

QUESTORS ARCHIVES

A SURVEY OF STUDENT GROUP PRODUCTIONS

Part Three
1958-1963

compiled by
John Dobson

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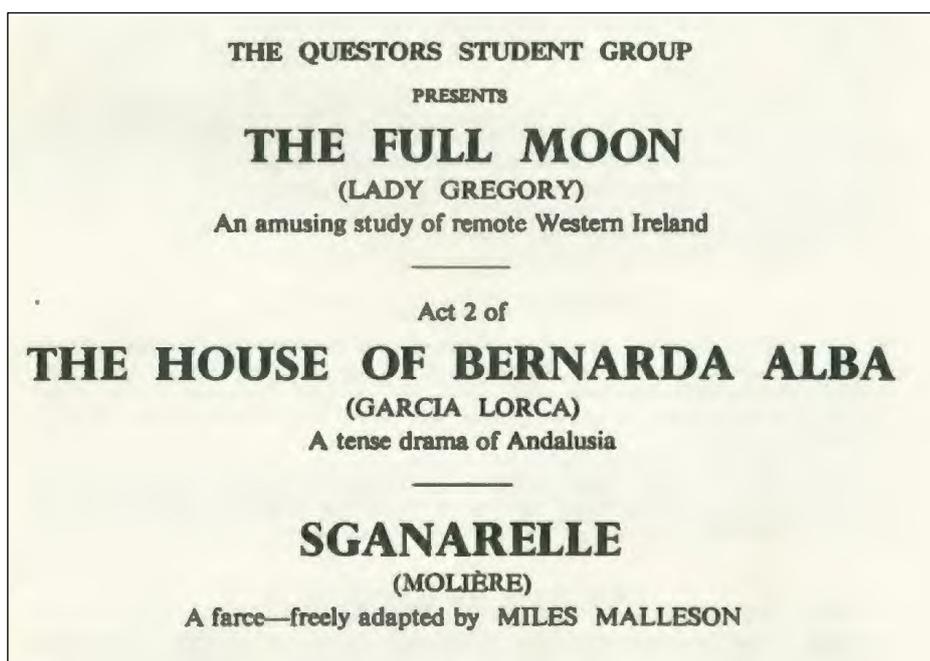
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STUDENT GROUP 11 (1956-1958)

There were fewer applicants this year and, according to **Alfred Emmet**, the standard of applicant was generally lower. Part of the solution was to invite three members who had graduated from Group 10 to join Group 11. These were **Dorothy Boyd Taylor** (Dolly Barber), **Graham Evans** and **Stuart Hartley**. At this stage there still seemed to be thoughts of extending the course to three years.

Student Group 11 February 1958

THREE PLAYS



This production saw the Questors début of **Helen Blatch**, who not only became one of our leading actors, but designed the costumes for this and many of our main productions, left us in the mid-1970s to go into rep where she had a successful career, joined the **Royal Shakespeare Company** in 1989 and made many film and TV appearances - including (naturally) **Dr Who**.

It would also have been **Sandra Turner's** début if she hadn't already appeared on stage as a first-year student in 1957.



**Student Group 11 in
THE HOUSE OF
BERNARDA ALBA**

**Student Group 11 in
THE FULL MOON**





**Student Group 11 in
SGANARELLE**



Middlesex County Times

1 March 1958

Versatile drama students in a triple bill at the Questors

Variety underlines the programme mapped out by The Questors for their Student Group. In the three plays presented by second year students, we heard (very creditable) Irish accents in Lady Gregory's "**The Full Moon**"; burned and suffered in the torrid atmosphere of Lorca's "**The House of Bernarda Alba**"; and laughed while accepting the absurd conventions of Molière's "Sganarelle."

Irish plays of the type of Lady Gregory's the writer cannot stomach, which makes it difficult to assess the production. One was, however, greatly pleased with Barbara Turpin's "Mrs Broderick." She not only spoke, but looked and (rarer) stood and moved, in the manner of the character she represented, and possessed a happy knack of throwing off remarks such as "Murder is (gone?) out of the way this long time since. It's the administration!" in just the right, easy manner.

As Hyacinth Halvey, Kenneth Kane managed the accent successfully but did not seem to have quite the presence to have carried off his role among the townfolk. "Crackled Mary" (Helen Blatch) looked well but was somewhat too sane for one's liking. There might have been earlier indication of insanity - a sidelong glance, a slewed head: after all art is larger than life. But she produced a fine, crazy laugh eventually.

The action of the play takes place in a shed near a railway station in Western Ireland. This makes it difficult to provide

variety in movement and grouping, though more would certainly have been welcome.

Other parts were played by Philip Clark, Derek Morris, Stuart Hartley, Hilary Sheath and Graham Evans. Stage management was by Sonia Frisell.

Evocative atmosphere

The second play was notable for its evocative atmosphere. The iron rule of convention in Spanish domestic life, with its resultant effect on passionate Southern natures, was implicit all through. The nubile but mateless sisters were well presented by Sonia Frisell. Hilary Sheath, Dorothy Boyd-Taylor and Helen Blatch, and Sandra Turner was excellent as the self-righteous spinster about to receive her matrimonial reward. The right notes were struck by Barbara Turpin as the shrewd, earthy old servant and by Lindsay Bouvet as the iron widow. Josephine Rowbottom played a maidservant, and Stuart Hartley was responsible for the stage management.

In Molière's "**Sganarelle**" the heroine, Celie, was delightfully presented by Dorothy Boyd-Taylor. She looked and acted well, moved gracefully, and was never out of period. Sandra Turner, on the other hand, though most amusing and lively as Sganarelle's wife, failed to reconcile the modernity implicit in the "plus ça change, plus c'est le même chose" of all good comedy with a feeling for the actual period portrayed. And Lelie (Graham Evans) was too hobbledehoy for a dashing young Parisian; he did not carry himself with the grace nor the swagger of the part.

Sganarelle himself, the red-faced,

comfortable, chicken-hearted merchant who does not trust his pretty young wife, was well visualised by Derek Morris, who made effective use of his asides. Other parts were played by Stuart Hartley, Sonia Frisell and Kenneth Kane. Stage management was by Barbara Turpin.

All the plays were produced by Geraldine Alford. Costumes, designed by Helen Blatch were made in the Questors' wardrobe by Veronica Meredith and Eileen Wooder. Settings were designed by Madge

Turnbull and built in the theatre workshop by Graham Harrington. General stage management was by John Coates assisted by Diana Lindle, Vivien Innes and Maureen Stears. Lighting was by Colin James and sound by Roy Montgomery. Rena Rice and Archie Cowan were responsible for theatre and house management

**Student Group 11
July 1958**

TIME AND THE CONWAYS

THE SECOND YEAR STUDENT GROUP
PRESENTS

J. B. PRIESTLEY'S

VIVID, ALIVE AND ENTERTAINING

TIME AND THE CONWAYS

Production by **GERALDINE ALFORD**

Designed by **BRYAN EVANS and HELEN BLATCH**

TIME AND THE CONWAYS

by J. B. PRIESTLEY

*The following cast are all members
of The Questors' Student Group.*

The Conways—

Mrs. Conway ... LINDSAY BOUVET
Alan ... STUART HARTLEY
Madge ... BARBARA TURPIN
Robin ... ANTHONY KING
Kay ... HELEN BLATCH
Hazel ... SANDRA TURNER
Carol ... DOROTHY BOYD-TAYLOR

The Others—

Joan Helford ... HILARY SHEATH
Gerald Thornton ... ALISTAIR ELLIOT
Ernest Beavers ... DEREK MORRIS

The play is produced by GERALDINE ALFORD

The decor is by BRYAN EVANS

and the costumes designed by HELEN BLATCH

The scene throughout is a sitting-room in Mrs. Conway's house, a detached villa in a prosperous suburb of a manufacturing town, Newingham

ACT I

That night, Kay's twenty-first birthday

ACT II

Another night. And another birthday

ACT III

That night again. Her twenty-first birthday

Acts I and III take place on an autumn night in 1919. Act II on an autumn night in 1938. Act III is continuous with Act I

There will be two intervals of 15 minutes. After Act I, coffee and light refreshments will be available in the Shaw Room.

Stage Manager GRAHAM EVANS
assisted by ... / ... TERRY QUINN, MAUREEN McHUGH
JOYCE BUTCHER and EDWARD PITT
Wardrobe PAT COLEMAN
Properties VIVIEN INNES and BRENDA WATSON
Sets constructed by KEN BAIN
Lighting SIMON GRAY
assisted by JO ROWBOTHAM
Sound FRED PATEMAN
Theatre Manager RENA RICE
House Manager ARCHIE COWAN

*Members are respectfully reminded that smoking is not
permitted in the Theatre while the play is in progress.*

BOX OFFICE (6.30-8.00 p.m.) EALING 5184

Sadly we have no photos of this production but the review in the **Middlesex County Times** gave a colourful description of the

Middlesex County Times

19 July 1958

Play that dwells on cruelty of time

**QUESTORS' STUDENTS IN
PRIESTLEY PIECE**

Watching now that play which Priestley wrote about the cruelty of time and the disillusionment of a generation, "**Time and the Conways**," it almost seems there should be another act to bring it up to date. The Questors Student Group did the play this week as the finale to their two-year training course, and it made one wonder what another 20 years would have done to this rather awful family.

We see them in 1919, light-heartedly looking forwards to a world of gay adventure and, of course, success. Then we see them 20 years older, with all their dreams shattered, gathered round to look at the wreckage of the family Conway for the last time. Nothing much is left then, would there be anything at all left to-day?

Mama at least would be dead, the selfish tyranny that helped in turn to ruin each of her children over, but not soon enough to save them. She dreamed so hard and so loud for each of her children that it was a foregone conclusion they would fail her. Mrs Conway is a mammoth figure who should brood over the play - something which unfortunately Lindsay Bouvet failed to do. She did not seem to realise that she was the pivot of the play, and was the only one who failed to bridge the 20-year gap with success.

Hers was a hard part, needing far more maturity than the others. It was strange, though, that the best came from the students in the second act when they were playing middle-aged people.

FLIRTING WITH LIFE

In the first act Sandra Turner was a carefree enough Hazel, flirting with life and eating chocolates, but she was a better Mrs Ernest Beevers in the second act, tragic wife of an indelicate bully.

Kay was another tragic figure. While Hazel dreamed of romance in faraway places she dreamed of literary fame as she hopefully penned romantic lines - which 20 years later have got her as far as writing women's gossip in a popular newspaper. There was a lovely aloofness about Helen Blatch's Kay, and she acted well. She was as convincing as the hard Kay of 40 as the dreaming and sensitive 21 year-old. And she had, too, a lovely voice.

Carol dies, but somehow that seems less tragic than the others. She is all sweetness and goodness, and Dorothy Boyd-Taylor made her so truly delightful that we missed her on the stage in the second act.

Madge is the hardest of the lot, after 20 years, and after another 20 years nobody will have heard from her for a long time, and they will have forgotten that one glorious release in her youth when she preached a sermon of socialism to a man she could have loved.

Barbara Turpin was Madge - a true emotionless spinster. But allowing herself to let go with ferocity when necessary.

APPLE OF MAMA'S EYE

Another [Anthony] King played Robin, the apple of Mama's eye who slips almost too easily into failure. Hilary Sheath played Joan the girl who caught him on the rebound from the war and never quite

realises it was the silliest thing she did, and Stuart Hartley was Alan, the only Conway who seems content, because he never aspires to anything.

The man who married Hazel and took away her happiness, Ernest Beevers, was acted with humour and a wonderful dour accent, by Derek Morris.

Alistair Elliott was Gerald, the friend who stays like most small town people, a thing which not one of the Conways of Newlingham seem able to do.

These students made a good job of a not very exciting play and most of them showed promise which a few years more experience will help. One or two of them Helen Blatch and Dorothy Boyd-Taylor in particular, had a variety which lend them to greater things than Priestley.

There will be a final performance of the play tonight.

AW

STUDENT GROUP 12 (1957-1959)

In its first year, this group was joined by **The Young Questors Club**, under the direction of **Rena Rice**, for **Students at Work** (June 1958). There is an interest account of it in the Middlesex County Times (although the reviewer seems to have been under the impression that Christopher Fry wrote Murder in the Cathedral!)



RENA RICE ca 1960

**Student Group 12
July 1958**

STUDENTS AT WORK

Middlesex County Times

5 July 1958

**STUDENTS AT WORK
Accent on Youth
at Questors**

The mistake most actors make is that they think about the result instead of about the action that must prepare it. So wrote one of the great teachers of the art of acting. At the Questors Theatre on Wednesday night it was clear that the Questors Student Group was well aware of this pitfall.

The first-year students, together with the young Questors Club, were giving their end of term demonstration to a packed and appreciative audience.

The exercises which we saw were part of the year's course, which is run by the Questors under the auspices of the Middlesex County Council Education Committee, and ranged from a delightful boy-meets-girl mime (set in a dentist's waiting room) to a full-blooded presentation of the opening scene of Christopher Fry's **Murder in the Cathedral**.

The former was picked at random out of the hat for us by Alfred Emmet, the Group's director of studies, as we went along. The latter was formally introduced (with verbal footnotes and annotations - for which we were very grateful) by Sheila Moriarty, of the Aerial Theatre School, who teaches speech to the Group.

One sympathised with Ludmilla Mlada, who instructs in movement, because we

suspected that she has a difficult job with the class in overcoming that inborn inflexibility of the lower half of the human backbone, which is perhaps a characteristic of the English, and which results in us moving around as if we were forever in a deep-skirted steel corset.

The arrangement of the evening's entertainment was admirable: an excellent balance was maintained and it was presented by the ubiquitous Mr Emmet with that modicum of humour which, although it did nothing to deflect our attention from the obvious sincerity, hard work, and solid achievement of the students, certainly put us at our ease from the word go.

The new term begins in September and inquiries by those interested in joining either the Student Group, which is intended for amateurs who are seriously interested in the theatre, or the Young Questors Club - a teenage youth club led by Rena Rice - will doubtless be welcomed at the theatre in Mattock-lane.

**THE QUESTORS
STUDENTS AT WORK**

Wednesday 25th June 1958

Programme

INTRODUCTION by ALFRED EMMET
A MOVEMENT CLASS directed by LUDMILLA MLADA
A SPEECH CLASS directed by SHEILA MORIARTY
ACTING EXERCISES directed by ALFRED EMMET

THE YOUNG QUESTORS CLUB directed by Rena Rice
in an improvisation to the music of Peter Warlock's "Capriol Suite".

