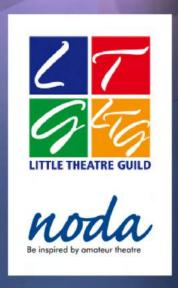


Welcome to Progress!

Founded in 1946, we're the oldest producing theatre in Reading.

A self-governing, self-funding theatre group, run entirely by volunteers. We are members of the Little Theatre Guild and the National Operatic and Dramatic Association, and are a registered charity in England (no. 1182798). Our patron is Sir Kenneth Branagh.



11 Shows per year

We put together a varied and challenging programme of shows every season, including our traditional Open Air Shakespeare production at Reading Abbey Ruins each Summer.



An Intimate Venue

Our intimate 96 seat venue has a fully licensed bar. There is wheelchair access and a hearing loop, and we are committed to making further improvements in the coming years to make our building more accessible.



Youth Theatre

We have a vibrant and happy Youth Theatre, split into 4 groups by age. Regular workshops involve theatre games, improvisations and skills development. Youth Theatre shows are often challenging and always performed to a high standard. Many past members maintain an interest in theatre and numerous aspects of performance art as adults, some of them professionally!



Award Winners

In June 2020, we were very honoured to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. This award is equivalent to an MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire), and is the highest award given to volunteer groups across the UK, to recognise outstanding work done in their own communities.

History of Reading Abbey

Reading Abbey was a famous royal abbey of Benedictine monks, founded on a lavish scale in 1121 by one of the greatest medieval English kings, Henry I. It contained the tomb of that king and remained under royal patronage until its dissolution in 1539. Conveniently situated on major communication routes, it witnessed many important royal and other historical events, including the marriage of John of Gaunt to Blanche of Lancaster in 1359, and the publication of Edward IV's secret marriage to Elizabeth Woodville in 1464. The abbey was richly endowed by the royal family and others, and held estates and churches in many English counties. The abbey's presence helped the little town of Reading, which was under its lordship, to grow and prosper. Monastic life came to an end in 1539. The last abbot, Hugh Cook, alias Faringdon, refused to surrender his abbey to Henry VIII and was found guilty of treason and executed near the abbey gate in November, 1539.

Progress Theatre in the Ruins

Progress Theatre have been presenting an open-air event in Reading since 1995. Originally staged in the ruins of Reading Abbey, it quickly became a cultural highlight in the Thames Valley region, with around 4,000 people attending in later years. Productions moved to the beautiful Caversham Court Gardens whilst the ruins underwent repair. We returned in 2018, with the first open-air show in the ruins since its closure 10 years previously and have staged a production every year since, bar 2020.

Mounting such an event requires the efforts of a large team of people and everything from the seating to electrical cabling, the front of house tents and stage has to be ordered and installed on site. Preparations start a year in advance and from January, the production team work flat out to ensure that everything runs as smoothly as possible.

The Progress production team are all volunteers and each person becomes involved because they enjoy the challenges and are passionate about theatre. If this sounds like you, contact us or speak to one of the stewards to learn more about how you can get involved in our open-air productions or any other aspect of Progress Theatre.

In July 2024 we will present:

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde

Renowned as Oscar Wilde's finest and best-loved romantic comedy, *The Importance of Being Earnest* is a hilarious tale of double lives and mistaken identities. With romance and misadventure at every turn, this classic will be given new life in Reading Abbey Ruins, against a backdrop of the Gaol in which Wilde was imprisoned.

Foreword from our Patron



"What country, friends, is this?" So Viola, the heroine of *Twelfth Night* asks, as she begins her journey as a stranger in a strange land.

The answer, as provided by this evening's entertainment, is 'Pirate country!'



And what an exciting place to experience this epic comedy of mistaken identity and upturned vanities. The sea roars loud through an adventure of identical twins who are lost on the high seas, and (just as dangerously), lost in love.

The resultant play is a wondrous combination of the deeply silly and the tenderly vulnerable, and it is hard to imagine a more invigorating setting to unleash both, than the golden age of piracy.

Sea shanties are a rousing way to unlock the many musical set pieces within the story. They combine to make *Twelfth Night* perhaps the most complete of Shakespeare's comedies. It has the music of humour and sadness, grief and hope. It does not avoid the cruelty that humans (especially pirates), can sometimes inflict on their fellows, but it always provides sharply witty commentary on the bullies, and their empty bravado.

It is a play in which it is possible to laugh as hard as you may also be tempted to cry. Malvolio's gulling and subsequent yellow-stockinged madness is one of the great comedic turns in all of Shakespeare, but his ultimate humiliation is also uncomfortable, and moving, and asks us all questions about the nature or necessity of punishment. As Malvolio asks simply and repeatedly in his unforgettable final monologue: "Why?"

But mostly the play asks you to give yourself to a big hearted experience that puts love in the centre of the story, laughter in the centre of our hearts, and invites you to strange new lands where the most extraordinary things can happen...

Progress Theatre are your ideal guides to take to the high seas, jiggle the mainsail, scupper your hearties, and generally enjoy the heck out of another wonderful open-air adventure with our (temporary) Bard of Berkshire. Thank you for supporting live theatre and Progress Theatre, and have a wonderful experience!



Sir Kenneth Branagh - Patron

Producers' Welcome

We are very pleased, as joint Producers, to welcome you all to this year's open-air production of *Twelfth Night* in the Reading Abbey Ruins. After the very successful performances of *Great Expectations* in 2022, we return to Shakespeare and present for you one of his most well-known and popular comedies, which we last put on in 2000.

Progress Theatre is proud of its tradition of putting on open-air productions in an almost continuous line stretching back to 1995. There is something very special and exhilarating about sitting in an outdoor theatre we have created inside these ancient walls.

Trevor Dale, one of this year's Directors, proposed a nautical slant for this production: ship-wreck, sailors, pirates and sea shanties, presented with minimal staging and scenery. This approach has reduced some of the backstage technical challenges, without diminishing the overall theatrical effect. Covid-19 is largely a thing of the past, but it has reared its ugly head again in recent times amongst the actors.

