

**The Merry Wives of Winsor
Colorado Shakespeare Festival 2014
Callback Sides**

For Auditions 1/17-1/20:

Falstaff

Ford

Mistress Ford

Mistress Page

Page

Caius

Shallow

Hugh

Slender

Anne

Fenton

Pistol (and "Corporal Nym")

Rugby

Additional Casting (not reading for these roles in January):

Quickly (cast)

Host (m)

Simple (m)

Robin (f)

Hotel Attendant (f)

Six Children

SPECIAL CASTING REQUESTS AT AUDITIONS:

Falstaff: 60-90 seconds of 1960's era "Borscht Belt" stand-up. Can be taken from any comedian of this era (such as Jackie Mason, Milton Berle, Don Rickles, etc). Should suggest a Jackie Gleason-type style. In this production, set in 1962 in the Catskill Mountains, Falstaff is an exiled performer from the comedy circuit.

Pistol: Be prepared to audition with "Corporal Nym"- his "dummy." Pistol is another performer on the comedy circuit. A rehearsal dummy/puppet will possibly be provided (?)

Shallow: Be prepared to audition with your best cardiac arrest.

Hugh: Please audition with an Appalachian accent.

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FORD:

ACT II SCENE ii

FORD

What a damned Epicurean rascal is this! My heart is ready to crack with impatience. Who says this is improvident jealousy? My wife hath sent to him; the hour is fixed; the match is made. Would any man have thought this? See the hell of having a false woman! My bed shall be abused, my coffers ransacked, my reputation gnawn at; and I shall not only receive this villanous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. Terms! Names! Amaimon sounds well; Lucifer, well; Beelzebub, well; yet they are devils' additions, the names of fiends: but Cuckold! Wittol!--Cuckold! The devil himself hath not such a name. Page is an ass, a secure ass: he will trust his wife; he will not be jealous. I will rather trust [a Swiss with my chocolate, Parson Hugh with my whiskey, Caius with my epitaph, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding,] than my wife with herself. God be praised for my jealousy! I will prevent this, detect my wife, be revenged on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. I will about it; better three hours too soon than a minute too late. Fie, fie, fie! Cuckold! Cuckold! Cuckold!

FORD/ FALSTAFF:

ACT II SCENE ii

MUSIC: COOL JAZZ: Dave Brubeck's "TAKE FIVE." FORD enters and poses by the door, dressed in the black hipster uniform of a Jazz Beatnik. He sports a thin moustache, which deserts him at various points in the scene, appearing where he least expects it, forcing him to improvise and substitute other available objects on his face. He "saunters" in with his best effort at sauntering...

From later in the scene:

FORD

O, understand my drift. She dwells so securely on the excellency of her honour, that the folly of my soul dares not present itself. Now, could I could come to her with any *detection in my hand*, my desires had instance and argument to commend themselves: I could drive her then from the ward of her purity—
Falstaff is clueless-
Her reputation—
Clueless
her marriage-vow,
Falstaff follows
and a thousand other her defenses, which now are too too strongly embattled against me. What say you to't, Sir John?

FALSTAFF

Master Brook-

FORD

Broom-

FALSTAFF

Broom?

FORD

Brook.

FALSTAFF

Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money; next, give me your hand; and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

FORD

(horrified- was he really prepared for this answer?)

O good sir!

FALSTAFF

I say you shall. I shall be with her, I may tell you, by her own appointment; even as you came in to me, her assistant or go-between parted from me: I say I

shall be with her between ten and eleven; for at that time the jealous rascally knave her husband will be forth. Come you to me at night; you shall know how I speed.

FORD

I am blest in your acquaintance.

(comes in extremely close)

Do you know Ford, sir?

FALSTAFF

Hang him, poor cuckoldly knave! I know him not:

(Falstaff turns away, and Ford strangles the air he occupied)

yet I wrong him to call him poor; they say the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money; for the which his wife seems to me well-favored. I will use her as the key of the cuckoldly rogue's coffer; and there's my harvest-home.

FORD

I would you knew Ford, sir, that you might avoid him if you saw him.

