

PRESS RELEASE

Monday 2 March 2026

Please find images [here](#)**Royal Court Theatre Announces Full Line Up For The Spring Open Submissions Festival Supported by Character 7**

Today the Royal Court Theatre announces the full line up for its second **Open Submissions Festival**, running from Monday 30 March - Friday 3 April 2026. Selected from more than 3,500 scripts received each year, and launching a **new twice-yearly format supported by Character 7**, the Festival showcases the most distinctive and exciting new plays received by the Royal Court as part of its year-round, world-wide commitment to open script submissions. .

The plays and writers featured are ***The Briar Patch* by Ciara Elizabeth Smyth, *All Adventurous Women Do* by Tanja Šljivar, *We're Gonna Kill Billy* by Alex Medland, *Duppies* by Tia-Renee Mullings, and *What's The F**king Point* by ensemble company **FlawBored**. The plays will be presented in rehearsed readings with professional casts, directed by **Danielle Kassarate, Aneasha Srinivasan, Prime Isaac, Mayaan Haputantri** and **FlawBored's Josh Roche** respectively.**

Following the exceptional quality and impact of last year's pilot - and thanks to generous support from producers of ***The Night Manager*** Character 7 - the Open Submissions Festival will now take place twice yearly, in spring and autumn. The expansion will double opportunities for writers to receive paid development support and a critical platform for their work through this programme.

The Open Submissions Festival further strengthens the Royal Court's support for new writing and the promise that anyone, anywhere in the world, can submit a play for equal consideration - central to the Royal Court's mission since it opened exactly 70 years ago, in April 1956. The week-long Festival champions the best new plays submitted through this channel – while offering industry and audiences a first look at the future of contemporary theatre.

Gillian Greer, Associate Playwright and Senior Dramaturg commented: '*Our inaugural Open Submissions Festival was an enormous success. With Jack Nicholls' *The Shitheads* and Rhys Warrington's *Monument* both receiving full productions following successful readings, the Open Submissions Festival is fast becoming a key driver for plays making their way to our stages. I am delighted that with the support of Character Seven, we are doubling our efforts with two festivals this year. This programme is ambitious, international and provocative - a testament to the immense playwriting talent in the UK and beyond just waiting to be staged.*'

Playwright **Jack Nicholls**, whose play *The Shitheads* featured in the 2025 Festival before securing a full production as part of the Royal Court's 2026 season, said: *'Inclusion in the Open Submissions Festival was such an important milestone for me in showing that my work was being taken very seriously - an enormous vote of confidence that boosted my spirits, but also signalled to the wider industry that my work was worth paying attention to.'*

Character 7's Executive Chairman **Stephen Garrett** said: *'Our company is driven by a deep belief in the power of great writing and the importance of nurturing talent. So many of the very brilliant writers we work with in film and TV have finessed their craft in theatre that it feels essential to be supporting the Royal Court in this vital initiative.'*

The festival runs from Monday 30th March until Friday 3rd April 2026, with each performance starting at 7:45pm in the Royal Court Jerwood Theatre Upstairs. The Royal Court Theatre marks its 70th anniversary on Thursday 2nd April 2026. For more information or to submit a script through the Royal Court's Open Submissions programme, please visit the [Royal Court Theatre's website](#).

Tickets will cost £8.50 and go on-sale to the public at midday today, Monday 2nd March 2026, via its website and Box Office.

Writers' Card Members will have exclusive access to 20% off tickets to this event. All tickets will be eligible for a multibuy offer: when buying tickets for more than one performance, there will be a discount of £1.50 per ticket. (Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer).

*The Open Submissions Festival is supported by Character 7, an award-winning independent production company based in London, whose work includes the multi-award-winning global TV hit *The Night Manager*.*

SHOW BY SHOW

In association with Prime Cut Productions

The Briar Patch

Written by Ciara Elizabeth Smyth. Directed by Danielle Kassarate.

Monday 30th March 2026, 7:45pm

"So they've no explanation for the gaps or memory loss?"

