



THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

Audition Pack

Audition Dates

24/25/27 June 2026

Rehearsals Commence

October 2026

Performance Dates

11-20 December 2026

The Q is thrilled to announce that Echo Theatre's 2026 Under the Stars show will be the brilliantly witty, delightfully ridiculous classic, *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

We're on the lookout for 8 experienced actors to help bring Oscar Wilde's unforgettable characters to life. These roles are iconic, and we don't believe they rely on specific age or gender. We're interested in your ability to capture the spirit, charm, and absurdity of these characters as they have been written rather than matching any specific age or gender, so please audition for the role you're most excited about.

Please note that the exception to the gender-blind casting is the role of Lady Bracknell which will be cast with an AFAB actor.

This play will be performed outside with minimal set and props.

This production includes a guaranteed fixed performance fee.

About the Play

The play kicks off with Jack Worthing, a respectable gentleman in the countryside who secretly lives a double life. He has invented a wicked brother called Earnest, whose scrapes and crises give him the perfect excuse to leave his country home and journey to London to stay with his friend, Algernon Moncrief.

Algy's cousin, Gwendolen, with whom Jack is in love, will only marry someone *named* Earnest, and her fearsome mother, Lady Bracknell, shuts him down when she learns he was literally found in a handbag.

Back in the country we meet Cecily, Jack's ward, a conspicuously pretty girl of 18 (who always admits to 20 at parties). When Algernon shows up pretending to be this imaginary brother, he immediately falls for Cecily, who has always wanted to marry a man named Earnest.

Everyone lies, everyone's named Earnest (or wishes they were), handbags become very important, and chaos politely explodes until everything is neatly, and ridiculously, sorted out.

To book an audition please send through a CV (or just some information about your performance history and experience) and current headshot to Jordan.best@gprc.nsw.gov.au and order the audition dates, 24 June (5:30-9:30pm), 25 June (5:30-9:30pm) and 27 June (10am-4pm) in preference (please let us know if you are unavailable for 1 or more of the dates and/or times and we will do our best to accommodate).

For the Audition

Please prepare one (or more!) of the monologues provided. You may also be asked to read scenes, and to discuss the character you feel you are right for and why, so make sure you have read the play (copy available on request).

Character List

Jack Worthington
Algernon Moncrieff
Gwendolyn Fairfax
Cecily Cardew
Reverend Chasuble
Miss Prism
Lady Bracknell
Lane/Merriman

Audition Monologues

Gwendolyn

It is strange he never mentioned to me that he had a ward. How secretive of him! He grows more interesting hourly. I am not sure, however, that the news inspires me with feelings of unmixed delight. I am very fond of you, Cecily; I have liked you ever since I met you! But I am bound to state that now that I know that you are Mr. Worthing's ward, I cannot help expressing a wish you were—well, just a little older than you seem to be—and not quite so very alluring in appearance. In fact, if I may speak candidly—Well, to speak with perfect candour, Cecily, I wish that you were fully forty-two, and more than usually plain for your age. Ernest has a strong upright nature. He is the very soul of truth and honour. Disloyalty would be as impossible to him as deception. But even men of the noblest possible moral character are extremely susceptible to the influence of the physical charms of others. Modern, no less than Ancient History, supplies us with many most painful examples of what I refer to. If it were not so, indeed, history would be quite unreadable.

Lady Bracknell

Well, I must say, Algernon, that I think it is high time that Mr. Bunbury made up his mind whether he was going to live or die. This shilly-shallying with the question is absurd. Nor do I in any way approve of the modern sympathy with invalids. I consider it morbid. Illness of any kind is hardly a thing to be encouraged in others. Health is the primary duty of life. I am always telling that to your poor uncle, but he never seems to take much notice . . . as far as any improvement in his ailment goes. Well, Algernon, of course if you are obliged to be beside the bedside of Mr. Bunbury, I have nothing more to say. But I would be much obliged if you would ask Mr. Bunbury, from me, to be kind enough not to have a relapse on Saturday, for I rely on you to arrange my music for me. It is my last reception, and one wants something that will encourage conversation, particularly at the end of the season when every one has practically said whatever they had to say, which, in most cases, was probably not much.

