



The Scarlet Pimpernel

BMSI – May 2023

The Scarlet Pimpernel is a musical with music by Frank Wildhorn and lyrics and book by Nan Knighton, based on the 1905 novel of the same name by Baroness Orczy. The show is set in England and France during the Reign of Terror of the French Revolution. The story is a precursor to the spy fiction and the superhero genres, where a hero hides under a mild-mannered alias.

Director: Andrew Cousins
Musical Director: Sally Cousins
Choreographer: Jess Edward

Production Dates:

Sunday 14th May - Dress Rehearsal, Sound Bump in
Thursday 18th May - Dress Rehearsal
Saturday 20th May - 8pm Performance
Sunday 21st May - 2pm Performance
Friday 26th May - 8pm Performance
Saturday 27th May - 2pm & 8pm Performances

As the French Revolution gets out of hand and Poets, Priests, Intellectuals and Aristocrats are sentenced to the Guillotine, The English Aristocrat Sir Percy Blakeney and his band carry out rescue missions to France. They avoid suspicion in England by pretending to be foppish nincompoops.

Guillotine, swords, fights and lots of lace, perfumes and clothes that “do shimmer so”. It’s an epic action musical with a lot of comedic moments. The whole show moves at a fair pace so it will be an exciting spectacle for the audience.

The show has some fantastic tunes and epic songs: Madame Guillotine, Falcon in the Dive, Storybook, Into the Fire, to name a few. The Broadway soundtrack is available on Spotify (and probably YouTube).

Rehearsals: Every Monday and Thursday nights at the Berowra Community Centre (7:30pm to 10pm), starting 30th January 2023.

For all enquiries please call Andrew or Sally Cousins on 94570744 (After hours) or email info@bmsi.org.au.

Auditions/Information



The Scarlet Pimpernel contains many opportunities for teenagers and adults of **all ages**. If you've ever thought about being involved but haven't had the confidence, take the plunge. It doesn't matter if you haven't done this before.

It's an opportunity to make new friends, discover hidden talents, and have a fantastic time.

Don't let the title "audition" frighten you. We try to keep the auditions relaxed and friendly. If you are interested but haven't done anything like this before then come (with a friend or two if you like) and the "audition" will turn into an informal chat. We can meet you and have a talk about what you would like to do. Note that this wouldn't necessarily exclude you from being considered for an "advanced role".

If you don't fall into the above category, then for:

A lead/significant support role - Preparation of a song that demonstrates your vocal capabilities. Please provide a backing track or sheet music. (A pianist will be available at the audition). There'll be some cold reading of excerpts from the script.

Associate roles and Ensemble members - should still book an audition. A prepared song is not necessary. We'll just take you through some simple vocal checks – no stress. It's more to find out how many of each voice type we have and how we might use you in the show. If you're only interested in Ensemble, then we're happy to see you two at a time, so sign up a friend.

Dance - There are no special dance auditions, although there are some dances in the show, some sword fighting for the leads, and a general skirmish for everyone.

We are lucky to be able to use Footloose Performance Studios in Hornsby for the auditions, meet and chat, info sessions, etc. ...

Footloose Performance Studios – 93 Hunter Street Hornsby.

Monday 12th December, 7:30 - 10:00 pm

Wednesday 14th December, 7:30 - 10:00 pm

Friday 16th December, 7:30 - 10:00 pm

Please call and organise a time to come along. Contact Andrew or Sally Cousins on 94570744 (After Hours) or email info@bmsi.org.au.

If you are interested in being involved but will be away for these days and there is absolutely no way you can attend, please contact us as we may be able (NO guarantee) to arrange an alternative time.



Character Breakdown

Marguerite St. Just – Lead, Female, Mezzo-Soprano.

An actress at the *Comedie Francaise*, blackmailed by Chauvelin into betraying the French aristocrat St Cyr, on the proviso that he be given free passage to England. Without her knowledge, Chauvelin breaks his promise and St Cyr is executed. Just after her wedding, rumours of her betrayal reach Percy and the relationship "cools" although she does not understand why. After her brother is arrested she returns to France to try and rescue him, during which the truth is finally revealed. Sword fighting required.

Sir Percy Blakeney – Lead, Male, Tenor

Leader of the “Bounders” who carry out rescue missions to France. He marries Marguerite, but on their wedding day hears rumours of her supposed betrayal and distances himself from her. News of the gruesome excesses of the French Revolution spurs him into action and he and his friends form a band to rescue who they can. To throw off suspicion he pretends to be a foppish nincompoop more interested in clothes, lace and perfume.

He also goes undercover in France and assumes the role of Grappin, Belgian spy for Chauvelin. Sword fighting required.

Chauvelin – Lead, Male, Baritone

Chauvelin was once in a relationship with Marguerite and uses this secret to blackmail her. He relies on fear and violence to prove his relevance to the French Republic and to its head Robespierre. Not known for keeping his promises. He makes it his mission to capture the Scarlet Pimpernel. Sword fighting required.

Armand St. Just – Supporting, Tenor

Marguerite’s only surviving family member and sole confidant, Armand is true to his own moral compass. At first a supporter of the French republic, he is disillusioned with the violence of the Reign of Terror and joins Percy in saving innocent lives. Sings a duet with Marguerite.

Bounders – Lead/Supporting, Male, Baritone/Tenor

(Ozzy, Dewhurst, Elton, Farleigh, Hal, Ben)

Percy’s gang who rescue the french aristocrats and others from the guillotine. Singing and some funny dialogue for all.

Marie Grosholtz – Featured, Female

Careful artist/sculptor with a future in wax figures. She marries Tussaud and sets up the *denouement* for Chauvelin’s undoing. Some dialogue and a couple of solo singing lines.

The Prince of Wales – Supporting, Male

Small speaking role in one of the more comedic scenes, possibly a chorus member will double up for this one scene, but would also suit a person who might not have done theatre before and would like to ‘ease’ into it.

St. Cyr – Supporting, Male

French aristocrat who is betrayed by Marguerite. He has some solo singing on his way to the guillotine... After this scene he will double another role.

Cupids of the *Comedie Francaise* – Supporting, Female

Girls dance/singing troupe on stage at the theatre where Marguerite acts. The theatre is shut down by Chauvelin, (partly as a vindictive act against Marguerite). The Cupids will double as other roles after this scene.

Maids of Percy’s Household – Supporting, Female

Solo lines for a group of 6 maids singing about the Scarlet Pimpernel with Percy. They will double as other roles outside this scene.

Mercier and Coupeau – Supporting, Male

Chauvelin's chief lieutenants. Speaking lines and some skirmishes. They end up tied to the guillotine at some stage.

Jessup – Support Male/Female

Percy's butler/housekeeper. The script says butler but would suit either characterisation. Would probably start in another chorus role, but switch to Jessup once action swings back to England.

Tussaud – Support, Male

Marries the sculptor Marie Grosholtz, and sets up the *denouement* for Chauvelin's undoing. A rather "corny" moment but audiences love it ... "apparently". A few spoken lines. Will probably assume other chorus roles.

Robespierre – Support, Male

The head of the revolutionary committee. A couple of scenes with dialogue. Nastier than Chauvelin. Probably assume another chorus role between scenes.

French Peasants, Soldiers, Tarts & Pimps of the Cafe, Prisoners, other roles.

Dancing, singing, costume changes.

Possible stage combat – big choreographed rescue scene in front of the guillotine.