Dara has learned to live with the blank spaces - the missing memories, the stories that don't add up. But a discovery shatters the version of her life she thinks she's been living.

The Briar Patch is a bold new play by **Ciara Elizabeth Smyth**, and was commissioned through Prime Cut Productions Reveal programme.

All Adventurous Women Do

Written by Tanja Šljivar. Directed by Aneesha Srinivasan.
Translated from Bosnian by **Aida Spahić**.
Tuesday 31st March 2026, 7:45pm

"The contours of our bodies changed without us exactly knowing how where why with whom how much for what when."

Seven girls return from a school trip mysteriously pregnant. Their small community is quick to assign blame, while the girls fight to reclaim their own stories.

All Adventurous Women Do is a fierce, unsettling play by **Tanja Šljivar**.

We're Gonna Kill Billy

Written by Alex Medland. Directed by Prime Isaac.
Wednesday 1st April 2026, 7:45pm

"Not that we're actually gonna kill him though"

Four teenage girls want to stop a billionaire building a marina that will destroy local wildlife and save the world. Step one: kidnap his grandson.

Step two... well, they haven't thought that far.

We're Gonna Kill Billy is a dark comedy by **Alex Medland**.

Duppies

Written by Tia-Renee Mullings. Directed by Mayaan Haputantri.
Thursday 2nd April 2026, 7:45pm

"The idea is, duppies are like... the part of the soul that stays behind."

Nathan and Nia have finally found a place they can call home - even if the lights keep flickering for no reason. After a series of strange disturbances, the couple realise they're not alone... and the past they've stepped on isn't staying buried.

Duppies is a haunting new play by **Tia-Renee Mullings**.

WHAT'S THE FKING POINT?**

Written by FlawBored. Directed by Josh Roche (FlawBored).
Friday 3rd April 2026, 7:45pm

"Yeah, identities work a bit like antibiotics. The more people use them, the less effective they become."

Matteen's disability is reclassified overnight. Julia is handed a diagnosis she never asked for. And Beth decides she deserves one too.

Three friends - and a useless doctor - are pulled into a spiral of medical bureaucracy, identity politics and the desperate human need to feel significant.

WHAT'S THE FKING POINT?** is a dark comedy from multi-award-winning disability led theatre company **FlawBored**.

On this performance, FlawBored company member credits are as follows:

Writer & Performer: **Samuel Brewer** (he/him)

Writer & Performer: **Aarian Mehrabani** (he/him)

Writer & Performer: **Chloe Palmer** (she/her)

Writer & Director: **Josh Roche** (he/him)

Writer & Producer: **Hannah Smith** (she/her)

Writer biographies

Ciara Elizabeth Smyth

Ciara Elizabeth Smyth is an award-winning playwright from Dublin. Her plays have been staged by the Abbey Theatre, Lyric Theatre Belfast, Traverse Theatre Edinburgh, Royal Court London and Irish Rep New York. *LIE LOW* (Best Theatre Script, Writers' Guild of Ireland 2023) has been translated into Italian, Turkish and Mandarin and is currently being adapted into an opera. Recent credits include *IRISHTOWN* (Irish Rep 2025), *THREE SISTERS* (Dublin Theatre Festival 2025) and a production of *LIE LOW* in Washington D.C (Atlas 2025). She is winner of Playwrights '73 Bursary on attachment to Traverse Theatre 2025-26 and represented by Cutis Brown.

Tanja Šljivar

Tanja Šljivar (born 1988 in Banja Luka) studied Dramaturgy in Belgrade and Applied Theatre Studies in Giessen. Her plays have been translated into ten languages and staged in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Serbia, Italy, Germany, and Poland. In 2019, she served as Drama Director at the National Theatre Belgrade. Films based on her screenplays have premiered at international film festivals in Berlin and Locarno. She teaches playwriting in Belgrade and has been a guest lecturer in Vienna. Based on her experience at the National Theatre, she wrote her debut novel, published by Suhrkamp Verlag in 2026.

