

## Cycling Shakespeare Tour 2024

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### Call for Actors

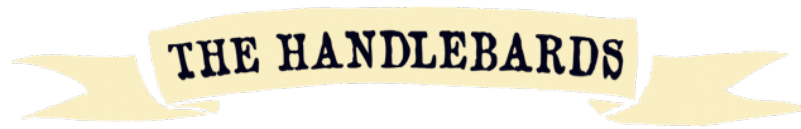
The HandleBards are seeking four larger-than-life comedy **actors** for their 2024 UK Tour of Shakespeare's '**The Comedy of Errors**', which will tour on bicycles from May - September 2024. Each actor will play multiple roles in the production.

The HandleBards are a four-strong troupe of cycling actors, who have performed their unique brand of irreverent, energetic and environmentally sustainable Shakespeare in venues across the world. In Summer 2024, a troupe will cycle from London to Edinburgh, stopping every 30 miles or so for nightly performances of The Comedy of Errors in castles, gardens, theatres, bicycle shops and stately homes throughout the UK.

- The HandleBards is an ensemble company, and all actors will play multiple roles in the production. Most performances will take place in the outdoors, in all weathers.
- The roles will require each actor to cycle approximately 30 miles per day, for up to six days per week during the length of the contract. The troupe typically perform a six-show week. Bikes and related equipment will be provided by the HandleBards. Set, props and costumes will be transported using two using bicycle trailers, which will be carried by company members on a rota system.
- Please have a read through of the "day in the life" document at the end of this callout which should give you a good idea of what an average day of touring by bicycle looks like.
- Accommodation is provided by the company for touring days, and will largely be in hotels and airbnbs with room sharing, but will occasionally include dormitories and homestays. Please note that we are not able to provide accommodation for the rehearsal period in London.
- We are looking for actors with a flair for adventure and friendly personality, who are prepared to participate and immerse themselves in all that the experience on- and off-stage requires.
- Experience with Shakespeare texts, comedy and movement is essential.
- Experience with bicycles, bicycle touring, and/or long-term fitness training is desirable.
- Desirable onstage skills include clowning, devising, musical ability ranging from singing to playing an instrument small enough to carry on a bike: if you can play an instrument or sing please mention this in your self-tape as well as including it on your spotlight.
- Optional special skills: we're definitely not expecting this, but if you have any special skills (puppetry, gymnastics, fire breathing or anything else) please mention it in your self tape!
- Desirable offstage skills include first aid, bike maintenance, photography, blogging and sewing.
- The tour involves some international travel, so all applicants must hold a valid passport and no reason to be denied entry to EU member states.
- All applicants must have the right to work in the UK.

The fee for all posts is £500 per rehearsal week and £535 for touring weeks, with a £27 per diem for touring days. The contract is approximately 22 weeks long, and includes around 1500 miles of cycling.

The terms of the contract and tour schedule will adhere to the conditions of the Equity Charter for Outdoor Theatre and any applicable variation agreement.



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To apply, please submit a Spotlight CV or CV and headshot to [auditions@handlebards.com](mailto:auditions@handlebards.com) by 6pm on Thursday 18th January, alongside submitting a self-tape of one of the eight monologues in the audition monologue pack found on our website ([www.handlebards.com/jobs](http://www.handlebards.com/jobs)). followed by a short song (accompanied or unaccompanied). Please upload self tapes using this link: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/f9VZ9l8VLofJNrjcQ0R>.

We are a multi-rolling ensemble so please feel free to choose from any of the monologues in the pack regardless of gender – if you are invited to the first round of auditions we will ask you to continue working with your chosen monologue.

We are looking for actors above the age of 18 of any height, appearance, gender and playing age.

We want our cast and workforce to be representative of all sections of society and welcome applications from everyone. If you require the information in this callout in a different format, or would like to discuss any access requirements for the roles, please contact us at [auditions@handlebards.com](mailto:auditions@handlebards.com).

Please direct all questions about the positions to the producer, Will Orton, at [auditions@handlebards.com](mailto:auditions@handlebards.com).

### **The HandleBards:** *The Comedy of Errors*

A four-actor production of Shakespeare's original, slightly abridged.

Director: **Charlotte Peters**

### **Key dates and information:**

**Application deadline: 6pm – Thursday 18 January**

*Shortlist decision made by 26 January*

**First round auditions: Monday 29 January (daytime)**

*Shortlist decision made by 2 February*

**Second round auditions: Monday 5 February (daytime group workshop)**

*Final decision made by 9 February*

Rehearsals: **8 April - 10 May**

First performance: **13 May**

Performances in Germany (non-cycling): **16 and 17 May**

Last performance: **8 September**

*Please note that these dates are subject to change.*

# THE HANDLEBARDS

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### A Day in the Life of a HandleBard

This example schedule should give you a good idea of what a day of cycling with an evening performance looks like with The HandleBards.

#### **Tonight's Venue – An outdoor amphitheatre north of Edinburgh**

7pm Show      Mid-August      Weather - Drizzle

#### 9:30AM – Travel Call

*The Company Manager has called you for 9:30AM to check over your bikes, load them with panniers, hitch the trailers up and get ready for the cycle ahead.*

#### 10:00AM – Start Cycling

*Today's cycle is approximately 25 miles but quite hilly. For a cycle like this you'll normally be pedalling for approximately 3.5 hours with an hour extra allocated for punctures/stoppage just in case.*

#### 11:00 – 11:15AM – Pit stop

*Quick pit stop at a corner shop to stock up on flapjacks and snacks.*

#### 12:30PM – Lunch (break in travel call)

*You stop at a local village for an hour's lunch break, some of you pop into a local café for a sandwich and the rest of you grab lunch at a supermarket.*

#### 1:30PM – Travel Call – Back on the Road

*You've got around 9 miles left to go.*

#### 1:45 – 2:00PM – Puncture!

*You've got a puncture! But you're all back on the road soon.*

#### 3:15PM – Arrive at the venue - End of travel call

*You arrive at the venue a little early – you all head to the dressing room and go on break for some down time while the venue get some pre-show food ready for you.*

#### 5:00-9:30PM - Show Call

*5pm – the Company Manager gives you the next day's calls, you build any set and get the performance area ready (this doesn't take too long as everything fits on the back of a bike), 5:30pm – into costume and warm-up, 6pm – quickly help seat the first audience members to arrive, 6:45pm – help with selling programmes, 7pm – 9pm – the show, 9-9:45pm – pack down.*

#### 10:00PM – End of Day

*You get a taxi to a local hotel where you're sharing a twin room – end of the day!*

It's a long day but we make sure to balance things out over the tour: there are days with no cycling when you're at the same venue for 2-3 performances, cycle days with no shows, scheduled days off and some shorter cycles. Our working hours also adhere to the Equity Charter for Outdoor Theatre.