



## **Casting Policy**

## **CASTING AT THE LYRIC**

### **Who are we?**

Casting at the Lyric is led and managed by the Lyric Casting Director, Clare Gault and involves the wider Lyric artistic team including the Executive Producer, Senior Producer, Production Assistant and Literary Manager. The Casting Director works with freelance Directors and where appropriate, Playwrights or Co-Producers.

### **Policy**

Casting at the Lyric is in-house for the majority of roles and seeks to employ the very best available talent for every role. We have a responsibility to consider and cast where possible (and appropriate) native Irish performers and those based locally to the theatre but we also cast outside of this remit when the need arises.

We strive to create an integrated, fair, transparent and professional process that engages with both emerging and established professional actors.

We consider artists from diverse backgrounds and cast without prejudice in terms of the path performers have taken into the industry. We operate an inclusive approach to the casting of all roles and ensure that casting sessions take place at fully accessible venues.

### **Casting for Productions**

We aim to cast most roles through auditions. Under certain circumstances directors may pre-cast roles in consultation with the Casting Director and Executive Producer. Casting breakdowns are sent to agents, emailed upon request, or posted on Spotlight. Extensive casting lists are drawn up by the Casting Director for most roles in productions and suggestions / submissions are also welcomed.

The casting process can vary from show to show but generally, there are two rounds of auditions before offers are made. Virtual auditions and self-tapes are now more common, particularly in the earlier stages of casting.

Information regarding the role / production / dates / scripts will be provided electronically in advance of the audition. Where new commissions are still in draft stages, actors may be provided with draft scripts or scenes.

Auditions usually take place at the Lyric in Belfast and will be with the Lyric Casting Director, the Director of the play, the Playwright (if appropriate) and a professional actor to read opposite. They normally last 15-20 minutes. After auditions we will always let artists know if they have or have not been successful as soon as possible, usually within 2-3 weeks depending on the timeline of offers and acceptances. We will try to offer constructive feedback to as many actors as possible.

### **Casting for Readings**

We do not usually hold auditions for play readings. Actors will be chosen by the Casting Director, Executive Producer, Director and Playwright and invited to take part. We will try to ensure that opportunities to be involved in readings are equitable amongst the acting community. As readings tend to have limited budgets, priority will be given to actors based locally to the theatre but when required, actors from outside NI will also be considered. Readings are professional paid work and in line with Equity / UK Theatre Repertory Rates.

### **Open Auditions / General Meetings / Invitations / Showcases / Submissions**

There are currently no open auditions at the Lyric however it is under review. The Casting Director is available for general meetings throughout the year.

The Casting Director, Executive Producer, Senior Producer and Literary Manager regularly attend shows across the island of Ireland and in the UK in order to see and meet performers and have an in-depth, current working knowledge of the industry. Invitations can be emailed to each directly or through the Production Assistant email: [kerryfitzsimmons@lyrictheatre.co.uk](mailto:kerryfitzsimmons@lyrictheatre.co.uk)

We also welcome advance notice of appearances on all other media – Screen / Online / Audio etc. The Casting Director will attend as many graduate showcases as possible, please email invitations directly or send online links to streamed showcases. Actors and agents are welcome to submit online CVs and headshots by email to the Casting Director: [clare@lyrictheatre.co.uk](mailto:clare@lyrictheatre.co.uk) . Please do not submit hard copies.

### **Professional Development**

We believe actor training is a lifelong challenge and offer workshops with recognised experts, in a variety of fields, to those working in the profession, keen to hone their performance skills. Throughout the year, we run workshops for professional actors, providing the opportunity to explore new ways of working and refresh the skills they already have. We invite practitioners at the top of their field to share their expertise with local actors. We keep course fees to a minimum and are keen to respond to requests from actors and agents with suggestions for further workshops.

Please visit: <https://lyrictheatre.co.uk/creative-learning/professional-development/> for the latest information.