

QUESTORS ARCHIVES

A SURVEY OF STUDENT GROUP PRODUCTIONS

Part Four
1964-1969

compiled by
John Dobson

Contents

STUDENT GROUP 17 (1962-1964)	1
STUDENT GROUP 18 (1963-1965)	9
STUDENT GROUP 19 (1964-1966)	17
STUDENT GROUP 20 (1965-1967)	29
STUDENT GROUP 21 (1966-1968)	39
STUDENT GROUP 22 (1967-1969)	54
LIST OF STUDENTS (1962-1969)	Annexe

STUDENT GROUP 17 (1962-1964)

Alumni from this group include **Michael Davis, Estelle Hampton, Gillian Kerswell** and **David** and **Sonia Pearson**.

A highlight of their first year was this photo call for the local press featuring a group session with **Alfred Emmet**.



**Student Group 17
February 1964**

ONE ACT PLAYS

THE QUESTORS THEATRE WATTOCK LANE
EALING 5184

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THE WEDDING
by
Chekhov

LITHUANIA
by
Rupert Brooke

THE BALD PRIMA DONNA
by
Ionesco

The Plays Produced by Michael Hoddell

FEBRUARY 18-21 AT 7.30

ALL PERFORMANCES 3/6d

BOX OFFICE OPENS
February 13th : 14th : 17th 7 - 9 p.m.
February 18th to 21st 6.30 - 8 p.m.

THIS IS A SPECIAL PRODUCTION AND
MEMBERS FREE SEATS ARE NOT AVAILABLE

BOOK IN COMFORT — BOOK BY POST

This was the second of four Student Group revivals of Chekhov's **The Wedding**.

Michael Langridge and **Reta Saxton-Howes** made quite a hit as a double act in **The Wedding** playing an aged waiter and waitress. **Reta Saxton-Howes** also drew praise for her performance in the Ionesco. The pair were to repeat their partnership the following year in Ionesco's play **The Chairs**.

[Unidentified cutting]

STUDENTS IN ONE-ACT PLAYS Promising Talent at Questors

THE three one-act plays which the acting students of the Questors Theatre have been presenting at their Ealing theatre this week certainly gave them a chance to do some acting.

Surprisingly the tragedy was much more successful than the elaborately - staged comedy. Rupert Brooke's only play "**Lithuania**," is a horrible, tautly-wrought tale of murder in a peasant's hut. Gillian Kerswell gave the correct impression of the strong lame girl quite capable of murder. The producer, Michael Hoddell, and all the cast held the audience tense throughout the play, which is, of course, essential for such plays.

Luxury

Full advantage was taken, in producing Chekhov's comedy "**The Wedding**," of the chance to dress up in beautiful clothes, and a feeling of luxurious colour was created in the middle of the bare brick hall the Questors are using while their new theatre is being completed.

There are 17 characters, all more or less comic, and while most of the players created caricatures which were really funny, one felt that experienced players would have the audience in fits of laughter every minute of the action.

However, these two-year students can congratulate themselves on keeping the audience amused half the time. A funny play, against all appearances, is the most difficult.

Two of the funniest players never said a word. Using nothing but stage "business" and mime. Michael Langridge and Reta Saxton-Howes kept up a continuous by-play as an aged waiter and waitress.

But David Evershed-Martin was also competent as the stupid bridegroom, Earl Norder as the Greek confectioner, and Donald Clarke as the telegraph clerk making gaffes in the conversation.

Reta Saxton-Howes was also convincing as the old peasant woman in "Lithuania" but showed she could also shine as a young woman too as Mary in Ionesco's "**The Bald Prima Donna**."

This was perhaps the most successful play of the three. Now in its eighth year at a small Paris theatre, this play consists of deliberately inane dialogue or complete nonsense by which the playwright guys English middle-class ineffectiveness, preoccupation with trivia snobbishness, and many other defects.

The Questors students certainly made us laugh at ourselves.

I.M.

The Middlesex County Times

22 February 1964

EXCELLENT STUDENTS - IN THEATRE OF RITUAL

Easily the best of the three one-act plays presented this week by the Questors students at Mattock-lane, Ealing, was Ionesco's "**The Bald Prima Donna**."

Superficially, this may seem a surrealist piece, but in fact it contains nothing that is not realistically credible. Perhaps there never was any such thing as surrealism.

