**ABOUT ME**

My name is Ben Pountney, I am 19 years old and I am the writer of Writer’s Block. I am currently on a gap year after finishing college. Already in my gap year, myself and a close friend of mine set up our own youth theatre. It has been running for a few months now and already I would deem it to be a success. I am also working as an Assistant Director at the Crescent Theatre in Birmingham. Alongside this I also do various freelance work involving acting, directing a writing and I have very recently set up my own company called Pountney Productions. I have a real passion for anything that involves theatre hence why it has been a goal of mine to put on a performance written by myself. Thus Writer’s Block was born, my first ever completed play. My goal is to cast this show and put it on at Edinburgh festival. This is where you come in…

**THE PROJECT**

Pountney Productions is my own creation in which I write and develop plays with the goal of getting them either performed or published. Currently I am working on a number of potential plays that I feel when completed will be a great success. Writer’s Block is my first competed piece and I have a lot of faith and passion for the play. The best quality that Writer’s Block possesses is its simplicity. It is built around a simple plot with simple humour to reinforce it. Four writers struggling to come up with a play idea for a competition that could ignite their career. Each writer pitches his/her own idea throughout the piece as the other actors work to bring the pitch to life. The ages of the characters can range from no younger than 18 to about 23 years of age. There are four main character however all performers will be expected to multirole during the monologues of each character. The four characters are:

Eugene – The nerdy, gamer guy still single living with his mother. He is a weird character who shows little expression, passion or emotion about anything. Of the four main roles, Eugene is probably the most comical character.

Dick Johnson – Self acclaimed ladies man, Dick spends a lot of time being sarcastic trying to position himself above the other characters. He has an eye for money and any woman that he see’s.

Elizabeth – This character is the most difficult to define, she is quite an alternative person. She spends her time protesting and making her own art. She is the least intelligent of the group and struggles to understand sarcasm and fails to register when she is being lied to. She is a sweet character but does have a dark side to her.

Alice – Alice is essentially ‘The normal one’ she strives to be successful and believes other always drag her down. She cannot believe how bad her luck in when she finds herself in the middle of weird duo, Eugene and Elizabeth and is completely repulsed by Dick Johnson.

I have only provided very short basic comments about the characters because like I said I am looking for creative performers. I want to see what you can bring to the role and the play in general.

**PLAN FOR THE PROJECT**

Auditions will be taking place throughout the months of October, November and the first two weeks in December. I will then thoroughly review all of the candidates and reach a decision before Christmas on who I would like to cast. Just as a side note, I would like to assure all applicants, that regardless of the outcome of your audition, I will contact everyone who applied and am willing to offer feedback. My reasoning for this is that I have also auditioned and applied for various projects and plays only to never hear back from them. I understand that this is a very frustrating and irritating experience to go through. Hence, my promise to contact all applicants regarding the success or failure of their application. This may be through email, phone or letter.

Rehearsals will then start in January, the times and location of the rehearsals will be discussed with the successful applicants. This is to ensure that it is as convenient as possible for them to attend weekly rehearsals. Throughout the rehearsal process, changes will most likely occur to the script as myself and the cast will be experimenting with the writing and performance of the play. Throughout the rehearsal process, I will probably be holding public readings, this is for myself to see the reaction of the public towards any new material currently in the script.

This rehearsal process will lead us to around March/April in which I will schedule a couple of small scale productions of Writer’s Block again to allow you as the cast to get used to performing this in front of an audience. In addition, it will also again allow me to check any and all material in the play.

During the month of May, we will be attending Brighton Festival. This will consist of a week long stay again. At the conclusion of Brighton, you will then be given a break after all your hard work.

Depending on how much improvement myself and the cast feel needs to be made, I will arrange some more Birmingham based performances. This will then take us to July/August when we get set for Edinburgh Festival. We will be staying in Edinburgh for one week to perform Writer’s Block. Throughout this week, we will also be doing a lot of marketing and handing out flyers to try and get our audience numbers as high as possible. Edinburgh is a very competitive place and so we will need a strong marketing strategy to get success. At the conclusion of the week, you will then go home. However, you may also wish to stay in Edinburgh to enjoy the rest of the festival.

I am aware that this is a huge commitment and is a fair few shows. I can assure you that throughout the 8 months from when we start rehearsing. There will be times when we take a break. This is to give yourselves a rest from the play and a chance to relax before we leave for a performance. During this 8-month period, I will be putting on numerous fundraising events in order to raise money. A project of this size is not an easy endeavour, therefore any participation from the cast or any of the applicants who still wish to support the show would be greatly appreciated.

**IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER**

* Although I have a plan in place, I feel obligated to make you aware that I have nothing booked yet. The reason for this is that the registration does not open until January for Edinburgh. The Brighton festival is something I am currently in the process of booking but will take a few weeks. Therefore, at the time that I am sending this application out, nothing is booked or set in stone. I have given you all the information I can regarding which months it will be however I cannot release specific dates as I do not possess them yet.
* Putting on a show at numerous festivals is not a cheap goal. Participants may be asked to contribute to the project in order to pay for things like; rehearsal spaces, venues and accommodation & Your money to live on during our time at the festival. As previously mentioned, I will be doing lots of fundraising events to try and make this project as cheap as humanly possible for you. Nevertheless, it is important that you are aware you as the cast may be asked to contribute.
* 8 months is a long period of time and while there will be breaks, cast will be expected to use this time to relax but still ensure they are keeping up to date with their lines and blocking, news of performances and potential fundraising events which you may be asked to attend.
* Despite the show being an 8-month project leading to Edinburgh, I understand that you may already have holidays and family events booked. I therefore would like to request that on the application form attached, please provide us with details regarding any other commitments of bookings of any kind that you feel may disrupt the running of this show. As long as I have plenty of notice, I understand that you as the cast will be unable to attend every rehearsal.
* For those who are auditioned early on during October and early November. I would like to remind you that my audition process does stretch until mid December. Due to this, I do ask you to remain calm and be patient with me. Already I have had a lot of interest shown in Writer’s Block, because of this it will take me some time to reply to everyone regarding their audition. Nevertheless, you will all be notified on the outcome of your audition by Friday December 16th. Until that time please do be patient.
* In addition, after you have completed your audition, do not be surprised if you are contacted for a call back. I have received a lot of interest and am anticipating that I will have a lot of potential candidates for the play. I may then ask you to perform again to help me reach a decision.
* In the unfortunate event that you are unsuccessful in your audition, please do not disassociate yourself with Writer’s Block or Pountney Productions. As stated earlier I am working on numerous plays at the moment and while you may not be the most suitable for this piece, I may wish to contact you regarding other promising projects in the future. Also, there is always the possibility that a member of my chosen cast for whatever reason may drop out. This meaning I may call you and ask you to step in.
* With regards to dropping out, I have already invested a lot of time and commitment to Pountney Productions and Writer’s Block. While I want to ensure that this project is as fun and enjoyable as possible. If I find that anyone is being lazy, disrespectful or generally not showing any commitment to this project, then it may be that I ask you to leave. I simply cannot stand for lack of commitment, this is a huge opportunity in which you will gain a lot of experience and it is unacceptable for anyone to be taking this lightly.
* Finally, if at any point before or after your audition you have any concerns or queries about anything, please do not hesitate to contact me at anytime and I will do my best to answer you. You will find my contact details at the end of the audition process section of this pack.

**AUDITION PROCESS**

During the rehearsal process I am looking for fun vibrant performers who are willing to stretch themselves. During the rehearsal process there will be a lot of experimenting with the script and testing new material. I need actors/actresses with enough confidence in themselves to allow them to try things that may or may not work. My ideal cast will be friendly and respectful to each other and I hope that as we will be spending a lot of time together, I want to make this project as fun and exciting as possible. This means that you as the cast will be responsible for keeping a strong positive atmosphere. In the auditions, I am mainly looking for two very important things. Firstly, I am looking for what interesting thing you have brought to the role. I am excited to find out about how you have interpreted this piece using the little information I have provided. Secondly and most importantly, I am looking for who in the audition process shows the most amount of passion and belief in the play. I want a cast of people whom share my passion and love for this creation that we will make a success of together.

The audition itself will go as follows, when you arrive if you haven’t received an application pack, you will be given one. You will then be asked to fill out the application form. One by one you will be called in to a room. You will then be expected to perform your chosen monologue from Writer’s Block. The monologues are printed out over the next couple of pages. I may then ask you a couple of questions and you will then hand me your application form for me to look over. Once I have your application you may be allowed to leave. However, depending on how many turn up to your audition day, you could potentially be asked to take part in an improvisation task. Following that, you will be allowed to leave.

You may be asked to return for a call back after your audition. In the event you are asked to attend the call back, I will give you the details of what you need to do for the call back. Most likely I will ask you to re do your original audition. However, I may also ask you to come and perform another monologue. I am aware that it may be short notice hence why I would like to reassure you that it will not have an effect on your audition if you perform using the script.

Once the audition stage reaches its conclusion, all applicants will be contacted about their audition. Once again please do not feel downhearted if you are not selected for this opportunity. There is always the chance someone may drop out and I may need you to step in. Also, I am working on a few projects during this time which I may feel you are more suited to.

One final note: please do come along an audition, this is a great opportunity to any young performer. Even if you are not sure, I still advise that you come along as even if you are unsuccessful, I will offer to send audition feedback to any applicant who would like it. I am looking forward to meeting you all. If you have any questions about anything at all regarding Pountney Productions or Writer’s Block do get in touch.

**You can contact me via phone – 07713822499**

**You can also reach me by email- ben\_pountney@hotmail.co.uk**

**AUDITON PIECES**

**EUGENE:** It was a quiet Sunday evening I was sitting alone in my room playing with my massive… Multiplayer online role playing game. After many hours of conquering and bloodshed. I had just obtained the sword of Azaroth. Then as I sat basking in my glory a strange feeling filled me. I felt a rush deep down all the way to my… gut. It spread up into my head and I felt almost weightless. Then all of a sudden I began to float up and out of my chair. A bright light filled the room blinding me and then darkness. Nothing. When I woke something was different about me I felt different, I felt older, wiser, I felt almost enlightened. I felt a pain down in my stomach, it was a strange sensation, I was confused, I was in a room it was dark, then I felt something brush against me. It wasn’t human. They sounded rather Eastern European. They told me things, lots of things, dark things, sexual things, DIY tips. They told me I am the chosen one and it is my destiny to save the fucking planet.