Creating a venue and putting on a play like this takes a great deal of planning and effort over many months, all undertaken by the marvellous members of Progress Theatre on a voluntary, unpaid basis. The actors spend many weeks rehearsing, and the Director and Technical Management have many months of work to do to bring it all together. Then during the run we are very lucky to be able to call on dozens of Progress members to cover front of house, box office, stage management and security.

Progress Theatre is the oldest, continuously operating theatre in Reading, staging a significant programme of theatre in our own premises near the University. We hope you enjoy this evening's performance and we look forward to seeing you at our theatre in The Mount and at next year's open-air production of *The Importance* of *Being Earnest*.

Liz Paulo and Terry Mackay - Producers





Order of Events



Act 1

Scene 1 - The Sea Coast Viola is shipwrecked in a a strange place

> Scene 2 - Duke Orsino's Palace Orsino muses about love

Scene 3 - Olivia's House

Sir Toby and Maria welcome Sir Andrew to Illyria

Scene 4 - Duke Orsino's Palace

Viola now Cesario, is given a key task by Orsino

Scene 5 - Olivia's House Feste plays the fool and Cesario meets Olivia

Act 2

Scene 1 - The Sea Coast Sebastian arrives having been rescued by Antonio

Scene 2 - A Street Malvolio returns a ring to Cesario

Scene 3 - Olivia's House

Drunken chaos and Maria forms a plan

Scene 4 - Duke Orsino's Palace

Cesario and Orsino discuss the nature of love $% \left\{ 1\right\} =\left\{ 1$

Scene 5 - Olivia's Garden

Malvolio 'the Trout' is caught with a letter











Order of Events

Act 3

Scene 1 - Olivia's Garden
Feste is suspicious and Olivia opens her heart

Scene 2 - Olivia's House Sir Toby encourages a challenge

There will be one 20 minute interval

Scene 3 - A Street Antonio makes a decision whilst Sebastian explores

Scene 4 - Olivia's Garden Malvolio 'woos' Olivia, a challenge is answered?

Act 4

Scene 1 - Before Olivia's House Olivia meets Sebastian or is it Cesario?

Scene 2 - Outside the Cell Feste mocks Malvolio

Scene 3 - Olivia's Garden Sebastian and Olivia met the priest

Act 5

Scene 1 - Before Olivia's House All is revealed.



Off To Sea

Twelfth Night is often regarded as one of Shakespeare's greatest comedies, and has been adapted numerous times for the stage and screen. The play's themes of love, mistaken identity, and the complexities of gender and sexuality continue to resonate with audiences.



The play follows the story of Viola, a young woman who is shipwrecked on the coast of Illyria. Believing her twin brother Sebastian has drowned in the wreck, Viola disguises herself as a man and takes on the name Cesario. She becomes a servant to the Duke of Illyria, Orsino, who is in love with the Lady Olivia.

Viola/Cesario is sent by Orsino to woo Olivia on his behalf, but Olivia falls in love with Cesario instead. Meanwhile, Viola's twin brother Sebastian arrives in Illyria and is mistaken for Cesario. Olivia ends up marrying Sebastian, while Viola reveals her true identity and is reunited with her brother.

The play also features a subplot involving Olivia's drunken uncle, Sir Toby Belch, and his friend Sir Andrew Aguecheek, who conspire to humiliate Olivia's steward, Malvolio. Overseeing all of this is the Jester Feste who is eager to manipulate all around him for his own amusement.

Identical twins are not often found in theatre so we have decided to focus more on the dress and attitude of the performers. We hope that you will join us in this suspension of disbelief and find joy in the subterfuge.

In keeping with our theme of the golden age of piracy you can expect sea shanties, rum and a rollicking good time.

The Golden Age of Piracy is a period of time from the late-17th century to the early-18th century, roughly spanning from the 1650s to the 1730s, when piracy was at its peak in the Caribbean Sea and the western Atlantic Ocean. This era is characterised by the rise of notorious pirates such as Blackbeard, Captain Kidd, Calico Jack, and Anne Bonny. During this time, piracy was seen as a viable and often lucrative career option for many sailors, especially those who had been disenfranchised by the government or were looking for a way to escape poverty. Pirates often targeted wealthy merchant ships and stole their cargo, which could include valuable goods such as gold, silver, and spices.





The pirates of the Golden Age operated independently or in loose associations known as pirate "brotherhoods" or "confraternities". They often had a code of conduct, known as the "Articles of Agreement", which established rules and regulations for their crews. These codes included provisions for dividing plunder, settling disputes, and ensuring discipline on board ship.

Nassau Pirate Republic, also known as the Nassau Pirate Kingdom, was a short-lived pirate republic located on the Bahamian island of New Providence in the early 18th century. The republic was established in the aftermath of the War of the Spanish Succession, during which privateers and pirates had preyed on Spanish ships in the Caribbean. The pirates who settled in Nassau were attracted by the island's strategic location and the lack of effective British authority. They established a base on Nassau and began to attack passing ships, seizing goods and supplies, and engaging in other forms of piracy.

In 1715, the British government sent a squadron to Nassau to suppress piracy in the region. However, the pirates were able to negotiate a pardon with the British governor and establish a new, more formalised system of government. Under the leadership of the infamous pirate Blackbeard, a council was established to govern the republic, and a code of conduct was adopted to regulate pirate behaviour. The republic became a centre of trade and commerce, with pirates and privateers from all over the Caribbean visiting Nassau to sell their plunder and goods. The Nassau Pirate Republic lasted for only a few years before it was finally brought under British control. We are reimagining this republic as the location of Illyria which is the island that Viola washes up on at the start of our play. Instead of Blackbeard the Council is ruled by Orsino who is eager to develop his world with his love by his side.