Because one of the three things which the play is about is class: and the outrage of the middle-class couple when their maid starts passionately necking in the dining-room is a direct echo of the supposedly "L'Age d'Or."

The play's second theme is the English. Ionesco was inspired to write it by an English phrase-book. English "small talk"

frequently conceals marital apathy, boredom with acquaintances, or shyness.

Ionesco shows this in a series of dialogues at once mad and sane, fantastic and true, funny and serious.

Theatre of ritual

And the third theme is that of ritual. The play belongs to the "theatre of ritual." Its climax of concerted gobbledygook proves that, as Colin Wilson has suggested, anything can become sexy.

Conversely, the most obscene word can seem innocent and meaningless, if spoken innocently and meaninglessly.

The piece's cleverest passage (a long duologue between a man and woman who pretend to be tentatively wondering if they've met before, in order to gain gradual mounting pleasure through slowly arriving at the fact that they are actually lovers) unites both the English-shyness-politeness theme and the ritual theme.

The cast of six in the Questors production by Michael Hoddell and Estelle Hampton was uniformly excellent. In it were Michael Langridge, Virginia Fell, David Evershed-Martin, Cleo Wrighton, Roger Kidd and Reta Saxton-Howes as a Cathy Gale-ish "leather girl" of a maid in kinky boots.

Proper disrespect

The second-best play was Chekhov's "**The Wedding**." It is very minor Chekhov and is not very amusing. But it was staged and

acted quite amusingly, though over-leisurely.

Cheekbones were well rouged: cigarette-holders were worthy of Auntie Mame (if not Holly Golightly): and you should have seen them dance the polka.

Again, the servants maintained a proper disrespect for their masters, and twitched in high [??] style.

Last,[??], we had "**Lithuania**" a forgotten Rupert Brooke opus which should have stayed forgotten, about an unfortunate traveller who met the fate of Thomas of Reading and the patrons of "L'Auberge Rouge."

Other attractions of this everyday story of country folk included a [soused?] father and a lame daughter. What with "**Struggle Till Dawn**" and now Brooke's spot of homely fun, the Questors' addiction to resurrection begins to outdo Jerry Cruncher's and must be cured forthwith.

When Cole Porter wrote "Lithuanians and Letts do it," he meant something enjoyable.

DOUGLAS McVAY

" THE BALD PRIMA DONNA "

By EUGENE IONESCO

Mr. Smith	MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
Mrs. Smith	VIRGINIA FELL
Mr. Martin	DAVID EVERSHED-MARTIN
Mrs. Martin	CLEO WRIGHTON
Mary	RETA SAXTON-HOWES
Captain of the Fire Brigade	ROGER KIDD

The scene is a " typically English " home

FIFTEEN-MINUTE INTERVAL

" LITHUANIA "

By RUPERT BROOKE

The Mother	RETA SAXTON-HOWES
The Daughter	GILLIAN KERSWELL
The Father	DAVID PEARSON
The Stranger	MICHAEL DAVIS
A Young Man	DONALD CLARKE
The Vodka Shopkeeper	EARL NORDER
The Vodka Shopkeeper's Son	EARLE LEWIS

The scene is a cottage in Lithuania

FIFTEEN-MINUTE INTERVAL

" THE WEDDING "

By ANTON CHEKHOV

(Translated by Constance Garnett)

Pianist	MARY HOLLAND
Waitress	RETA SAXTON-HOWES
Anna Matryonovna Zmeyukin (a midwife)	MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
Ivan Mihailovitch Yat (a telegraph clerk)	CLEO WRIGHTON
The Best-Man	DONALD CLARKE
Nastasya Timofeyevna (the bride's mother)	STANLEY COOCHCHILD
Eppaminond Maximovitch Apolombov (the bridegroom)	VIRGINIA FELL
Yevdokim Zaharovitch Zhigalov (the bride's father)	DAVID EVERSHED-MARTIN
Harlampy Spiridonovitch Dymba (a Greek confectioner)	ROGER KIDD
Woman of the town	EARL NORDER
1st Bridemaid	AUDREY HEWLETT
2nd Bridemaid	WENDY STONE
Dmitry Stepanovitch Mozgovoy (a sailor)	JULIA ATKINSON
Dashaenka (the bride)	EARLE LEWIS
Andrey Andreyevitch Nyunin (an insurance agent)	GILLIAN KERSWELL
Fyodor Yakovlevitch Revunov-Karaulov (a retired naval captain)	MICHAEL DAVIS
	DAVID PEARSON

