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## Students in a Japanese play

A traditional 14th century Japanese play, "A Damask Drum," is one of three plays chosen for the students annual show at Questors Theatre next month.

The other productions are "Poison, Passion and Petrification" and "A Phoenix too Frequent."

# STARLETS ON SHOW AT QUESTORS

**T**HE annual students' production at Questors Theatre, Ealing, has always proved an exciting shop window from which to spot stars of the future. This year's presentation, which ended on Saturday, was no exception. It offered a galaxy of potential stars.

"A Phoenix too Frequent," in one act, by Christopher Fry, a frothy, delightful period comedy, offered a remarkable contribution by Miss Marilyn Jones as Doto, whose performance was full of personal charm and wit.

Miss Jones epitomises the student Questor — animated, highly eloquent and knowledgeable. A secretary - receptionist, 24-year-old Miss Jones, of Elm Grove-road, Ealing, first attracted attention in a student production last year.

## STILL LEARNING

"I would like to make a career in the theatre, but I am still learning technique and fundamentals," she says.

Her father was a former operatic star, and she appeared in a stage production in Jamaica while the family lived there.

Another unusual newcomer is Roger de Toney, who took the exacting role of Iwakichi in "The Damask Drum," a modern version of a traditional 14th century Japanese Nō play. The play had been starkly transformed, but with the haunting, symbolic quality of the original retained.

It was Roger's uncle, Michael McOwan, a pillar of LAMDA,

who suggested Tony join Questors. He had previously been working as a scene shifter in a Guernsey repertory theatre.

Questors administrator, Mrs. Teresa Collard, describes him as "one of the most exciting and dramatic student actors I have seen."

The challenging part of Hanako was played by Miss Jacqueline Pinchin, aged 26, who takes her acting so seriously that she chose to live and work in Ealing to join Questors as a student.

## WORKS BACKSTAGE

A member of the Props Committee, she has made a name for herself working backstage, also. Her range of talent stood up remarkably well to the challenge of a Japanese characterization. "Jackie" Pinchin is a name to remember and a talent to nurture.

The final one-actor was a piece of Shavian tomfoolery and slapstick, "Poison, Passion and Petrefaction," in which Miss Cynthia Ridout appeared as Phyllis.

The action, described by some as a forerunner of Albee and Simpson, was a glorious finale to a splendid assembly of starlets.

# QUESTORS IN SEARCH OF NEW TALENT

**T**HE QUESTORS THEATRE is now receiving applications for the 21st year of its Student Training Course for amateur actors and actresses.

Many of those now playing leading roles in The Questors productions had their first training in the Student Group. Other ex-students have gone into the professional theatre or moved away to put what they have learned into practice with other drama groups.

Alfred Emmet, director of The Questors Theatre and director of studies of the Student Group, says: "It is the existence of the Student Group and the opportunity it gives to young actors to enter into the life of The Questors Theatre that has kept The Questors young in spirit. Moreover, the course has had a great influence on the standard of acting at The Questors."

The course lasts two years, but not everyone admitted to the first year course can go on for the second year. About 20 to 24 students are admitted to the first year course, but the Second Year Group is normally restricted to about 12. "It is not a high standard of accomplishment I look for when admitting students to the group," says Mr. Emmet, "but rather a high potential. I am more interested in the latent talent that can be developed, and this one often finds among those who have had no previous acting experience at all."

## ENTHUSIASM FIRST

The minimum age for admission to the group is 16—The Questors junior workshop groups exist for the younger age groups—but there is no upper age limit. "Whatever the age, there is one quality that is absolutely essential," said Mr. Emmet, "and that is enthusiasm."

The course is run under the auspices of the Ealing Education Committee. The First Year Group has three weekly classes—a movement class directed by Miss Ludmila Mlada, a speech class directed by Mr. Derek Harmer-Morris (both evening classes), and a Saturday afternoon class in acting, directed by Mr. Emmet.

"The object here," Mr. Emmet told me, "is to develop the students' imaginative range and to teach them the rudiments of some kind of method of working. A lot of time is spent on acting improvisations and imaginative exercises. It is because we take the work rather seriously that the students enjoy it so much. They feel they are getting somewhere and learning all the time."

A prospectus of the course may be obtained from the administrator, The Questors Theatre, Mattock Lane, Ealing, W.5 (telephone 567 0011).

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## BOROUGH FESTIVAL Admission prices

### may go up

**T**HE drama sub-committee of the Hayes and Harlington Arts Council is recommending that Hillingdon Borough should increase some of the admission charges at the Borough drama festival next year.

