

It promises to bring the “Old Town” in Southampton to life when students take to the street on Sunday (June 28) to perform their version of Shakespeare’s rousing history play *Henry V*.

Under the direction of [Fluid Motion Theatre Company](#), 30 pupils, aged from nine to 15 years old, from Woodlands Secondary School, Kanes Hill and High Town Primary in Southampton, will perform an abridged version of the thrilling play, based on Henry V’s legendary Battle of Agincourt, at Bargate monument and the ruins of Holyrood Church, as well as leading a procession between the two historic venues.

The project is part of the [The Streetspeare Schools Project](#) , a site-specific performance experience that gives schools the chance to enhance children’s understanding of Shakespeare by partaking in a creative theatre making process.

Road To Agincourt caught up briefly with Fluid Motion Theatre’s Artistic Director and director of this version of *Henry V* Leigh Johnstone to find out a bit more about the exciting project.

RTA: Can you tell us a little about The Streetspeare Schools Project (SSP)...

LJ: *The Streetspeare Schools Project allows children to think like actors, developing an understanding of Shakespeare’s plays through doing and seeing rather than conventional classroom based approaches. It gives schools and children the opportunity to work alongside other schools and professional artists to create abridged version of a Shakespeare play, performed in locations that are meaningful or relevant to the text being staged.*

RTA: How long have you been working with local schools on this production?

LJ: *The schools have been working with a professional theatre director for two hours a week since January, along with specialist workshops on a range of theatre techniques and skills including marketing for theatre, street performance and arts award sessions. The sessions have all been taking place at Woodlands School and both primary and secondary schools have come together to form one cast, something we have never done on SSP before.*

RTA: How much input have the students had in this abridged version of Henry V?

LJ: *The students have had a huge amount of input in this version of Henry V. Before we showed the students the script we all did some background workshops around the history of England at the time, the Hundred Years War and got the students to think theatrically about that time period. We then gave them a selection of titles to work with, before they had read any Shakespeare, titles such as 'leaving Southampton', 'the long march' and 'victory in the midst of casualty' that they started to devise small sections of performance for. Then we gave them sections of the script to work on and finally we had a full read through. The text has been abridged by the Drama teacher at Woodlands in consultation with myself and cuts and small changes have been made by the individual student cast.*

RTA: What can audiences expect from the production?

LJ: *Audiences can expect a focus on the confident and charismatic King along with how both armies felt in the lead up to the siege of Harfleur and battle of Agincourt. The performance is fast paced, energetic and at times humorous. The production is a real testament to how much the students have learnt about Shakespeare and Henry V and how much they now understand about this important part of local and national history. Audiences should also look out for the excellent scene spoken entirely in French.*

The Streetspeare Schools Project Henry V takes place in Old Southampton on Sunday, June 28. Performances are 30minutes long and take place at Bargate monument at 10am and the ruins of Holyrood Church at 1pm. The procession leaves from Bargate at 11am. All events are FREE.

For more details about [The Streetspeare Schools Project](#) and Fluid Motion Theatre Company, go to www.fluidmotiontheatre.co.uk