Pirates also played a significant role in the history of the Caribbean and the Americas, as they were known to attack and plunder coastal towns and cities. They were often seen as romantic figures in popular culture, with many stories and legends romanticising their exploits.

The Golden Age of Piracy came to an end in the early 18th century due to increased naval patrols and crackdowns on piracy by various governments. The signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, which ended the War of the Spanish Succession, also played a role in the decline of piracy, as it reduced the need for privateers (privately-owned ships authorised to attack enemy vessels).



Director's Notes

In 2018 I directed *Much Ado About Nothing* in this wonderful setting. During that hot summer and a successful run, one of the cast said to me that we should do Shakespeare and Pirates. This conversation got me thinking about which play lent itself to that thematic setting.

It was then that I began to think about what elements did 'a pirate play' need? I saw four key elements:

- Gender confusion though a common theme in Shakespeare, in the golden age of piracy the 'traditional' gender roles were disregarded;
- 2) Singing and drinking- when not pillaging and plundering the Pirate kingdom was known for raucous behaviour so this was a must;
- 3) Lack of respect for authority- whilst Pirates did have a hierarchy, the very concept of authority was based around democracy so any pompous attitudes were quickly addressed;
- 4) a dark edge- despite the 'fun' that we see in pirates movies the reality was darker with violence and mania bubbling below the surface.

Having looked at these themes, there was only one of Shakespeare's plays which really covered all of those elements: Twelfth Night. The mixture of plots provides all of the above elements and the script itself does make reference both to privateers and a life at sea. Even the insults are linked to events at sea, in Act 3 Scene 2 Fabian mocks Sir Andrews lack of courage by saying he will hang like 'an icicle on a dutchmans beard', this is believed by scholars to be a reference to William Barentsz a dutch explorer who died in 1597 on an expedition to the arctic.

When I decided therefore to look at directing a Pirate Twelfth Night I then had to consider the other problem: the twins.

Shakespeare loves writing about twins, throughout his comedies we see him returning to mistaken identity and he uses twins both in Twelfth Night and A Comedy of Errors to provide this mistaken identity theme. It is difficult to find identical twins who are looking to act, so over the years inventive approaches have been used to provide the identical elements. The cast have been brilliant but you will probably notice that our Viola and Sebastian would not be 'classic' twins. Instead we have used the magic of theatre and in particular the 'magic' hat which confuses the other characters as they become 'an apple split in two'.

The cast and crew have been brilliant throughout the process of bringing the pirate world of Illyria to life, but this entire production really owes most of its energy to my co-director Laura who has been a motivating and artistic driving force who I cannot thank enough for her support.

I know I speak for everyone involved when I say thank you for coming and we hope you enjoy a tankard waving, shanty singing, show.



Trevor Dale - Director

Director's Notes

When Trevor asked the PPC who might want to co-direct this show with him, mine was apparently the first name that popped up. Was it my experience in open-air productions or as a director? No, it was my love of pirates!

Until we started talking about this production, somehow I had not previously been conscious of just how much I love pirates. Looking back, I think it began with the Lego Pirates set I requested for my 6th birthday. My Mum then made me the most awesome treasure chest cake when I was 10, I was mesmerised watching Muppet Treasure Island when I was 12, 'Pirate' was my go to fancy dress outfit in my teens and then when I turned 18, I realised the only alcoholic drink I enjoyed was rum.

My relationship with Shakespeare went along similar lines: basically, I can blame my family for both! My mum enjoyed taking us to the Reduced Shakespeare Company every time they came to Reading (which in the 90s was a lot!) She took us to open-air events from a young age, as well as trips to Stratford. When my older brother Alex (Malvolio) began performing at Progress, I was captivated by the creativity shown in Youth Theatre productions of Macbeth, Julius Caesar and A Midsummer Night's Dream, and gifts of videos and DVDs of BBC Shakespeare adaptations were a staple in the family.

When I left the Youth Theatre (somehow having never been in a Shakespeare production myself) I began the next phase of my time at Progress as a stage manager for PYT Productions of *Much Ado About Nothing* (2004) and open-air productions of *Romeo and Juliet* (2005) and *The Winter's Tale* (2006).

During the hiatus while the ruins were being restored, we moved our open-air production to Caversham Court Gardens where I produced

Henry IV, Part 1 (2012), Macbeth (2013) and Love's Labour's Lost... and Won (2014). I then went on to direct The Wind in the Willows (2017) in our last year at Caversham Court Gardens.

As much as I have always enjoyed watching and being involved in Shakespeare productions, I had not thought a lot about directing one, there are a few of his plays which I know very well, but as they have all been done recently, I put it to the back of my mind.

I have always enjoyed Shakespeare most when it is put into different settings or eras, It doesn't have to be a huge change but it is one of the brilliant realities of storytelling, that a good story can be translated into many different settings, giving it new dimensions and meaning. As soon as Trevor said "It's Twelfth Night, but pirates" it absolutely made sense to me, there are so many references in the text to the sea (of course) but also privateers, and it has been so interesting to explore these characters with the cast, thinking about their backgrounds, their motivations and considering where they may sit in the hierarchy of the pirate world of Illyria.

As Twelfth Night was a play that I had seen a couple of times but didn't know particularly well, I was nervous to join the production, but it has been amazing directing with Trevor, who is so knowledgeable not only on Shakespeare and the play itself, but also the Golden Age of Piracy. Working with Trevor and this cast, it has been such a confidence building and enjoyable experience. I surprised myself with how quickly the text and the language weaves its way through your brain, even for a play you are less familiar with.

I hope you enjoy our interpretation of *Twelfth* Night, pirates and all. Yo Ho, Yo Ho, it's a theatre life for me!

Laura Mills - Director

Pirates and Privateers

This production of Twelfth Night takes place in a fictionalised Mediterranean pirate state named Illyria during the 'Golden Age of Piracy', which ran from around 1650-1725.

"What Country, Friends, Is This?"

"This is Illyria, lady."