The scene is a second class restaurant

The plays produced by MICHAEL HODDELL assisted by ESTELLE HAMPTON
Settings designed and constructed by JOHN ROLFE

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For STUDENT ONE ACT PLAYS :

Stage Manager	DIANE WILLIAMS
Assistant Stage Managers	CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR, PETER SHARP
WARDROBE MISTRESS	MICHAEL EDGINGTON, DOROTHY CRAIK, PAULINE KIELTY, CAROLINE DENNES
Properties	JOAN PYLE
Lighting	JOAN BARACLOUGH and JOAN SAUNDERS
Sound	JOAN WINDERS
	GRAHAM EVANS

**Refreshments are on sale during both intervals in the Shaw Room and
The Grapevine Club is open to its Members.**

An Item of Interest

The first production in the new theatre is now in rehearsal and excitement is rising in anticipation of ALFRED EMMETT'S production of "BRAND". RAYMOND MOSS will play the title role and FFRANCCON WHELAN and JAN KENNY will be seen as Agnes and Gard respectively.

By the end of this week all members should have received a form inviting them to take part in the ballot for seats for the opening and Gala performances. As this form must be returned to me not later than first post on Monday, 2nd March, you are advised to contact the theatre immediately if you do not receive your form.

If you are unsuccessful in the ballot you will be able to book your member's free seat during the rest of the run which finishes on 28th April. You are advised to book early and it would be appreciated if you will BOOK BY POST.

Meanwhile you can play your part in ensuring the success of Questions by spreading the word and telling your friends, relations and colleagues of the advantages of joining Questions. Our aim is 3,000 members by April—I DO HOPE YOU WILL HELP US IN ANY WAY YOU CAN! There is always a big welcome in Mattock Lane for active members—WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE?—Tony Clayton.

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Sunday, 23rd February : EALING FILM SOCIETY

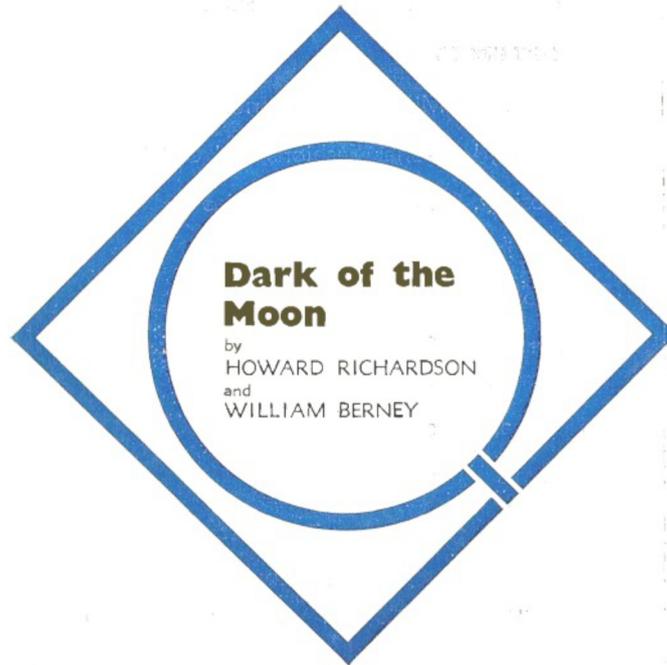
THE WITCHES OF SALEM

Saturday, 29th February : MUSIC CLUB—Recital by

NISO TICCIATI (Harpichord)

**Student Group 17
July 1964**

DARK OF THE MOON



This was the first Student Production to take place in the new Playhouse and made a big impression on Douglas McVay in the County Times:

"... some nice playing, and some good moments. Wylie Longmore, arms and fingers bent and outspread, a bounding black eagle, as the witch boy. Sorceress Estelle Hampton and Cleopatra Wrighton tormenting and enslaving him with a perilously whirling axe, their long hair like golden and ebony seaweed.

"Two things, though, were the real tragic: **Gillian Kerswell** singing "Barbara Allen," only comparable in yearning beauty amongst American folk-songs with "Black is the Colour of My True Love's Hair"; and the curtain... The witch-boy, his brief humanity lost, callously pushing Barbara's dead body with his foot, sending it toppling down a slope, casting his scarlet neckerchief after her — and vanishing as the lights blacked out..."