FALSTAFF

Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my cudgel: it shall hang like a meteor o'er the cuckold's horns. Master Brook, thou shalt know I will predominate over the peasant, and thou shalt lie with his wife. Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his style. Thou, Master Brook, shalt know him for knave and cuckold. Come to me soon at night.

FALSTAFF:

ACT III SCENE v

FALSTAFF

Nay, you shall hear, Master Brook, what I have suffered to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus crammed in the basket, a couple of Ford's knaves were called forth by their mistress to carry me in the name of foul clothes to the laundry: they took me; met the jealous knave their master at the door, who asked them once or twice what they had in their basket: I quaked for fear, lest the lunatic knave would have searched it; but fate, ordaining he should be a cuckold, held his hand. Well: on went he for a search, and away went I for foul clothes. But mark the sequel, Master Brook: I suffered the pangs of three several deaths; first, an intolerable fright, to be detected with a jealous rotten bell-wether; next, to be compassed, like a good bilbo, in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head; and then, to be stopped in, like a strong distillation, with stinking clothes that fretted in their own grease: think of that,--a man of my kidney,--think of that,--that am as subject to heat as butter; a man of continual dissolution and thaw: it was a miracle to scape suffocation. And in the height of this bath, when I was more than half stewed in grease, like a Dutch dish, to be thrown into the lake, and cooled, glowing hot, in that surge, like a horse-shoe; think of that,--hissing hot,--think of that, Master Brook.

MISTRESS FORD/ MISTRESS PAGE:

ACT II SCENE i.

MISTRESS FORD

Mistress Page! Trust me, I was going to your house.

MISTRESS PAGE

And, trust me, I was coming to you.

(Pause) You look very ill.

MISTRESS FORD

(Rushing over to a nearby mirror)

Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to show to the contrary.

MISTRESS PAGE

Faith, but you do, in my mind.

MISTRESS FORD

Well, I do then- yet I say I could show you to the contrary.

(Gives up at the mirror)

O Mistress Page, give me some counsel!

MISTRESS PAGE

What's the matter, woman?

MISTRESS FORD

If I would but go to hell for an eternal moment or so,
I could be "knighted."

MISTRESS PAGE

What? Thou liest! Sir Alice Ford!

MISTRESS FORD

Read, read!

(Passes Mistress Page the noxious epistle)

Perceive how I might be knighted.

(Mistress Page gasps)

Did you ever hear the like?

MISTRESS PAGE

Letter for letter, but that the name of Page and
Ford differs! To thy great comfort in this mystery
of ill opinions, here's the twin-brother of thy
letter!

(They compare horrors)

I warrant he hath a thousand of these,
writ with blank space for different names.

He will print them out, for he cares not what he puts into the press,
where he would put us two. I had rather be a giantess,
and lie under Mount Pelion. Well, I will find you
twenty lascivious turtles ere one chaste man.

MISTRESS FORD

Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words. / What doth he think of us?

MISTRESS PAGE

Nay, I know not: it makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, sure, unless he know some strain in me, that I know not myself, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

MISTRESS FORD

'Boarding,' call you it? I'll be sure to keep him above deck.

MISTRESS PAGE

So will I if he come under my hatches, I'll never to sea again./ Let's be *revenged* on him.

MISTRESS FORD

Nay, I will consent to act any villany against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. / O- if my husband saw this letter! It would give eternal food to his jealousy.

Mistress Page spots him through a "window" in the Spa.

MISTRESS PAGE

Why, look where he comes; and my good man too: he's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause; and that I hope is an unmeasurable distance.

MISTRESS FORD

You are the happier woman.

This admission remains in the air between them. Mistress Page changes the subject:

MISTRESS PAGE

Come. Let's consult together against this greasy "knight."
Come hither.

They retire.

MISTRESS PAGE:

ACT II SCENE I. INT. BEAUTY PARLOR

MISTRESS PAGE lounges in a comfortable recliner, an army of attendants working on her hair, her nails, helping her to keep the inevitability of age at bay for the moment. ROBIN enters, with a LETTER for her. She glares at him- clearly she does not have a hand free. Robin unfurls it before her (blocking her reaction from the audience).

After a short moment, she plucks her hands away from the pedicure, snatching the letter, dismissing her retinue, who move upstage to work on the next bored housewife. She crosses downstage, her face still shielded, until she comes to a stop. The letter quickly drops, revealing the thrilled blush of a teenager...