- Viola and the Captain, Act I, Scene I

The Kingdom of Illyria was a region in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula, running along the coast, Croatia to Albania, from around 8th century BC to 167 BC, and inhabited by numerous tribes of people collectively known as the Illyrians. They were known as skilled shipbuilders and controlled much of the Adriatic and Ionian Sea using their numerous warships. The rugged broken coastline with its screen of islands formed a perfect base from which their light and speedy vessels would attack unwary ships. The Illyrians were often referred to as pirates, raiding Greek and Roman vessels and the Illyrian's indulgence in piracy was one that brought them infamy and invited their downfall. The Illyrians piratical career reached its zenith under Queen Teuta in 230 BC.





"I'll have a battery of action against him, if there be any law in Illyria." - Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Act IV, Scene I

During the Golden Age of Piracy, The majority of a group of sailors who turned pirate would draw up their own code or articles. Breaking the code could get a pirate marooned or killed. These early buccaneer articles were based on earlier maritime law and privateer codes that, among other things, governed conduct of the crew. These "articles of agreement" became authority independent of any nation, and became known as the Pirate's Code.

Pirate articles varied from one captain to another, and sometimes even from one voyage to another, but they were generally alike in including provisions for discipline, specifications for each crewmate's share of treasure, and compensation for the injured. Each crew member was asked to sign or make his mark on the articles, then swear an oath of allegiance or honour. This act formally inducted the signer into the pirate crew, generally entitling him to vote for officers and on other "affairs of moment", to bear arms, and to his share of the plunder. After a piratical cruise began, new recruits from captured ships would sometimes sign the articles, in some cases voluntarily, in other cases under threat of torture or death. Valuable sea artisans, such as carpenters and navigators, were especially likely to be forced to sign articles under duress. Generally, men who had not signed the articles had a much better chance of acquittal at trial if captured by the law. Nine complete or nearly complete sets of piratical articles have survived, chiefly from Charles Johnson's A General History of the Pyrates, first published in 1724, and from records kept by Admiralty Court proceedings at the trials of pirates.

Examples of articles in a pirates code

- The Captain and Quartermaster to receive two shares of a prize: the master, boatswain, and gunner, one share and a half, and other officers one and quarter.
- No person to game at cards or dice for money.
- The lights and candles to be put out at eight o'clock at night: if any of the crew, after that hour still
 remained inclined for drinking, they were to do it on the open deck.
- If any Man shall steal any Thing in the Company, or game, to the Value of a Piece of Eight, he shall be marooned or shot.
- He that shall be guilty of Drunkenness in time of Engagement shall suffer what Punishment the Captain and Majority of the Company shall think fit.
- If at any time you meet with a Woman, the Man that offers to meddle with her, without her Consent, shall suffer present Death.
- He that shall have the Misfortune to lose a Limb in time of Engagement, shall have the Sum of Six hundred pieces of Eight, and remain aboard as long as he shall think fit.

"Who Governs here?" "A duke, in nature if not in title." - Viola and the Captain, Act I, Scene I

In the second volume of "A General History of the Pyrates", Captain Charles Johnson tells the tale of Captain Mission and his pirates, who established a utopian republic on the island of Madagascar. They called it "Libertalia,†where societies would be based on the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Mission's pirates were determined to guard the common people's rights, fight the power of monarchies and allow people to make and judge their own laws and elect and rotate their leaders. They chose a council without distinguishing between nationality or race. They condemned slavery and Mission and his men were said to integrate slaves from captured ships into their society as well. However, Captain Mission and Libertalia probably never existed except as an expression of the living traditions, practices and dreams of an "Atlantic working class". Nevertheless, in 1713, English pirates Thomas Barrow and Benjamin Hornigold did proclaim themselves the governors of a tangible pirate republic on the island of New Providence in the Bahamas. They were joined by pirate captains such as Charles Vane, Thomas Burgess, Calico Jack and Blackbeard.



Sources Used wikipedia.org/wiki/Illyria wikipedia.org/wiki/Illyrian_warfare

"Let her hang me: he that is well hanged in this world need fear no colours." - Feste, Act I, Scene V

However the English ruling class recognized the influence of Libertalia and its alternative social order, and they soon put their efforts into quashing it. There were worries of a pirate "Commonwealth", such as the one Barrow and Hornigold set up, and this pirate republic was eliminated in 1718 by Captain Woodes Rogers with his appointment as the Royal Governor of the Bahamas. Finally, with the hanging of Captain Bartholomew Roberts' men at Cape Coast Castle on the African coast in 1722, the Golden Age of Piracy was brought to an end.

Cast

Viola

Imogen Lilley

A ship-wrecked young woman, disguised as a cabin boy named Cesario

Sebastian

Freddie Meader

Viola's twin brother

Duke Orsino

Adam Wells

Pirate Duke of Illyria

Olivia

Caroline White

A wealthy woman whose father was a Privateer

Malvolio

Alex McCubbin

Steward in Olivia's household

Maria

Stephanie Clark

Olivia's gentlewoman

Sir Toby Belch

Jo Green

Olivia's Uncle

Sir Andrew Aguecheek

Guy Nicholls

A friend of Sir Toby

Feste

Barnaby McArthur

Olivia's Servant

Fabian

Zac McAllister

Servant in Olivia's household

Antonio

Chris Gunner - Lucas

A sea captain and friend to Sebastian

Valentine

Flora Paulo

Attendant to the Duke

Duke

Curio Attendant to the Duke Hugo Parker - Farrell

Launce

Juliet England

Servant to the Duke

Daniel Gladwell

A Sea Captain/Priest

A friend to Viola







Production Team

Directors Trevor Dale, Laura Mills

Producers Terry McKay, Liz Paulo

Site Management Team Ali Carroll, John Goodman

Stage Management Team Millie Charlesworth, Nancy Gittus,

Arlo Haigh, Imogen Haley,

Rachel Hayward, Daniel McDermott,

Alex McDonald, Aelia Raza

Costume Coordinator Chris Moran

Costume Team Wendy Hobson, Rowena Sterry

Musical Director Stuart McCubbin

Box Office Manager Chris Moran

Front of House Managers Meg Grant, Stuart McCubbin

Chaperone Coordinator Fiona McNeil

Props Louise Banks, Tony Powell

Photography Richard Brown

Videographer Aidan Moran

Additional Thanks Carole Brown, Emily Goode,

John Goodman, Poppy Price





WE THANK YOU TO:

- not smoke, except in designated smoking areas
- · keep the aisles clear at all times
- not take photos or recordings of the performance
- · turn off your mobile devices during the performance

Lyrics to Drunken Sailor

1.

