

THE NORTH WALL PRESENTS

ArtsLab: Catalyst Showcase

About ArtsLab & Catalyst

ArtsLab is The North Wall's professional development programme for early career artists. The North Wall offers a residential programme every Easter, and a series of non-residential short courses through the rest of the year, supporting writers, directors, performers, technicians, designers and producers to develop their practice, and to progress in their chosen field.

Catalyst is the cornerstone of our commitment to new writing for the theatre. This project offers in-depth professional development to early-career writers and directors. To those selected, we offer the chance to work with an ensemble of professional actors, and highly experienced writing and directing mentors in a safe and supportive space, to hone their craft, develop and showcase their new scripts.

The Easter residency is totally unique across the UK due to the extra provision of accommodation and meals offered to participants. This support is provided in-kind by St Edward's School as The North Wall's principal sponsor.

About the Company

Catalyst Writers

Yasmine Dankwah is a British-Ghanaian spoken word artist and writer based in South London.

Sarah Isaac is an award-winning playwright who was born in India and now lives in London.

Simon Marshall is a playwright, writing facilitator and participation producer from Derbyshire, living in Sheffield.

Roann Hassani McCloskey is a writer and storyteller, aspiring to tell stories often left at the margins and bringing them to the centre where they belong.

Sam Parker is a playwright, producer and facilitator based in Plymouth.

Jenny Wall is a writer and actor from Hertfordshire; she trained at LAMDA and has previously been part of Broken Silence Theatre's Writers' Hive.

Catalyst Directors

Dale Edwards is an early-career director based in Bolton, Greater Manchester.

Olivia Munk is a director originally from New York City.

Taiwo Ava Oyebola is an interdisciplinary artist working across theatre, literature and arts & heritage.

Catalyst Actors

Aaron Gordon
Rori Hawthorn
Tife Kusoro
Alec Nicholls
Andy Owens
Maya Pillay
Robyn Sinclair

Catalyst Team

Writing Mentors Tom Brennan, Karim Khan and Sam Potter
Directing Mentors Ria Parry and John Hoggarth
Programme Leads John Hoggarth, Ria Parry, Amelia Thornber
ArtsLab Company Manager Alex Lonsdale
Technical Manager Clive Stevenson
Lighting Design James Bailey
Sound Design Tom Brennan, John Hoggarth
Production Assistant Arthur Kemp

The Plays (in order of Performance)

In Defence of Adventurous Mothers by Simon Marshall, directed by Dale Edwards, performed by Andy Owens and Robyn Sinclair

In Defence of Adventurous Mothers explores a brother and sister's relationship with risk as they grow up and apart, and our duty to family, but also to ourselves, to find our own extraordinary.

Catastrophe by Sarah Isaac, directed by Olivia Munk, performed by Tife Kusoro and Maya Pillay

Set in a corporate PR company, Catastrophe explores the attempt to discredit a racial grievance complaint by setting people of colour against each other with ultimately tragic consequences.

Torbaydos by Sam Parker, directed by Olivia Munk, performed by Rori Hawthorn, Alec Nicholls and Andy Owens

Otis is a young lad living in Torbay who cares for his Nan. When he falls in to the clutches of a county lines gang, a storm of biblical proportions hits the seaside town.

Sexiest Woman in the World by Jenny Wall, directed by Taiwo Ava Oyebola, performed by Aaron Gordon, Rori Hawthorn and Maya Pillay

Holly Wilder is the star of a YA trilogy, adored and obsessed over by millions of teenagers and recently voted Sexiest Woman in the World. When Summer, the girl she used to nanny, calls asking for advice about losing her virginity, Holly is forced to face her own aversion to giving anything personal away when her life and body already feel like public property.

1961 by Roann Hassani McCloskey, directed by Taiwo Ava Oyebola, performed by Robyn Sinclair and Alec Nicholls

17th October, 1961, over 250 Algerians were drowned in the Seine at the hands of the French Police. 1961 examines how a father and daughter a generation apart can have such differing views on how to fight oppression.

rite to party by Yasmine Dankwah, directed by Dale Edwards, performed by Aaron Gordon, Tife Kusoro, Maya Pillay and Robyn Sinclair

Set in 1989, rite to party follows two childhood friends who reunite with one another for one night. The play explores how moments of resistance can spark rituals of inherited joy.

Testimonials

“The experience has been really formative for me - from learning more about what directions to take my writing in to maximise the drama and potential, through to finding new writing peers, mentors and friends. I've loved our Writer's Gym sessions and how everyone in the cohort clubbed together to make my birthday special. The North Wall have this programme down so right, and I'm so grateful to have been a part of it.”

- Simon M, Catalyst Participant

“I have really enjoyed my time here on the Catalyst residency. The fact that it is a residential has meant that there has been a real opportunity to build connections with the North Wall, as well as with fellow creatives and I have enjoyed the conversations we've had in and outside of our rehearsal rooms. Catalyst also marks the first time I've directed something independently and I have felt confident to take that leap, hugely because of the generosity of the team here at the North Wall, as well as everyone who has taken part in the programme.”

- Taiwo O, Catalyst Participant

The North Wall Team

James Bailey Senior Technician
Tenika Blake Front of House Supervisor
John Hoggarth Co-Director
Nicky Laird Gallery Manager
Ria Parry Co-Director
Ethan Powell Casual Front of House Supervisor

Clive Stevenson Technical Manager
Amelia Thornber Associate Producer
Amy Walters Programme & Marketing Manager
Abie Walton Participation Manager
Wendy Weiss General Manager
Gabi Wilson Front of House Manager

With thanks to St Edward's School for their generous support.
