

# BRIGHTONLittleTHEATRE

## AUDITION NOTICE

# Queers

by Various, curated by Mark Gatiss

**Producer:** Joseph Bentley

**Production dates:** Thursday 11th April 2024 - Saturday 13th April 2024 (including a matinee on Saturday 13th)

**Auditions:** Sunday 21st January 2024 evening at Brighton Little Theatre

*Audition times TBC based on interest received so appropriate time slots can be set for each monologue depending on the number of auditionees. Please be available for late afternoon and evening.*

**Rehearsals:** Independently organised between actors and directors. However, full availability is required week commencing 7th April for final technical and dress rehearsals. Dates will be confirmed to work around other main season shows that are rehearsing in the theatre.

*Queers celebrates a century of evolving social attitudes and political milestones in British gay history, as seen through the eyes of individuals. Poignant and personal, funny, tragic and riotous, these monologues for male and female performers cover major events such as the Wolfenden Report of 1957, the HIV/AIDS crisis, and the debate over the age of consent through deeply affecting and personal rites of passage stories. A collaborative evening of performances to remind you how far we've come, and how far we still have to go. This is a fundraising production to support the BrickByBrick campaign to renovate our theatre.*

You may have seen at our season launch, or from publicity released since, that we will be working on a production of *Queers* next April. To ensure that we made space and time for our big Summer productions in 2024 we took the decision to present only one production for our Brighton Fringe offering. This made our season slightly smaller than usual and left us lacking in an intimate, minimalist, smaller scale production that our members and audiences always enjoy that showcases the finesse and talent that our directors and actors can bring to the stage with complex character based performances.

We have used this opportunity to create an additional season slot for a BrickByBrick fundraising show with a reduced run to be presented on stage in the main auditorium. As with previous fundraising shows that we have produced, this will be a collaborative production with directors and actors being able to structure their rehearsal schedule to work with their own availability.

*Queers* is a compilation of eight deeply affecting monologues for actors of varying ages and genders. Each monologue runs between fifteen and twenty minutes. If you are looking for an opportunity to work one-on-one with a director to produce an engaging and thoughtful piece within the wider show then this could be for you.

Auditioning for this show is open to all, and you will not be disadvantaged based on involvement with any other scheduled shows in the season. Rehearsals will be up to you and your director to organise in your own time and in your own space, at times that fit around your other theatre and home commitments. Unfortunately, due to demand for theatre space, rehearsal time in the theatre is not available until the week of the show.

Please see below for audition notes for each monologue and the directors' contact details. Please contact specific directors for further details and audition pieces.

***The Man on the Platform*** by Mark Gatiss

**Director:** Harry Atkinson

**Email:** atkinsonwilliam2003@yahoo.co.uk

Time 1917. The protagonist, Perce, is a serving RAMC Private, and is on leave in England. He is a naturally introverted person who is tender and who cares deeply about the wounded soldiers who pass through his care. The man on the platform, is, of course, Oscar Wilde and the date of the fictitious encounter is the 25th of November 1895 because that is when Wilde was transferred from Pentonville Prison to Reading Goal because of his ill health. The spark of recognition between Wilde and the young Perce is significant because that spark of clandestine recognition is how Perce has learnt to live his life. He must hide his gayness or risk life changing consequences. He has learnt to read the people in a room, and this is what we find him doing at the start of the play. Hiding one's true identity is a major theme of the play.

**Perce:** Male-presenting - playing age 30s

***The Perfect Gentleman*** by Jackie Clune

**Director:** Emmie Spencer

**Email:** emmie.spencer@talk21.com

*Bobby is a swaggering man about town in 1920s London, but he has a secret. Can it survive when it really matters?*

This bold, funny and poignant monologue looks at gender identity and the queer experience a hundred years ago but with huge relevance for today. I'm looking for a female presenting actor with a playing age c.30s/early 40s to play Bobby – the perfect gentleman who happens to be a woman. Rehearsals for this short (c.20-minute) monologue will likely start early March 2024 in central Brighton. I'm imagining a fairly condensed/intensive rehearsal process over a couple of weekends, but this would be worked out with the actor. For a copy of the script and audition pieces, email Emmie.

**Bobby:** Female-presenting - playing age 30s to early 40s

***Safest Spot in Town*** by Keith Jarrett

**Director:** Harry Atkinson

**Email:** atkinsonwilliam2003@yahoo.co.uk

Time 1941. The Café de Paris was bombed on the 8th of March 1941 killing thirty four people and injuring eighty. Among the dead was the famous black jazz band leader Ken "Snakehips" Johnson. Ken Johnson was openly and flamboyantly gay. Ken is Freddy's idol, and he was on his way to the Café de Paris when he was diverted, and that saved his life. Freddy is an outrageously promiscuous gay man who moves through all levels of society from The Bloomsbury Set to the East End dockers. Freddy has his own fierce morality which runs counter to the accepted morality of the time. He knows that sooner or later he will be conscripted to fight and the play ends with his

vowing to join up, but not from some patriotic impulse or to “defend democracy”, but to protect his own subterranean world where “accepted morality” never filters down.

