play and falls in love with Ralph Clark.
- **Dabby Bryant:** Mary's more confident friend, talks her into auditioning. Plain spoken and can be argumentative, plays 'Rose' in the play. Devon accent. Fierce rivalry with Duckling
- **Duckling Smith:** young, feisty, sentenced for being a prostitute and thief. Has a relationship with Harry Brewer but conceals her feelings for him until his death. Plays Lucy in the play. Fierce rivalry with Dabby.
- **Liz Morden:** Feistiest of the women, defensive, angry; playing Melinda in the play is a transformative experience for her.
- **Meg Long:** Nicknamed "Shitty Meg", described as 'very old, very smelly, very dirty'. Could be cross cast.

#### **Fee**

To audition you must be a full Sedos member or pay a non-refundable £5 audition fee. If cast, non-members will need to become a members (£30 for the year direct debit or £35 one-off). Everyone cast will need to pay a participation fee (£30 for plays).