Members of the Group:

Pat Hutton, Lynne Rasselle
Marilyn Walters, Carol Allen
Carolyn Smith, Janette Clemow
Rosaleen Hughes, Jill Morris
Derek Kerridge, Jane Cuff
Penelope Davis, Lynne Harrison
John Aglioglu

INTERVAL

SPEECH CLASS CHORAL EXERCISES
i. "The Night Mail" by W.H.Auden
Barbara Jackson, Maureen McHugh, Veronica Meridew,
Josephine Rowbottom, Patricia Verrall, Brenday Watson,
John Chapmen, Derek Marlow.
ii. "England Expects" by Ogden Nash
Patience Coleman, Christine James, Terry Quin,
Jean Rouse, Marion Wood, Joan Woodhouse, Tony Barber,
Zafar Chaudri.

ACTING IMPROVISATIONS

SPEECH AND MOVEMENT - an experiment in combined class work
i. Extract from "Murder in the Cathedral" by T.S.Eliot.
ii. Extract from "Under Milk Wood" by Dylan Thomas.

ACTING - GROUP IMPROVISATIONS

Stage Management Daphne Williams
Lighting Simon Gray

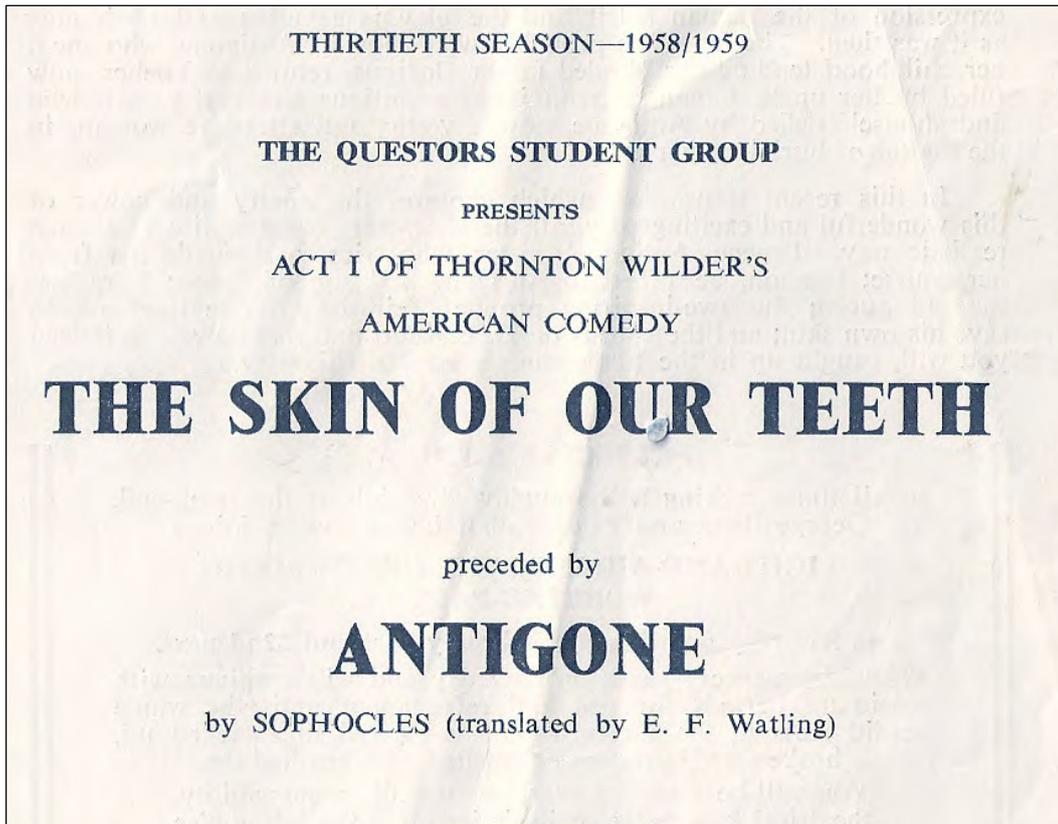
Student Group 12 included two students who had already completed Group 10 (**Zafar Chaudhri** and **Peter Hutchins**), who had completed Group 11 (**Sandra Turner**) and one who had completed Group 9 (**Shaun Curry**).



Shaun Curry is another alumni who left the Questors Student Group to go to RADA and thence via the RSC and the West End to enjoy a successful career on Film and TV in, amongst many, **Z Cars**, **The Saint**, **Poldark**, **The Professionals**, **Coronation Street**, **Minder**, **Blake's 7** .

Student Group 12
February 1959

DOUBLE BILL



A QUESTORS GUIDE TO THE SECOND YEAR STUDENT GROUP

The Staff

Tutor of Acting and Producer : GERALDINE ALFORD. Trained at the Central School of Speech and Drama; for five years on the staff of the Old Vic Theatre School under Michel Saint-Denis and subsequently of the Rose Bruford College; presently on the permanent staff of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. On the staff of The Questors Student Group since 1953.

Tutor of Movement : JOHN BROOME has just taken over from Ludmilla Mlada. He was trained as a dancer at the Royal Ballet School and then at the Sigurd Leeder School. He has taught in schools and at the Bradford Civic Playhouse; was choreographer and ballet master to the Touring Opera Company and is presently on the staff at R.A.D.A.

Tutor of Speech : MADELEINE BAILEY (who this term succeeded Sheila Moriarty), trained at the Central School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art; and is presently on the staff of the Drama Department of Chiswick Polytechnic.

Members of the Group

PAT COLEMAN. First Year Group 1957/58; is Secretary of the Group and a keen worker in several other departments of the theatre.

BARBARA JACKSON, 19. Was for a few years a member of the Young Questors. First Year Group 1957/58.

VERONICA MEREDREW, 18. First Year Group 1956/57/58.

TERRY QUINN, 18. Also spent two years in the First Year Group.

JO ROWBOTTOM, 18. After a year or two in the Young Questors, joined the First Year Group in 1956/57 for two years.

SANDRA TURNER, 19. Was in the Young Questors with Jo, joined the First Year Group in 1956/57 and the Second Year Group in 1957/58; passed audition for acting membership and elected to spend this, her second year, in the Second Year Group.

TONY BARBER, 20. Joined the First Year Group in 1957/58, after playing Bedford in *Henry V*.

JOHN CHAPMAN, 19. First Year Group 1957/58.

SHAUN CURRY, 21. Joined First Year Group in 1954/55, returned again to join the Second Year Group after three years in the R.A.F.

PETER HUTCHINS, 21. Was a member of the Young Questors in 1954/55, joined the First Year Group in 1955/56, then spent two years in the Forces to return to the Second Year Group this year.

DEREK MARLOW, 20. First Year Group 1957/58.

This will be the first production of the Group. For them it will be a big and important occasion, in which they will be greatly helped by the encouragement of your presence. Knowing them, we believe that they will acquit themselves well and we are confident that they will give you an evening which you will feel to have been very well and rewardingly spent.

ANTIGONE

by SOPHOCLES (translated by E. F. WALLING)

Ismene	{ Daughters of Oedipus,	VERONICA MEREDREW
Antigone	{ former King of Thebes	JOSEPHINE ROWBOTTOM
Creon, King of Thebes	...	TONY BARBER
Haemon, son of Creon	...	DEREK MARLOW
Terisias, a blind prophet	...	SHAUN CURRY
A sentry	{	PETER HUTCHINS
A messenger	...	SANDRA TURNER
Eurydice, wife of Creon	...	
<i>Chorus of Thebans :</i>		
An old woman	...	PAT COLEMAN
An elder	...	JOHN CHAPMAN
A priestess	...	TERRY QUINN
A young woman	...	LEONORA JOHNSTON
A girl	...	BARBARA JACKSON
King's attendants	...	{ STEPHEN O'TOOLE
		KEN HEGGIE
A boy leading Terisias	...	VERONICA MEREDREW
A soldier	...	DEREK MARLOW

Scene: Before the Palace at Thebes.

Recorder and drum played by ... JOHN CHAPMAN
and MARIAN WOOD
Student Stage Manager ... SHAUN CURRY

During the interval of 15 minutes light refreshments will be served
in the Bernard Shaw Room.

Kindly note that the price of a cup of coffee is 7d. and of a
cup of tea 4d. It will assist service if you will have your
money ready.

*Smoking is not permitted in the Auditorium at any
time. Will members wishing to smoke in the interval
kindly use the Bernard Shaw Room.*

BOX OFFICE (6.30-8.00 p.m.) ... EAL 5184

THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH

ACT 1 of

by THORNTON WILDER

Announcer	...	TONY BARBER
Sabina	...	TERRY QUINN
Mr. FitzPatrick	...	PETER HUTCHINS
Mrs. Antrobus	...	SANDRA TURNER
Dinosaur	...	VERONICA MEREDREW
Mammoth	...	JOSEPHINE ROWBOTTOM
Telegraph boy	...	DEREK MARLOW
Gladys	...	BARBARA JACKSON
Henry	...	JOHN CHAPMAN
Mr. Antrobus	...	SHAUN CURRY
Professor	...	TONY BARBER
Judge	...	PETER HUTCHINS
Homer	...	DEREK MARLOW
Miss E. Muse	...	VERONICA MEREDREW
Miss T. Muse	...	LEONORA JOHNSTON
Miss M. Muse	...	PAT COLEMAN

Scene: Home, Excelsior, New Jersey.

Time: The present.

Student stage manager ... TONY BARBER

The plays produced by GERALDINE ALFORD

The music composed by BARBARA LANDER. The sets designed
by MARY VENUS and constructed in The Questions' workshop by
PETER JENKINS. The costumes designed by HELEN BLATCH
who also made the masks. The costumes made in The Questions'
wardrobe with the help of the students.

General Stage Manager	...	KEN HEGGIE
assisted by	...	DIANA LINDLE and BARBARA TURPIN
Property Mistress	...	MARY BENNEY
Sound	...	STUART HARTLEY
Lighting	...	PHYLLIS CRADDOCK
House Manager	...	BILL COLLINS

This double bill included the student début of **Tony Barber**, another one of those people without whom, one wonders, Questors could have existed all these years. Tony remembers:

*"My Questors début was in **Henry V** in 1957, following which, at the after show party in Alfred and Kit's flat at Haven Green, some members of the cast spoke to Alfred, who had directed the production, about using it as my audition for Questors' acting membership. Alfred's reply was to say my performance could serve as my successful application for the Student Group.*

*I also appeared in '**The Voice of Shem**' directed by **Colette King** in 1958, and was also in '**In search of Happiness**' in 1960 as a Student Group graduate from the previous year."*



Also stepping on to the Questors stage for the first time was budding playwright and best selling novelist **Derek Marlowe**. His play "**How I Assumed the Role of a Popular Dandy**" was premiered in the Questors **New Plays Festival** of 1965, and he was part of the group of actors and playwrights, including **Tom Stoppard** and **Peter Whelan**, who represented The Questors at the Literarisches Colloquium, Berlin in 1964. His entry in Wikipedia is an interesting read.

Shortly after taking the title role of **Antigone** (which she liked to claim she played with a cockney accent), **Jo Rowbottom**, at the time working as a clerk at the BBC, won a scholarship to LAMDA and went on to enjoy a long and very productive career in film and TV.

Described by John Deighton in Reveille as "*one of the best known brassy birds on television*", she was a familiar face on British TV throughout the 60s,70s and 80s, appearing in countless series and dramas including **Dr Who**, **The Bill**, **Juliet Bravo**, **Z Cars**, **Terry and June**, **The Morcombe** and **Wise Show**, **I Claudius** and **Romany Jones**.

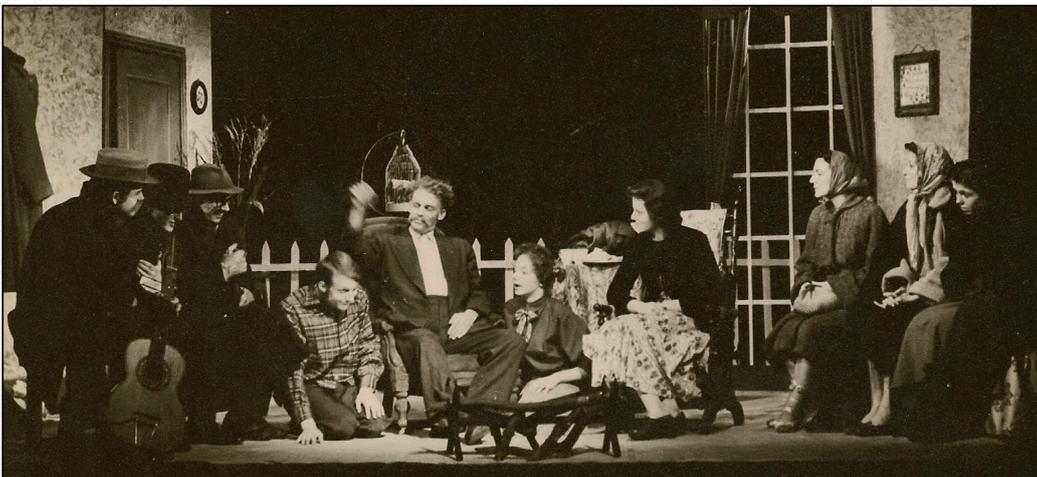




**Student Group 12 in
ANTIGONE**



Student Group 12 in THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH



Middlesex County Times

7 March 1959

**Plays of old Greece
and new America**

**SOPHOCLES AND WILDER
BY QUESTORS STUDENTS**

Real tragedy lies in pain, not in horror - in young lives cut short and lovers bereaven; not in broken bodies denied formal funerals. But a plenitude of "realistic" war stories has reminded our generation that horror impinged upon man's imagination long before pain and remains a very present pre-occupation of the sub-conscious.

In its time it has inspired better things than Grand Guignol, and among them is the "**Antigone**" of Sophocles - one of two plays, of which a four performance run has just been given by the Questors' second-year student group.

Girl's anguish

The play - as the classical do not need informing - deals with a girl's anguish at the desecration of her slain brother's corpse. Her real cause for grief is in the loss of her brother's mind, not in what happens to his bones; but the early part takes the over novel view, only with an act they cannot touch. Perhaps the student cast - ages around 19 and 20 - did not quite "get" this as might their seniors with first-hand knowledge of war. But they had been well coached and gave a lively and convincing performance - up indeed, except for the language, to something like university Greek play standard.

Prima Donna style

Josephine Rowbottom made a lovely Antigone, who could act in the prima donna style when called upon. Tony Barber gave an ambitious performance as Creon: and Shaun Curry was formidable (in the French sense) as Tiresias. Veronica Meredith (Ismene), Derek Marlow (Haemon), and especially Sandra Turner (Eurydice) helped things along.

The chorus was charming and John Chapman and Marion Wood provided recorder and drum accompaniment.

Second play in the programme was Thornton Wilder's "**Skin of Our Teeth**" which was attacked heartily, if not quite in the American idiom. Tony Barber, as the announcer and the professor, Shaun Curry as Mr Antrobus, Sandra Turner (Mrs Antrobus), Terry Quinn (Sabina) and Veronica Rowbottom as the dinosaur and mammoth, kept things going with proper student enthusiasm.

