

Casting Call: Mycelial by Catrina McHugh MBE, co-created with sex worker activists
In-person auditions 15th and 16th May '23 or self-tape submission

**open
clasp**
theatre company



We are looking to cast actors for our new production, Mycelial, who represent the women and people Open Clasp have collaborated with since 2020.

Mycelial

Written by Catrina McHugh MBE

Directed by Laura Lindow

Co-Created with sex worker activists

In association with Northern Stage

Ten people, scattered around the world and connected by the invisible threads that run between them.

A community; networks of sex worker activists rooted in their fight against injustice, illustrate how above ground, there are walls that need smashing.

From the feminist theatre company behind *Key Change* – New York Times Critics' Pick and *Sugar* on BBC iPlayer, Open Clasp, *Mycelial* is an international production that advocates for global justice and equity, co-created with sex worker activists.

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“When I first started this project, I had no idea what I would write, I just knew that Open Clasp could add to the debate with ‘two camps’ of thought, one to criminalize sex buyers, the other to decriminalize sex work. The workshops started in the pandemic and were full of joy, creative writing, drawing and cake. We talked about homicidal dogs, big baths and boredom. It’s a play about the world, money and the Suez Canal. About love, loss and being vegan. As I work with the groups and now as I write the drafts, the world keeps turning and so do the pages of this new play.” Writer of Mycelial and Artistic Director, Catrina McHugh MBE

About Open Clasp

We are a feminist theatre company. Our aim is to Change the World, One Play at a Time. The theatre we co-create calls for revolution. It ignites activism and places theatre at the heart of transforming the lives of women and girls.

We co-create with women excluded by theatre and society to create bold and urgent theatre for personal, social and political change.

[Openclasp.org.uk](https://openclasp.org.uk)



Sugar on BBC iPlayer, Episode 2, Julie starring Paislie Reid. Photo by Topher McGrillis

Casting Brief

We are looking to cast actors for our new production, Mycelial, who represent the women and people Open Clasp have collaborated with since 2020. Mycelial will be a production performed live at Northern Stage and filmed by our partners, Meerkat Films.

Actors should have good comedic presence in addition to being able to tackle the harder areas that the piece visits, such as whorephobia, racism, austerity, transphobia, homophobia and living with mental health problems, with performative strength. They should also have a knowledge and interest in the work of the company.

As this piece is rooted in the true voices of lived experience, we are looking to work with people who share an investment in seeking an authentic representation of the characters' narratives. This will involve a degree of research, but moreover an interest in connecting with the issues underpinning the work in order to inform the performance. **Our co-creators include women, trans women, intersex and non-binary people; therefore, it is important to us that we represent our co-creators and their lived experience on stage.**

Please note, some roles may be digital/film only and **not** live on stage. You will be updated about this if an official offer is made.

The breakdown is below, however there is room for interpretation.

Character: I Don't Eat Flour or Sugar

Playing Age: 35+

Ethnicity: Any

We are looking for an actor with ADHD to play this role.

She lives in Ireland, loves cooking vegan food, and wants to write a cookbook. She can be obsessive and finds it hard to start and finish things. She has an eye on the world, climate change and climate justice. She would describe herself as pessimistic, thinking the worst and is pleasantly surprised if she finds redeeming qualities, but that doesn't happen often.

Character: The Post Lady and the Homicidal Dog

Playing Age: 40+

Ethnicity: Any, from and lives in Northumberland

She lives in rural Northumberland and spends her time being inventive at trying to keep her food cool. Navigating life feels like flying a helicopter with boxing gloves on. She keeps an eye on the news and her dog, Butch. She hears history as it repeats and sees the cobwebs of racism unravel.

Character: Rocket Girl

Playing Age: 25+

Ethnicity: Irish

Born and raised in Dublin, working class, strong, intelligent, witty and a little wild. She was raised a Catholic but doesn't want to tick that box anymore. She has a strong connection to her cat Mo, now called Brendan. Rocket Girl has an addiction to crack cocaine, has periods in rehab/detox/addiction support. She is a lesbian who fights for the rights of others, strong grassroots activist. Her activism leads us to the bridge and future.

Character: The Bath in the Window

Playing Age: 30+

Ethnicity: Any

She is sitting in a shop window. This woman loves her curves, is desperate to find a bath that fits them. She has an inner strength but an experience of whorephobia has led her to feeling vulnerable, in need of quiet and escape. She is intelligent, witty and passionate about the rights of sex workers.