Gillian Kerswell and Wylie Longmore

July 22nd-25th

Second Year Student Group Production

"DARK OF THE MOON"

By HOWARD RICHARDSON and WILLIAM BERNIEY

Characters (in order of appearance) :

Conjur Man	JOHN TURNER
John	WYLIE LONGMORE
Dark Witch	CLEOPATRA WRIGHTON
Fair Witch	ESTELLE HAMPTON
Conjur' Woman	CAROL ALLEN
Floyd Allen	EARLE LEWIS
Mr. Allen	MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
Burt Dinwitty	KEITH GODMAN
Mr. Summey	ROGER KIDD
Mrs. Summey	WINFRED FRASER
Mrs. Bergen	JILL CHAMPION
Mr. Bergen	STANLEY GOODCHILD
Mrs. Allen	RETA SAXTON-HOWES
Hattie Heffner	JACQUELINE HASLAND
Hank Gudger	DONALD CLARK
Edna Summey	MONYNE KANE
Mr. Atkins	JAMES NEIL
Ella Bergen	WENDY STONE
Uncle Smeltzue	EARL NORDBER
Mary Lou Gorman	WENDY JOLLY
Miss Metcalf	AUDREY HEWLETT
Marvin Hudgens	MICHAEL DAVIS
Barbara Allen	GILLIAN KERSWELL
Preacher Haggler	DAVID PEARSON

The play produced by MICHAEL HODDELL

assisted by ESTELLE HAMPTON

The setting designed by JOHN ROLFE

ACT I

Scene 1	A Mountain Ridge
Scene 2	Village Square, Buck Creek
Scene 3	Outside the Aliens' Cabin
Scene 4	The General Store, Buck Creek

INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

ACT II

Scene 1	A Clearing
Scene 2	John and Barbara's Cabin
Scene 3	A Mountain Ridge
Scene 4	The House of God
Scene 5	A Mountain

MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE ARE REQUESTED TO REFRAIN FROM SMOKING IN THE AUDITORIUM

For "Dark Of The Moon":

Stage Manager	DIANE WILLIAMS
Deputy Stage Manager	MAIRE STEADMAN
Assistant Stage Managers	TOM BROWN, ANN CHASE, BRIAN LACEY, GERALD BLAKE, CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR, MARTIN MACDONALD, PAULINE WATKINS, STEFAN KOWALSKI, CHRISTINE REID, CHRISTOPHER JONES
Setting constructed by	TOM BROWN, BILL WHITE
Wardrobe	JACQUELINE LEARNER, HILDA COLLINS
Sound	GRAHAM EVANS
Lighting	JOHN WINDERS
Properties	JOAN BARRACLOUGH, JOAN SAUNDERS, PAULINE KIELTY, CAROLINE DENNES

The Square Dance arranged by LUDMILA MLADA

DARK OF THE MOON was produced by Peter Brook at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, in 1949, when it was acclaimed by critics as the most exciting production of the year. The play is built upon the traditional ballad of Barbara Allen.

"A witch boy from the mountain came,
A pinin' to be human,
Fer he had seen the fairest gal . . .
A gal named Barbara Allen."

Sandwiches and coffee are obtainable in The Bernard Shaw Room before performances, and refreshments will be served there during the interval.

The Grapevine Club is open each evening to its members from 7.00 to 10.30 p.m. (11.00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays)

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Middlesex County Times

1 August 1964

Witchcraft ends Questors season

THE QUESTORS finished their current season last week with four performances by the second-year student group of "**Dark of the Moon**," the American folk tale by Howard Richardson and William Berney which was made over by Peter Brook in 1949 into one of his early, eye-catching productions.

Tastes have changed since then; faux-naiveté is now rather out; but seeing the piece again at Mattock-lane, I felt that Brook's wizardry probably led critics and audiences to overrate the witchery of the play itself.

*"A witch boy from the mountain came,
A'pinin' to be human,
For he had seen the fairest gal...
A gal named Barbara Allen" . .*

The theme is fine, with its echoes of both the Orphic myth (the witch boy will stay human for ever if Barbara is faithful to him for a year) and Romeo and Juliet (Questors director Michael Hoddell, in his most invigorating scene — a square dance rumbustiously choreographed by Ludmila Mlada — heightened the star-cross'd lovers reference by having the couple walk slowly, raptly towards each other, like the pair in "West Side story").

