

Mixed grill at the Questors



Groping their way around in the dark in "Black Comedy" — one of three plays being presented by second year students at the Questors Theatre — are left to right, Kevin Fells, Richard Paines, John Wilson, Mary Kennedy and Christine Richardson.

Picture right in "An office of profit" are Yasmin Ahmed and John Wilson





Another scene (above) from "Black Comedy" with Christine Richardson, Richard Paines and Mary Kennedy. This is a play "in reverse", with the audience imagining the stage is in darkness.

On the left is Kathie Fraser as she appears in "An office of profit."

Two of the main characters in "An office of profit" are Judy Lane and Kevin Fells. The play is set in the style of the Restoration



THREE plays with plenty of contrast are running at the Questors Theatre until tomorrow night (Saturday).

The plays are one-acters specially produced for the Questors' second year students.

The first is "The Resurrection," taken from the York Cycle of Mystery Plays.

This shows the scheming of Pilate with Annas and Caiphas, the boasting of soldiers guarding Jesus's body, and Pilate's fury when the body disappears.

The second is "Black Comedy," by Peter Shaffer, which takes a look at how people behave when they are unobserved.

When the stage lights go up, the audience is asked to imagine the lights have gone out for the characters. As they grope blindly in the darkness, identities are mistaken, actions belie words, and secret passions are indulged.

The third play, again takes a wide swing out of the straight and narrow.

Entitled "An Office of Profit," it involves gallant and eloquent young men of the Restoration hiding in closets and cursing things that don't go their way, while the women are busy having "the vapours" and taking walks in the park.

TUTOR PRODUCES

The producer is Wyllie Longford, who is acting tutor to the Questors' second year students, and also a lecturer at Rose Bruford College.

He chose the three plays, which are designed to expose and exploit to the full the talents of his group.

Mr. Longford is a product of the 1962/63 Questors training course.

The programme opened on Wednesday.

Among the students taking part are: Mary Kennedy, John Wilson, Carol Wiseman, Richard Paines, Christine Richardson and Yasmin Ahmed.

The production is the first of the current season.

On March 1, a Schools Touring Company present excerpts from Irish plays by Irish playwrights — "The Playboy of the Western World" by J. M. Synge; "O'Flaherty, V.C." by George Bernard Shaw; "The Shadow of a Gunman" and "Juno and the Paycock" by Sean O'Casey.



Sebastian Vehgese, well wiggged and in period costume, for his role in "An office of profit"

Gloucester Road tube alterations

LONDON Transport announced this week that, starting on Sunday, March 1, all eastbound District and Circle line trains will serve the central island platform at Gloucester Road Station, instead of the northern outer platform.

As a result, passengers will board and alight from trains through the right-hand doors instead of the left-hand, as now.

The change is being made so that all doors of eight-car District Line trains can be used at

QUESTOR STUDENTS IN TRIPLE BILL

THREE plays presented at the Questors Theatre, Mattock Lane, Ealing, were specially chosen to sketch the talents of the theatre's second year students — and stretch them they did!

The plays were selected and produced by Wyllie Longmore, himself a product of one of the Questors' student courses. The plays were staged on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The first was "The Resurrection," a medieval play taken from the Wakefield Mystery Plays. It concerns the plotting of Pilate and the Pharisees to conceal the miracle of Christ's resurrection, and His meeting with Mary Magdalene.

The play is written in rhyming couplets, a factor which sometimes proved a stumbling block. Some of the actors had

not appeared on stage before.

It was difficult to avoid repeating the lines in a flat monotone, stopping at the end of each line to emphasise the limerick type meter.

But the students coped well, handling their parts with particular deftness were Judy Lane as Mary Magdalene, and Richard Paines as the Centurion, who declares his faith in Christ after witnessing the crucifixion.

OVER-EMOTIONAL

Sebastian Verghese, as Pilate, showed more feeling as the play went on, but his words sometimes tended to be lost when he put too much emotion into them.

In sharp contrast, the second play was full of the flowery language and gestures of the Restoration.

Written by Peter Preston, the play, "An Office of Profit," was difficult to fault. The cast carried off the grace and humour of the reign of Charles II with considerable aplomb.

Yasmin Ahmed, with her vapours and crafty asides to the audience, fitted her part beautifully. Her stage father, the pompous civil servant, Quibble, played by Kevin Fells, produced a nice character study.

This light comedy passed off smoothly and professionally, and led neatly into the last play, "Black Comedy," by Peter Schaffer.

This play was a fitting climax to the evening, producing some real belly laughs.

It opens in complete darkness, and when the lights go up, the audience is expected to imagine the

lights in the flat of young sculptor, Brindsley Miller, have fused.

Then the fun starts. Players grope about in full view of the audience, and some weird situations ensue.

WRY COMMENT

But underneath all the humour, there is some wry comment on human behaviour.

The situation gathers together a number of divers characters — a homosexual, a spinster who turns to the bottle, a deb, two Germans, a slinky ex-girl friend and a nervous wild-eyed sculptor.

Timing and delivery were exactly right, and every situation was exploited to the full.

This play completed a thoroughly enjoyable set and producer Wyllie Longmore should be well satisfied.