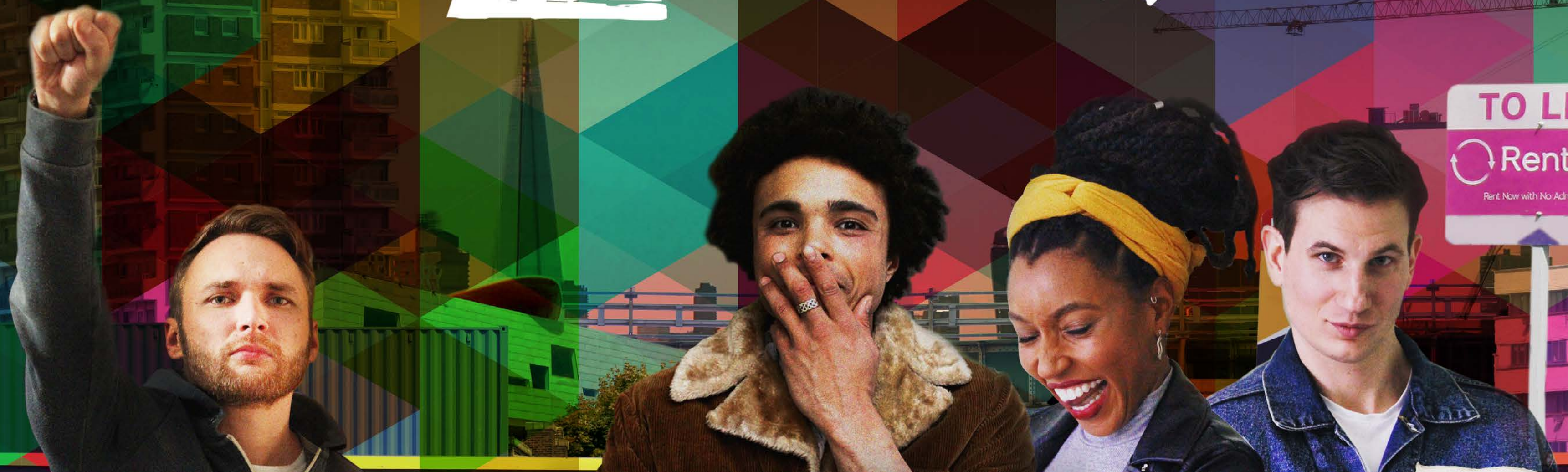


# FLATSHARE

Brand new  
4 part series



**MINDCLEANSE PRODUCTIONS** IN ASSOCIATION WITH **RKIVE PRODUCTIONS** PRESENTS AN ORIGINAL SHORT SERIES WRITTEN & CREATED BY **JAMES BARBER "FLATSHARE"**  
PRODUCED BY **JAMES BARBER, MONICA Y. DEE & GRANT TAYLOR** STARRING **SHAUN COWLISHAW, ANDREW ROWE, ANI NELSON & NIC BERNASCONI**  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY **CALEB WISSUN-BHIDE** EDITED BY **GONCALO SA CORREIA** ARTISTIC DIRECTOR **ELENA MUNTONI** SOUND DESIGNER **CALUM BELL** DIRECTED BY **GRANT TAYLOR**

[www.flatshareseries.com](http://www.flatshareseries.com)





**WE ALL KNOW  
RENTING IN LONDON  
IS TOUGH, BUT IF  
YOU THROW IN A  
HOT-HEADED SOCIAL  
ACTIVIST, A DODGY  
MONEY-GRABBING  
LANDLORD, AND AN  
ILLEGAL SUBLET,  
IT'S A RECIPE FOR  
DISASTER.**

**WATCH THE SERIES HERE**

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**PRESS  
RELEASE**

Flatshare is a new comedy-drama series by James Barber. Brought to life by the award-winning director, Grant Taylor. It's an LGBT series that follows the trials and tribulations of four house mates living in Peckham. Midway through yet another threesome, Omar has a revelation and escapes his hedonistic lifestyle by starting up a flatshare with his best pal Kemi. This idyllic new beginning is ruined when he's forced to illegally sublet the damp living room to his ex Tom, against Kemi's wishes. But this is the least of their worries as the shady landlord has converted the loft into an extra room for anti gentrification activist Seb. Is it doomed to fail or can Omar create the utopia he wants in his new flatshare?

This show was created by MindCleanse Productions and in association with rKive Productions, which produced the award-winning LGBT web series Spectrum London. The show's creator, James Barber, says that he is excited for audiences to see a man of mixed heritage who is queer at the centre of the narrative and to show the complexities and challenges of being both gay and a person of colour in London. "Whether you've struggled with your sexuality, race, class or gender, the characters in the show will connect with anyone who ever felt different" says James.