Geraldine Alford produced both plays to advantage with help from Questors-made sets and costumes.

W H

**Student Group 12
July 1959**

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

*The Most Moving Story from
Modern History Ever Dramatised*

**The Thoughts of a Girl who
Grew up under the
German Terror**

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

dramatised by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett

**Played by the Second Year Student Group
Produced by Geraldine Alford**

**Student Group 12 in
THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK**



STUDENT GROUP 13 (1958-1960)

Three graduates from Group 12, **John Chapman**, **Pat Coleman** and **Terry Quinn**, were invited to join this Group, and **Madelaine Baily** replaced **Sheila Moriarty** as voice tutor.

Barry Clark wrote to us in January 2014 with his reminiscences of being a student and afterwards as a Questors member.

*In the period 1959 through 1967, I lent a willing hand to many of the Club's activities, including laying bricks for the foundation of the "new" theatre. I was fortunate to have worked with Alfred on the Theatre's first production in-the-round of **The Glass Menagerie**, which required understudying both male roles, as well as providing the background music that accompanied much of the action.*



*In 1966, I worked in the sound department for the Student production of **Ring Round the Moon**, and personally obtained **Richard Addinsell's** integral score for the play, which is still in my possession complete with leader tape & cues. At the time, EMI did not consider the score "commercially viable", and refused to release a recording. **Alan Drake** might just remember me, notably for my part as the narrator in the shortened-version of **Under Milk Wood**, which the Evening Standard critic of the time dubbed "Condensed Milk".*

Of course, I have many other anecdotes from that period -- in particular, our efforts to tart-up (pardon the expression) the only toilet that would have been available to the Queen Mother when she opened the new theatre.

I am now resident in Tucson, Arizona, where I am pleased to report that we may live in a desert, but we are far from being a cultural one.

Steve O'Toole, who was a first-year student in Group 13 and made an appearance in the main production of **Julius Caesar** (1958) and the Student Production of **Antigone** (1959), made the headlines a few years later for being something of a real-life hero. The Middlesex County Times reported the event as follows (August

EALING ACTOR CAPTURE MAN WITH A GUN



When an Ealing man captured a gunman in Dusseldorf, Germany, on Sunday, he risked his career and his life. For 28-year-old **Steven Patrick O'Toole** is a television and film actor. "My face is my fortune," he remarked this week after arriving back home at 17, Woodville-gardens.

Waiting for him when he flew back was a letter from the Police President in Dusseldorf — in German — thanking him for capturing a thief who had stolen a car, and congratulating him upon his initiative.

"All I was concerned with immediately afterwards was my coat. I had bought it only the day before and scuffed it in the struggle," recalled Mr. O'Toole.

But after, back at his hotel, he suddenly realized that he had done, "and all I wanted then was a drink..."

TRAPPED BY POLICE

What he did was capture a man who was later found to be carrying a gun and a knife.

Trapped by police cars, a man had jumped out of a car in one of the main shopping areas of the German town on Sunday evening and fled.

He was running towards Mr. O'Toole. "And suddenly I was running towards him, with my eyes fixed on his hand reaching inside his coat," said the 6ft actor.

"The police were some way away, and there were women and children about. I was convinced he had a gun in his coat and my only thought was that he should not be allowed to use it,

HELD ON

"He saw me coming and tried to round the corner. But I caught hold of his lapel and twisted him round until he fell on top of me. I just held on to his coat until the police arrived and handcuffed him."

Mr O'Toole was in Germany working on a commercial film. "I was looking for a present for my mother, otherwise I would have been asleep in the hotel," he said.

A former student at the Questors, Mr O'Toole has had parts in television series like "Z Cars," "No Hiding Place," "Compact," "The Reluctant Bandit," and the "World of Suzie Wong" film.

Our records indicate that many years later Steve returned briefly to The Questors and appeared in **The Shift** (1990), **The Strangeness of Others** (1992) and **The Grotesque Farce of Mr Punch** (1993)

**Student Group 13
February 1960**

DOUBLE BILL

THE QUESTORS

present

THE CRUCIBLE (Act 1)

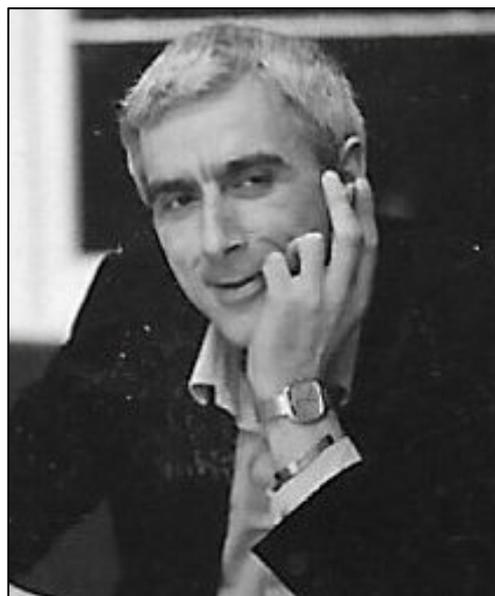
and

UNDER MILK WOOD

performed by

THE SECOND YEAR STUDENT GROUP

Shaun Curry (Group 12) was brought in to support the cast in this double bill, as was **Vic Pompini** from the first-year of Group 13. This was Vic Pompini's début appearance at The Questors. He quickly became a much loved and regular performer right up until his death in 1993, with more than 30 productions to his credit .



Vic Pompini in later

Act 1
of
THE CRUCIBLE
by ARTHUR MILLER

Cast (in order of appearance):

Betty Parris	..	..	LORRAINE MUNNS
Rev. Samuel Parris	..	..	CHARLES CONABERE
Tituba	..	..	LEONORA JOHNSTON
Abigail Williams	..	..	ANN WOODS
Susanna Wallcott	..	..	BARBARA GILES
Mrs. Ann Putnam	..	..	PAT COLEMAN
Thomas Putnam	..	..	CHRISTOPHER WHITBREAD
Mercy Lewis	..	..	MARIAN WOOD
Mary Warren	..	..	TERRY QUINN
John Proctor	..	..	BARRY CLARK
Rebecca Nurse	..	..	MADELEINE MARGAN
Giles Corey	..	..	SHAUN CURRY
Rev. John Hale	..	..	JOHN CHAPMAN

Both plays produced by **GERALDINE ALFORD**
The settings designed by **TADEUSZ ORLOWICZ**
The costumes designed by **DENISE HUOT**

During the interval of 15 minutes light refreshments will be served in the Bernard Shaw Room.

Kindly note that the price of a cup of coffee is 7d. and of a cup of tea 4d. It will assist service if you will have your money ready.

The Grapevine Bar is open during this production.

Smoking is not permitted in the Auditorium at any time. Will members wishing to smoke in the interval kindly use the Bernard Shaw Room.

BOX OFFICE (6.30-8.00 p.m.) EAL 5184

UNDER MILK WOOD

(Shortened version)
by DYLAN THOMAS

Cast (in order of appearance):

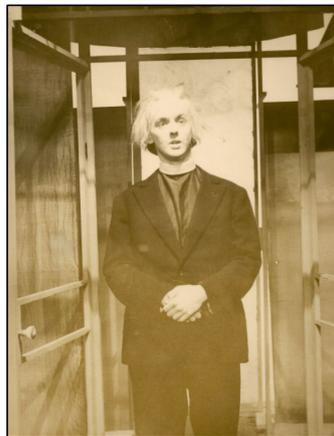
Narrator	..	..	BARRY CLARK
Capt. Cat	..	..	CHRISTOPHER WHITBREAD
Myfanwy Price	..	..	LORRAINE MUNNS
Mog Edwards	..	..	JOHN CHAPMAN
Mr. Waldo	..	..	VICTOR POMPINI
Rev. Eli Jenkins	..	..	CHARLES CONABERE
Mrs. Ogmore Pritchard	..	..	LEONORA JOHNSTON
Gossama Beynon	..	..	TERRY QUINN
Organ Morgan	..	..	CHRISTOPHER WHITBREAD
Mrs. Organ Morgan	..	..	LEONORA JOHNSTON
Willy Nilly	..	..	CHARLES CONABERE
Mrs. Willy Nilly	..	..	MADELEINE MARGAN
Sinbad Sailors	..	..	MAX LAWRIE
Lily Smals	..	..	LORRAINE MUNNS
Butcher Beynon	..	..	JOHN CHAPMAN
Mrs. Beynon	..	..	PATRICIA COLEMAN
Mr. Pugh	..	..	CHARLES CONABERE
Mrs. Pugh	..	..	ANN WOODS
P.C. Attila Rees	..	..	SHAUN CURRY
Mary Ann Sailors	..	..	MARIAN WOOD
Dai Bread	..	..	MAX LAWRIE
Polly Garth	..	..	MADELEINE MARGAN
Lord Cut-Glass	..	..	VICTOR POMPINI
Mrs. Dai Bread One	..	..	MARIAN WOOD
Mrs. Sarah	..	..	BARBARA GILES
Mrs. Dai Bread Two	..	..	ANN WOODS
An old woman	..	..	PATRICIA COLEMAN
Mrs. Cherry	..	..	TERRY QUINN
Fisherman	..	..	VICTOR POMPINI
Rosie Probut	..	..	TERRY QUINN

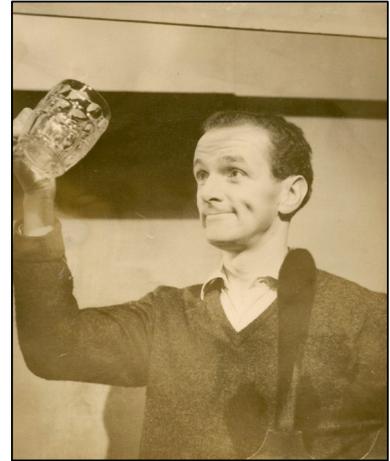
Stage Manager	..	..	JOSÉ ROBERTS
assisted by	..	..	JUDY HARRISON, GERALDINE HARPUR, DAVID EVANS and DEREK BROWN
Deputy Stage Manager	..	..	SANDRA TURNER
Wardrobe Mistress	..	..	JACQUELINE LEARNER
Lighting	..	..	PHYLLIS CRADDOCK and STUART HARTLEY
House Manager	..	..	BILL COLLINS
Theatre Manager	..	..	RENA RICE



**Student Group 13
in
THE CRUCIBLE**

**Student Group 13 in
UNDER MILK WOOD**





**Student Group 13 in
UNDER MILK WOOD**



The Middlesex County Times reviewer, **Douglas McVay**, gave an extensive account of why he didn't like Dylan Thomas or **Under Milk Wood** and his doubts about **The Crucible** as well - he gave the students a pretty hard time too!

Middlesex County Times

27 February 1960

**STIMULATING PLAYS BY QUESTORS'
STUDENTS
Week-end four-day run**

Two of the most stimulating plays of recent years have been chosen by the Questors Theatre for the annual production of the Student Group.

Opening this Saturday for a run of four performances, the Questors students will present Act One of "**The Crucible**" by Arthur Miller, and a condensed version of Dylan Thomas's "**Under Milk Wood**."

"**The Crucible**" was written by Miller (who is the husband of film star Marilyn Monroe) at the time of the notorious Committee on Un-American Activities, who persecuted Miller himself.

It tells the story of a witch-hunt in Puritan New England, but although the setting is 18th century, the parallel with the late Senator Macarthy's investigations is clear.

"**Under Milk Wood**" is the best-known, and probably the best-loved, of the works of the late Dylan Thomas. It simply tells the story of a Welsh village from sunset to sunrise, as seen through the poet's eyes.

The play was originally written as a broadcast play, but was so successful that after the author's death it was adapted for the stage where it had a successful West End run.

The two pieces will be given on February 27, February 29, March 1 and March 2, all performances at 7.30. Tickets can be booked by members only but new members are welcome and should inquire at the theatre (EAL 5184).

Variety concert

Another attraction at the Questors will be on March 6, when a variety concert will be

held, starring Harry Locke, fresh from his triumph as Justice Squeezum in "Lock Up Your Daughters" at the Mermaid Theatre. Mr Locke is an old Questors' member and played Macbeth there some years ago. The concert will be produced by Wilfred Sharp.

Middlesex County Times

5 March 1960

CONDENSED 'MILK'

Were the Questors second-year students right to make room for Act One of Arthur Miller's "**Crucible**" by abbreviating Dylan Thomas's "**Under Milk Wood**," in their Mattock-lane presentation this week? I don't think they were. With the Miller, audiences couldn't help but be left asking what happened next. Production-wise, more time had clearly been given to the Thomas. So that the double-bill seemed very unequal. And no artist's work should ever be truncated on principle. Even when, as with "Under Milk Wood," one feels that, though shortened, it wasn't short enough.

Thomas's conception is atmospheric but not dramatic. If it observes the unities (Welsh village life drawn from dawn to dusk), it neglects the essential of theatre: progression of event. Nothing really happens. The abridged Questors version only lasted seventy minutes. Fifty minutes would have been preferable. Yet the basic trouble with the play is not its construction but its expression.

"**Under Milk Wood**" tries to blend descriptive poetry (the speeches of the narrator), pathetic poetry (the speeches of the blind old sea-dog Captain Cat and his past mistress Rosie Probut), and comic poetry (the rest of the village). The technical mainspring of Thomas's poems is the attempted discovery of the exalted in the commonplace, what John Grierson described in the films of the late Humphrey Jennings as "The Louis Quinze

properties of a Lyons' Swiss roll." Such metaphysical juggling requires absolute certainty. John Donne had it (compare, incidentally, his "Death be not proud" sonnet with Thomas's "Death shall have no Dominion"). Andrew Marvell had it at his best. In a different medium, Jennings had it as well. And John Betjeman's writing has it now; furthermore, his "Journey into a Lost World" on BBC television's "Monitor" last Sunday hinted how he might, allowed the chance, fill part of the void caused in British cinema by Jennings' loss.

The narrator's speeches in the Questors "Milk Wood" were admirably delivered by Barry Clark, who unlike some of the supporting cast was never scared by the verse into either gabbling it or swallowing it. For all that, he couldn't hide the language's recurrent striving for effect any more than Christopher Whitbread and Terry Quin could turn Captain Cat and Rosie into poignant people instead of vaguely pretentious abstracts. Lyricism and emotion must appear spontaneous things, subtle rather than demonstratively exhibitionist. Thomas gets close to them in his idyll of boyhood "Fern Hill." In "Under milk Wood" he mostly doesn't.

There are exceptions. The Rev Eli Jenkins' placid, grateful "morning service" on behalf of the town, spoken for the Questors with touching affection by Charles Conabere, Polly Garter's floor-scrubbing threnody for the bygone loves, sung with innocence but insufficient voice by Madeleine Margan. And the ardent, timorous, unending courtship of Mog Edwards (John Chapman) and Myfanwy Price (priceless - pussy Lorraine Munns). They succeed as poetry because they strike a happy balance between the remaining alternations of high and lower style. But their success is brief.