Alex Medland

Alex Medland is an award-winning playwright from Aotearoa/New Zealand. In 2024, her play *Becoming Jeff Bezos* won her Playmarket New Zealand's b425 Award. She went on to write *We're Gonna Kill Billy* which won the 2025 Adam New Zealand Play Award for Best Play, Best Play by a Māori Playwright and Best Play by a Woman. She is currently the youngest person to have won the Adam Award in its 18 year history. In the UK, *We're Gonna Kill Billy* was also shortlisted for The Women's Prize for Playwriting 2025 and long-listed for The Bruntwood

Prize 2025. She is one of the founding members of Half Trick Theatre, a kiwi theatre company based in Edinburgh dedicated to making irreverent reinventions of untouchable classics.

Tia-Renee Mullings

Tia-Renee Mullings is a British-Caribbean writer and spoken word poet from South London. In 2023, she won the Mustapha Matura award for her first play LITTLE ANGELA DAVIS, which was also shortlisted for the Alfred Fagon award. She wrote her second play A TO B on the Royal Court introductory writers group in 2024. It was later workshopped at the Royal court and presented as a Shedinburgh Original at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2025, before being shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Playwriting. A TO B will debut at the Soho Theatre in June 2026.

As a poet, Tia-Renee has headlined Clicks Poetry Festival, Zenith Poetry, and performed on BBC Radio London. She is currently part of the 2026 Channel 4Screenwriting Cohort, developing work for TV.

FlawBored

FlawBored is a multi award-winning disability-led theatre company, co-founded by Samuel Brewer, Aarian Mehrabani and Chloe Palmer. They create satirical work with dark irreverence which aims to address complex and uncomfortable issues surrounding identity which no one has the answers to. FlawBored shows feature integrated, creative access throughout and seek to create an environment where all audiences are able to access the same show. A FlawBored show is cheeky, chaotic, and most importantly is not disability 'trauma-porn' or 'pity-porn.'

FlawBored's first show *It's a Motherf**king Pleasure* was a sell-out show at Edinburgh Fringe and has toured nationally to venues including Southbank Centre, Soho Theatre, Bristol Old Vic, Leeds Playhouse & Brighton Dome and internationally to Det Andre Teatret, Oslo, Soho Playhouse, NYC, Woolly Mammoth, Washington DC and Arts Emerson, Boston. *What's the F**king Point?* is FlawBored's second show and is the recipient of Unlimited UK Open Awards 2024.

★★★★★ THE TIMES ★★★★★ THE STAGE ★★★★★ TO DO LIST
★★★★★ FEST ★★★★★ THE LIST

ENDS

For the Royal Court press team, please contact:

Maisie Lawrence on maisie@breadandbutterpr.uk

Chloe Heard on chloe@breadandbutterpr.uk

Natasha Ryszka-Onions on NatashaRyszka-Onions@royalcourttheatre.com

Images [here](#).

NOTES TO THE EDITORS

Code of Conduct

The Royal Court has devised a Code of Conduct intended for staff, freelancers, audiences, participants, supporters, independent companies and wider stakeholders. It sets out the fundamental principles for how we work together: guidelines and expectations which reflect our legal duties, as well as our values and ethics – including anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice. [Please read more here.](#)

About Character 7

Character 7 is an award-winning independent production company based in London.

Founded by Stephen Garrett, the company is driven by a deep belief in the power of great writing and the importance of nurturing talent. Character 7 champions both established and emerging voices; collaborating with leading screenwriters, directors, and the next generation of storytellers shaping the future of screen drama.

Reflecting its long-term commitment to discovering and supporting new writers, Character 7 is the headline sponsor of the Royal Court's Open Submission Festival and Soho Theatre's Verity Bargate Award.

*Renowned for producing intelligent, stylish, and emotionally charged drama, Character 7 has worked with the BBC, AMC, HBO, Lionsgate, Starz, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ to deliver globally acclaimed series including *The Night Manager*, *Culprits*, *The Undoing*, and *The Rook*.*

*Season 1 of *The Night Manager* was nominated for twelve Emmys and won three Golden Globes. Season 2 – once again led by Garrett as Executive Producer – arrived on screens around the world in January 2026.*