The show features some of the brightest young acting talent in the UK including Shaun Cowlshaw, Andrew Rowe, Ani Nelson, Nic Bernasconi, Gaz Hayden, Chevin Dash, Andrew Armitage and Sami Karim.

The show is expected to premiere in early 2019 on the online platform YouTube after a screening in Peckham, and will be entered into the festival circuit.



**JAMES BARBER**

WRITER & CREATOR

## **STATEMENT FROM WRITER & CREATOR**

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As a black gay man I wanted to write a show about the intersections of race, gender, sexuality and class as it directly pertains to my own life experiences. By being bold and unapologetic, Flatshare gives a voice to marginalised groups who have been underrepresented by mainstream media and will make them feel more seen.

With television striving to embrace more diverse stories, I feel that there is no better time than now for a series of this kind to emerge. Its strength lies in its willingness to boldly take on taboo themes like the devastating impact chemsex has on the lives of gay men, the sexual fetishism experienced by queer people of colour, the conflict created by white middle class people moving in urban areas, and how unregulated landlords are contributing to London's housing crisis. Not wanting to come across as preachy I have endeavoured to explore these issues with heart and humour which I'm sure will strike a chord with audiences.

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# EPISODES



## 01 MOVING IN

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/IBFPM1SXKZO](https://youtu.be/IBFPM1SXKZO)

After catching cold feet during yet another threesome, Omar decides to move out of his flat and start again. He enlists Kemi and together they rent the perfect flatshare in Peckham. But there's something dodgy about the Landlord and when Omar reveals to Kemi that they'll be illegally subletting to his ex Tom, she is not happy. Whilst rowing amongst themselves a loud crash comes from the attic upstairs and Omar is forced to investigate what or who is up there.



## 02 SENSUAL TOUCH

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/8S9LZDDBX3A](https://youtu.be/8S9LZDDBX3A)

Omar, Kemi, and Tom discover Seb, the extra house mate who has been squatting in the loft ahead of the move-in date. Tom threatens to call the police, but when Seb references his illegal sublet they are forced to work together. Despite starting on shaky ground, Seb almost wins them over by offering them a takeaway from Lagos Palace as a peace offering. Feeling confident that everyone has now settled in, Omar jets off to attend a sensual massage workshop in the hope of finding a soul mate, but after stripping down to his underwear for the class, things become too hot for Omar to handle. Meanwhile things in the flat are quickly heating up between Tom and Seb who come close to locking lips.



## 03 THE CHEMSEX PARTY

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/USD7LKJWWBE](https://youtu.be/USD7LKJWWBE)

Tom gets invited to a chemsex party and is intent on going. Omar can't persuade him otherwise and tags along to protect him. Meanwhile Seb tries to make peace with Kemi following an argument earlier in the week by asking her to co-lead an anti-gentrification protest with him, but will she accept his offer? Back at the chemsex party, Tom gets more than what he bargained for when he bumps into his ex and finds himself in danger. Has he gone too far or will Omar come to the rescue yet again?



## 04 GENTRIFICATION PROTEST

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/OJI9W2SUIIK](https://youtu.be/OJI9W2SUIIK)

Seb, who perceives himself as a modern-day Robin Hood, co-leads a heated pre-protest meeting with Kemi in support of Ahmed, a local shop owner who was forced to sell his business to a wealthy businessman. However the pre-protest meeting is derailed when an unexpected visitor arrives and reveals a secret Seb fought hard to conceal. A heated argument erupts leaving Seb with a black eye. But things take a drastic turn for the worst when another unannounced visitor arrives at the flat leaving Omar, Kemi, Tom, and Seb in absolute shock.



# CAST



**OMAR**

SHAUN COWLISHAW

Omar is the heart and soul of the series. Driven by a strong desire to create community at any cost, Omar often finds himself acting as the diplomat between Tom, Kemi and Seb. He wants to keep everyone happy but is struggling to find what makes him feel content. Omar craves the instant gratification of casual hookups and recreational drugs but wants to avoid the trappings of his past. Despite insisting on living a more zen lifestyle, Omar quickly finds himself falling into the rabbit hole of his former life.

Shaun Cowlshaw, who plays Omar, has appeared in short films such as Coatrack (2018), Molly & Noel (2017), Journey (2017), and Fools Gold (2017).



**TOM**

ANDREW ROWE

Tom outwardly appears confident and carefree, but still bears the scars of his past. Having recently escaped an abusive relationship, Tom seeks solace through alcohol, hookup apps, and one night stands. He's high maintenance and prone to diva behaviour. Tom's careless hedonism reaches a fever pitch when he convinces Omar to go to a chemsex party, in which he finds himself having to confront the very thing that he has been running away from.

Andrew Rowe, who plays Tom has appeared in TV shows like Banana (2015), feature films such as Great Expectations (2011), short films such as A Convenient Cough (2015), and theatre productions including King Lear (2010).



