

BENCHED

(Working Title)

Synopsis

A bench at the beach, overlooking the sea. A man, Andrew, nervously awaits an imminent arrival: the man he has been sleeping with. Upset, he doesn't know what will happen next when he is joined by an awkward, remorseful, and anxious Glen who needs to set the pair on a new path before returning to celebrate his marriage to his new bride.

Andrew:
Why didn't you say?

Glen:
It wasn't important at the time -

Andrew:
To you.

Glen:
To me.

A short film in development before shooting in Summer 2019, Benched takes a snapshot look at the pressures of heteronormativity and the masks we wear. As part of this, we feel it very important that LGBT+ characters are played by people who identify with being LGBT+: this is often the only opportunity for performers to play roles unapologetically close to their lived experiences.

We are looking for 2 performers to join a team for 1–2 days depending on your availability in developing the script for a new short film by Nicholas Barton–Wines. The script will be written towards the performer's unique characteristics, similar to a devised theatre process. Unfortunately, this is unpaid. Performers will then be invited to play these roles in the film when it is shot over one day in Scotland this coming summer with travel and food provided.

Our aim is for the short film to be submitted to relevant festivals around the world upon completion later in the year.

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Character Brief

Andrew

Twenties, any race, British

Respectful, empathetic and secure enough to avoid being walked over, Andrew is seeking answers as to how he is supposed to manage now his closeted friend and partner of numerous secret liaisons is getting married to a woman.

The casting brief is purposefully loose to promote actors from a wide range of backgrounds to portray the face of contemporary gay men. It is important to the team that casting reflect the characters' experiences for the process, and as such as are seeking notes of interest from men who value the importance of engaging in this important subject matter, and especially encourage any gay or bisexual men, or any men who identify under the banner of MSM in all its forms to register their interest.

Glen

Twenties, any race, British

Conflicted, pragmatic, and sensitive to the issue, Glen is trying to keep the many facets of his identity under control. At the celebration after marrying his new wife, he must now balance his on-again-off-again lover and friend's feelings: a man called Andrew.

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Statement of Intent

We feel it important that those with experiences of living under the LGBT+ umbrella have the opportunity to portray the experiences of characters who are also LGBT+. We recognise that there is risk associated to applying for roles in which performers may feel the need to declare themselves as LGBT+, and we want to assure you that your identity and any characteristics you declare will only be made known to the co-directors Nick Barton–Wines and Fergus Cruickshank before being cast in the role. We will ask you no questions about where you fit into the LGBT+ spectrum, but only your thoughts about the subject of the film and its wider resonances. We ask that you take responsibility on sending a note of interest that you do feel you fit somewhere within it.

As we have declared an interest in encouraging individuals who identify with the experiences of the characters to apply, by undertaking the role you may be associated with having shared those experiences too. We want to offer roles to those who we feel are the best fit with the characters, and that includes an element of relatability and visibility. Therefore, we ask you to consider carefully if you are prepared to undertake the role with its attached responsibilities. We will work with you to ensure any specific boundaries you may have to do with visibility will be built into our process, and you are supported and protected where appropriate throughout the creation, filming, and distribution of the film.

We want to break down stigma of being an LGBT+ actor by offering LGBT+ characters for them to play confidently and presenting LGBT+ stories to broad audiences. We hope that you will join us in this ambition too.

Questions and notes of interest should be sent to contact@nicholasbw.co.uk. At this stage we do not need CVs or headshots. We will contact everyone to arrange meetings to discuss the project in more detail after the deadline of 20th June 2019.