**Frederick:** Male-presenting - black - playing age early 30s

***Missing Alice*** by Jon Bradfield

**Director:** Suse Crosby

**Email:** suse@susannecrosby.com

Alice, forty-seven, sits in her coat and nurses a drink. She used to be working class, but is now more middle class. She's good-humoured with a slightly non-conformist edge. It's 1957. Alice has come to terms with a life that was completely unexpected, and describes how she came to be here. She tells us of her younger self: newly married and at a loss as to why her lovely and kind husband doesn't want her. From her lack of awareness and thinking that there was something wrong with her, she is now accepting of her life with her husband who she loves but who is only capable of loving her as a friend.

It's also the only monologue in the whole collection by a straight woman, which could be jarring, but really isn't. It's being in love with a gay man, and being loved by him as a deep friendship, not as a wife. In a way it's a celebration of a different type of relationship which must have been so very common especially during that time.

She thinks she's very proper and posh, but is a little less posh than she would have us believe.

**Alice:** Female-presenting - playing age mid to late 40s.

***I Miss the War*** by Matthew Baldwin

**Director:** Joseph Bentley

**Email:** jobaho@hotmail.com

It's 1967, Jack is in his sixties and he sits smartly dressed drinking a glass of dry sherry. Sometimes he is playing to the gallery, sometimes not. His camp is for effect.

Jack is a snappy tailor working on Duke Street, which might not be Saville Row, but he knows how to make a well fitting pair of trousers for a young man... He has lived through huge changes in social attitudes to the gay community. He recalls the times when affection between two men was not tolerated in public, and holds tight to the memory of a night with a beautiful American soldier on the empty streets of London during the Blitz. He recounts his experiences as a young soldier earning money as a rent boy, and how he is now the older gentleman seeking out the company of renters. The gay community is celebrating the Sexual Offences Act 1967, but they have no idea how hard it has been to get there, and he's not afraid to say so.

He is wise and playful, nostalgic but not bitter. He's reached that point in life when he can say what he likes with honesty without being held down by perceptions and opinions of others. Imagine the slightly tipsy uncle at a family wedding and you can't believe he just said that...

**Jack:** Male-presenting - playing age 60s.

***More Anger*** by Brian Fillis

**Director:** Suse Crosby

**Email:** suse@susannecrosby.com

Phil, twenty-nine. White T-shirt, 501 jeans rolled up at the ankles, Doc Martens. Beanie hat with a blond tuft of hair poking out at the front. An eighties gay. Phil isn't camp, but he's not 'laddish' either. He's witty. Razor-sharp - most of the time.

It's 1987. Phil is an actor, is young and non camp gay man living in a time of new fear of HIV and AIDS; adding layers of complexity to existing homophobia. The fear around HIV and AIDS at that time from within the Gay community and without was so pervasive it was almost palpable: and Phil lives in this time, describing it perfectly. Phil is not afraid to say exactly what he's thinking to the audience, in a pithy and brutal yet sometimes funny way. In this snapshot of time Phil tells of how his acting work is affected by the assumptions of others, and how fear affects a relationship he is in; and the lasting effects on his own self.

**Phil:** Male-presenting - playing age late 20s.

***A Grand Day Out*** by Michael Dennis

**Director:** Sarah Edinburgh

**Email:** saredin75@gmail.com

It's 1994, Andrew is seventeen, sometimes he's shy, he's unassuming and not completely confident, but he has charm, he's quick and importantly, deep down he knows who he is, who he authentically wants to be. Fresh from college and on the cusp of adult hood. The world is changing, and aware that he is different to his peers, a somewhat, spontaneous trip to London takes Andrew on a journey of self discovery, as he joins hundreds of others in witnessing a momentous day for the queer community. Would it go the way they want and will this change anything for Andrew?

Set to a backdrop of queers classics. This one person play will leave a lasting impression on those that join Andrew on the ride of his life (so far).

**Andrew:** Male-presenting - playing age late teens.

***Something Borrowed*** by Gareth McLean

**Director:** Jo Gatford

**Email:** jmgatford@gmail.com

It's 2016 and Steve prepares to give a wedding speech — at the wedding he never thought he'd have — going off script to consider the fairytale of love, the lingering fears of growing up under Section 28, defining moments of courage and happily-ever-afters, and above all — the love of his life, Adam.

**Steve:** Male-presenting - playing age late 30s to early 50s.

*BLT actively encourages auditionees from ethnic minority communities.*

*You do not have to be a member of the company to audition, but if you are cast you must join.*