**KEMI**

ANI NELSON

Kemi is outspoken and has a strong sense of who she is as a black woman. Having lived a very sheltered life she desperately wants her own independence. However this is the first time Kemi is living away from her parents, and is looking for perfection. She is furious with Omar's decision to illegally sublet to Tom and has issues with the fourth house mate Seb who she finds herself at odds with after co-leading an anti-gentrification with him.

Ani Nelson, who plays Kemi, has appeared in Channel 4's Random Acts (2016), web series Brothers With No Game (2015), feature film Cigarette Girl (2017), and short films such as Through Tasha's Eyes (2018).



**SEB**

NIC BERNASCONI

Seb is a former squatter and a self-righteous social activist. He is not afraid to challenge the status quo, seeing himself as a voice for marginalised groups. Never one to hold back, Seb often finds himself getting into arguments with his flatmates and anyone else who dares to disagree with him. After arranging an anti-gentrification protest against the opening of a hipster vegan cafe, the secret that Seb has fought his hardest to conceal is revealed.

Nic Bernasconi, who plays Seb has appeared in TV shows like Downton Abbey (2013), feature films Skulls (2015), The Man from U.N.C.L.E (2015), and The Monuments Men (2013).

# SUPPORTING CAST



**KATE**

**CHEVIN DASH**

Chevin Dash is an actress who has appeared in feature films such as Ready Player One and Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them.



**OLIVER**

**ANDREW ARMITAGE**

Andrew Armitage is actor who has appeared in TV shows like EastEnders and Humans, as well as feature films such as AIYAARY.



**CHRIS**

**MATTHEW HODSON**

Matthew Hodson is an actor who has appeared in theatre productions such as The Chemsex Monologues and the web series The Grass Is Always Grindr.



**NATALIE**

**RACHEL SPARKES**

Rachel Sparkes is an actress who has appeared in theatre productions such as Hamlet in Session with Sigmund Freud and A Midsummer Night's Dream.



**AHMED**

**SAMI KARIM**

Sami Karim is an actor who has starred in TV shows like WATAHA, The Looming Tower and feature films such as Blackbird.



**MARK**

**GAZ HAYDEN**

Gaz Hayden is an actor who has appeared in TV shows Coronation Street and feature films such as Looking for Eric.

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**GRANT TAYLOR**

**DIRECTOR**

## **STATEMENT FROM THE DIRECTOR**

Grant Taylor is an award-winning director based in London. He has made a name for himself directing narrative films, music promos and ad campaigns. His films have been screened at the London Short Film Festival and the Oxford Human Rights film festival. He directed the first season of the critically acclaimed web series #Reality which opened the BFI's Future Film Festival in 2017 and won a Screen Nation Award for Best Web Series. His short film, Emigrant, won best free-fall at the 2017 Limelight Film Awards for emerging talent. In 2017 he was selected to develop his feature film, It's A Riot, with the Screen Arts Institute at the BFI. Grant's latest film, Everyday Struggles, was screened at BAFTA and came second in the Nespresso Talents 2018 competition.

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I'm really passionate about telling fictional and upbeat stories. Working with James on Flatshare has had its ups and downs but the synergy with James has been a dream. He's trusted me to bring years of his writing to life. We wanted Flatshare to be as bold and colourful as possible, with a hand held dynamic following the characters wherever they go to really bring the audience close to the action. We also played heavily with light, using it subtly to draw characters to places they are intent on staying away from. It's a comedy with real heartfelt drama and we took reference from shows like Catastrophe, Crashing and Chewing Gum. The series is a true reflection of our aims as filmmakers and where we want to go with our careers.

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# PRODUCTION CREW



**MONICA Y.DEE**

**PRODUCER**

Monica Y. Dee was born in Ethiopia but grew up and was educated in London. She has a background in Law with an MA in Film from Staffordshire University. She is the creator, producer, and co-writer of award-winning web series Spectrum London. Monica has written and produced a handful of narrative shorts screened in London and abroad, winning awards at the International Film Awards in 2014 for her production of the short film, Truco, Spectrum London in 2017 and another three at the Global Independent Film Awards 2017. Monica also produces corporate event films such as award shows and branding advertising films. She is the founder and head programmer of the second only web series festival in Britain, UK Web Fest.



**ELENA MUNTONI**

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Having a very visual way of thinking and of processing stories, Elena is passionate about being an artistic director. Since graduating in English Literature at the University of Sussex in 2015, Elena has established a flourishing career in the film industry. Elena started her career working in costume design on various short films, adverts, and music videos. Most recently Elena has been working as an office manager at a production company as well as freelancing. Elena's proudest achievements include working as an art director on the set of Wretch 32 music video, His and Hers, a director for a 2017 BAFTA nominated short film Standby, a production designer for a 2018 VIMEO Staff Pick of the Month short film, Drug Runner, and as a production designer for a 2018 short film, The Pitch, which was screened at Cannes.