But such a fragile romance would be more satisfyingly contained within the ballad on which it's based for in a 60-minute compression, as in Philip Saville's 1956 television adaptation), than in this two hours 20 minutes prolonging.

Several interpolated episodes are clearly superfluous, and even the climatic

revivalist meeting (ending on a striking new interpretation of "I will lay down my burden"), while heartily staged, had at least this congregation member beginning to nod in his pew.

Good moments

We were left, finally, with some nice playing, and some good moments. Wylie Longmore, arms and fingers bent and outspread, a bounding black eagle, as the witch-boy. Sorceress Estelle Hampton and Cleopatra Wrighton tormenting and enslaving him with a perilously whirling axe, their long hair like golden and ebony seaweed.

Two things, though, were the real tragic: Gillian Kerswell singing "Barbara Allen," only comparable in yearning beauty amongst American folk-songs with "Black is the Colour of My True Love's Hair"; and the curtain... the witch-boy, his brief humanity lost, callously pushing Barbara's dead body with his foot, sending it toppling down a slope, casting his scarlet neckerchief after her — and vanishing as the lights blacked out...

DOUGLAS McVAY

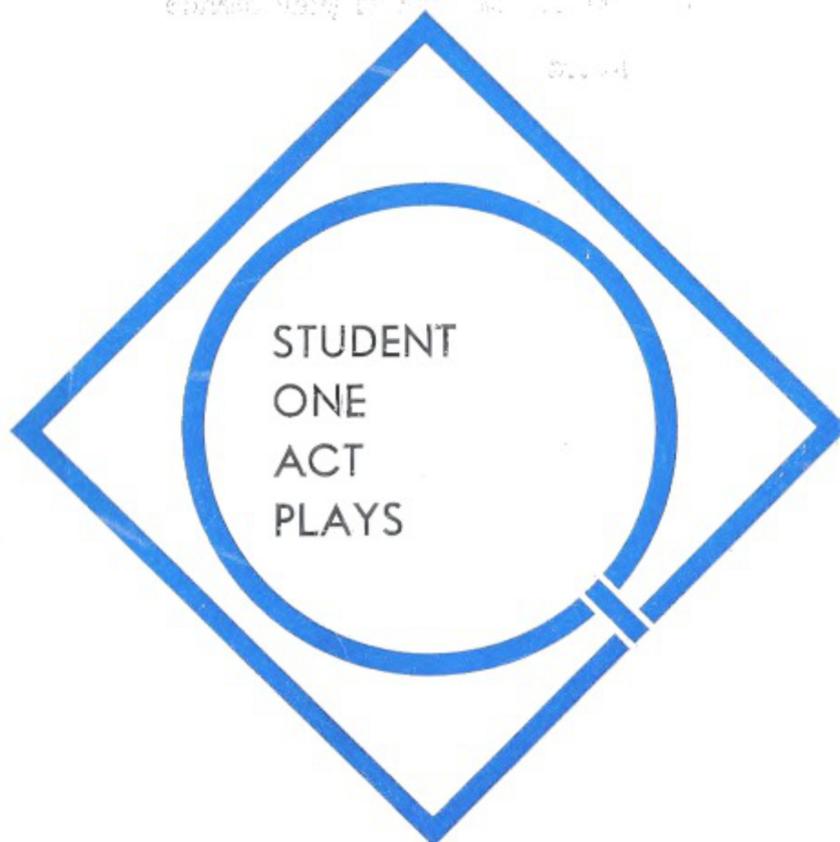
STUDENT GROUP 18 (1963-1965)

Margaret McDonald may possibly hold the record, if not for having been in more student groups than anyone else, then at least for taking the longest to graduate. Besides year one of Group 18, she is recorded as having been in year one of Groups 19 and 20 and apparently not achieving the second year until Groups 29 (1974-1976) and 30 (1975-1977).

Group 18 also included **Wendy Stone** who later returned to direct Student Groups 35 (1982), 36 (1983) and 41 (1988), and **Stanley Goodchild** who remained a regular acting member until the early 1980s.

Student Group 18 February 1965 STUDENT ONE ACT PLAYS

GREAT CATHERINE by Bernard Shaw
SGANARELLE by Molière
THOR, WITH ANGELS by Christopher Fry



Middlesex County Times

**STUDENTS IN THREE PLAYS
AT QUESTORS**

"**Great Catherine**" is merely a Shavian *bonne bouche* : yet it had no difficulty in being by far the brightest of the three one-act plays presented by the Questors students at Mattock-lane, Ealing, last week.