Cecily

You silly boy! Why, we have been engaged for the last three months. It will be exactly three months on Thursday. Ever since dear Uncle Jack first confessed to us that he had a younger brother who was very wicked and bad, you of course have formed the chief topic of conversation between myself and Miss Prism. And of course a man who is much talked about is always very attractive. One feels there must be something in him, after all. I daresay it was foolish of me, but I fell in love with you, Ernest. The engagement was actually settled on the 14th of February last. Worn out by your entire ignorance of my existence, I determined to end the matter one way or the other, and after a long struggle with myself I accepted you under this dear old tree here.

Prism

Lady Bracknell, I admit with shame that I do not know. I only wish I did. The plain facts of the case are these. On the morning of the day you mention, a day that is for ever branded on my memory, I prepared as usual to take the baby out in its perambulator. I had also with me a somewhat old, but capacious hand-bag in which I had intended to place the manuscript of a work of fiction that I had written during my few unoccupied hours. In a moment of mental abstraction, for which I never can forgive myself, I deposited the manuscript in the basinette, and placed the baby in the hand-bag.

Algernon

I haven't the smallest intention of doing anything of the kind. To begin with, I dined there on Monday, and once a week is quite enough to dine with one's own relations. In the second place, whenever I do dine there I am always treated as a member of the family, and sent down with either no woman at all, or two. In the third place, I know perfectly well whom she will place me next to, to-night. She will place me next Mary Farquhar, who always flirts with her own husband across the dinner-table. That is not very pleasant. Indeed, it is not even decent . . . and that sort of thing is enormously on the increase. The amount of women in London who flirt with their own husbands is perfectly scandalous. It looks so bad. It is simply washing one's clean linen in public. Besides, now that I know you to be a confirmed Bunburyist I naturally want to talk to you about Bunburying. I want to tell you the rules. Nothing will induce me to part with Bunbury, and if you ever get married, which seems to me extremely problematic, you will be very glad to know Bunbury. A man who marries without knowing Bunbury has a very tedious time of it. Then your wife will. You don't seem to realise, that in married life three is company and two is none.

Jack

It pains me very much to have to speak frankly to you, Lady Bracknell, about your nephew, but the fact is that I do not approve at all of his moral character. I suspect him of being untruthful. I fear there can be no possible doubt about the matter. This afternoon during my temporary absence in London on an important question of romance, he obtained admission to my house by means of the false pretence of being my brother. Under an assumed name he drank, I've just been informed by my butler, an entire pint bottle of my Perrier-Jouet, Brut, '89; wine I was specially reserving for myself. Continuing his disgraceful deception, he succeeded in the course of the afternoon in alienating the affections of my only ward. He subsequently stayed to tea, and devoured every single muffin. And what makes his conduct all the more heartless is, that he was perfectly well aware from the first that I have no brother, that I never had a brother, and that I don't intend to have a brother, not even of any kind. I distinctly told him so myself yesterday afternoon.

Chasuble

In Paris! I fear that hardly points to any very serious state of mind at the last. You would no doubt wish me to make some slight allusion to this tragic domestic affliction next Sunday. My sermon on the meaning of the manna in the wilderness can be adapted to almost any occasion, joyful, or, as in the present case, distressing. I have preached it at harvest celebrations, christenings, confirmations, on days of humiliation and festal days. The last time I delivered it was in the Cathedral, as a charity sermon on behalf of the Society for the Prevention of Discontent among the Upper Orders. The Bishop, who was present, was much struck by some of the analogies I drew.

**Auditions to be submitted by
5pm 19 June 2026**

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