At a meeting last week, attended by Mr. George Dennington the Borough Entertainments Officer and others connected with drama in the Borough, the sub-committee decided to recommend that:-

- The admission price each night should be 3s instead of 2s (pensioners and children should still pay 1s).

- The season ticket for the whole 12 nights of the festival should cost £1 unreserved, before it was 5s for five or six nights—or 25s reserved—formerly it was 7s 6d for five or six performances.

#### BLOCK

On both these prices of £1 and 25s there should be a reduction of 5s for block bookings of ten or more.

There will be no reduction for tickets sold before the night (formerly these cost 1s 6d instead of 2s).

However the sub-committee is also recommending that all pensioners, as opposed to the statutory old age pensioners, should pay the reduced entrance prices.

It also advises the competing drama groups should be helped out with the cost of transport to the festival, which will be held in the new Winston Churchill hall, Ruislip.

The sub-committee recommends that, at the discretion of the Borough Entertainments Officer, up to £3 should be given to a group providing it sells at least £24 tickets 3s tickets

Next year's festival will be the first 12 day borough drama festival and it will run from April 22 to May 4.

#### BAN LATE COMERS

The drama sub-committee is recommending that no admissions should be allowed during the course of a play.

# Questors invoke Satanism in 1692 America

THE "little, crazy children" running amok in Arthur Miller's "The Crucible", at the Questors Theatre, Mattock Lane, Ealing, run parallel to some of the young people of today.

Miller's child characters are caught up in the mass hysteria of witchcraft persecutions which hit the small town of Salem, Massachusetts, America, in 1692.

The play, performed by second year students of the two-year Questors Theatre student training course in drama, is being presented throughout the week except on Monday and Thursday, ending tomorrow (Saturday).

The choice of play is sensible, requiring young actors and actresses with energy and ability to induce a Satanic stage atmosphere.

In the play, the God-fearing town of Salem discovers that

its young girls have nightly danced naked around a fire. Some have been forced to drink blood. Others have yelled curses on respected villagers — including the Rev. Mr. Pariss, played by Roger de Toney.

The good man is put into jail for opposing the court and is given the choice of confessing that he has been working in league with the Devil or continuing with his accusations.

At the last moment, he chooses death and honour. He is well supported by Georgina Skilton as his wife, and Ann Bevan as the servant.

C.C.

# WANT TO BE AN ACTOR?

**T**HE Questors Theatre, Ealing, is now receiving applications for what will be the 21st year of its student training course for amateur actors and actresses.

Many of those now playing leading roles in The Questors productions had their first training in the student group.

Other ex-students have gone into the professional theatre or moved away to put what they have learned into practice with other drama groups.

Alfred Emmet, director of the Questors Theatre and director of Studies of the student group was emphatic when questioned about the value of the training course.

## Influence

"It is the existence of the student group and the opportunity that it gives to young actors to enter into the life of The Questors Theatre that has kept The Questors young in spirit" he said.

The course is a two-year one, but not everyone who is admitted to the first year course can go on for the second year. About 20 to 24 students are admitted to the first year course, but the second year group is normally restricted to about 12.

"It is not a high standard of accomplishment that I am looking for when admitting students to the group" says Mr. Emmet, "but rather a high potential.

## Age limit

The minimum age for admission to the group is 16 (the Questors Junior Workshop caters for the younger age groups) but there is no upper age limit.

The course is run under the auspices of the Ealing Education Committee. The first year group has three weekly classes—a movement class directed by Miss Ludmila, a speech class directed by Mr. Derek Harmer-Morris (these are both evening classes) and a Saturday afternoon class in acting directed by Mr. Emmet.

## Imaginative

"The object here" Mr. Emmet says "is to develop the students' imaginative range and to teach them the rudiments of some kind of method of working. To that end a lot of time is spent on acting improvisations and imaginative exercises.

"It is because we take the work rather seriously that the students enjoy it so much. They feel they are getting somewhere and learning all the time."

Further details about the course may be obtained from the Administrator, The Questors Theatre, Mattock Lane, Ealing.

Wes Valley Lane

21 AUG 1967

## Want to be an actor?

THE Questors Theatre is now receiving applications for the 21st year of its student training course for amateur actors and actresses. Many of those now playing leading roles in Questors' productions had their first training in the student group. Other ex-students have gone into the professional theatre or moved away to put what they have learned into practice with other drama groups.

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"The object of the acting class," says Mr. Emmet, "is to develop the students' imaginative range and to teach them the rudiments of some kind of method of working. To that end a lot of time is spent on acting improvisations and imaginative exercises. It is because we take the work rather seriously that the students enjoy it so much. They feel they are getting somewhere and learning all the time."

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