Character: I Drowned Twice – Erana

Playing Age: 40+

Ethnicity: Māori and/or Polynesian

A woman proud of her Māori/Polynesian genealogy, an activist for the right of sex workers, particularly the rights of indigenous women, Māori, black, brown, Asian and migrant women. Now in her 40s, she's a cool aunty who breaks rules and at night she walks her dog. Erana is a hustler.

Character: Jessica (Jessica, Molly, Math's and Me)

Playing Age: 30

Ethnicity: White, New Zealander

Jessica is 30yrs old and has a 10 year old daughter, Molly. She is a white woman from Aotearoa/New Zealand. She has to navigate stigma, home school during the pandemic and relearn maths. She is proud of her daughter and now proud of herself. We meet her as she creates banners, making right her ignorance, walking and standing in solidarity.

Character: How Am I Still Here

Playing Age: 25+

Ethnicity: Any

We are looking for an actor from the North East of England for this role

We meet her in a graveyard for phone boxes. Her life is written in chapters, first she is alone, young and struggling, second is exploitation, in the third chapter she finds herself in Edinburgh, high on a hill and she knows she will survive. Now a poet, her voice echoes and remembers.

Character: Red Boots

Playing Age: 25+

Ethnicity: African Diaspora

A woman who walks and runs to change the world. A trans woman of African or Caribbean heritage, her life was transformed when a client bought her a pair of shoes, they literally changed her life. With her long hair flowing and red lipstick glowing, she walks out of her house and starts to march, protest and grow. She sees her sisters across the world, her empathy overflows and now she wants change.

Key Info and Dates

All actors applying for a role must be available for **all** dates.

Rehearsal weeks include Saturdays.

25th Sept- 14th Oct 2023

Rehearsals in Newcastle upon Tyne

16th -19th October 2023

Tech/Dress in Stage 2, Northern Stage

20th and 21st October 2023

Previews, Stage 2

23rd – 28th October 2023

Live performances and filming.

30th October – 1st November

Filming 'pick up' Days – no audience

Contract Type: ITC/Equity plus a licensing agreement for the digital theatre element

Fee: £545 per week

- An additional one-off £350 fee for filming and Royalty Pool inclusion for the digital theatre aspect of the engagement, which will be covered in a licensing agreement
- Accommodation will be paid provided by the company if the actor's base is from outside of the North East.
- *** Please note, some roles may be DIGITAL/FILM only and **not** live on stage. You will be updated about this if an official offer is made.

Key Audition Dates

Auditions will be in-person and self-tape submission.

20th April 2023 - Submissions for in-person audition and self-tapes open

3rd May 2023 by 12 noon - Self-tapes submissions close

9th May 2023 - Actors who best meet the brief will be given an in-person or online audition and will receive a day and time slot.

15th and 16th May 2023 – In-person or zoom auditions at Northern Stage, Newcastle upon Tyne

The company will aim to respond to all auditionees, whatever the outcome, by the 19th May, however, due to the size of the casting process, please be patient with us as we may be delayed in communications.

In-Person Audition

- To show interest in auditioning, please email, Colette at casting@openclasp.org.uk with your CV/spotlight link and the role/s you are interested in auditioning for.

Self-tape Submissions

*All actors who submit a self-tape will be informed of the outcome, whether they have been successful or not.

- We would like actors to begin their self-tape/voice-over with a brief introduction, telling us a bit about you, and why you would like to work with Open Clasp on Mycelial before continuing with your monologue.
- Please audition using a monologue from the script, which will be provided to you through email.
- We expect speeches to be a maximum of 1 minute 30 seconds. Send to casting@openclasp.org.uk

Our only aim with the self-tape submissions is to see your audition, so please don't worry about using high tech equipment.

Self-tapes filmed on a phone are absolutely fine. If you haven't submitted a self-tape for audition before, some basic but useful tips are:

- Use a blank wall as a background
- Some good/natural lighting if possible
- A quiet space, so nothing distracts us from your audition
- Upload your video to Vimeo/WeTransfer so it's easier to send through in one file
- Send us the link and any passwords we'll need to view it.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch by emailing casting@openclasp.org.uk.

The Open Clasp team look forward to hearing from you!