What will we do with a drunken sailor? What will we do with a drunken sailor? What will we do with a drunken sailor? Earlye in the morning!

Chorus

Way hay and up she rises Way hay and up she rises Way hay and up she rises Earlye in the morning!

2

Shave his belly with a rusty razor x3 Earlye in the morning!

[Chorus]

3.

Put him in a longboat till he's sober x3
Earlye in the morning!

[Chorus]

4.

Tie him to the mast and then you flog him x3
Earlye in the morning!

[Chorus]

5.

Put him in the Bilge and make him drink it x3
Earlye in the morning!

[Chorus]

6.

Stick him in a scupper with a hosepipe on him x3
Earlye in the morning!

[Chorus]

7.

Put him in the bed with the captain's daughter x3
Earlye in the morning!

[Chorus]

8

That's what we do with a drunken sailor x3
Earlye in the morning!

[Chorus] x2





Sea Shanties

The Sea Shanty is a genre of traditional folk music that was once commonly sung as a work song aboard large merchant sailing vessels. However, in recent, popular usage, the definition has been expanded to admit a wider range of repertoire and characteristics, or to refer to a "maritime work song" in general.

There is a notable lack of historical references to anything like shanties, as they would come to be known, in the entirety of the 18th century. In the second half of the 18th century, English and French sailors were using simple chants to coordinate a few shipboard tasks that required unanimous effort. Such simple or brief chants survived into the 19th century.

Detailed reference to shipboard practices that correspond to shanty-singing was extremely rare before the 1830s, with singing-while-working generally limited to merchant ships, not war ships. By the 1860s, the shanty form was fully developed and the decade of the 1870s represents the zenith of the genre. Those sailors who first went to sea after that decade would not to have seen shanties in their prime, due to the the proliferation of steamships.

Even as shanty singing to accompany work aboard ships was dying out, interest was being taken in reviving it as a type of leisure pastime. Folklorists of the first decade of the 20th century included shanties in their collections of folk songs connected with the idea of national heritage. By the 1920s, the proliferation of shanty collections had begun to facilitate a revival in shanty singing as entertainment for a general audience.

Appearances of songs and melodies labelled as shanties in popular media can be anachronistic and fanciful. Songs that are documented as being created in the mid-19th century at the earliest, have been freely used to portray scenes from the 18th century and earlier. Shanties, and short videos of them being sung, saw a spike in popularity in late 2020 into early 2021, mainly due to trends on social media platforms.

John Kanaka

A halyard shanty, sung while sailors pulled on ropes to raise heavy sails. A rope is stretched out along the deck and the crew takes their place along the line. The shantyman, or song leader takes his place at the front of the line where the line leads down to the deck from the aloft. The shantyman sings the verses and the crew sings the chorus or refrain. Two pulls on the line occur during the refrain while all hands, including the shantyman, haul.

Lowlands Away

This 17th-century song describes the feeling of desolation felt by a woman, who knows that her true love is dead and drowned in the Lowlands of Holland. As a sailor shanty it was sung while working at the pumps. Two distinct sets of words accompany the tune: one text tells the present story of the dead lover who returns; the other text concerns the work and pay of cotton-lumbers in the port of Mobile, Alabama

everipedia.org/wiki/lang_en/fish-in-the-sea-sea-shanty www.girlonawhaleship.org/jernapp/refCard.do? shortName=shanty_halyard

A Drop of Nelson's Blood

Often described as a 'walkaway' or 'runaway chorus' or 'stamp and go' sea shanty, the chorus comes from the 19th century Salvation Army hymn, 'Roll the old chariot'. Following his victory and death at the Battle of Trafalgar, Nelson's body was preserved in a cask of brandy, or rum, to allow transport back to England. 'Nelson's blood' became a nickname for rum, but it can also mean to have Nelson's spirit or bravery.

The Fish of the Sea

'The Fish of the Sea' is what is known as a capstan shanty. In this sailors would take turns singing verse, each one introducing a new fish. The round would continue until the manual work on the capstan, the winch used on ships for anchoring and mooring, was complete.

Drunken Sailor

"What Shall We Do with a / the Drunken Sailor?" or "Up She Rises", was sung onboard sailing ships since the 1830s. The song's lyrics vary, but usually contain some variant of the question, "What shall we do with a drunken sailor, early in the morning?" In some styles of performance, each successive verse suggests a method of sobering or punishing the drunken sailor. In other styles, further questions are asked and answered about different people. "Drunken" Sailor" was revived as a popular song among non-sailors in the 20th century, and grew to become one of the best-known songs of the shanty repertoire among mainstream audiences. It has been performed and recorded by many musical artists and appeared regularly in popular culture.

Sources

wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_shanty wikipedia.org/wiki/Drunken_Sailor wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Drop_of_Nelson's_Blood mainlynorfolk.info/anne.briggs/songs/lowlands.html

WANTED

For Piracy and Bootlegging

Adam Wells - Duke Orsino

Twelfth Night was the first Shakespeare play Adam ever watched, and he's delighted to be taking a role in this swashbuckling production. It's only his second outdoor show with Progress, following 2021's Romeo and Juliet, though he's also played cosy indoor roles in Hangmen, Radiant Vermin, The Pride and most recently The Lonesome West. As always, his performance tonight is for GLY. Adam would like to think of himself as being Henry Every, but in all honesty it's more likely a low-tier Muppet from 1996's Treasure Island. You can decide which specific Muppet for yourselves.