It never tries for either the visual virtuosity or the brilliantly macabre comedy of Sternberg's "**The Scarlet Empress.**" But in the other comic field of intentional anachronism, Shaw of course leaves even Sternberg standing.

The piece's humorous technique is pretty close to that of another movie. "Ninotchka," with Russians constantly saying things like "little father," "little mother" and "darlink."

Catherine herself is certainly very Garboesque, revealed as not so much a scarlet, more a tickling empress, when she tortures in this fashion a true-blue young English officer to whom she has taken a characteristic shine.

Audrey Hewlett and Keith Godman made the most of their rib-cracking confrontation, whilst Jacqueline Hasland personified debutante disdain as the officer's fiancée. Best of the bunch, though, was Christopher Taylor's boozy, burly, cajoling portrait of the intriguer Patiomkin

Molière's "**Sganarelle,**" the second attraction on the bill, occupies an equally minor place in its author's oeuvre, but an

equally unmistakable one, with as amorous rondo of fathers, daughters and misunderstandings.

ELEGANT

And once again the students provided several spry performances, notably Wendy Stone's plump little wrath as a suspicious wife and James Neil's wanly elegant, beautifully Scots mocking of a lily white boy of a lover.

Only Stanley Goodchild in the name-part lacked subtle wit.

The Questors producer; Michael Hoddell (helped by Reta Saxton-Howes), was at ease in both pieces (despite rather arbitrary use of masks in the Molière): and John Rolfe designed each handsomely.

However, the last and longest item of the programme, Fry's "**Thor, with Angels.**" proved much too much for everybody.

Fry's religious works are the less rewarding side of his output, and this particular specimen (better titled "Bore, with Angels") is arguably the least rewarding of the lot.

His obsessive theme of liberty and captivity here drowns in a clotted cream of strained metaphors and Ancient British jokes.

The cast, however, sweated the whole thing out manfully.

DOUGLAS McVAY.

February 11th to 13th 1965

THE QUESTORS presents

STUDENT ONE-ACT PLAYS

SCANARRELLE

by Moliere (translated by Miles Mallison)

Celle	WENDY JOLLY
Georgibus	KEITH GODMAN
Nurse	AUDREY HEWLETT
Sganarelle	STANLEY GOODCHILD
Sganarelle's wife	WENDY STONE
Leite	JAMES NEIL
Servant	PETER SHARP

A Paris street - 1660

INTERVAL OF 5 MINUTES

GREAT CATHERINE

by Bernard Shaw

Catherine	AUDREY HEWLETT
Varinika	WENDY JOLLY
Claire	JACQUELINE HASLUND
Princess Dashkoff	JILL CHAMPION
Patiomkin	CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR
Edastason	KEITH GODMAN
Naryshkin	STANLEY GOODCHILD
Sergeant	JAMES NEIL
Ladies-in-Waiting	ROSALINDE NISSEL, JULIA ATKINSON
Guards	TREVOR HOPKINS, JULIAN TAYLOR

The Imperial Palace
St. Petersburg - 1775

INTERVAL OF 20 MINUTES

THOR, WITH ANGELS

by Christopher Fry

Gymn	JOHN ALIOGLU
Clodisuda	JILL CHAMPION
Martina	JACQUELINE HASLUND
Quichelm	KEITH GODMAN
Tadfrid	MICHAEL DAVIS
Osner	JAMES NEIL
Colgrin	CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR
Anna	WENDY STONE
Hoel	PETER SHARP
Merlin	STANLEY GOODCHILD
Messenger	TREVOR HOPKINS

A Jutish Farmstead - 765

The plays produced by MICHAEL HODDELL
assisted by RETA SAXTON-HOWES
Setting designed by JOHN ROLFE
Choreography by LUDMILLA MLADA

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking in the auditorium.

For STUDENT ONE-ACT PLAYS

Stage Manager	DIANE WILLIAMS
Deputy Stage Manager	GEORGE BENN
Assistant Stage Managers	DIANA DEVLIN, JANE STEEL
Lighting	JOHN WINDER
assisted by	J. D. MALONEY
Sound	BARRY CLARKE
Wardrobe	BRENDA LEWIS
Properties	ROBERT SMILLIE
Production Assistant	ANN CONNHEENEY
Stage Director	TONY SHIPLEY

Smoke machine kindly loaned by Mole-Richardson (England) Ltd.