MISTRESS PAGE

What, have I scaped love-letters in the holiday-time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them?

Let me see:

(Reads)

'Ask me no reason why I love you; for though
Love use Reason for his physician, he admits him
not for his counsellor. You are not young, no more
am I; go to then, there's sympathy: you are merry,
so am I; ha, ha, then there's more sympathy: you
love sack, and so do I; would you desire better
sympathy? Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page,--at
the least, if the love of a man can suffice,--
that I love thee. I will not say, pity me; 'tis
not a manly phrase: but I say, love me. By me,
Thine own true knight,
By day or night,
Or any kind of light,
With all his might
For thee to fight... JOHN FALSTAFF!'

What is *this!* O wicked world!

One that is well-nigh worn to pieces with
age to show himself a young gallant! What an
unweighed behavior hath this roaring drunkard
picked--with the devil's name--out of my
conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me?

Why, I'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting down of men.
How shall I be revenged on him? for revenged I will be,
as sure as his guts are made of puddings.

PISTOL (NYM) / FORD:

ACT II SCENE i

Enter FORD with PISTOL on one side, his arm draped about so that "NYM" can chatter on the other.

FORD

Well, I hope it be not so.

PISTOL

Hope is a curtal dog.

NYM

Sir John affects thy wife.

FORD

Why, sir, my wife is not young.

PISTOL

He wooes both high and low, both rich and poor.

NYM

Both young and old.

PISTOL

One with another, Ford.

NYM

He loves the gallimaufry, Ford.

PISTOL

Perpend.

FORD

(beat)

Love my wife!

PISTOL

With liver burning hot. Prevent, or go thou,

Like Sir Actaeon.

(Ford does not follow)

NYM

He, with Ringwood at thy heels:

PISTOL

O, odious is the name!

FORD

What name, sir?

NYM

The horn, I say.

PISTOL

Farewell.

NYM

(Retreating)

Take heed, have open eye, for thieves do foot by night.

PISTOL

Take heed, ere summer comes or cuckoo-birds do sing.

NYM

“Cuckoo...”

“Cuckoo...”

“Cuck-“

Pistol slaps a hand over Nym's mouth. Nym bites Pistol. Pistol yells. They stare at each other a moment, then turn back slowly for one last ominous glance at Ford.

SHALLOW/ HUGH/ PAGE/ SLENDER:

ACT I SCENE i

SHALLOW

Sir Hugh, persuade me not: if he were twenty "Sir" John Falstaffs, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, esquire.

SIR HUGH EVANS

If John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you, I am of the church, and will be glad to do my benevolence to make atonements and compromises between you.

SHALLOW

Ha! o' my life, if I were young again, the sword should end it.

SIR HUGH EVANS

It is better that friends is the sword, and end it. But there is another device in my brain, which peradventure brings good discretions with it: there is Anne Page, which is daughter to Master Thomas Page, which is pretty virginity.

SLENDER

Mistress Anne Page? She has brown hair, and speaks small- like a woman.

SIR HUGH EVANS

It is that very person for all the 'orld, as just as you will desire; and a pretty pound of moneys is her grandsire upon his death's bed- Got deliver to a joyful resurrection!- --to give, when she is able to overtake twenty and one years old: it were a good motion if we leave our prattles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Anne Page.

SLENDER

I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

SIR HUGH EVANS

Pounds of moneys and possibilities is good gifts.

SHALLOW

Well, let us see honest Master Page. Is Falstaff there?

SIR HUGH EVANS

Sir John is there.

(Shallow agitates)

I beseech you, be ruled by your well-willers.

I will peat the door for Master Page.

What, ho! Got please your house here!

PAGE

(Enter PAGE from his nearby BUNGALOW)

Who's there?

SIR HUGH EVANS

Here is Got's plessing, and your friend, and Justice Shallow; and here young Master Slender, that peradventures shall tell you another tale, if matters grow to your likings.

Evans and Shallow erupt into a dueling coughing fit.

PAGE

I am glad to see your worships well.

SHALLOW

Master Page-

(Evans turns him in the correct direction to address Page)

Master Page- I am glad to see you.