Alex McCubbin - Malvolio

Alex has been a long standing member of Progress Theatre and has previously been seen in productions of Macbeth, Moonlight and Magnolias, The Wind in the Willows and A Midsummer Night's Dream. He has also been Stage Manager many productions including Julius Caesar, Radiant Vermin, The Taming of the Shrew and The Lonesome West. Alex's privateer of choice is Jonathan Barnet.



Barnaby McArthur - Feste

This is Barnaby's first show with Progress Theatre, but has been part of Reading Playwrights, Progress Theatre's playwrighting group, for a couple of years. He is ecstatic to be playing the Feste and leading a shanty or two. Barnaby's favourite pirate is the Sky Pirate Balthier.



Chris Gunner-Lucas - Antonio

This is Chris's first season as a member of Progress Theatre, and Twelfth Night is his third play after recent outings in The 16th Annual WriteFest and The Welkin. He is delighted to be involved as this is his first outdoor production and his first stab at a Shakespeare play! Preparing for the role of pirate captain Antonio has meant a lot of research re-watching Our Flag Means Death, growing out his pirate-y beard and drinking imported overproof Caribbean rum! If Chris were a pirate, he would be Stede Bonnet 'The Gentleman Pirate'.



Caroline White - Olivia

Caroline has previously privateered on ships such as Romeo and Juliet, Blood and Ice, Who Goes Bare, 9 to 5: The Dolly Parton Musical and The Three Musketeers. She sharpened her sword on The Bumblebee in WriteFest 2018, simultaneously taking the helm on The Costume Department. Lemons, Lemons, Lemons, Lemons, Lemons was an online campaign she's especially proud of. Caroline's favourite pirate is Jeanne de Clisson (The Lioness of Brittany) who roamed the seas for 13 years, privateering in the English Channel to avenge her husband's death. That's pretty much the same as Caroline, who spent 3 years in the North Sea (for money, as her husband isn't dead... yet).



WANTED

For Piracy and Bootlegging

Daniel Gladwell - A Sea Captain/Priest

Daniel previously performed in Progress Theatre's 2018 open-air production of Much Ado About Nothing. Before this he had experience performing in a production of Oliver! with the Newbury Musical Theatre Society in 2014. He also has experience playing roles in other Shakespeare plays, including Two Noble Kinsmen and Hamlet. Daniel's chosen fictional pirate is Edward Kenway.



Flora Paulo - Valentine

Flora has been a member of Progress Youth Theatre for 13 years now. In those years she has performed in several shows including Daisy Pulls It Off, His Dark Materials, The Tempest, Maskerade, Romeo and Juliet and Wyrd Sisters. She has been an ASM for When They Go Low, Babe the Sheep Pig, Great Expectations, Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense and The Welkin. More recently, Flora took the mantle of Stage Manager for the first time for Silver Lining. Flora's favourite pirate is The Surprisingly Curvaceous Pirate from Pirates! In an adventure with Scientists.



Freddie Meader - Sebastian

Freddie is a relatively new member to Progress Theatre, only joining just before Christmas. Although new to acting, this is Freddie's second outdoor Shakespeare, the first being The Tempest with Wargrave Theatre Workshop. After finding a real interest in acting Freddie decided to take A-level Drama and to possibly pursue acting as a career. Freddie is really looking forward to taking inspiration from and working with very talented and experienced actors in this production. Freddie's favourite pirate is Captain Jack Sparrow.



Guy Nicholls - Sir Andrew Aguecheek

Guy has been a member of Progress Theatre for about 4 years, yet this is his first outing on the open-air stage. He is breaking his usual stereotype of playing a farmer and here plays Sir Andrew, a character that people say, may have come a little too easily to him. Guy's favourite pirate is the Pirate Captain due to his, and his character's, beard envy.



Hugo Parker-Farrell - Curio

Hugo made his first professional stage appearance in 2022 as Winston in the musical Whistle Down the Wind at the Watermill Theatre, Newbury. His training includes Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Trinity Laban, Reading Minster (chorister), Progress Theatre Youth Group, Rabble Young Company and Junior Department, Royal Academy of Music. Hugo's next project is at the Edinburgh Fringe with the Newbury Youth Theatre. If Hugo were a pirate, he would be Hergé's fictional Red Rackham – encompassing his love of the comic books The Adventures of Tintin and the voicework of Daniel Craig for screen!

WANTED

For Piracy and Bootlegging

Imogen Lilley - Viola

Twelfth Night will be Imogen's third production at Progress Theatre and first open-air show following her performances as Pea in Jerusalem by Jez Butterworth and Girleen in Martin Mcdonagh's The Lonesome West. Imogen has thoroughly enjoyed collaborating and creating this swashbuckling reimagining of Shakespeare's mistaken identity comedy. She hopes you sing-a-long and enjoy the show! Imogen's favourite pirate is Anne Bonny.



Juliet England - Launce

If five years' Progress involvement counts as being an old hand, Juliet is one. This is her third open-air production; she previously appeared in Much Ado About Nothing and as Mrs Joe (and serving wench Molly) in last summer's *Great Expectations*. She has also been in a number of in-house shows, including Blood and Ice, Catch-22, a couple of WriteFests and most recently, she played OAP Maureen Cookson in Sandi Toksvig's Silver Lining. Juliet is also often found claiming to be a Front of House steward but don't be fooled. She is really just standing around gassing and shirking her duties. Juliet's favourite pirate is Captain Jack Sparrow.



Jo Green - Sir Toby Belch

This is Jo's first production with Progress Theatre, and his first in Reading since a sixth-form show decades back. In between times he was involved in fringe productions in London for a few years, and more recently as a member of the Tower Theatre Company. His last role with the Tower was as the Stage Manager in *Our Town*. Jo's favourite pirate is Captain Blood.