**CALEB WISSUN-BHIDE**

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Caleb Wissun-Bhide has been working as a director of photography for the last three years mainly in short form content, creating everything from music videos, web commercials, and short films. His latest project, The Right Choice, was screened at 2018's Sundance Film Festival. Last year also saw the release of a nine-part critically-acclaimed web series called Dreaming Whilst Black, which Caleb served as the director of photography.

Caleb continues to work in all avenues of cinematography and is passionate about using his talent to tell different narratives which have been underrepresented.





# CREATOR Q & A

## HOW DID FLATSHARE COME ABOUT?

A friend of mine approached me about making a web series together and something in me screamed yes. I've always been a writer and I was yearning to find an outlet in which I could fully express myself and Flatshare became the catalyst for me to do that. I wanted to create a story where I could see myself and my close friends represented because I rarely see a black gay lead in my favourite TV shows. Inspired by this I started writing immediately, and within weeks I had a rough draft. But as many creatives quickly discover, having great ideas is not enough to materialise your dreams, you need money to finance it. After getting a reality check from a producer I was working with, who meticulously broke down how much each episode would cost, I set up a crowdfunding campaign on IndieGoGo with the hope of raising enough money to fund a pilot episode.

## WHAT INSPIRED OR INFLUENCED YOUR WRITING WHILST CREATING FLATSHARE?

I'm a huge fan of TV shows like POSE, Queen Sugar, Insecure, the US version of Queer as Folk, and web series like Hello Cupid and Hunting Season as they focus on the lives and experiences of black and same-sex loving people. Seeing characters on screen who were multifaceted, messy and complicated was so liberating and definitely inspired me to do the same in my own writing.

## WHAT SETBACKS DID YOU EXPERIENCE?

There are too many to mention. I could probably create an entire show about the drama behind the scenes leading up to the making of Flatshare. Soon after setting up the crowdfunding campaign, the director and producer I was working with both quit on the same day which at the time felt like a dagger in my heart, I was made redundant from my job, and I had to re-cast three out of the four original cast members just weeks before we started filming, which was stressful to say the least. It felt like everything was falling apart all at once. There was a definitely a period of time when I lost hope wondered whether Flatshare was just a pipe dream.

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### ***HOW LONG HAS IT TAKEN YOU TO MAKE?***

It has taken me three years to make and it's been a stressful but ultimately rewarding journey. The scripts took about a year and then finding filming dates and all the locations took six months. We had a cast and crew of over fifty people so it was challenging to get everyone's availability. I completely underestimated how long post production would take, which has taken about a year to get it to a place where my team and I were satisfied.

### ***WHAT KEPT YOU MOTIVATED WHILE CREATING FLATSHARE?***

I've lost count how many times I thought of scrapping the show and giving back the money friends and family who had donated to the crowdfunding campaign. But the fact that so many people all across the world had given money to the crowdfunding campaign motivated me to keep pushing. To be honest, having to go back to everyone who donated and tell them that the show would not be happening would have left me feeling like a failure. So I went back to the drawing board, developed a new strategy and started building a new team around me. Soon after I met Grant who came on board as the new director. I didn't realise how accomplished he was, but I liked the fact that he was from South London like me and that he had worked on culturally diverse creative projects. There was a great vibe between us and we energised each other. I feel that the creative partnership we developed breathed some much-needed new life into Flatshare and made me believe that it just might be possible to get the show made.

### ***IF YOU HAD TO DO IT OVER AGAIN, WHAT WOULD YOU DO DIFFERENTLY? WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT CREATING A WEBSERIES?***

I'd do the whole thing differently. The deceptive thing about making a web series is that it looks easy but if you want to create one with high production value it's incredibly hard. Building a team around me who felt just as passionate as me about Flatshare, who were willing to emotionally invest themselves for little or no financial compensation was one of the hardest things, but once I found the right people, behind and in front of the camera everything started to come together.

### ***DESCRIBE FLATSHARE IN 5 KEY WORDS?***

Bold, audacious, funny, cheeky and riveting.



# PRODUCTION STILLS



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# PRODUCTION STILLS



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# CAST PHOTO SHOOT



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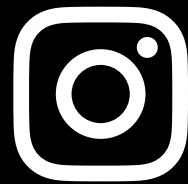


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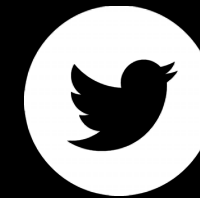
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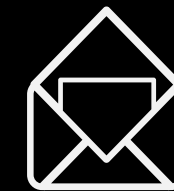


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