As for the lower style itself, the village provides several good jokes, of which the pick is henpecked Mr Pugh (Charles Conabere again) ruminatively eyeing Mrs Pugh (Ann Woods) while consulting a plain-covered copy of "Lives of the Great Poisoners." Henpecked husbands are nothing new of course. The level of the

play's humour can't be called particularly original. What bothers me more is the attitude behind it and behind the whole, Not so much its extravagance, (harking back to celluloid, "Whisky Galore" and "The Quiet Man" were scarcely naturalistic portraits of the Scots and Irish). No, it's the persistent whiff of seediness in Thomas's view of the fleshly town, the suspicion of Puritan inhibition in his apparently "uninhibited" fun. I just don't warm to the majority of his characters as I should. Put it this way, I wouldn't like to live amongst them. Still the acting and Geraldine Alford's direction did the Questors student group immense credit.

Every Arthur Miller play has a flaw in it. With "**The Crucible**" he endeavoured to criticise McCarthyism via a story of literal witch-hunting set in 17th century America. Unfortunately, he made the seventeenth century's grounds for hunting look stronger than the twentieth's. With shaky results to the parallel. (Better the straight 1950s account of the movie "Storm Centre" any day). The witches, in fact, are too witchy for comfort. (Wiers Jansen had the same difficulty in his novel "Anne Pedersdotter", judging by the stage and screen adaptations of John Masefield and Carl Dreyer). They don't warm up properly till Act Two, but Act One sees the crucible starting to simmer. Mrs Putnam has buried seven of her babies in a row, and the eighth is already having trances and fits. Miller, I suppose, blames hereditary disease. He doesn't, at least in context, convince me - despite assurances I've received that Queen Anne interred sixteen of her seventeen during infancy. (Seventeen! No wonder she's dead). The single authoritative performance at Mattock-lane was Mr Whitbread's grim Thomas Putnam, and Mr Chapman's exorcist preacher Hale notably lacked the zealot fire necessary.

DOUGLAS MCVAY

Student Group 13
July 1960

IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS

IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS

a Modern Comedy

by VIKTOR ROZOV

(translated from the Russian by NINA FROUD)



A young member of the group, **Charles Conabere**, seemed to have made quite an impression and has at least one professional credit as "second youth" in a 1962 episode of the TV series Probation Officer.

This was the first of some 20 Student Productions to be designed by **John Rolfe**, and was also the last to be directed by **Geraldine Alford** (right) who handed the second-year student brief over to **Michael Hoddell**.



MEMO TO COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

22.3.60

The play for the Student group production in July has been agreed between Geraldine Alford and myself - "in Search of Happiness", translated by Nina Froud from the Russian of Viktor Rozov.

This is a charming, modern comedy, originally written for the Children's Theatre in Moscow. It recently had its first production in this country by the students at L.A.M.D.A.

Will the committee please approve?

ALFRED EMMET
Hon. Director

IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS

a Modern Comedy
by **VIKTOR ROZOV**
(translated from the Russian by **NINA FROUD**)

Characters

Klavdia Vasilyevna Savini ...	... LEO JOHNSTONE
Fyodor } (her sons) ...	CHRIS WHITBREAD
Nikolai } ...	TONY BARBER
Oleg } ...	CHARLES CONABERE
Tanya (her daughter) ...	... ANN WOODS
Lena (Fyodor's wife) ...	TERRY QUINN
Ivan Nikitich Lapshin (a cattle breeder) ...	JONATHAN BEAVIS
Gennady (his son) ...	BARRY CLARK
Taisia Nikolaevna (a neighbour) ...	PAT COLEMAN
Marina (her daughter) ...	BARBARA GILES
Leonid ...	DEREK BROWN
Uncle Vasya (another neighbour) ...	MAX LAWRIE
Fira Kantarovitch } (Oleg's classmates)	MARIAN WOOD
Vera Tretyakova } ...	LORRAINE MUNNS

Production ... GERALDINE ALFORD
Sets designed by ... JOHN ROLFE
Costumes designed by ... DENISE HUOT

The scene is a room in a typical Moscow flat in an old converted house at the present day.

The play will be presented in two acts. There will be one interval of 15 minutes during which light refreshments will be served in the Bernard Shaw Room.

The Grapevine bar is open during this production.

NOTICE.

On Friday and Saturday, August 5th and 6th, an Oxford University Dramatic Society company will present

Miss Caryl Churchill's new play
"HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME."

Seats are now for sale at usual prices.

We are extremely fortunate to have secured an O.U.D.S. company for Ealing. We know you will give it your full support.

Smoking is not permitted in the Auditorium at any time. Will members wishing to smoke in the intervals kindly use the Bernard Shaw Room.

BOX OFFICE (6.30-8.00 p.m.) ... EAL 5184



**Student Group 13
in
IN SEARCH OF
HAPPINESS**

THAMES VALLEY TIMES (RICHMOND)

20 July 1960

The Questors are concluding their season this week with their student group in a translation of a Russian comedy, "**In Search of Happiness.**"

The theme of the play, as the title suggests, is the constant efforts of the individual to find happiness after his own fashion. For this purpose the author, Viktor Rozov, has chosen a Moscow family of widowed mother, her three sons, daughter, and daughter-in-law. The eldest son is a scientist a weak minded fellow who lets himself be dominated by his wife. The latter looks for happiness in material things, such as a new flat and furniture. The two younger sons have their romantic visions, especially the youngest, Oleg, with his poetic feelings and his adolescent attempts to find the meaning of life.

As usual there are some very promising youngsters, Charles Conabere, who plays Oleg, already has a wide range of expression. He has one startling scene where Oleg, in a quarrel with his sister-in-law, runs berserk and slashes her precious new dresser with a sword. I could not believe that he would have carved the thing into such neat pieces of wood as he is represented as having done, but the actor shows that he can rise to a dramatic moment as well as suggest the youth's shy fumbblings after life.

There are delightful scenes with two of Oleg's girl classmates, played with studied seriousness by Marian Wood and Lorraine Munns.

THE STAGE

21 July 1960

Modern Russian Comedy

'IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS'
play by Viktor Rozov, translated from the Russian by Nina Froud. Presented at the Questors, Ealing, on July 16. Sets by John

Rolfe and costumes by Denis Huot.
Directed by Geraldine Alford.

The current production at the Questors, Ealing, of Viktor Rozov's modern Russian comedy "**In Search of Happiness**", translated by Nina Froud, falls somewhat short of this theatre's normal standards, leaving one with the awareness, seldom experienced here, that the company is, in fact, an amateur one. By that standard the performances are still good; but it is not a standard which I have hitherto felt the need to apply to their presentations of straight plays.

The play itself is not of great importance, being a slightly sentimental and only mildly funny story of family life among an ordinary family and their neighbours in Moscow, with an arrogant daughter-in-law disturbing the peace and some not very brisk encounters between the rivals for the hand of the student daughter of the house.

One of these, Gennady, was played by Barry Clark who, with Charles Conabere as a fifteen-year-old boy, gave the most polished performance of the evening. There was also some very good characterisation in the brief appearances of Marian Wood and Lorraine Munns, as two schoolgirls.

Jonathan Beavis, despite an overdone make-up, was good as the uncouth cattle breeder Ivan, and Ann Woods was quietly competent as Marina. Terry Quin as the angry Lena and Derek Brown as the other suitor were notably audible - a virtue not always shared by the rest of the company. Geraldine Alford's direction kept a good pace and successfully evoked the right atmosphere.

LGS

STUDENT GROUP 14 (1959-1961)



Stepping into **Geraldine Alford's** shoes as director of the second-year students was **Michael Hoddell**. Michael had served in the Fleet Air Arm during the Second World War, with a spell in ENSA (Entertainments National Service Association - not quite "It Ain't Half Hot Mum", but close).

After stage managing at Watford Rep, he studied at the Central School of Speech and Drama, co-founded an amateur group called London Little Theatre, and became a producer at Goldsmith College. Before coming to Questors he worked for the British Council in the Middle East and taught the Student Group at Mountview Theatre.

Michael was in charge of our second-year students for nearly a decade, and directing over 35 plays with them.

In a Middlesex County Times article, **Douglas McVay** gave a detailed description of the Group 14 first-year Students at Work which took place on 27 June 1960 .

Middlesex County Times

2 July 1960

DRAMA STUDENTS AT WORK An Engaging display at Questors

The Questors theatre isn't just a drama company, but a drama school: there lies the reason for the exceptional standard of its amateur performance. Enrolled students take three classes a week in speech, deportment and acting. At the close of a year a number continue to a further course.

Last Monday at Mattock-lane, the first-year group allowed us to eavesdrop. The resulting display, involving a dozen or so casually dressed youngsters and two instructors, possessed the fascination of all such exercises; a fascination felt on the highest level in the scenes at Lee Strasbourg's Studio during ITA's "The Method," in the Martha Graham film "A

Dancer's World," or in Jerome Robbins' silent ballet "Moves."

"The inherent curiosities of movement." Robbins' explanatory phrase defines, too, the interest of much of what we saw on Monday. The boys and girls, strung across the bare stage like a gym team, on their teacher's command sagged, straightened, alertly raised their arms, relaxedly lowered them, whirled, shook, and advanced in unison to the staccato rhythm of a single drum. Noiselessly they stretched their hands into an invisible spotlight, turned the palms over, basked in the imaginary heat; noiselessly a kneeling soloist, struck by warmth from above, slowly stood and strained to touch the ray's source, amid a quiet only broken by the faint chirp of birds outside.

Passing to the mime of concrete experiences. A daisy and rose were plucked, an apple picked - and eaten. The males conveyed the sense of appetite, the sound of relishing mouth juices, better

than the females - perhaps because greedier by nature. Similarly, the ladies excelled on the sentimental task of throwing a dead bird into a lake. One cast it in with sudden disgust; a second clutched her skirt as if in an effort of self-cleansing; a third caressed the creature sadly before bending away with a delicate, hurt gesture of finger to lips. The same actress repeated the gesture while retreating in mesmerised horror from a snake. Again the effect told, but she must be careful not to let it be a mannerism.

Snake-reaction

Another imaginative snake -reaction came from a girl who jumped up and hurled a shoe. And indeed imaginative reactions were frequent. As everybody twisted and coughed under the pretence of being tied to a stake, a boy cried aloud in realistic suffering. As a boy lay dying after some general catastrophe a girl tried desperately to drag him to safety, and his hand limply lifted, wavered, then fell; here was a moment of legitimate bravura pathos. More elaborate motion set to music followed later; a primordially violent "transgression from peace to war," executed with cymbals and drums against a blood-red backcloth; a flamencoish duet memorable for a sensually inventive instant where the youth grasped his feminine partner's long hair; and a balletic accompaniment to a scene from "Porgy and Bess." (This I thought a shade posturing, yet in any case it would have paled beside the aural spell of Gershwin's opera.) The evening concluded, though, on a return to a note of death. Each student successively yielded the ghost, with one in particular crumpling on to his knees, staring agonizedly in front of him, then pitching forward - making a good end.

In verbal as distinct from physical originality the group inevitably found greater difficulty, partly due to the in initial

embarrassment of beginning to speak to an audience. A certain exaggeration was apparent in their improvised dialogue when supposedly trapped in a rain bound beach shelter waiting for the sun to shine: what flashes of authenticity remained were visual, in the rubbing on of tan-oil and an unexpected mock-attempt at necking. Their response to the radio news of incipient atomic conflict lacked conviction. (Admittedly a hard thing to suggest: even so...) Lengthier prepared variants on a given theme also disappointed, largely emerging as stock studies - except for a mildly witty comedy built round the mother -in-law problem. Yet the Questors are meant to be actors rather than authors; and very little could be faulted in the section of the programme devoted to recitation. Resonant, impulsive renderings of the Harfleur harangue and Antony's soliloquy to Caesar's corpse; a sibilant, tittering Indian Iago; tense monologues from Williams and Pinter - these impressed. But did I, in an elsewhere most intelligent delivery of a Lawrence poem, hear "drawing" pronounced as "drawring"? Such elementary errors should have been corrected by now.

DOUGLAS MCVAY

**Student Group 14
February 1961**

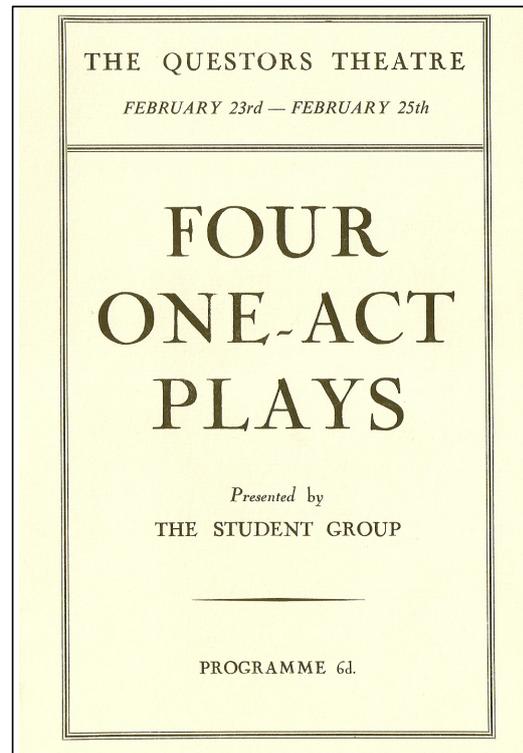
**THE LADY OF LARKSPUR LOTION
by Tennessee Williams**

**THE LOVE OF DON PERLIMPLIN
by Federico Lorca**

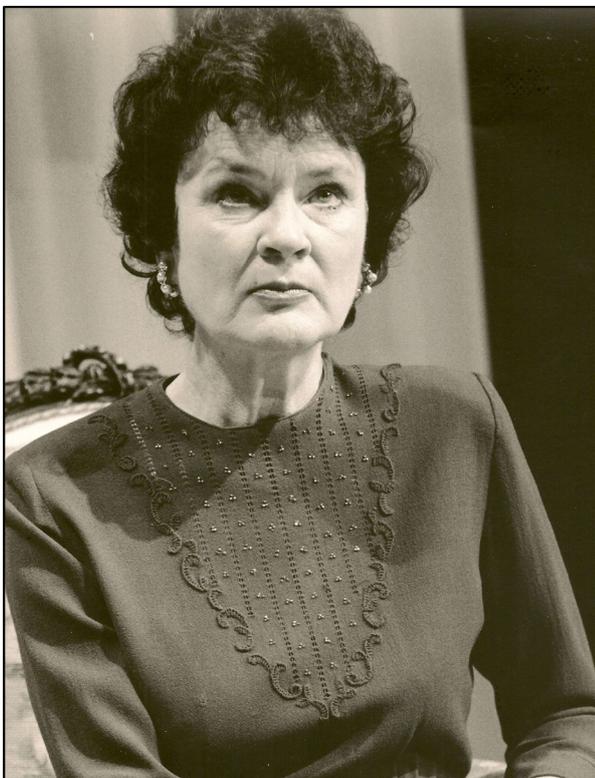
**PORTRAIT OF A MADONNA
by Tennessee Williams**

**THE SHEWING UP OF BLANCO
POSNET
by Bernard Shaw**

**Directed by Michael Hoddell,
with original music composed by
Ewart Vaughan Hopkins and
Sylvia Leeson**



**Monyene Kane in
THREE TALL WOMEN (2001)**



The casts of **Blanco Posnet** and **Portrait of a Madonna** included **Monyene Kane** from the first-year of Group 15. Apart from an appearance as a nymph in **The Tempest** (1960) this was Monyene's Questors début.