Stephanie Clark - Maria

This is Steph's second production with Progress Theatre. Earlier this year, she played Kitty in *The Welkin* by Lucy Kirkwood. Prior to that, Steph had taken a long hiatus from performing and was last on stage in 2008 at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival playing the role of Holly in *Flush* by David Dipper. If Steph was a pirate she would be Lady Mary Killigrew.



Zac McAllister - Fabian

This is Zac's debut performance at Progress Theatre and his first time treading the boards since his A-level performance a number of years ago. After wanting to return to the world of theatre for a while, Zac is embarking on this new journey with a jolly crew and hasn't been made to walk the plank yet! Zac's favourite pirate is Captain Morgan.



NIE

For Hijacking and Smuggling

Aelia Raza - Stage Management Team

This is Aelia's first show with Progress Theatre as part of her work experience as she was really keen to get some experience working in a production before she starts her professional career path of being a production assistant. Working backstage has been a new experience for her, but one that she is thoroughly enjoying. Her favourite pirate is Captain Jack Sparrow.

Arlo Haigh - Stage Management Team

This production will be Arlo's first production at Progress Theatre. He has been previously involved in amateur productions with groups at school, but this is the first professional production he will be working on. He has had a great time working with all the crew on the show and is excited to continue to be involved with Progress Theatre in the future. Arlo's favourite pirate is Captain Hook.

Alex McDonald - Stage Management Team
Alexander is a former member of the youth theatre, during which time he appeared onstage in The Oresteia and Romeo and Juliet, and helped out behind the scenes as Assistant Director for When They Go Low. This is his second time helping out with the open-air production, having helped with Great Expectations last year. He can't wait to see all the piratical action unfold! On that note, he has a soft spot for Captain Pugwash. As an aside, he would like to affirm that his spagnetti bolognese is indeed spectacular and that further to any previous statements on the matter many chefs have in fact been moved to tremble.

Christine Moran - Costume Coordinator

Christine has been a member of Progress for over 30 years and has had a go at most things including acting, directing, writing, producing, marketing shows, stage managing, set painting, prop-making, costuming and operating sound (once!) She has also been Wardrobe Mistress, Theatre Secretary and Chair of the Programme Planning Committee (three times!) She has very much enjoyed sourcing costumes for this production and welcoming you to the Abbey Ruins tonight as Box Office Manager. Her next venture will be directing Terry Pratchett's Hogfather at Progress Theatre in December. Chris' favourite pirate is Ching Shih.

ANTEU

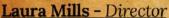
For Hijacking and Smuggling

<u>Daniel McDermott - Stage Management Team</u>

Daniel has been a member of Progress Theatre for over 6 months now. Although he has never helped with an open-air before, Daniel has helped run many shows in and out of school, some of the best being Guys and Dolls and Life Is A Dream. Daniel has had a great time working with the crew to get this show underway. Daniel's favourite pirate is Captain J. Flint (he loves how his legacy carried on in a parrot) or Blackbeard.

Imogen Haley - Stage Management Team

Imogen has been a member of Progress Youth Theatre for two years, and played Rosaura in Life Is A Dream in December last year. She was also an ASM for last summer's production of Great Expectations, and can't wait to continue that for Twelfth Night! Imogen's favourite pirate is the Dread Pirate Roberts from The Princess Bride.



Laura has been a member of Progress Theatre for over 30 years. She is no stranger to the open-air event having stage managed Romeo and Juliet (2005) and The Winter's Tale (2006), produced Henry VI, Part One (2012), Macbeth (2013) and Love's Labours Lost (2014) and directed Wind in the Willows (2016). This is, however, her first time directing Shakespeare and she has had a great time working with this merry crew who set sail with us on the Good Ship Shakespeare. Laura's favourite pirate is John Silver (as played by Tim Curry in Muppet Treasure Island).

Liz Paulo - Producer

Liz is a long standing member of Progress Theatre who divides her time on- and backstage, she most recently played the role of June Partridge in Silver Lining. This is the second open-air production Liz has been involved with, having co-produced and helped with costumes for Great Expectations. If Liz was to live a life on the open seas she would link into her Chinese heritage and be Madam Cheng I Sao, who plundered her way across Southeast Asia, assembled a fleet that rivalled many countries' navies, penned a rigorous code of conduct for her pirates and retired as one of history's most successful pirates.

Millie Charlesworth - Stage Management Team
Millie has been a member of Progress Youth Theatre for a year and in that time has been involved with Life Is A Dream and Dinner. She has come back to theatre after a break and has fallen in love all over again, with a particular interest in tech and stage management and working on multiple school productions. She loves the youth group and cannot wait to work on her first outdoor show with an amazing crew! Millie's favourite pirate is Mary Read, who was a 17th-century pirate disguised as a man, and either best friends or in love with Anne Bonny who was also in disguise.



NIE

For Hijacking and Smuggling

Nancy Gittus - Stage Management Team

Nancy is super excited to be involved in Twelfth Night as it's her first experience in stage management, having been a member of Progress Youth Theatre for two years. She played Biddy in last year's open-air production of Great Expectations and performed as Perry in Missing in last year's WriteFest. Nancy's favourite pirate is Ann Bonny.



Rachel Hayward - Stage Management Team
Rachel has been a member of the Progress Youth Theatre for 2 and a half years and is currently a part of the Blinders group on a Monday. This is her first time helping out in one of Progress' shows and she is very excited to be an assistant stage manager. Rachel's favourite pirate is Captain Hook.



Stuart McCubbin - Musical Director

Stuart has been a member of Progress Theatre since 2010, but has been coming to see shows, including the open-air productions, since the early 1990s. In-house, he is mainly to be found in the tech box, designing and operating sound. He has been Front of House Manager for the later open-air shows at Caversham Court Gardens, and since we moved back into the Abbey Ruins. The first Pirate he came across, albeit fictional, was probably Captain Pugwash.



