

# AUDITION NOTICE



## PLAY READING AUDITIONS

Friday 9 February 2024, 8pm in the Studio  
Sunday 18 February 2024, 2pm in the Theatre

## FIRST REHEARSAL PERFORMANCES

Wednesday 3 April 2024  
30 May – 8 June 2024, 8pm  
Matinée: Saturday 8 June at 2.30pm

## DIRECTOR PA

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Scripts available from Keith

The then reigning monarch, Elizabeth II; her most powerful subject, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher were always destined to clash. One believed there was no such thing as society, the other had vowed to serve it. Moira Buffini's wickedly hit comedy Handbagged explores the battle of wills between these two giants of the 20th century during Margaret Thatcher's period in office in this funny and feisty play. This play uses the meetings between these two giants to explore political issues of the time and to do so there are slightly younger version having the official meetings and an older version observing and commenting on proceedings. The men and the occasional woman in Thatcher's personal and political life are played by male actors. Actors 1 and 2 must be versatile character actors as they play a variety of cameo roles throughout. There is also the possibility of several actors playing these roles.

## CHARACTER AUDITION PIECES:

The following pages are the audition pieces. At the audition you maybe given time to prepare and then read a scene from the play with others if auditioning for M, Q , Mags and Liz.

**T (Mrs Thatcher in her 60s)**

Freedom  
Freedom and democracy  
They are things worth dying for  
We must never  
Never stop resisting those who would take them from us  
And when they have been taken  
We will fight until we get them back  
The act of resistance is our defining act as human beings  
To say “No, I will not stand for that,  
I will not collude, collaborate, negotiate  
I will not compromise”  
To say to the enemies of freedom “You are wrong”  
To resist, whatever the cost  
To say No  
This is courage  
This is integrity

I never said “There is no such thing as society”  
I said there is a living tapestry of men and women  
I said the beauty of that tapestry will depend upon how much each of us  
is prepared to take responsibility for ourselves  
Society is a framework for freedom  
Freedom that gives a man room to breathe  
To make his own decisions and to chart his own course  
There is the individual  
And there is family  
People in this country feel entitled to state help  
I reject this entitlement  
“I’m homeless, the government must house me” – why?

**Q (Queen Elizabeth II in her 60s)**

We conceive parliamentary institutions, with their free speech and respect for the rights of minorities, to be a precious part of our way of life and outlook. They inspire a broad tolerance in thought and expression.

During recent centuries, this message has been sustained and invigorated by the immense contribution, in language, literature and action, of the nations of our Commonwealth overseas. Our Commonwealth gives expression, as I pray it always will, to living principles as sacred to the Crown and Monarchy as to its many Parliaments and Peoples. I ask you now to cherish them – and practise them too; then we can go forward together in peace, seeking justice and freedom for all men.

*[reacting to Mrs Thatcher following the Brighton bombing]*

We watched her speech the next day

Not a hair out of place

She made reference to the atrocity and then she just carried on

Profoundly impressive

But at what cost?

Two weeks later, Indira Gandhi was assassinated outside her own home

They removed thirty bullets from her body

**MAGS (Mrs Thatcher in her 50s)**

When I got to Oxford and saw what was being taught –

Somerville was very Left and I knew I wouldn't fit in –

Something in me thought

No, this is wrong, this is wrong

No, these consensus economics cap profit

You see what we have now is a failed socialist experiment

Socialism is inimical to freedom. The left-wing slide we have been on leads inexorably to poverty and human bondage

The only way to build a decent world is to improve the level of wealth via the activities of free markets. My father knew this.

He taught me that you've got to sell your goods every day

It's a constant battle that's never won.

I will call their bluff

If they want a leadership challenge

By golly I'll give them one.

I'm a world stateswoman

On the verge of committing our troops to Kuwait,

I'm a proven election winner

And I can count on my cabinet to back me to the hilt

Let's have a leadership challenge

Come on boys

Who's up to it?

Who thinks that they can take me on?

**LIZ (Queen Elizabeth II in her 50s)**

Prime Minister

One likes to know what's going on

One likes to feel that one's a sort of sponge

You can come and tell me things

And some things stay

And some go out the other ear

One might occasionally do some good

And one can put one's point of view

One is unelected, yes

But one is experienced

One likes to be constructive

And perhaps one cannot publicly express opinion

One can be a trusted tool

Especially abroad.

We shall not begin to close this poverty gap until we hear less about nationalism  
and more about interdependence

One of the main aims of the Commonwealth is to make an effective contribution  
towards redressing the economic balance between nations

We in the Commonwealth are fortunate enough

To belong to a worldwide comradeship

Let us make the most of it

Only then can we make the message of the angels come true:

"Peace on earth, goodwill towards men"

God bless you all.

**ACTOR ONE****Kenneth Kaunda**

I'm Kenneth Kaunda, Father of Zambia

I'm about halfway through my twenty-seven years of rule, during which time I abuse democracy and amass a huge personal fortune.

But that's another story.

When we Commonwealth heads of government meet, we are all equal under the Queen.

In other words, the British government is just one of many.

The Queen is like a mother confessor to us all. A very down-to-earth person.

**Nancy Reagan**

The Queen was so thoughtful.

She showed us up to our room herself.

And you should have seen the little things she'd put out for us.

There were letters from Abraham Lincoln.

There was a note from George the Third saying "America is lost to us!"

And there was the sweetest letter from Her Majesty's parents, written when they were visiting President Roosevelt. It described a picnic they'd been on, where the King had eaten a hot dog for the first time in his life.

I was knocked out by Windsor Castle.

**Neil Kinnock**

I warn you that you will have pain - when healing and relief depend upon payment.

I warn you that you will have ignorance - when learning is a privilege and not a right.

I warn you that you will have poverty - when pensions slip and benefits are whittled away by a government that won't pay in an economy that can't pay.

I warn you that you will be cold - when fuel charges are used as a tax system that the rich don't notice and the poor can't afford.

I warn you not to be young....

I warn you not to fall ill....

I warn you not to grow old....

**ACTOR TWO****Gerry Adams**

Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein. What the IRA did to Mountbatten is what Mountbatten had been doing all his life to other people; and with his war record I don't think he could have objected to dying in what was clearly a war situation. He knew what he was doing – coming to our country. In my opinion, the IRA achieved its objective: people started paying attention to what was happening in Ireland.

**Ronald Reagan**

There were two guys in Moscow waiting in line for vodka and one of them says “This line is too long; I've had enough. I'm going into the Kremlin and I'm going to kill Brezhnev.” So off he goes and after about an hour he comes back. And the other guy says “So did you kill him?” and he says “No, that line was even longer.”

**Michael Heseltine**

The Labour Party is like a one-legged army. Left. Left. Left-left-left. They are a rabble of extremists united only by their determination to keep the red flag flying here. Let us make one thing clear. The red flag has never flown throughout these islands yet. Nor for a thousand years has the flag of any other alien creed. It is only our party that can keep it that way. We must not and we will not fail!

**Rupert Murdoch**

The press had basically printed whatever fawning flummery the Palace had given them. But I wasn't going to have that in my papers. I'm Rupert Murdoch, obviously.

When I bought the Sun in 1968, it was a soggy broadsheet. And I said to the editor – you're now part of a tabloid revolution. I want a tearaway paper with lots of tits in it. I bought The Times and the Sunday Times in 1981. I was doing the same thing there.