How doth good Mistress Page?--and I thank you always with my heart...

(grips his chest)

La! My heart!

Page comes to his aid- these heart attacks are nothing new.

SHALLOW

I thank you, sir.

PAGE

Sir, I thank you.

SHALLOW

Sir, I thank you; by yea and no, I do.

PAGE

I am glad to see you, good Master Slender.

Slender is so nervous, he can only grunt and wave.

SHALLOW

Sir, is Sir John Falstaff here?

PAGE

He is within, sir; and I would I could do a good office between you.

SHALLOW

He hath wronged me, Master Page.

PAGE

Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

SHALLOW

If it be confessed, it is not redress'd: is not that so, Master Page? He hath wronged me; indeed he hath, at a word, he hath, believe me: Robert Shallow, esquire, saith, he is wronged.

PAGE

Here comes Sir John.

ANNE/ SLENDER:

ACT I SCENE i

ANNE PAGE

Will't please your worship to come in, sir?

SLENDER

No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well.

ANNE PAGE

The dinner attends you, sir.

SLENDER

I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forsooth.

(Backs up into Simple)

Go, sirrah, for you are my man, go wait upon my
cousin Shallow.

Exit SIMPLE. Silence, as Anne waits patiently for Slender, who is too violently bashful to notice.

ANNE PAGE

I may not go in without your worship- I pray you, sir, walk in.

SLENDER

I had rather walk here, I thank you. I bruised
my shin th' other day with playing at sword and
dagger with a master of fence-

(Jumps at a noise)

Why do your dogs bark so? Be there bears i' the town?

ANNE PAGE

I think there are, sir; I heard them talked of.

SLENDER

You are afraid, if you see a bear loose, are you not?

ANNE PAGE

Ay, indeed, sir.

SLENDER

That's meat and drink to me, now. I have seen
Gentle Ben loose twenty times, and have taken him by
the chain...

(chatters on about his exploits...)

FENTON/ ANNE:

ACT III SCENE iv

FENTON

I see I cannot get thy father's love;
Therefore no more turn me to him, sweet Nan.

ANNE PAGE

Alas, how then?

FENTON

Why, thou must be thyself.
He doth object I am too great of birth--,
And that, my state being gall'd with my expense,
I seek to heal it only by his wealth:
Besides these, other bars he lays before me,
My riots past, my wild societies;
And tells me 'tis a thing impossible
I should love thee but as a property.

ANNE PAGE

May be he tells you true.

FENTON

No, heaven so speed me in my time to come!
Albeit I will confess thy father's wealth
Was the first motive that I woo'd thee, Anne:
Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value
Than stamps in gold or sums in sealed bags;
And 'tis the very riches of thyself
That now I aim at.

ANNE PAGE

Gentle Master Fenton,
Yet seek my father's love; still seek it, sir:
If opportunity and humblest suit
Cannot attain it, why, then,--hark you hither!

They converse apart

CAIUS/ RUGBY

ACT II SCENE iii

A GOLFCOURSE TEE. *CAIUS is driven onstage aboard his mighty Golf Cart. He dismounts and prowls to the Tee, anxiously awaiting his appointed challenge. RUGBY caddies.*

Caius lines up a shot, wagging in ways that a human body should not waggle. He swings, and both of them turn their eyes down range to see how far the thundering drive sailed. They see nothing. Caius looks down- the ball is still on the tee.

DOCTOR CAIUS

(pointing off)

Jack Rugby!

RUGBY

(Looking off)

Sir?

Caius deftly pockets the untouched ball.

DOCTOR CAIUS

Vat is de clock, Jack?

RUGBY

'Tis past the hour, sir, that Sir Hugh promised to meet.

DOCTOR CAIUS

By gar, he has save his soul, dat he is no come; he has pray his Pible well, dat he is no come.

(menacing Rugby)

By gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.

RUGBY

He is wise, sir; he knew your worship would kill him, if he came.

Caius "shadow fences" with his Five Iron

DOCTOR CAIUS

By gar, de herring is no dead so as I vill kill him.

Take your iron, Jack; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

RUGBY

Alas, sir, I cannot fight.

DOCTOR CAIUS

Villany, take your iron.

RUGBY

Forbear; here's company.