Terry Mackay - Producer

Terry joined Progress Theatre in 1989 and has done most jobs for the group from sweeping the floor, through acting and directing, to being Chairman. In the nineties and noughties, Terry was very involved in the open-air productions, having directed Twelfth Night in 2000 and Romeo and Juliet in 2005, and having been Producer for five other shows. Terry's favourite pirate is Captain Hook!



Trevor Dale - Director

Trevor has been a member of Progress Theatre for many years and has been involved in numerous open-air productions, both onstage and behind the scenes. This is his second time directing in the Abbey Ruins after the 2018 production of Much Ado About Nothing. He is really looking forward to bringing the pirate world of Twelfth Night to the wonderful setting of the Abbey. Trevor's favourite pirate is Benjamin Hornigold who created the Pirate Republic in Nassau, and believed that piracy was honourable and turned his back on the pirate world when others went too far.



PROGRESS

Y 🔷 T H



Our vibrant Youth Theatre offers weekly workshops for young theatre-makers or aspiring actors aged 7-18 years involving theatre games, improvisations, script work and developing technical production skills. Based in our gorgeous working theatre, we offer a supportive environment for young people to improve their skills, gain confidence and make friends. We grow a passion for theatre in our young people, stimulate their imagination, and help develop their enthusiasm and confidence to ask questions about the world around them. Sessions run weekly for 10 weeks each term.

Book a FREE trial by emailing: youthliaison@progresstheatre.co.uk

LAST FEW PLACES AVAILABLE!!! SUMMER WORKSHOPS - AUGUST 2023

THEATRE SKILLS

Monday 14th August and Monday 21st August



- One-day workshop.
- 10am 3pm.
- For students aged approx. 7 10 years.
- At the end of the day family will be able to come and see what the participants have been working on.
- Participants are welcome to sign up for both one-day workshops.

These creative and engaging sessions have been specially designed for young actors in school years 3, 4, and 5. We will encourage imaginative storytelling, learn about creating characters, and explore improvisation. Through fun games and acting exercises, we aim to develop theatre skills and build confidence. Young participants can enjoy exploring their creativity in a welcoming and friendly environment, and will be encouraged to share their work with friends and family members at the end of the day.

A PLAY IN A WEEK

Monday 7th - Friday 11th August 2023



- · Five-day workshop.
- 10am 4pm.
- For students aged aprox 10 16 years.
- Across the week, students will workshop and learn a play to perform on the Friday Evening for friends and family.

Young theatre makers: we have an exciting opportunity for you! Young people from school years 6 - 11 will have the chance to work together to stage a production in five days! Through games, acting exercises, and a dynamic rehearsal process, we will develop theatre skills and build confidence in performing. Creativity and kindness go hand in hand at Progress Youth Theatre, and we encourage young people with any level of experience who would like to learn, create and perform in a friendly and supportive atmosphere, to get involved! Friends and family are invited to come along to see the culmination of the participants' work on Friday evening.

AUDITION MASTERCLASS

Wednesday 16th - Friday 18th August 2023

> £120 (£105)

- Three-day workshop.
- 10am 4pm.
- For students aged approx. 14 18 years.
- Students will work on monologue and audition skills presenting their work on Friday evening.
- All participants will need to prepare a monologue to be performed on the first day.

Auditions can be a daunting experience, that's why at PYT, we are offering a three-day masterclass to build confidence, advance theatrical skill, and aid your audition preparation. Participants will prepare a contemporary monologue in advance of the workshop and over the course of the three days, we will develop the presentation of this and work on an additional monologue suggested by the tutor. In a friendly and supportive environment, participants with any level of experience can enjoy developing their acting skills, preparing for auditions, and making friends! This valuable experience will culminate in an informal sharing for family and friends on Friday evening.

Coming Soon... 2023/24 Season

4 - 9 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Effect by Lucy Prebble

PROGRESS Y > TH

1 - 4 NOVEMBER 2023

TBC

29 JANUARY - 3 FEBRUARY 2024

Albion by Mike Bartlett

26 APRIL - 4 MAY 2024

Under Milk Wood by Dylan Thomas

PROGRESS Y TH 3 - 6 JULY 2024 Youth Week 27 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

The 17th Annual WriteFest

7 - 17 DECEMBER 2023

Hogfather by Terry Pratchett, adapted by Stephen Briggs

11 - 16 MARCH 2024

The Last Quiz Night on Earth by Alison Carr

12 - 15 JUNE 2024

Progress Premiers Presents: Moles by Sarah Wright and Dirt by Caroline White

17 - 27 JULY 2024

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde
Open Air at the Abbey Ruins

Progress Theatre is Reading's oldest working theatre, having been opened in 1951 by the Progress Theatre Company, which was itself established in 1946, staging its first production in 1947. We are a charity and maintain our own theatre building on The Mount, funded entirely by voluntary donations.

progresstheatre.co.uk/fundraising





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2022/23

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Our 76th Season

2022

4 - 9 SEPTEMBER

Jeeves & Wooster in Perfect Nonsense by P.G. Wodehouse, adapted by the Goodale Brothers

10 - 15 OCTOBER

The Pride by Alexi Kaye Campbell

2 - 5 NOVEMBER

The 16th Annual Writefest

16 - 19 NOVEMBER

Progress Premieres presents Liar's Teeth by Emily Goode

7 - 10 DECEMBER

Life is a Dream by Pedro Calderon, translated by Rhys Lawton



2023

20 - 28 JANUARY

The Welkin by Lucy Kirkwood

3 - 11 MARCH

Lonesome West by Martin McDonagh

14 - 22 APRIL

Dinner by Moira Buffini

19 - 27 MAY

Silver Lining by Sandi Toksvig

19 - 24 JUNE

The Silence of the Sea by Paul Vercors, adapted by Peter Cheeseman

12 - 22 JULY

Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare Open Air at the Abbey Ruins