When she passed away in 2011, **David Emmet** wrote:

I have in front of me a record, written by **Alfred Emmet**, which tells me that on 6th September 1960, at 6.45 pm a girl called **Monyene Kane**, aged 16, came to The Questors and auditioned for the Student Group. That audition began a lifetime of involvement with the theatre. Alfred's record also tells me that he rated her the most outstandingly talented of all the applicants that year.

Monyene stayed with us for forty-six years making 55 appearances on our stage and will always live in our memories as a warm, affectionate and much-loved friend, as well as a great actress.

1. THE LADY OF LARKSPUR LOTION

by TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

Mrs. Hardwicke-Moore KARLA SHACKELL
 Mrs. Wire JO GREEN
 A Writer JOHN BEAVIS

Larkspur Lotion is a common treatment for body vermin which contains a high proportion of alcohol.

"Larkspur Lotion Blues" was specially composed for The Questors by Ewart Vaughan-Hopkins.

2. PORTRAIT OF A MADONNA

by TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

Miss Lucretia Collins LIAT SANDYS
 The Porter DEREK BROWN
 The Elevator Boy CLIVE WILLIAMS
 The Doctor VICTOR POMPINI
 The Nurse MONYENE KANE
 Mr. Abrams BARRY DAVIS

FIFTEEN-MINUTE INTERVAL

3. THE LOVE OF DON PERLIMPLIN

by FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA
 translated by GEORGE LEESON

Don Perlimplin BASHIR BADRUDDIN
 Marcolfa CAROL ADAMS
 Belisa FLORENCE COOPER
 1st Elf LIAT SANDYS
 2nd Elf CHARLES CONABERE

Songs specially composed for The Questors by SYLVIA LEESON

FIFTEEN-MINUTE INTERVAL

4. THE SHEWING-UP OF BLANCO POSNET

by GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Babsy JO GREEN
 Lottie MONYENE KANE
 Hannah LIAT SANDYS
 Jessie FLORENCE COOPER
 Emma FRANCES COOPER
 Sally ELAINE BANHAM
 Elder Daniels DEREK BROWN
 Blanco Posnet VICTOR POMPINI
 Strapper Kemp CLIVE WILLIAMS
 Squinty DAVID PLOSS
 Peter PETER WRIGLEY
 Feeny Evans KARLA SHACKELL
 The Sheriff JOHN BEAVIS
 Foreman of the Jury CHARLES CONABERE
 Nestor BARRY DAVIS
 Waggoner Jo BASHIR BADRUDDIN
 The Woman CAROL ADAMS

The plays produced by MICHAEL HODDELL

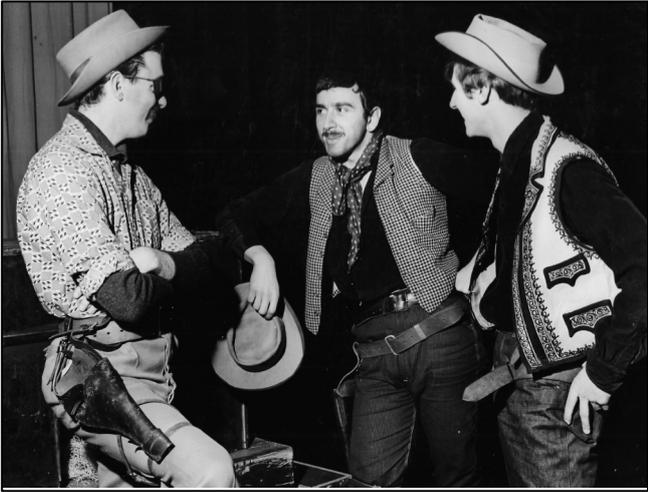
Sets designed by TONY CARRUTHERS

Stage Manager DAVID EVANS
 Deputy Stage Manager FRANCES MORRIS
 Assisted by TONY CARTER, DAVID ROBERTS, DENNIS ESTOP,
 BILL BARTLET, JANET LEWIS, RAY MORRIS
 Wardrobe PHYLLIS HARRIS, MAUREEN DRAPER
 Sets constructed in THE QUESTORS WORKSHOP
 Properties INGRID ADLER, ELIZABETH CARRUTHERS,
 JANE DAWS
 Lighting BRIAN LISHER,
 and JOHN WINDER
 Sound GRAHAM EVANS and JEAN GOUMEIN
 House Manager BILL COLLINS
 Theatre Manager RENA RICE

During the intervals light refreshments will be served in the
 Bernard Shaw Room

Smoking is not permitted in the Auditorium at any time. Will members
 wishing to smoke in the intervals, kindly use the Bernard Shaw Room

BOX OFFICE (6.30-8.00 p.m.) EALING 5184



**Student Group 14 in
THE SHEWING UP OF
BLANCO POSNET (above)
and
THE LADY OF LARKSPUR
LOTION (right)**

Middlesex County Times
3 March 1961

**Four Plays for the
price of one by
Questors student group**

Last week in Ealing, the Questors student group presented four short plays by distinguished authors. Tennessee Williams' "**The Lady of Larkspur Lotion**" and "**Portrait of Madonna**" are two moderately effective blueprints for Blanche DuBois.

At Mattock-lane the former, little more than a curtain-raiser, was chiefly notable for the atmospheric decor touch of the pink bar-sign glowing through the bedroom window, and Ewart Vaughan-Hopkins' melancholy "**Larkspur Lotion Blues**" jangling away on the piano offstage.

The latter, though, [ran?] longer and afforded Liat Sandys the chance of an inevitably compelling - if vocally somewhat limited - tour de force in the name-part.

Major Items

But the major items arrived with Lorca's "**The Love of Don Perlimplin**" and Shaw's "**The Shewing-Up of Blanco Posnet**": both comedies on tragic subjects. Why did the Lorca prove to be the most and the Shaw the least successful piece of the evening? Because, I think, it's easier to create a work in this vein if you're an essentially sombre dramatist than if you're a fundamentally witty one.

Admittedly, at his very best, GBS managed it in "**Man and Superman**." But "**Blanco Posnet**" is far from his best. The dangers inherent in the idea of a satirical "Oxbow incident" become explicit with the jarring introduction amidst the impudent Shavianisms of a wholly poignant figure, a woman who's child has died.

In such circumstances, neither a lively production nor Karla Shackell's assured cameo of a tough Wild West floozy could quite save the day.

Graver moods

In "**Perlimplin**" by contrast, the graver moods of "**Blood Wedding**" and "**Bernarda Alba**" are always discernible, first the sexual desire, expressed in engagingly Rabelaisian humour; then the tragedy expressed in a kind of pathetic Guignol masquerade. And throughout, there is poetry, lyrical richness of language.

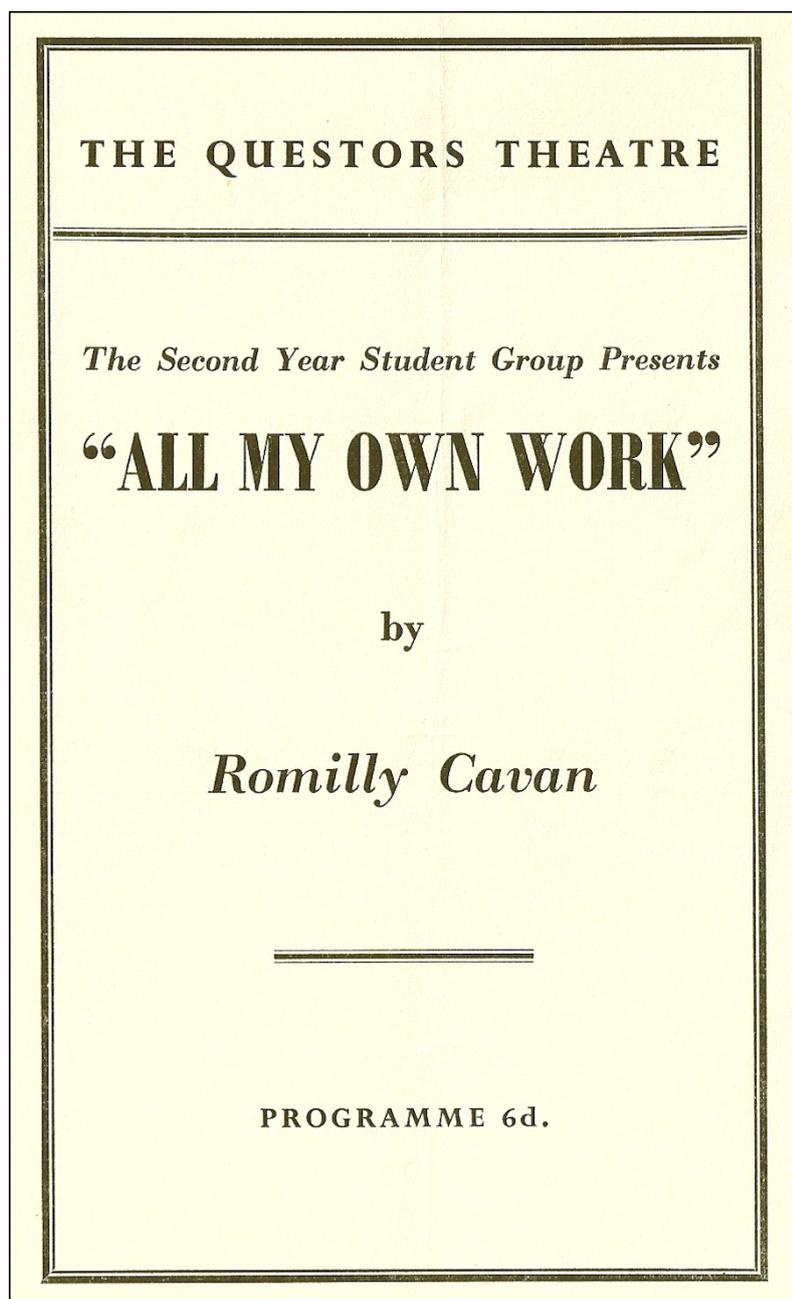
Michael Hoddell and Tony Carruthers (director and set designer for the entire quartet) were here especially sensitive; while unquestionably the night's finest performance came from Bashir Badruddin as the old grandee who peacefully commits suicide on realising he cannot satisfy his passionate young wife.

Mr Badruddin, squinting, hobbling, clucking and chuckling, or else simply standing alone towards the end, nodding his head and crooning to himself "The trees all fall and die with love" was unerringly funny and sad.

Jo Green contributed a sharp sketch of wily matchmaking; and as for Florence Cooper as the bride, one could really believe in her "blushing like a geranium."

**Student Group 14
July 1961**

ALL MY OWN WORK



Although the County Times reviewer didn't reckon much on the play he was impressed by "the exotic **Bashir Badrudin**, with his tensely mannered prowling, growling and scowling: and **Veronica Castang**, with her dark mop of hair, slanted black-button eyes, and plump-muzzled, cheery - chirping mouth."

No mention however was made of new (non-student) acting member **Alan Chambers** who here made his third Questors appearance, his first two having been a few weeks earlier in the **New Plays Festival**. Apparently working with the students didn't put him off and he hung around Questors being absolutely indispensable as actor, director, board member, bar chairman, poet, drinking companion and beloved friend (and lots more) for the next sixty years!

The Middlesex County Times
29 July 1961

**THE QUESTORS DISAPPOINT
AT END-OF-SEASON**

Strive though one may to be charitable, the fact remains that the last two plays at The Questors Theatre, Ealing, have generated—in their pretentious phoniness of content, pseudo-poetic banality of style, and crippling lack (in every sense) of wit - a tedium bordering on the paralytic.

A month or so ago the Galaxy Theatre Club treated us to a piece by William Atkinson called "Blue-Eyed Boy Under the Snow" which concerned a solemnly hairy Canadian farmer, his dead idiot son, a condescending parson sporting the fanciest silver-grey sideboards you ever did see, and a few handy agricultural hints on slitting the stomachs of bloated cows.

Now the Questors' second-year student group has chosen to inflict on its audiences an offering by Romilly Cavan, hopefully entitled "**All My Own Work**," in which the chief characters are a maddeningly quasi-philosophical Irish loafer, an even more maddeningly whimsical English lady, a dreary high-class family, and a still drearier collection of low-class Beats.

One saving grace

The only saving grace of the evening was the chance to watch again the most gifted Young Questors discoveries of the past couple of years: the exotic Bashir Badrudin, with his tensely mannered prowling, growling and scowling: and Veronica Castang, with here dark mop of hair, slanted black-button eyes, and plump-muzzled, cheery - chirping mouth.

But Mr Badrudin's role here didn't match in opportunity that of Lorca's Dom Perlimplin. And Miss Castang's

performance as a good-hearted popsie (clever, funny and charming as it was) never quite reached the comic heights of her recent impersonation of a chair-ridden old woman, striving feverishly forward in her seat with a fixed gaze of greed and croaking the magic word "Money!" at the news of a financial windfall. (This, too, was due to the limitations of the part.)

Season ends

With this production, the Questors close their current season. Its undoubted highlight has been Alfred Emmet's superbly-acted staging of Tennessee Williams' "**The Glass Menagerie**," followed by "The Love of Don Perlimplin" and Peter Philip's extraordinarily professional "**A Quiet Clap of Thunder**" as runners-up.

Next season's programme is scheduled to include Graham Greene's "**The Living Room**," Osborne and Creighton's "**Epitaph for George Dillon**," Shakespeare's "**Henry IV Part 1**," Pirandello's "**The Rules of The Game**," Arthur Miller's "**Death of a Salesman**" and Aristophanes' "**Lysistrata**." A rich prospect.

THE CAST

Victoria Verity CAROL ADAMS
 Mike Duffy VICTOR POMPINI
 Joe DEREK BROWN
 Steven Channer JOHN BEAVIS
 Rebecca KARLA SHACKELL
 Pansy VERONICA CASTANG
 Jimmy Taylor BASHIR BADRUDIN
 Man in a Bowler Hat BARRY DAVIS
 Adrian, Lord Columbell MAX LAWRIE
 Caroline Chesney ELIZABETH MEAD
 Marigold Chesney JO GREEN
 Ernst ALAN CHAMBERS

The play produced by MICHAEL HODDELL

The action takes place in
 a cellar beneath a derelict
 house in Mayfair.

