

Audition Pack



The Company

Fingerless Theatre debuted in 2018, presenting William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, as part of the Sydney Fringe Festival. This production was followed by a double-bill of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* at the Giant Dwarf (now the Grand Electric) in 2019. Later that year, we produced *Just A Short Break on a Hafgufa* by Persian playwright Kian Farzam at Flight Path Theatre. 2020 saw the cancellation of another Shakespeare season and the development of a new musical. Similarly, 2021 saw the cancellation of yet another Shakespeare show, as well as an original-ish Fringe show. In 2022, we were back in the game, and were able to finally mount *The Tale of the Great Emu War* as part of the Fringe. 2024 saw us do a super queer *Twelfth Night: or What You Will* as part of Sydney WorldPride, followed by an adaptation of *The Government Inspector* by Nikolai Gogol, both at Flow Studios. After a year of focusing on other projects, 2025 saw us produce the critically-acclaimed *Ophelia Thinks Harder* by Jean Betts (and William Shakespeare) at KXT. After some of the key Fingerless players worked on New Theatre's smash hit *The Frogs: in Hell They Sing Show Tunes*, a snap decision was made to reunite much of this ensemble to stage Shakespeare's *As You Like It* at Flight Path at the beginning of this year. And whilst we scheme and dream about next year, we thought we'd squeeze in one more project this year...



The Director/Playwright

Alex Kendall Robson (he/him) is a freelance theatre maker, having completed a Bachelor of Theatre Studies and a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) at the University of New England. Winning an international scholarship, he studied Shakespeare at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. In 2020, he won a scholarship to study at Shakespeare's Globe in London, before covid ruined everything for everyone. He has devised two plays about the Bard and his work: *A Short Guide to Shakespeare* and *Shakespeare's Villains: Everyone But Iago*, the former appearing in the 2014 Sydney Fringe then touring the state. He has directed three (and a half) queer shows for New Theatre: *Bathhouse: the Musical* by Tim Evanicki, *The Things I Could Never Tell Stephen* by Jye Bryant, *Homos, or Everyone in America* by Jordan Seavey, and most recently his own adaptation of Aristophanes' *The Frogs: in Hell They Sing Show Tunes*. He has



written and directed several adaptations of classic texts: *The Government Inspector* by Nikolai Gogol, *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, *The Misanthrope* by Molière, *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame, *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, and *Grimm Tidings* based on the stories of the Brothers Grimm. His other theatre directing credits include: *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare, *Ophelia Thinks Harder* by Jean Betts (and Shakespeare), *The Tale of the Great Emu War* by himself, *Just a Short Break on a Hafgufa* by Kian Farzam, *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night* by Shakespeare (Fingerless Theatre); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Two Sticks Theatre); *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest*, *The Threepenny Opera* by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, and *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde (Felt Tip Theatre).

The Movement/Puppetry Director

Jade Fuda (she/her) is a Sydney-based actor with a Bachelor of Performance from the Australian Academy of Dramatic Arts. She has performed in, directed, produced, and collaborated on a number of new plays, films, and Theatre in Education projects. In 2018, Jade was accepted into the Stella Adler Art of Acting Studio in Los Angeles, where she completed the Film and Television Acting Intensive Program. Jade has had the privilege of touring nationally with CDP Theatre Producers in 'Magic Beach', 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show', 'Ratburger', and 'Spot – Live on Stage', and internationally with 'The 13-Storey Treehouse' (dir. Liesel Badorrek). She has worked extensively with Sport for Jove, playing Celia/PhebePhebe in 'As You Like It', Benvolio in 'Romeo and Juliet' (dir. Damien Ryan), and Hermia/Starveling in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' (Sean O'Shea). Other credits include; Viola in 'Twelfth Night: or What You Will' (Fingerless Theatre), Marya in 'The Government Inspector' (Fingerless Theatre), Molly in 'The Female of the Species' (Rogue Projects), Stacey in the Australian premiere of 'Girl Band' by Katy Warner (New Ghosts Theatre Company), Rosalind in 'As You Like it' (Fingerless Theatre) and a puppeteer in the award-winning Australian Premier of 'Lost and Finding' (Liminal Productions).and a puppeteer in the award-winning Australian Premier of 'Lost and Finding' (Liminal Productions). in 'As You Like It', Benvolio in 'Romeo and Juliet' (dir. Damien Ryan), and Hermia/Starveling in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' (Sean O'Shea). Other credits include; Viola in 'Twelfth Night: or What You Will' (Fingerless Theatre), Marya in 'The Government Inspector' (Fingerless Theatre), Molly in 'The Female of the Species' (Rogue Projects), Stacey in 'Girl Band' by Katy Warner (New Ghosts Theatre Company), Rosalind in 'As You Like it' (Fingerless Theatre), Anna in 'Dealing with Clair' ((Irregular Programming) and a puppeteer in the award-winning Australian Premier of 'Lost and Finding' (Liminal Productions).



