

## 2025 CASTING

Illyria celebrates its 34th season in 2025. Would you like to work for one of the longest established, most widely respected and highly acclaimed of the open-air theatre companies? If so, we'd like to hear from you.

Illyria's shows are very physical and demand very strong vocal skills. The productions are ensemble - no individual is the star. Actors need to be fearless in giving HUGE performances and, within given parameters, interacting freely with the audience.

We rehearse in the far west of Cornwall. Rehearsals are 5 days per week, and the entire cast will stay together in one or two static caravans. Travel to Cornwall and accommodation during rehearsals are provided and paid for by Illyria.

On tour, there is at least one day off per week (generally Monday). Vans return to base/London on average once a fortnight, but sometimes less frequently. Any other travel on tour is provided and paid for by Illyria. Accommodation is provided and paid for by Illyria (normally shared twin rooms).

Each tour has a company of between 4-6 actors (depending on the title) who work as a team. Everyone mucks in with everything, including stage-management, driving, costume/prop-maintenance, radio/TV interviews, and most importantly get-ins & get-outs which involve lugging heavy steel deck staging. No-one gets off lightly. All jobs are everyone's jobs.

**Performances continue regardless of the weather.** Building the stage, performing in the show, striking everything and packing the van in the pouring rain and mud – how does that make you feel? Is that an *honest* answer, or just what you think we want to hear? Everyone loves the sound of adventure – until they're in one. So please think long and hard about this kind of work before applying.

Touring with Illyria is not like indoor touring. Open-air shows demand greater physical and vocal energy, because we don't use amplification and because the weather and other elements can sometimes work against you. There are days when your get-in becomes laborious and muddy, the wind blows your voice away from the audience and your quick-changes in sodden costumes become an endless struggle. You can be cold, tired and wetter than you've ever dreamed possible. But for the right people the periodic hardships are outweighed by the camaraderie, the balmy days and the magic of being on stage in the great outdoors. During the last 33 years 75% of Illyria's actors have returned for more! (Over 50% return for 3 seasons, 20% for 5 seasons or more!)

Illyria was proud to adopt Equity's Charter for Outdoor Theatre at its inception. Please bear this in mind when choosing between work with Illyria or other companies who offer remunerations and conditions well below the Equity standard.

We would like to hear from versatile performers who are up for the challenge of outdoor touring. We need to be certain that every applicant has genuinely understood the physical, mental and technical demands of open-air touring, so **submissions will ONLY be considered if accompanied by a \*detailed\* covering letter from the performer themselves.** We can see your skills and experience from your CV, but we want to hear about *\*you\**. Tell us in a paragraph or two why this kind of work appeals to you, how it plays to your strengths, and what qualities you can bring.

## **Casting – PRIDE AND PREJUDICE**

With her tongue firmly in her cheek, Jane Austen tells us “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.” Mrs Bennet certainly thinks so. So when Mr Bingley – single, young, handsome, and with £5000 a year – moves into nearby Netherfield Park, she devotes all her energy to contriving for Jane, the eldest of her five daughters, to meet him during rural Hertfordshire’s whirlwind of social balls. But even Mrs Bennet draws the line at Mr Bingley’s disdainful friend Mr Darcy despite his whopping £10,000 a year. Thank heavens Lizzy, her second daughter, finds him detestable too! Or does she...? Can she see beyond his pride – and could he overcome her prejudice – to consider a possible future together? Following seven sell-out seasons of this sparkling adaptation, award-winning Illyria returns to celebrate Jane Austen’s 250th birthday in style.

Location: UK open-air theatre tour

Dates: Rehearsing from 26<sup>th</sup> May. Touring 14<sup>th</sup> June – 7<sup>th</sup> September  
(15 weeks in total, dates subject to alteration)

Wage £523pw

+ 3 meals per day on tour OR £7.50 per meal

+ statutory holiday pay/paid holiday

+ overtime (where applicable)

+ pension contribution

Accommodation and travel paid for by Illyria.

Compliant with Equity’s Charter for Outdoor Theatre.

### **Character Details:**

We are looking for exceptionally versatile comedy actors to join Illyria as company members in this ensemble outdoor touring production.

### **Essential:**

All applicants must have the following:

- a full, clean driving licence (van-driving experience preferable)
- a passion for small-scale touring

**We strongly encourage application from Black, Asian and ethnic minority actors. All appointments will be made on merit.**

### **Roles:**

#### **MRS BENNET/MR BINGLEY**

*Playing age:* 21-45

*Gender:* Female

*Appearance:* Any

*Height:* Any

**MRS BENNET** - has a family of 5 daughters. In a world where her husband's estate has been entailed away from his own family, she is committed to finding them all wealthy husbands with the focus of a hungry shark. But she is not a subtle woman, and her endeavours often cause members of her family great embarrassment. Having been ignored by her husband for many years, it is perhaps understandable that she has a tendency to over-dramatise any situation that even remotely obstructs her purpose.

Doubles with:

**MR BINGLEY** - a wealthy young man who falls in love with the eldest of the Bennet daughters, Jane. A man who is guileless, who knows that he is easily seen through, and who places more trust in the judgement of his friend Darcy than in his own.