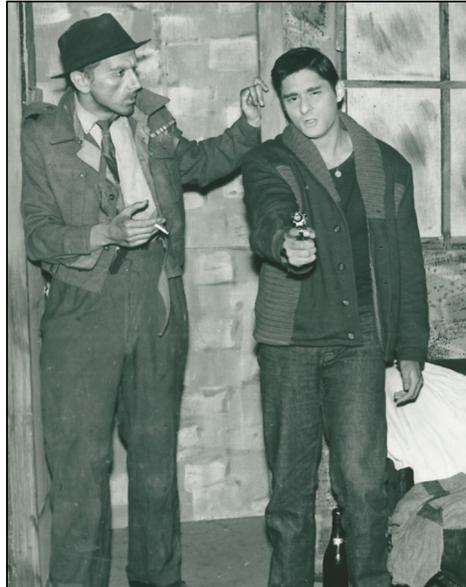
ACT ONE ... Morning
 ACT TWO ... Afternoon
 ACT THREE ... Night

There will be two intervals of
 15 minutes between the acts.

The Setting designed by RON CARTER
 Constructed by TONY CARTER and
 FRED CANN
 assisted by DAVID ROBERTS and
 ALAN CHAMBERS
 Stage Manager DAVID EVANS
 Deputy Stage Manager TONY CARTER
 assisted by ELIZABETH CARRUTHERS, VERONICA TURNER, JOAN
 BARACLOUGH, INGRID ADLER, SANDRA TURNER,
 and JANETTE GATESHILL
 Sound GRAHAM EVANS and JEFFERY GOULD
 Lighting JOHN WINDER and DAVID INNES
 Wardrobe Supervision PHYLLIS HARRIS and JACQUELINE LEARNER
 Theatre Manager RENA RICE

Smoking is not permitted in the Auditorium at any time. Will
 members wishing to smoke in the intervals kindly use the Bernard
 Shaw Room.

BOX OFFICE (6.30-8.00 p.m.) EAL 5184



**Student Group 14 in
ALL MY OWN WORK**

STUDENT GROUP 15 (1960-1962)

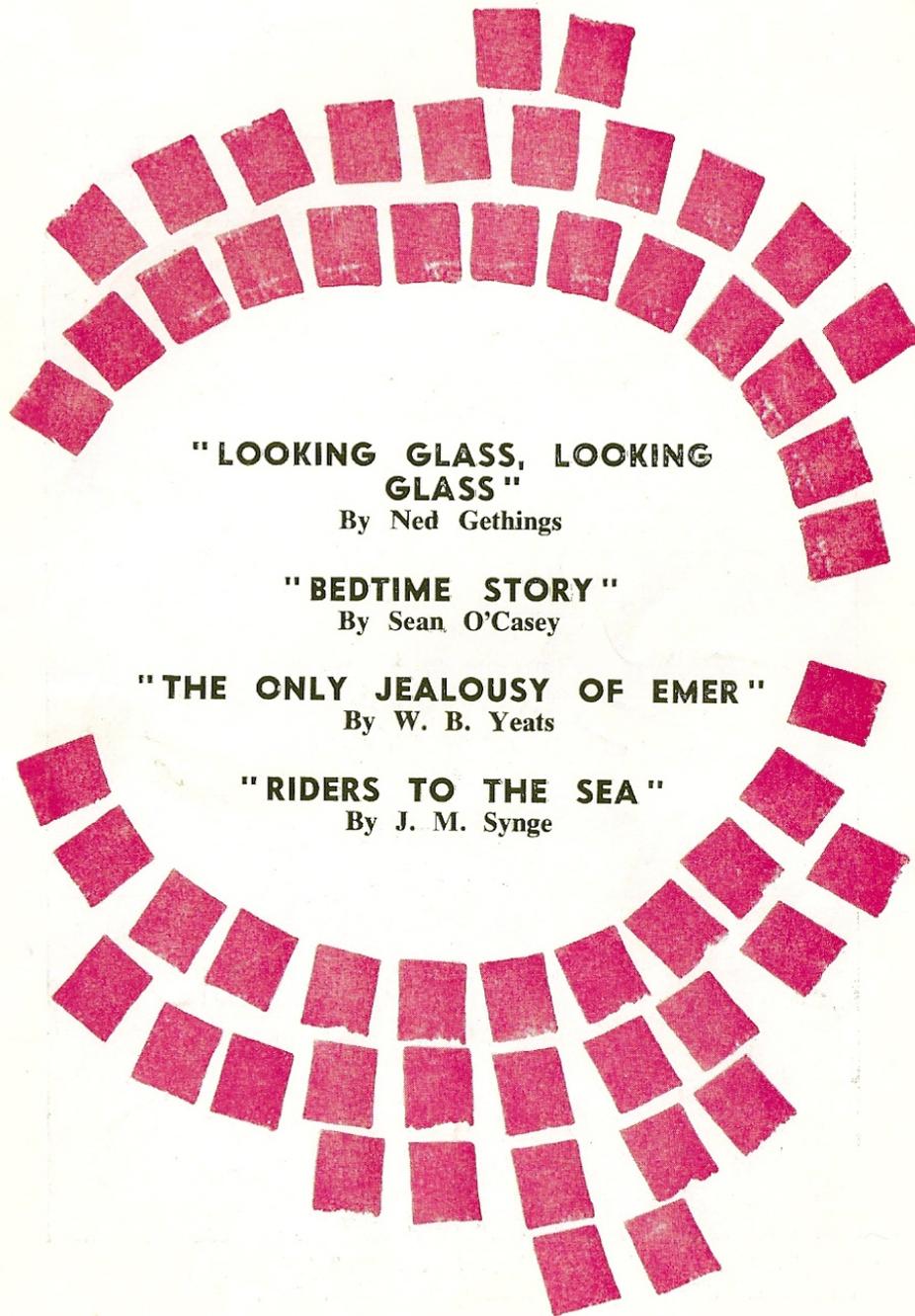
Unfortunately there are no production photos for Group 15, but we do have these photos of a group session with them and Group 16 first-year students in a class with **Alfred Emmet** and **Michael Hoddell**.



**Student Group 15
February 1962**

FOUR ONE ACT PLAYS

62



**"LOOKING GLASS, LOOKING
GLASS"**
By Ned Gethings

"BEDTIME STORY"
By Sean O'Casey

"THE ONLY JEALOUSY OF EMER"
By W. B. Yeats

"RIDERS TO THE SEA"
By J. M. Synge

the questors theatre

commencing feb. 8

programme 6d.

Stage Manager : Tony Carter

Deputy Stage Manager : David Evans

Assisted by Jillyann Metcalfe, Cleo Wrighton, Odette Bery and Brian Horry

Wardrobe Mistress : Phyllis Harris

Set constructed by : Tony Carter

Properties : Joan Barracrough

Assisted by Rosemary Aveline, Sally Lupton, Estelle Hampton and
Maureen Walsh

Lighting : John Winder

Assisted by David Innes and Michael Langridge

Sound : Graham Evans

Assisted by Michael Cartwright

House Manager : George Stubbs

Theatre Manager : Rena Rice

Spinning Wheel by London School of Weaving

Oilskins by Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Mirrors by Hanwell Glass Company

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FOR THE WEEK EVERY THURSDAY

"LOOKING GLASS, LOOKING GLASS"

By NED GETHINGS

MATHILDA PAT GOTTLIEB
ELLEN SUSAN TYLOR
SISTER IBAR BARBARA LONDON
NURSE EVANS MARION MYNARD
BETTY ELAINE BANHAM

The action takes place in a nursing home for old ladies

FIVE MINUTE INTERVAL

"BEDTIME STORY"

By SEAN O'CASEY

JOHN JO MULLIGAN, a clerk MAX LAWRIE
ANGELA NIGHTINGALE, a gay lass MARIA RITCHIE
DANIEL HALIBUT, also a clerk VICTOR POMPINI
MISS MOSSIE, a very respectable lodging-house keeper MONYENE KANE
A POLICEMAN DAVID PLOSS
A DOCTOR JOHN BEAVIS
A NURSE JENNIFER BROWN

The Scene : A bachelor flat in Dublin. The Time : 1921

FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERVAL, during which coffee will be served

"THE ONLY JEALOUSY OF EMER"

By W. B. YEATS

EMER, a queen BARBARA LONDON
EITHNE, the king's mistress MARION MYNARD
A WOMEN OF THE SIDHE ELAINE BANHAM
THE FIGURE OF CUCHULAIN, the king JOHN BEAVIS
THE GHOST OF CUCHULAIN DAVID PLOSS
CHORUS WYLIE LONGMORE and BRIAN HARRY
MUSICIAN RICHARD CHESTER

The action takes place in a small Irish kingdom during the tenth century.
The Sidhe are the inhabitants of the world under the sea

Music composed by Christopher Willshire

FIVE MINUTES INTERVAL

"RIDERS TO THE SEA"

By J. M. SYNGE

NORA MARIA RITCHIE
CATHLEEN MONYENE KANE
MAURYA SUSAN TYLOR
EARTLEY DAVID PLOSS

OLD MEN AND WOMEN

The scene is a remote fisher's hut on the West Coast of Ireland

"The Only Jealousy of Emer" produced by Bashir Badruddin. The other three plays produced by Michael Hoddell. The sets designed by Mary Anderson.

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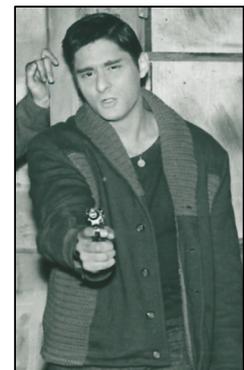
The Testimony of Michael Langridge
(An Extract from Questopics, July 1968)



I turned the wind machine with my left hand delicately varying the speed of revolution to prevent the contraption sounding too much like a coffee grinder and more like the phenomenon it was intended to create. My right hand had a piece of cotton around one finger which was attached to an insignificant fishing net draped over two poles out on the stage, and by jerking my arm every now and again I could flap the net in full view of the audience in order to convince them that the dreadful sound emanating from the wings was indeed a light to moderate gale. Whilst I was attempting to synchronise my grindings with my flappings I had to let forth the muted cry of a man drowning in the sea three miles away, a sound almost impossible to produce when one's arms are flailing around like something possessed.

This sequence of events occurred during my first year as a Questors student and I was assisting backstage on the second year student group One Act Plays. The contortions described above were part of the sound plot for "**RIDERS TO THE SEA**" by J. M. SYNGE, and on the second night I over enthusiastically jerked my arm, resulting in chaos. The fishing net nearly came off its poles and finished in a horizontal position as if it were frozen stiff. To justify this rather sudden freak weather I turned the wind machine like a dervish, furiously trying to hide my mistake, only succeeding in making a noise like ten coffee grinders. At this point in the proceedings the cotton broke from the extreme tension and the net gracefully collapsed on the stage taking two of the cast with it. I had sufficient presence of mind to cease the operation of the wind machine and at the time noted a distinct sigh of relief from the audience, who, I was later to learn, had not heard a single line since the curtain went up. Perhaps this was the reason why the programme had me listed as '*lighting assistant*'.

Bashir Badruddin (right) from Group 14 directed "**The Only Jealousy of Emer**" which **Douglas McVay** in the County Times (See next page) thought "*was nicely directed... with lots of fierce masks and dancing and music; and Mr Badruddin gave a nice performance as well; stripped to the waist, spitting real saliva, and hissing and snickering splendidly. But despite the saliva, I'm afraid that the play itself was...very dull; even duller than **Mr Gethings***"



Ned Gethings' "dull" play "**Looking Glass, Looking Glass**" was the third of Ned's plays to be premiered by a Student Group. Ned was in good company though, because according to McVay, the duller play of all was J M Synge's "**Riders to the Sea**" in which "the fishers' wives in black coats... kept up a continuous wordless moaning, the sort of sound the Luton Girls' Choir might produce when tuning up at a rehearsal." The only play McVay had a good thing to say about was O'Casey's "**Bedtime Story**" which he found "loose and light-hearted and laughable."

The four plays had an undeniably Irish flavour (which I think Mr McVay had difficulties with, much as he had difficulty with Dylan Thomas's Welshness but that hadn't been the original intention. The fourth play was to have been "**The Damask Drum**" by **Yukio Mishima**, a modern day version of a traditional 14 century Japanese Noh Play. The cost

of the performance licence was too much, sadly, and "Riders to the Sea" was chosen at the last minute to replace it. The students must have already put in a good amount of work on the Japanese play, though, because a few days later they gave a "representation" of it before an invited audience alongside a presentation by Vincent McQueen's Schools Company.

The Damask Drum was eventually performed by Student Group 20 in 1967.

Middlesex County Times

17 February 1962

FOURTH PLAY WAS WORTH THE OTHER THREE TOGETHER!

Once upon a time, there were four little one-act plays. All written by Irishmen, which the Questors Theatre student group presented at Mattock-lane, Ealing. The first play was called "**Looking Glass, Looking Glass,**" by Ned Gethings. It took place in a home for the aged, and the characters included a demented old lady; her faithful companion Ellen; a calm, wise, nun; and a somewhat less calm and wise young nurse. It was very simple, and serious and sad. But it was also very dull.

The second play was called "**The Only Jealousy of Emer,**" by W B Yeats. It took place in a small Irish kingdom during the tenth century, and the characters included a king, his queen, his mistress and his ghost.

It was nicely directed by Bashir Badruddin, with lots of fierce masks and dancing and music; and Mr Badruddin gave a nice performance as well; stripped to the waist, spitting real saliva, and hissing and snickering splendidly.

But despite the saliva, I'm afraid that the play itself was once more very dull; even duller than Mr Gethings.

Fishers' wives in black

The third play was called "**Riders to the Sea,**" by J M Synge. It took place in a remote fisher's hut on the West Coast of Ireland; and the characters included a great many remote fishers' wives in black clothes, not forgetting the odd corpse.

The wives made a great many speeches like "Faith and begob, but I can still hear the wind whistling up the creek as it did on the night I buried my eight husband, Patrick the Daft".

In between these, they kept up a continuous wordless moaning, the sort of sound the Luton Girls' Choir might produce when tuning up at a rehearsal.

But alas, this play too was very dull — perhaps the dullest of the three.

"Bedtime story"

Now, however, we come to the fourth play, which was called "**Bedtime Story,**" by Sean O'Casey. It took place in a bachelor flat in Dublin, and the characters included John Jo Milligan (a clerk), Angela Nightingale ("a gay lass"), Daniel Halibut (another clerk), and Miss Mossie ("a very respectable lodging-house keeper).

