

Closer - by Patrick Marber: Audition Notes

Welcome to the auditions for Closer. This is a great play full of intensity as we explore the romantic entanglements of the four characters, Alice, Dan, Larry and Anna. The characters fall in love, betray each other, fall out of love and then, maybe, back again.

A lot of the scenes take place between two or three of the characters. There is a lot of raw emotion in those scenes. Some lightness and humour in places as well to break the tension. It is going to be a challenge but also, I hope, a lot of fun and we will put on an amazing production.

I have given some character notes below. But this is guidance only and for the audition. This will be a small tight cast with whom I will want to work closely on characterisation through textual analysis and discussion. We will talk about the motives of the characters and this will play an important part in character development. Do not worry at this stage about having a fully-formed idea of the characters. I don't. We will work on that together.

For the auditions I will be looking for what you see in the character. What you think about what is happening. How I can see us working together on development. Do not be afraid to bring something completely different to the auditions. I want to see your take on the character and on the play.

I will also be looking at the dynamics between the characters. Unusually for Woodhouse this may mean that we have recalls. I will take a view once we have had all auditions. If I have recalls then I will likely call back 8 or so people for a few hours, potentially on a Saturday shortly after the main auditions. I will likely cast on the best match of people as this is an ensemble piece where the sum of the parts is important. So, please do not feel disheartened if you are not cast.

I am looking to cast in early July so we can have a read-through before I sod off to Bali for two weeks at the end of the month (oh woe is me!).

I have put the character ages down. This is guidance only. The script does call for certain age gaps between the characters, but not strictly. I will not cast only on ages. Broadly Anna and Larry are older than Dan and Alice. But I am not going to be strict with this rule.

Alice (F, 20-35)

Alice and Dan meet at the start of the play. They soon start a relationship which is over by the end of Act 1 when Dan admits to having an affair with Anna (this is one of the audition pieces). She strives to not have to rely on people and is bit of a drifter. When she does, it is on her terms. She says that she wants to disappear into her relationship with Dan, who she lets in. When a relationship ends, she just disappears.

Alice may or may not be American. If you would like to try an American accent, please do. But I will not be casting based on having an American accent. There is a scene in a strip club where Alice is stripping for Larry. The role does not require nudity, but there is a degree of partial nudity.

Dan (M, 25-40)

Alice and Dan meet at the start of the play. They soon start a relationship which is over by the end of Act 1 when Dan admits to having an affair with Anna (this is one of the audition pieces). He can be quite cold and controlling. Maybe a bit possessive. He strives to find love, relationships and a perfect partner, but is then left "disappointed" when he does. He

is not easily satisfied. He is prone to over-intellectualising things which can come off quite cold. Perhaps selfish. Anna's line "*They love the way we make them feel but not 'us'* *They love dreams*" describes him well. He is a failed writer and predominantly works on the obituaries page for a national newspaper.

Larry (M, 25-45)

Anna and Larry meet in A1S4 having been inadvertently set up by Dan. They soon start a relationship and get married. They separate by the end of Act 1 when Anna admits to having an affair with Dan (this is one of the audition pieces). He is rather more secure and self-possessed than Dan. A bit more brutish. He holds grudges. We see him slowly descend into a more and more aggressive and short-tempered person. At times it seems he sees himself as a "working class hero." He is a dermatologist who starts the play working for the NHS but then goes into private practice, which he says betrays his "politics." Prone to nostalgia, things were always better in the olden days.

Anna (F, 25-45)

Anna and Larry meet in A1S4 having been inadvertently set up by Dan. They soon start a relationship and get married. They separate by the end of Act 1 when Anna admits to having an affair with Dan (this is one of the audition pieces). Cynical maybe. But also very willing to allow herself to fall in love, first with both Larry and Dan. She is quite considered in her actions. Not impulsive. Can be quite cold and aloof. She is a photographer. She wants to make art but also does more mundane photography jobs to make money. She meets Dan whilst photographing him for his book. This in turn leads her to meet Larry.

Audition Scene Notes

Extract 1: Alice and Dan: A1S6: Dan admits to Alice that he is having an affair with Anna. This scene is inter-cut with Extract 2 at the end of Act 1.

Extract 2: Anna and Larry: A1S6: Anna admits to Larry that she is having an affair with Dan. This scene is inter-cut with Extract 1 at the end of Act 1.

Extracts 1 and 2 are both from A1S6. Alice/Dan are in a different room from Anna/Larry and the action will flick between the two. For the audition, I will only do one scene at a time, so please prepare for continuous Alice/Dan and/or Anna/Larry

Extract 3: Alice and Anna: A2S9: Alice is now with Larry, Anna is with Dan. Alice arranges to meet with Anna in a museum to confront her re Dan. Shortly before this extract takes place, Alice also contrives so that Anna meets with Larry.

Extract 4: Dan and Larry: A2S10: Dan visits Larry in his office. Dan and Anna have separated. Anna had slept with Larry and told Dan. Dan goes to confront Larry.