**DICK:** Well I had just completed a trial at one of the top clubs in England, only I broke my back and missed most of the season. I was pegged to be one of if not the brightest most promising youngster to ever grace the footballing world. I had the pace of a Neymar or a Messi, the strength of a Ronaldo or a Suarez and the vision of an Alonso or a Gerrard. Oh yes I had it all, if it wasn’t for my injury I would be at the top of my game by now. I thought the dream was over. I spent days lying there thinking, “Will I ever shag again?”. You don’t get the name big dick for nothing you know. “I’d lose the name “shagger” I would be the Shaggy. It was at that moment; I knew I couldn’t let that happen. So I worked endlessly to get back on track. The doctors said I’d never walk again let alone play again (winks). But it the last day of the seasons came, it was a title deciding game, I had made the bench, still my back as busted as Forest Gump (Pause) before he became a national icon. The fans chanting for me, “We want dick, we want dick, we want dick”. The manager heard this, looked me right in the eye. He was caught in a dilemma, does he risk my back, career, and life just for a football game? I never let him decide, I rose up out of my chair, walked to the touchline, the crowd was silent, Shocked, amazed and just in love with me. I shook the mans hand and looked out across the stadium. You could hear a pin drop. Then I just ran on the pitch, dove straight into a diving challenge, took the guy clean on to give my team the ball and the crowd erupted. My team pushed on, but that’s not all, in revenge the guy I tackled came up behind me and hit me straight in the back. The referee blew his whistle, I rose to my feet, the pain near unbearable. Free kick, 45 yards out. I stepped up and I hit that ball with all the heart I had in me and watched it glide into the top corner. Victory was mine.

**ELIZABETH:** Right then. Here it goes.

MI5, FBI, CIA

Things like that.

So there’s this undercover triple agent and these two supercool double agents and none them know that they are agents. Suddenly out of nowhere a bomb strikes in the middle of the street and kills them all. One of them is dying on the floor right in front of me. Another guy’s guts are all are all over another guy’s guts to much blood everywhere! And gunge and gore, body parts flying off the walls, right in ye face. Then…then eventually all the other agent’s companies begin to figure out what was actually going on so they all catch a train down to Moscow. Dodging overhead bullets and shooting from their Colt 22’s. Finally, they step off the train where they’ve reached their destination, but suddenly two of them are captured as prisoners of war. They pick at the locks and finally they break free. They begin to jet Ski away. Then they run and run and run knee deep up snowy mountains. Only to find the other agent, the one who got away was the mastermind of it all! And that’s when the Nazis come in.

ZIECH HIEL, ZIECH HIEL, FUCK YOU HITLER, JEW KILLING BASTARD, BITE THE CURB BITCH BITE THE CURB.

**ALICE:** Bland? You think I’m fucking bland? Well let me tell you, I am not bland, all of you are just freaks of fucking nature. I mean I have worked hard my whole fucking life, I juggled my job and my school work when I was in secondary school. By the time I got to college, I had already got 2 fucking promotions at work and left high school with 13 fucking GCSE’s graded A to fucking A\*. During college I was the most successful student, taking on more A-Levels then anyone else. Three years on and fucking look at me now, stood in a room listening to absolute shite. Well let me tell you, I am better than this. I Alice fucking Williams deserve more than what’s in front of me. I could clash minds with the greats, The David Mamet’s, The Arthur Miller’s, The Tennessee fucking Williams. Hell, I could have even given Shakespeare a run for his money if the old bastard was still alive. But no. No. I’m not. You know what? I’m gonna find a new group, a better group. Then I will achieve the greatness that I was fucking destined for. Goodbye, you pathetic bunch of absolute Dickheads!

Writer’s Block Application Pack

(When finished – Please hand in when you go to perform. Thank you)

Name:…………………………………………………………………………….. D.O.B:­­­­­­­­­ \_ \_ / \_ \_ / \_ \_ \_ \_

Please sign your name to say that you have read and understood the application pack:

………………………………………………………….

Email Address:………………………………………………………………….

Mobile:……………………………………………………………………………

Why are you interested in being involved with this project?

What part is it that you would like? What do you feel you could bring to the role and play?

What experience do you have in theatre, performance or working closely with a group?

Rehearsals are set to start in January and will most likely be once a week. What days and times are more preferable to you for rehearsals to take place?

Tell us more about you? Hobbies, interests and fun facts. What makes you stand out?

Do you have any other commitments or holidays set in place? Please list all.

If you are unsuccessful would you be interested in another role?

Yes No

Is there anything else you wish to say that you feel would aid your application?

**Thank you for completing the form. Please hand this in when you go to audition**.