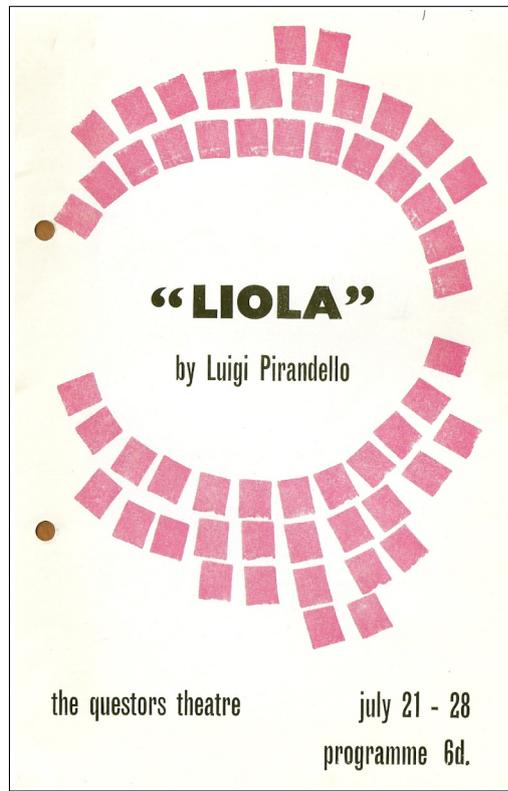
This play, unlike Miss Mossie and the other plays, wasn't very respectable at all. But again unlike the others, neither was it very dull.

Instead it was loose and light-hearted and laughable, with Max Lawrie extremely funny in plus-fours and trilby as John Jo the conscience-stricken Catholic sinner, and Maria Ritchie extremely sly and sexy in shirt and sweater as the mercenary Nightingale bird he sins with. It was, in fact, worth the other three plays put together.

DOUGLAS McVAY

**Student Group 15
July 1962**

LIOLA



This was the first Student production in **the Studio**, and the first (as far as I know) in the round. **Douglas McVay** in the County Times was as colourful as ever in his description of the play as "*one of those earthy Mediterranean sagas of lust, compounded of pride, peasant roundelays and periodic familiarities, interspersed by an occasional plea to the Holy*

The Middlesex County Times
28 July 1962

**QUESTORS BREAK UP FOR THE
SUMMER HOLIDAY**

STILL persevering with Pirandello, the Questors have closed their present season with a student production (which ends tonight) of "**Liola**."

This is one of those earthy Mediterranean sagas of lust, compounded of pride, peasant roundelays and periodic familiarities, interspersed by an occasional plea to the Holy Virgin.

It takes, like Richard Murdoch's radio sets, a very long time to warm up; and even then one suspects that only a Lorca could

really have brought it to proper boiling-point.

Yet there are thankfully none of the quasi-philosophical pretensions of "The Rules of the Game."

Candid Romeo

From time to time, the pervasive atmosphere of hypocrisy and internecine village strife achieves a rancid force: expressed with particular clarity, under director Michael Hoddell, by Maria Ritchie and Monyene Kane as a bitter mother and daughter, and by Victor Pompini as the cynically candid local Romeo.

Looking back over "l'annee dernière à Mattock-lane," the impression is of a good, if not a vintage year: True nothing' has

Stage Manager : David Evans
 Deputy Stage Manager : Graham Evans

Assistant Stage Managers :
 Winifred Frazer, Ingrid Adler, Wylife Longmore

Lighting by : John Winder

Assisted by : Mick Langridge

Sound by : Graham Evans

Assisted by : John Turner

Properties : Joan Barraclough

Assisted by :

Rosemary Areline and Joan Saunders

Construction by :

John Turner, Mick Langridge and Wylife Longmore

Wardrobe by : Joan Pyle

House Manager : George Stubbs

Theatre Manager : Rena Rice

During the fifteen-minute intervals, light refreshments will be served in the Bernard Shaw Room

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"LIOLA"

By LUIGI PIRENDELLO (trans. FREDERICK MAY)

CAST :

Liola	VICTOR POMPINI
Zio Simone (a landowner)	DEREK BROWN
Zia Croce (his cousin)	MARIA RITCHIE
Tuzza (her daughter)	MONTYNE KANE
Mita (Simone's wife)	BARBARA LONDON
Comare Gesa (Mita's aunt)	ELAINE BANHAM
a Moscardina	SUSAN TYLOR
Zia Ninfa (Liola's mother)	PAT GOTTLIEB
Cuizza	GILLIAN KERSWELL
Luzza	SONIA DOWDEN
Nela	WENDY JOLLY
Tinino	BRIDGET EVANS
Calicchio	HAZEL SMITH
Pallino	FRANCES CANNON

PRODUCTION MICHAEL HODDELL

Set design JOHN ROLFE

Music composition EWART VAUGHAN HOPKINS

The Children appear by kind permission of Miss Evelyne Vaughan

The action takes place in southern Sicily, early in the present century

ACT ONE : The courtyard at Zia Croce's house

ACT TWO : Zia Gesa's garden

ACT THREE : The courtyard at Zia Croce's house

There will be a Fifteen Minute Interval between Each Act



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provided an experience as memorable as "**The Birthday Party**" in 1959 or "The Glass Menagerie" in 1960.

But sufficient of note remain for me to feel justified in refuting the recent view by Mr. James Saunders that I find the theatre a bore.

Mr. Saunders must have misread my report on the Questors' New Plays Festival. It is not the theatre I found tedious, but his contribution to it on this occasion.

Not boredom

Boredom was certainly not my reaction in previous months, to the performances of Paul Imbusch, Ffrangcon Price and Rachele Ellis in John Clemow's staging of "**The Living Room**"; the cameos of Tony Worth in "**Epitaph for George Dillon**" and Charles Marowitz's uniformly well-acted production of "**Death of a Salesman**"; John Howard's Falstaff in Alfred Emmet's rumbustious production of "**Henry IV, Part I**"; the "**Temperance Quartet**" in the evening of Christmas Victoriana; Kenneth Conington's Rakitin in "**A Month in the Country**"; Max Lawrie and Miss Ritchie in O'Casey's "**Bedtime Story**"; Jo Arundel, Laurence Nixon and Lawrence Irvin in Michael Almaz's mounting - mounting, indeed—of "**Lysistrata**"; and Mr. Imbusch, Betty Ogden, Dorothy Boyd-Taylor and others in Barbara Hutchins' version of "**Pygmalion**." (Not to mention the Abse double-bill).

DOUGLAS McVAY.

The Stage
26 July 1962

Pirandello Not at His Best

The première of Frederick May's translation of Luigi Pirandello's "**Liola**" was given by the second-year students at the Questors last Saturday under the direction of Michael Hoddell, who took advantage of the Italian courtyard setting to present the play in the round.

Unfortunately, neither Pirandello nor his translator had created a work suitable for this form of staging, and Mr Hoddell missed some of the opportunities there were for presenting it in this way. As a result, the audience instead of feeling "involved" - the doubtful benefit extolled by promoters of this type of presentation - felt distinctly excluded.

The work, which is very far from being one of Pirandello's best, did not inspire one to paroxysms of regret for anything that was being missed, for the tale of a lady-killer devoted to repopulating his little quarter of Italy, and a family-conscious old man who was unable to rival him in this respect, is intended to be a minor tragedy with comical moments. Unfortunately it only succeeds in being rather banal. There were notable performances from Victor Pompini as Liola and Barbara London and Monyene Kane as his current mistresses.

L.G.S.



This production featured strong performances from **Monyene Kane** and **Vic Pompini**, as well as a young **Gillian Kerswell**, who made a guest appearance as a peasant girl.

Gillian's story doesn't really begin until the following September when she joined the first year of Group 17, but here is a picture of her in the Junior Drama Workshop ca 1961.

STUDENT GROUP 16 (1961-1963)



This was a vintage group having amongst its members the following luminaries: **Rachel Emmet, Estelle Hampton, Jillyann Healy, Michael Langridge, Wylie Longmore, Jo Phelps** and **John Turner**

Student Group 16 February 1963

THREE ONE ACT PLAYS

THE QUESTORS THEATRE

MATTOCK LANE

EALING 5184

28th February - 2nd March

STUDENT GROUP ONE-ACT PLAYS

Night Time for the Birds

by

Colin Finbow

Double Double

by

James Saunders

Painting on Wood

by

Ingmar Bergman

"NIGHT TIME FOR THE BIRDS"

By COLIN FINBOW

ELSIE ESTELLE HAMPTON
KATE SUSAN TYLOR
JACK MICHAEL CARTWRIGHT
MAVIS MARY HOLLAND
THE BOY JOHN McANDREW

The action takes place in a dockside café

FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERVAL

"DOUBLE DOUBLE"

By JAMES SAUNDERS

GRUNGE—A Driver } WYLIE LONGMORE
PUMFRET—His Conductor }
NELLIE—Cook } WINIFRED FRASER
LILIAN—Gimlet's Conductress }
FRAN—Sweeper-up and Kitchen hand }
IRIS—Bert Dagg's Conductress } RACHEL EMMET
INSPECTOR }
BERT DOGG—Driver } JOHN TURNER
NIMROD—Driver } MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
GIMLET—Driver }

The scene is set in a busmen's canteen

FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERVAL

"A PAINTING ON WOOD"

By INGMAR BERGMAN (translated by Paul Britten Austin)

THE KNIGHT MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
JOHN JOHN TURNER
THE GIRL ESTELLE HAMPTON
THE WITCH MARY HOLLAND
THE SMITH MICHAEL CARTWRIGHT
LISA CLEO WRIGHTON
THE ACTOR WYLIE LONGMORE
MARIA RACHEL EMMET
KARIN WINIFRED FRASER

The play takes place in Sweden in the XIV Century

The plays are produced by MICHAEL HODDELL

Assistant producer SUSAN TYLOR

Sets designed by JOHN ROLFE

Stage Manager : David Evans

Deputy Stage Manager : Ann Conheeny

Assisted by : Earl Lord and Angela Kalagias

Wardrobe Mistress : Joan Pyle

Set constructed by : John Rolfe

Properties : Rita Frost

Assisted by : Graham Cherry

Lighting : John Winder

Assisted by : Christopher O'Lude

Sound : Graham Evans

Assisted by : Michael Davis

House Manager : Wat Tyler

Theatre Manager : Rena Rice

Sound track recorded by Denis Comper

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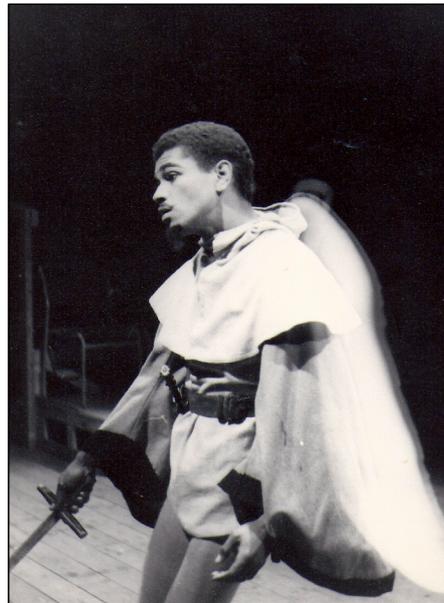
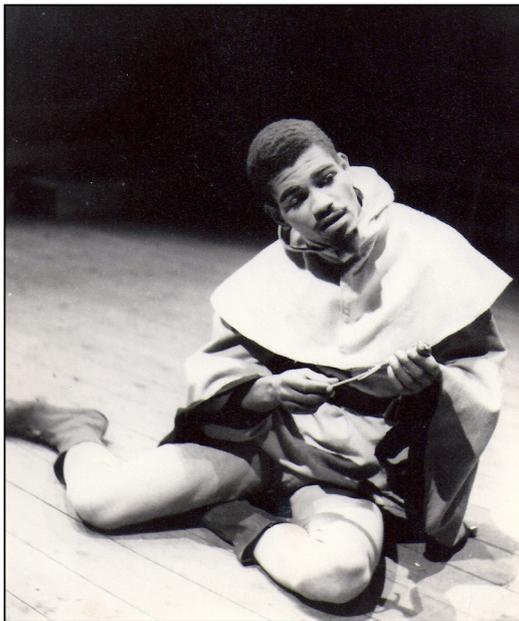
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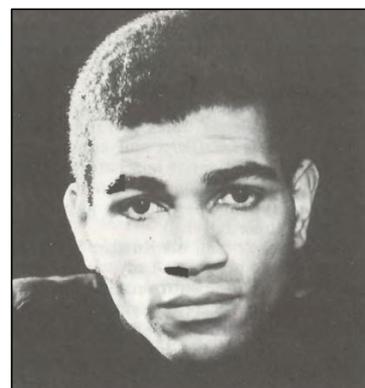




**Student Group 16
in
PAINTING ON
WOOD**



Wylie Longmore left a lasting impression at The Questors, not only for his remarkable performances in these and the next year's student plays, but for being an inspiration to the young Questors groups which he ran for a while after leaving the student group, and even for taking on Group 23 second-year students as director in 1970. He was also instrumental in setting up these precious archives without which we would be unable to share so many memories.



The Brentford and Chiswick Times

8 March 1963

**Quick-change studies by
Questors' students**

JAMES SAUNDERS, author of "**Next Time I'll Sing to You**," has a wonderful idea in his one-act play, "**Double Double**," which the Questors' students put on at the weekend. Set in a busmen's canteen, it has ten characters, who are constantly going in and out in such a way that they can be shared by half that number of actors, each playing two parts. Thus not only do we have a highly piquant situation but a rare opportunity is given for quick-change characterisation.

The play has been broadcast, under the title, "**Gimlet**," with each part played individually. The Questors themselves have given it to schools in this manner, but it must inevitably have lost much of its point.

The dialogue, consisting of arguments over the food, schedules, and women who hail buses with umbrellas from the wrong side of the road, is always racy and often very funny.

There are a coloured driver and his conductor who are constantly chasing one another but never meet. As one of them says: "You would think he was trying to avoid me." Since the pair are played by the same actor it would, of course, be impossible for them to meet!

There is an inspector who has lost a bus. The driver has inadvertently tried to pass under a low-level bridge and sliced off the top, "so we now have an open-top double decker bus." When the driver eventually

arrives it is our old friend the inspector surprisingly rejuvenated.

* * *

THE standard of acting showed what can be done with young people when given interesting characters to portray and good dialogue to speak. We were particularly impressed by Michael Langridge who doubled the parts of Nimrod, an old driver who lives on sausages and mash, and the sour young Gimlet, who drives at 40 miles an hour and hates everybody.

But it seems invidious to single out anyone where all contributed so much to the team. Wylie Longmore played the two coloured men who spend their time dodging one another, John Turner was the grumbling inspector, and Bert Dogg, the driver who collides with the bridge, Winifred Fraser was the cook, for ever threatening to give notice, and Gimlet's reproachful conductress, and Rachel Emmet was the kitchen maid and Bert's poor little shocked teammate.