#### **MR BENNET/LADY CATHERINE**

*Playing age:* 21-45

*Gender:* Male

*Appearance:* Any

*Height:* Any

**MR BENNET** - A man who got married when both he and his bride were too young. Now, in middle age, his chief sources of joy are winding his wife up, insulting people he dislikes (including most of his own family) in phrases so polite they have no idea and retreating to the refuge of his study. An intelligent and very witty man, he is nevertheless prone to procrastination, even when situations are really very serious.

Doubles with:

**LADY CATHERINE DE BURGH** - The matriarch of a formidable dynasty and Darcy's aunt. Lady Catherine is horrified when she hears a rumour that her nephew has proposed marriage to Lizzy Bennet, an outspoken young person from a family whose reputation was compromised when the youngest daughter infamously eloped. Such a connection is not to be borne, so Lady Catherine sets out to confront Miss Bennet to express her serious displeasure, and to extract a promise from her to break the engagement.

#### **DARCY/WICKHAM/MR COLLINS**

*Playing age:* 21-45

*Gender:* Male

*Appearance:* Any

*Height:* Any

**DARCY** - The stereotypical male romantic lead: tall, dark, handsome - but also haughty, silent, rude, judgemental, anti-social and a dastardly schemer. At least, that's the view of Lizzy Bennet when she first meets him, and her opinion of him gets consistently lower and lower. When he nervously proposes to Lizzy, and tells her he is doing so against his better judgement, she gives him both barrels. Needless to say, she has deeply misunderstood his true motives.

Doubles with:

**WICKHAM** - charming, but an utter scoundrel.

And:

**MR COLLINS** - a parson whose oily fawning belies his sleaziness with regards to young women. He is sanctimonious yet unforgiving; shows excessive humility yet remains wholly self-centred.

All other roles are now cast.

We need to be certain that every applicant has genuinely understood the physical, mental and technical demands of open-air touring, so **submissions will ONLY be considered if accompanied by a \*detailed\***

**covering letter (or voice memo or link to a short video) from the performer themselves.** We can see your skills and experience from your CV, but we want to hear about \*you\*. Tell us in a paragraph or two why this kind of work appeals to you, how it plays to your strengths, and what qualities you can bring.

Please email your details and/or Spotlight link (or equivalent) to the director, Kim Healey: [illyriacasting@gmail.com](mailto:illyriacasting@gmail.com). Email applications only please, with "CASTING PRIDE AND PREJUDICE" in the title bar. Submissions without a detailed covering letter, or mass submissions of only photos and CVs, cannot be considered.

Closing date for applications: midnight 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025.

Casting will be by in-person audition in West London on 12th or 13th March 2025. Applicants who are invited to audition will be contacted not later than 5th March 2025 with full details. After the audition Illyria commits to contacting each auditionee or their agent to let them know the outcome not later than 21 March 2025.

## **Casting – THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR**

Location: UK open-air theatre tour

Dates: Rehearsing from 16<sup>th</sup> June. Touring 5<sup>th</sup> July – 7<sup>th</sup> September (12 weeks in total, dates subject to alteration)

Wage £523pw

+ 3 meals per day on tour OR £7.50 per meal

+ statutory holiday pay/paid holiday

+ overtime (where applicable)

+ pension contribution

Accommodation and travel paid for by Illyria.

Compliant with Equity's Charter for Outdoor Theatre.

### **Character Details:**

We are looking for exceptionally versatile actors to join Illyria as company members in this ensemble production.

### **Essential:**

All applicants must have the following:

- a full, clean driving licence
- strong singing skills
- a passion for small-scale touring

### **Desirable:**

- Van-driving experience

**We strongly encourage application from Black, Asian and ethnic minority actors. All appointments will be made on merit.**

### **Roles (secondary roles in brackets):**

#### **SIR JOHN FALSTAFF/ANNE PAGE**

*Playing age: 21-45*

*Gender: Male*

*Appearance: Larger build preferred*

*Height: 180cm+*

**FALSTAFF** - Once a knight who was confidant to the King himself, Falstaff is now just a boisterous scoundrel living off a past reputation. He finds himself desperately short of money, so, without entertaining a moment's doubt as to his success, sets out to woo not one but two wealthy women. His character is built on self-deceit: in his mind he is the noble knight, the classical romantic lead, the ingenious deviser of clever plots - but in reality, he is none of these things. No matter how much he suffers humiliation or pain as a result of his own delusions, he never seems to learn the lessons.

Doubles with:

**ANNE PAGE** - a young girl whose parents love her but are blissfully ignorant of her wishes. They each want her to marry a different respectable person in their community; but she is in love with the dashing Fenton, and has the determination and deviousness to contrive their ultimate union.

## **MRS PAGE/MINE HOST**

*Playing age: 21-45*

*Gender: Female*

*Appearance: Any*

*Height: Any*

**MRS PAGE** - A woman who leads a charmed life: she has wealth, friends, a fine home, diligent servants, and a good husband who loves, respects and trusts her. The security these things provide allows her the freedom to respond without restraint when she reads the most offensive letter she's ever received. She's ballsy, determined, ferociously protective of her more timid best friend, and not above being devious to bring about results she wants.

Doubles with:

**MINE HOST OF THE GARTER** - A larger than life, rumbustious, booming character who loves hospitality, laughter and playing practical jokes on his friends.

All other roles are now cast.

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