The Play

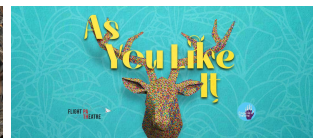
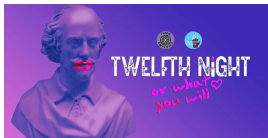
Word has come from the land of the Danes: Hrothgar's golden hall is being plagued by the monstrous troll Grendel. What they need is a hero, and Beowulf has answered the call.

Adapted from the Anglo-Saxon epic poem, this is the story of the English language's first hero, retold in lyrical contemporary prose.

Here, there be dragons.

The Team

Alex Kendall Robson	– Director/Playwright
Jade Fuda	– Movement Director/Puppet Director/Associate Producer
Zachary Aleksander	– Music Director
Sevgi Murphy	– Associate Producer
Nicholas Starte	– Fight Choreographer
Lily Moody	– Production Designer
Sophie Parker	– Lighting Designer
David Wilson	– Sound Designer
Matthew Whittingham	– Graphic Designer
Maddy Withington	– Social Media Manager
Eddy O’Leary	– Production Assistant
Caity Cowan	– Stage Manager (<i>pending</i>)



The Details

This production will run in accordance with the Equity Independent Theatre Guidelines, which can be found [here](#).

All actors will receive a guaranteed fee of **\$100** plus an equal **share of profits** after costs.

This season at KXT Underground is seen as a kind of pilot, and depending on its success and reception, there may be a return season.

The Text

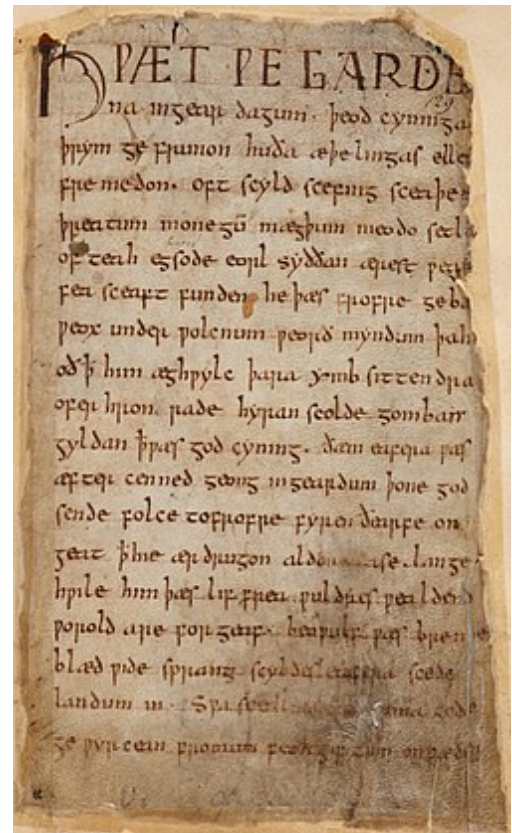
The original *Beowulf* was composed sometime between the 8th and 10th centuries. It is set in pagan, viking-era Scandinavia, but the version we have was written around the 10th and 11th centuries in Christian Anglo-Saxon England by an unknown poet. It is an epic poem – technically not a saga – comprised of alliterative verse, written in Old English: this is the language of the Anglo-Saxons; before the French influence of the Norman conquerors in 1066; before the Middle English of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in the late 14th century; and long before the Early Modern English of Shakespeare in the 16th century.