**The Middlesex County Times and
Gazette**

9 March 1963

**TWO GOOD PLAYS OUT OF THREE
AT QUESTORS**

COLIN FINBOW'S "**Night Time for the Birds**" (the first of the three one-act plays presented last week by the Questors student group at Mattock-lane, Ealing) is a pocket version of "**Look Back in Anger**," but without the social frustration, warmth, humour, or compassion.

It devotes itself to a uniquely unpleasant husband's tormenting of his faded wife and retarded son, prior to going off with a

brassily shallow girl (a clever, accurate performance by Mary Holland).

Pet caterpillars

From the moment that the cretinous boy lurches on-stage to tenderly feed his pet caterpillars, we know that before the end his father is bound to pour hot water on them.

Mr. Finbow's curious attempt at giving the brute a final pang of conscience comes, needless to say, far too late to be credible or to redeem the nasty little, opus.

After this, James Saunders' "**Double Double**" appeared even more humanely levelheaded than it was. During lunch-hour in a busmen's canteen, drivers and conductors, inspectors and kitchen-staff exchange domestic and romantic anecdotes, hopes and disenchantments, in a realistic flow of colloquial, serio-comic dialogue.

Range of wit

Mr. Saunders's wit ranges from the seemingly obvious statement which proves to be otherwise (" Watch my sandwiches, will you ?" " Why, what are they going to do?"), through malapropism "consummation" instead of "conservation") and double-entendre (a monologue on the pleasures of "sausage and mash"), to unconscious irony ("Don't you call me a left-winger: I'll complain to my Union about you") and cheerful vulgarity (a discussion on lavatories and the unreliability of the bladder).

None of this may be especially original, little of it downright hilarious; and the author typically lets the talk run on a bit too long. But most of it is decidedly agreeable : the character of the depressed young

driver Gimlet (well played by Michael Langridge), and his closing scene with the girl-friend, with whom he somehow can't make contact, introduce a balancing note of equally authentic melancholy; and all in all, this is a much happier achievement than the same writer's portentously inflated, fashionably overrated "**Next Time I'll Sing To You.**"

Virtuoso chances

Lastly, there was Ingmar Bergman's "**A Painting on Wood**" (which inspired his Seventh Seal"). The characteristic, ostensibly medieval, but in fact urgently contemporary parable of religious faith and doubt in a menacing world is less clearly and grippingly conceived here than in the film.

But it still afforded some virtuoso chances to the cast: in particular, Mary Holland (again) as the witch reliving her own burning, and Wylie Longmore bringing a coolly sardonic, balletic dash to the Pirandellian actor's self-analytical soliloquy. And Michael Hoddell's production (as in the companion-pieces) had quiet competence.

DOUGLAS McVAY

**Student Group 16
July 1963**

DOUBLE BILL



"THESE CORNFIELDS"
By GEORGES COURTELINE
Translated by Lewis Galantière
and
"ANTIGONE"
By JEAN ANOUILH
Translated by Eric Bentley

the questors theatre
mattock lane, ealing

July 13, to
July 20, 1963
programme 6d.

Note that the translators on the programme should have read :
THESE CORNFIELDS translated by **Eric Bentley**
ANTIGONE translated by **Lewis Galantiere**

1963

THE QUESTORS STUDENT GROUP present

"ANTIGONE"

By JEAN ANOUILH

Chorus	WYLIE LONGMORE
Creon	MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
Haemon	ROBERT CUSHMAN
First Guard	JOHN TURNER
Second Guard	GRAHAM CHERRY
Third Guard	MICHAEL DAVIS
Messenger	EARLE LEWIS
Antigone	MARY HOLLAND
Nurse	WINIFRED FRASER
Ismene	ESTELLE HAMPTON
Eurydice	CLEO WRIGHTON
Page	FRANCES CANNON

fifteen minute interval

"THESE CORNFIELDS"

By GEORGES COURTELINE

Herring	WYLIE LONGMORE
Mrs. Cornfield	CLEO WRIGHTON
Mr. Cornfield	JOHN TURNER
Felicity	ESTELLE HAMPTON

The plays are produced by MICHAEL HODDELL

Sets designed by JOHN ROLFE

Stage Manager : Jenny Pettit
Deputy Stage Manager : Ann Strong

Assisted by :

Sonia Dowden, Christopher O'Lude and Donald Clark

Wardrobe Mistress : Marjorie Golsby

Assisted by : Hilda Collins

Set Constructed by : John Rolfe

Properties : Rita Frost

Assisted by : Iris Phelips

Lighting by : John Winder

Assisted by : John Ferguson

Sound : Graham Evans

Assistant Sound : Michael Edgerton

House Manager : George Stubbs

Theatre Administrator : Owen Sunridge

During the construction of the new theatre building all productions will be given in the Constantin Strauslowsky Room.

26 July :—

NEW THEATRE BUILDING YEAR DRAW

14 September :

Opening Night

"THE ROUGH AND READY LOT"—Alun Owen

22-27 September :

STEPHEN JOSEPH'S COMPANY

28 September :

MUSIC GROUP EVENING

29 September :

FILM GROUP EVENING

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The main feature of this summer's Second Year Student production is the performance of Anouilh's version of the *Antigone*. This modern version of the timeless Greek legend was written during the Nazi occupation of France and reflects the turmoil and conflicts of that time. The content and style of the play is admirably suited to younger actors and the present group of students should provide an interesting and stimulating evening's drama.

As an after piece they are performing a short farcical comedy from the French produced to mirror the contemporary American 'occupation' of England.

This is the last production of the 1962-3 season, and the final production for these students, many of whom will shortly become members of the main acting group. For two years they have worked towards this goal, to assist them in their final efforts they need your support.

Please make every effort to come.

The Middlesex County Council

**MODERN CLASSICISM
BRINGS SEASON
TO A CLOSE**

THE last production of the current Questors season is a double-bill mounted by the student group, which ends its Mattock-lane run on July 20: the major item in this programme being Jean Anouilh's "**Antigone**."

Anouilh's piece belongs to a recent Gallic theatrical tradition of modernised classical literature and legend. It also belongs to

another Gallic tradition of intellectualised emotion: shared in drama by writers from other countries (Shaw, Pirandello, Brecht, Eliot, Arthur Miller, John Arden, to name just a few instances of varying nature and stature.

Tragic conflict

The example of classical literature modernised here is Sophocles's play about a girl who condemns herself to death through an irresistible, immovable instinct of family loyalty. This story concerns what may fairly be termed one of the two or three genuinely tragic

themes in life and art: the conflict of love and duty.

Anouilh, in his contemporary version, not only retells the story, but uses it as an opportunity to deliver an incidental lecture on the particular tragic theme it illustrates.

The best parts of the retelling (Antigone's early speeches to her sister, her lover and her nurse) are among the most austere poignant scenes that the author has ever created.

But in the speeches given to the nurse, to Creon and above all to the guards, Anouilh's desire to intellectualise leads him (like the other dramatists of this detached, alienation-effect school) into passages of colloquialism which risk provoking unsuitable moments of laughter.

Validity limited

And while the lecture side of the text (the Chorus's soliloquies) is admirably cogent and powerful, its validity and significance are limited by the ultimate restrictions in the love-and-duty theme itself. This theme (the natural one for the French modernisers to explore, since deriving simultaneously from certain Greek plays and Corneille) is indeed genuinely tragic. But to me at least, it is neither (as Anouilh appears to suggest) the most, nor in fact the sole, tragic theme in dramaturgy.

Anouilh curiously (conveniently?) ignores the second great (in my view greater) basis of tragedy (principally perpetuated by certain other Greek plays, Aristotle, Racine, the Elizabethans and Jacobean, and Ibsen and Tennessee Williams): in which catharsis stems, not from a situation where all the characters are in their own ways "blameless," but from a situation where the central character is

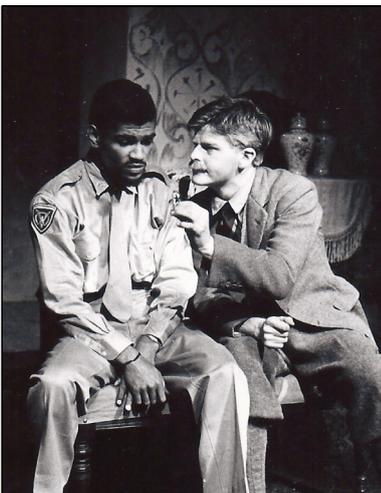
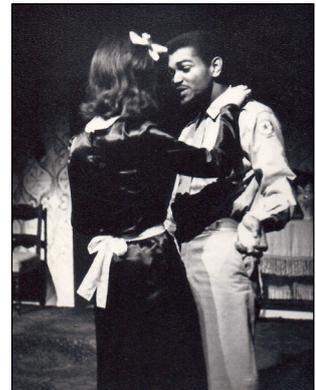
not blameless — but doomed by a "hamartia," a fatal flaw of personality.

Finally, though, if this restriction is endemic in Sophocles's original, the chief weakness of Anouilh's adaptation is entirely peculiar to him: his misguided attempt, in the closing stages, to abandon the love-duty idea and transform Antigone into an unusually pointless and irritating symbol of twentieth-century French philosophy, combining Sartrian existentialism with Cocteauesque suicidal necrophilia.

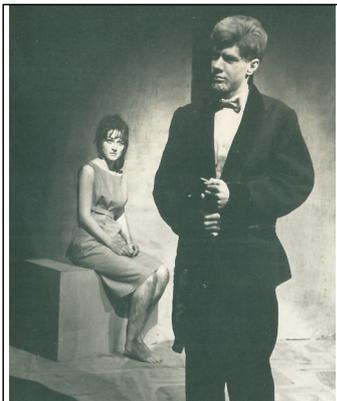
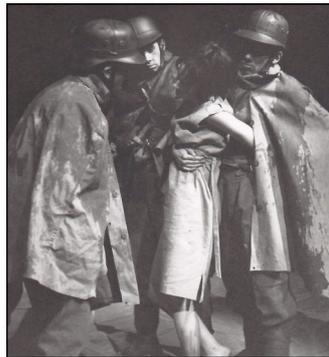
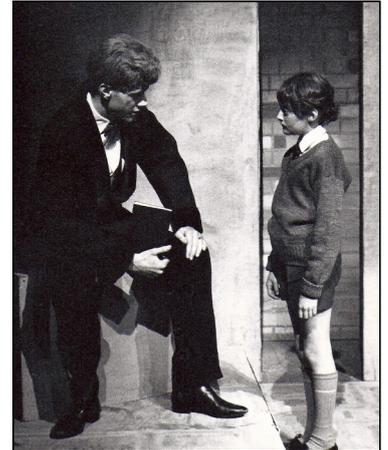
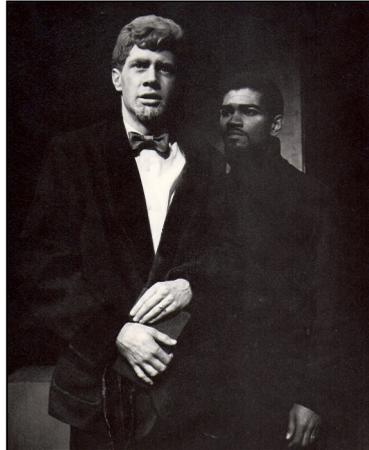
Talented pupils

Nonetheless, the finest sections of the work remain notable. And Michael Hoddell's Questors revival stars three of the most talented of the present Questors pupils: Mary Holland (her large sad eyes already gazing into the next world) as Antigone; Michael Langridge as Creon; and Wylie Longmore as the Chorus. Mr. Longmore should soon tackle Othello: he further brings a contrasting sense of impish humour to his role in George Courtelin's "These Cornfields," a pleasant little specimen of the "theatre of the absurd," which completes the evening.

DOUGLAS McVAY



**Student Group 16 in
THESE CORNFIELDS**



**Student Group 16 in
ANTIGONE**

END OF PART THREE

LIST OF STUDENTS (1956-1963)

Many students , especially in the early days, were in more than one group. Students who were accepted into a second year are marked with an asterisk.

GROUP 11 (1956-1958)

Norman Berliner
Helen Blatch *
Lindsay Bouvet *
Judy Bowley
Dorothy Boyd-Taylor *
Philip Clarke *
Barbara Deans
Graham Evans *
Sonia Frisell *
Stuart Hartley *
Kenneth Kane *
Veronica Meredith
Ann Mitchell
Derek Morris *
Terry Quinn
Jo Rowbottom *
Gillian Selby
Hilary Sheath *
Sandra Turner *
Barbara (Diki) Turpin *

GROUP 12 (1957-1959)

Tony Barber *
John Chapman *
Zafar Chaudhri
Pat Coleman *
Shaun Curry *
Jo Green
Peter Hutchins *
Barbara Jackson *
Christine James
Sylvia Mansfield
Derek Marlow *
Maureen Mchugh
Veronica Meredith *
Terry Quinn *
Jean Rouse
Coralie Rymer
Sandra Turner *
Patricia Verrall
Brenda Watson
Marion Wood

GROUP 13 (1958-1960)

Geoffrey Austin
John Chapman *
Barry Clarke *
Pat Coleman *
Charles Conabere *
Joyce Cusdin
Valerie Douglas
Mary Eastham
Bette Grice
Leo Johnstone *
Madeleine Margan *
Gillian Melady
Sylvia Mollett
Lorraine Munns *
Steve O'Toole
Terry Quinn *
Gary Weaver
Christopher Whitbread *
Marian Wood *
Ann Woods *

GROUP 14 (1959-1961)

Carol Allen
Bashir Badrudin *
Gordon (John?) Beavis *
Gillian Brooke
Derek Brown *
Florence Cooper *
Barry Davis *
Barbara Giles
Jo Green *
Max Laurie *
Vic Pompini *
Iris Rafferty
Liat Sandys *
Carla Shackell
Celia Vaux
Clive Williams *

GROUP 15 (1960-1962)

Bashir Badrudin
Elaine Banham *
Veronica Castang
Barry Davis
Doreen Davis
Maureen Draper
Pat Gottlieb *
Jeffrey Gould
Monyene Kane *
Barbara London *
Stephanie Paton
David Ploss *
Jane Price
Maria Ritchie *
Susan Tylor *
Marion Wood (Mynard) *
Peter Wrigley

GROUP 16 (1961-1963)

Joe Carson
Mike Cartwright *
Rachel Emmet *
Winifred Fraser *
Estelle Hampton *
Jillyann Healy
Mary Holland *
Reta Saxton-howes
Mike Langridge *
Wylie Longmore *
Jo Phelps
Shrdor Rae
Ann Strong
John Turner *
Maureen Walsh
Christopher Webb
Cleo Wrighton *