The Exhibition of Paintings in The Bernard Shaw Room during this production is the work of

CLYN MORGAN

Born in 1926 and studied at Cardiff, London and Paris. Has exhibited in London, Paris, Edinburgh, and New York and had paintings purchased by the Arts Council, Contemporary Arts Society, Derbyshire and Monmouthshire Education Committee and Auckland City Art Gallery. Latest work influenced by Greek Art. Also paints portraits.

Paintings are for sale and catalogues are available from information.

Sandwiches and coffee are obtainable in The Bernard Shaw Room before performances, and refreshments will be served there during the second interval.

The Grapevine Club is open each evening to its members from 7.00 to 10.30 p.m.

(11.00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays)

Also on Sunday 12 noon to 2 p.m.

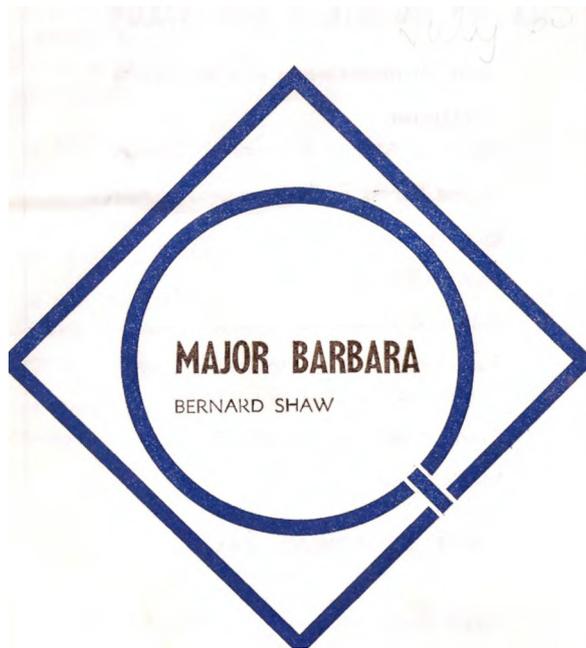
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**Student Group 18
July 1965**

MAJOR BARBARA



Major Barbara was chosen to coincide with the centenary of the founding of the Salvation Army.

Surprisingly, out of the 40 Bernard Shaw productions so far put on by The Questors this was only the second of two productions of Major Barbara, the first having been in 1953.

Writing in the Middlesex County Times 'THT' was enthusiastic about the performances (including that of the makeup artist!) but unfortunately credited **Tony Shipley** as the director of the piece, instead of **Michael Hoddell**. Tony was in fact the 'Stage' director.





**Student Group 18 in
MAJOR BARBARA**

Thames Valley Times

14 July 1965

TO mark the centenary of the Salvation Army, Questors' second year students are this week giving performances of Bernard Shaw's "**Major Barbara.**" Although written 60 years ago and first produced in 1906, it is still a fine tribute to the Army's work.

As is only to be expected of Shaw, the author has aimed many shafts of satire at the Army, but there is such a warm humanity behind the writing that it is impossible to be offended. Indeed an elderly woman officer of the Army at the opening performance on Saturday night was rocking with laughter at Shaw's sallies.

It is astonishing to find how sharply these young, comparatively inexperienced players put over the wit. Michael Hoddell, the producer, has been at great pains to emphasise this element of the play with the result that however familiar we may be with the work, it came over most enjoyably.

Particularly effective is the West Ham shelter scene with the opportunities it gives for rich characterisation. David Pearson makes the bullying Bill Walker a cringing coward, Jacqueline Hasland's Jenny Hill is a stout-hearted lass ready to forgive Bill's insults, and Peter Sharp and Wendy Jolly give equally well-etched studies of Snobby Price and Rummy Mitchens.

* * * *

BUT the two central characters are Andrew Undershaft, the munitions

millionaire, and his daughter, Major Barbara herself. Christopher Taylor, as Undershaft, gives a remarkably well-controlled performance, building up the character from a quiet dignity as he tries to renew the severed threads with his family.

Wendy Stone's Barbara is a hard-headed, self-assured young woman, just as the author intended her to be.

Two other sharp-pointed performances are given by Roger Kidd as the effete Charles Lomax and by Stanley Goodchild as the bespectacled Intellectual, Adolphus Cusins, who worships Barbara so ardently. Audrey Hewlett, too, makes the most of the outspoken Lady Britomart who seeks, somewhat ineffectually, to rule her family with an iron hand.