You have to be an expert to read it, like JRR Tolkien, who was a professor of Anglo-Saxon and medieval literature, and whose own translation was posthumously published. The hero's journey, the giving of rings, the bonds of fellowship, the vanquishing of dragons: all, arguably, inspired by *Beowulf*.

Our version is written in lyrical prose in contemporary English. In homage to the original form, the language is heightened, full of alliteration and assonance, with sparing use of rhyme. It will also feature some Old English and Old Norse, in addition to song and music, mask, and puppetry.

A working draft of our version can be made available on request.

[Here](#) is a standard translation of the original, with some notes.



The Roles

In the original, there is very little in the way of dialogue; the narration being broken up sporadically with long, ponderous speeches.

Our script is split between seven actors, each of whom play a key character in the story, but will also narrate the action and form an ensemble. When speaking as their narrator/ensemble role (1-7), it is envisioned that they will still give a flavour of their main character's thoughts and feelings. For instance, when the actor playing Grendel is delivering his lines as 3, they won't be in full troll voice/body, but there will be a quality of, say, menace about it.

We have indicated below how we currently conceive the gender presentation of the roles, but this is not set in stone.

All roles are physically demanding, with multiple fight sequences and dynamic movement. If you have questions or concerns about this, please let us know.

There will be some song and music. Please indicate in your EOI if you play an instrument or are a confident singer.

At this stage, it is imagined actors will use their natural accent.

BIPOC, CALD, First Nations, LGBTQI+ performers are strongly encouraged to apply.

The Dragon (1) – female presenting

The final boss. Framed as the main narrator of the story, it is not clear until the end that she is also the Dragon. Occasionally speaks in Old English and Old Norse. There will (potentially) be nothing in the way of costume that signifies she is a dragon, so must have gravitas and menace. Whilst the original dragon is primarily referred to with Old English masculine pronouns, we currently conceive the role as being played by a woman, as a woman.

Beowulf (2) – male presenting

The hero. They are strong, brave, loyal, perhaps a little prideful – We are interested in seeing actors who can show vulnerability as well as strength (that's not necessarily physical). While the character is male, we are open minded when it comes to casting.

Grendel (3) – male presenting

The villain. A monstrous troll; strong and gruesome. Their appearance – the nature of their troll-ness – is not described, so is open to interpretation. His motivation for attacking people is that he can't stand the sound of their happiness: the CGI film framed it like the volume was the issue, rather than the joy itself. We are currently envisioning using a half or three-quarter mask, and potentially claws. Speaks three words in Old English.

Grendel's Mother (4) – female presenting

The surprise second boss. Like mother like son: troll-ness open to interpretation; probably a half or three-quarter mask. She seeks to avenge her son, and her downfall is morally and emotionally grey.

Hrothgar (5/The Nameless Slave) – male presenting

The king. A strong and proud warrior in his youth, the horror of Grendel has aged and humbled him. Also plays the nameless slave who prompts the catastrophe in the final scene.

Unferth (6) – male presenting

The courtier. An enigmatic character who, in the original, “sits at the feet of the king,” either as a trusted advisor, or like a court fool. He is described as a kin-slayer, so he is potentially closer to Grima Wormtongue than King Lear’s Fool.

Wiglaf (7) – male presenting

The friend. In the final scene, he risks his life to defend Beowulf, who stands alone. He is brave but vulnerable. Younger, potentially sings.

[Here](#) is a useful video on how to pronounce character names, though don’t overly concern yourself with this for the audition.

The Dates

Audition EOIs in by	– Sat 19th Sept
Audition	– Sat 26th Sept
Development Residency	– 16th-18th Oct (<i>full attendance not required</i>)
First read / photoshoot	– Sun 18th Oct



Ad hoc rehearsals with individual actors throughout Oct-Nov

Intensive week: Mon 30th Nov - Fri 4th Dec, Mon late arvo/evening, Tues-Fri afternoons

As this is an ensemble piece, attendance for the intensive rehearsal week is vital.

