

# Concrete Island

**Graham White's adaptation of JG Ballard's dystopian novel**

**Directed by Rose Pickles**

**A KDC mini project - for new ideas and busy people!**

**3pm Saturday 5 November 2016**

**Barons Court Theatre**



## **1. What to expect**

The performance will be a rehearsed reading. You do not need to prepare anything in advance. The play is a radio adaptation of JG Ballard's novel *Concrete Island*. It is set in a frightening dystopian near future, close to Heathrow, on a piece of wasteland surrounded on all sides by motorway. There are three main characters, two male (aged 25-35 and 30-40) and one female (aged 18-25). There are also four other characters who are not on the island. Two must be female (aged 25-35) and two can be male or female (aged 16-18 and 25-35). Auditions will take

the form of games and cold readings from the script. British accents are preferable but not essential.

At the audition you will be asked to fill in a preference form so that we have your contact details and know if there are any specific parts you'd like to audition for. Recalls will be scene readings.

## **2. Key Dates**

**Auditions:** 10am-12pm Saturday 17 September

**Where:** St Bride Foundation, Bride Lane, EC4Y 8EQ. The nearest tube is Blackfriars.

**Rehearsals:** Sundays in October/November - TBC depending on cast availability

**Performance:** 3pm Saturday 5 November, Barons Court Theatre

## **3. About the Play**

Driving home one Friday rush hour, a cocky young architect crashes down a motorway embankment. At first he seems bound to be rescued, but as he fails to make the passing commuters notice him, he finds himself trapped on a strange, neglected island between the highways. Can this modern day Crusoe survive in this strange new world?

The play is a compelling allegory of modern life. Its main themes are morality, isolation, violence, our relationship with technology and our subconscious desires. It is an intense and demanding piece that asks a lot of its cast.

This production is a rehearsed reading. It will be a challenging and potentially disturbing piece. Through rehearsals we will explore the subtext and inner thoughts of the characters. As it was originally written as a radio play there is a strong focus on dialogue and this will be complimented by a simple but impactful graphic set, perhaps using projection.

## **5. Cast Breakdown**

7 actors (3-5 female, 2-4 male)

### **MAITLAND (25-35)**

Maitland is a cocky young architect. He has been very successful and is very wealthy. He has become bored with his job, his family and even his mistress. He is bored of life and has possibly marooned himself on the concrete island intentionally. This is the lead role and needs an actor with a strong presence and charm but also the ability to show vulnerability.

### **JANE (18-25)**

Jane is a young woman who has run away to escape family problems caused by an early marriage and an abortion. She lives on the island but leaves frequently, especially at night. We get the impression that she is working as a prostitute. She has a very strong exterior and tries not to show any emotion but at heart she is a frightened little girl.

**PROCTOR (30-40)**

Proctor is an ex-acrobat who lives on the island. He has a strong physical presence but seems to lack intellect. He was part of a travelling circus until he had an accident where he suffered a head injury. He is unable to read or write and talks in an almost primitive way. His strong exterior hides a very vulnerable personality who likes to have a leader to follow.

**CATHERINE (25-35)**

Catherine is Maitland's wife. She gave up expecting anything from Maitland a long time ago. Her main concern now is that he does right by their son. She is aware or at least suspects that he has affairs.

**DAVID (16-18)**

David is Maitland's teenage son who veers between hating his father and seeking approval from him. This could also be a daughter if played by a woman.

**HELEN (25-35)**

Helen is a successful doctor and Maitland's mistress. She is concerned about the fact that he is missing but not very. She is more worried that she left something that she needs for a conference in his car. She is quite prepared to give up on the relationship after he has been missing for a few days.

**MARK (25-35)**

Mark is Maitland's business partner. He knows Maitland well and doesn't seem particularly surprised by his disappearance. He is mainly concerned with the smooth running of the business. This part could also be played by a woman.