Production week:

Week 1

Fri 11th Dec	– Bump In/Tech/Dress – 9am
Sat 12th	– Perf 1 – 3pm – access from 9am
Sun 13th	– Perf 2 – 2pm – access from 12pm
Mon 14th	– Perf 3 – 7:30pm – access from 5:30pm

Week 2

Sat 19th – Perf 4 – 3pm – access from 1pm
Sun 20th – Perf 5 – 5pm – access from 3pm
Mon 21st – Perf 6 – 7:30pm – access from 5:30pm
Tues 22nd – Bump Out – finished by 3pm

Expressions of Interest

To express interest in auditioning, send an email to fingerlesstheatre@gmail.com with the following:

- An up-to-date headshot,
- Your CV,
- Which character(s) you wish to be considered for,
- An indication of whether or not you play an instrument or are a confident singer,
- If you have a preferred audition time, and
- Your availability for the above dates.

The cut off date for EOIs is **midnight Sat 19th Sept.**

The Audition

Due to the nature of the piece, we will be holding group auditions.

These will be held on **Sat 26th Sept** at **The Seymour Centre** in [Darlington](#).

If you are unable to attend, but still wish to be considered, reach out to us.

We may not have time to see all actors interested in auditioning, and priority will be given to actors we haven't seen before.

Either way, you will receive a confirmation reply that we have received your EOI, and we will contact you further about next steps.

What to Prepare

Auditionees are asked to prepare the following:

- Prepare one of the short speeches below. These will be incorporated into a group exercise.
- Familiarise yourself with the large speech below. This will be used as the basis for a group devising exercise.

Further details, including times, will be made available to auditionees closer to the day.



Audition Material

Short Speeches – *prepare one*

The songs we sing are sometimes heard by ears we do not intend to hear them. Skald and bard, harp and lyre, fueled a fire that would see Heorot burnt to the ground.

Unholy wight, grim and greedy, he fell upon them with his fell hands, dragging sleeping souls from out their beds, never to wake again. Thirty souls he reaved, thirty bodies cleaved, carrying home his butcher's spoils to feast upon 'em in his own dank hall – a glut of slaughter.

He saw the band of sleeping heroes, and in his heart, if heart he had, he laughed, if laugh he could; and meant to make-off with all fourteen fast-friends.

Great was the strength of Grendel, but he could not get loose of Beowulf's grip. He strained and he strained, until a seam in his shoulder ripped asunder, sinews snapped, tendons tore, bone-joints burst, and he at last wrenched himself free of Beowulf, leaving his arm behind him.

To Hrothgar, him slaughtered was nearest and dearest; so deep was his anguish for Æschere. The hall was in uproar, a rally to arms. Called forth was victory-blest Beowulf, who had slept apart.

Beneath the stagnant surface of that blood-clotted mire, creatures writhed in the mirk, maggot-like, but far larger and fanged like sea-serpents. The war-horn's call set them teaming, and the pool bubbled like a hell-broth on the boil.

Large Speech – *familiarise*

Young men we were then, untested, when we sought to try our mettle 'gainst the open ocean. We knew the dangers. Tight in our right hand we each held a sword as we swam, to ward off the whales, and worse than whales. Stroke for stroke he matched me, five days and nights, we stitched the sea together, 'til a storm sundered us, and set the flood into a roar. And then the fish came biting, with ravenous appetite. But this I had foreseen, and wore my best battle-shirt, forged by Wayland of the finest steel, and try as they might, they could not pierce it. So down the sea-beasts dragged me, to the darkest depths, and yet they would not dine on me. Safer are the sailors of those waters now, for the justice I dealt those slimy marauders; their bodies littered the beaches of the water-way. Dawn's light guided me to the surface: the wyrd of the world oft protects the undaunted from doom. No less than nine sea-monsters beset me, and I bested them all. But heavy was the toll, and thus tired, the tides took me, and coursed me to the coast of the Norse. I knew such bloody business in the waves that neither Breca nor you, Unferth, could e'er hope to withstand.