Others who enter into the excellent team work of the whole cast are Keith Godman, Jacqueline Hasland, Jill Champion, Michael Langridge and Phillip Irving.

Jill Champion has designed three most effective sets for the three-sided stage, suggesting the elegance at Lady Britomart's house, the tawdriness of the Army shelter and, with a massive cannon, the power of the Undershaft arms factory. The band music in the play was recorded by the Southall Salvation Army band.

* * * *

A NEW student training course starts at the Questors' Theatre, Ealing, in September. It is run under the auspices of Ealing Education Committee in place of the old Middlesex County Council education committee, and as before, in conjunction with Ealing Technical College.

The primary aim of the course is to train amateur actors and actresses who want eventually to act at the Questors' Theatre. Previous experience is not necessary. What is essential is enthusiasm, willingness to work hard and a potential talent likely to be developed by training. Admission is subject to interview and audition.

There is no formal lower or upper age limit, but it is exceptional to accept a student under 16. Most of the students are between 17 and 24, but anyone above that age is accepted providing he or she fulfils the conditions and is able to fit in with the group.

A high standard of discipline and punctuality is required from students who are expected to attend all classes regularly. The acting classes are held on Saturday afternoons from 3 to 5.30 at the Questors' Theatre. These classes are conducted by Alfred Emmet, director of studies. Occasional Saturday classes are set aside for make-up. The movement classes, taken by Ludmila Mlada, are held on Thursday evenings at the Grange school from 7.15 to 8.15. Speech classes are also at this school.

Auditions for the new course are expected to be held from the end of this month.

* * * *

THE Questors autumn season will open on September 18th with a production by Colette King of Chekhov's "**The Cherry Orchard**." Shakespeare's "**The Winter's Tale**" starts on November 20th.

The Antonia y Marino, Spanish Dance Company will be at the Questors from September 28th until October 2nd, and on December 7th the Western Theatre Ballet is paying another visit.

Middlesex Independent

14 July 1965

'Major Barbara' marks centenary

Marking the centenary year of the Salvation Army, the Questors Theatre at Ealing this week ran Shaw's play "**Major Barbara**." the last performance was today (Thursday).

The play was written in 1905, at a time when the Salvation Army was fighting not apathy and disinterest as it is largely doing today, but open hostility and derision. Shaw was among the first to depict "The Army" sympathetically, although there were differences of opinion about this among his critics.

Major Barbara was first presented in 1906 at the Royal Court Theatre. It was well received by all who saw it, including a contingent of Salvation Army commissioners despite the fact that the Army had denounced the theatre as "a den of vice," "a hive of unspeakable iniquity," and "a poison as noxious as alcohol."

"Major Barbara" was presented by the Questors Student Training Group directed by Michael Hoddell. Settings were by Jill Champion. Because of the success of former productions by the students, the run of "Major Barbara" was extended to six performances.

Middlesex County Times

16 July 1965

'MAJOR BARBARA' AIN'T WHAT SHE USED TO BE

A PRODUCTION of Shaw's "**Major Barbara**" by a student group might be expected to demand forbearance from the critic. But the Questors (second year) group at Mattock-lane, Ealing, marked the end of their training course with a balanced and thoroughly enjoyable performance that banished condescension.

Young actors playing older characters find it impossible to age their voices and, in some cases, their gait and because of this the play loses depth and authority, but it comes over with a punch all the same — and what a treat to be able to hear all the lines!

Wendy Stone, in the title role seems at the start to have everything against her. The part usually goes to big-boned, forceful women of the Wendy Hiller breed.

Miss Stone is petite and rather sweet, both big disadvantages. But she buckles to with such delicate precision that we soon accept, and back to the hilt, her version of the character.

At times she is a little shrill. and inclined to flounce, but she handles most of her big scenes with a sure hand and steers the play to success.

The droll, likeable personality of Stanley

Goodchild, as the man who joins the Salvation Army for love of the Major, suggests that the group should turn immediately to Whitehall Theatre farce. Here is an admirably easy and unforced piece of acting.

I appreciated the visual aspect of Christopher Taylor's performance as the Major's

millionaire arms manufacturer father, but, alas, the actor's youth comes through in spite of excellent make-up.

Audrey Hewlett plays Lady Britomart rather too much on one note, but, admittedly, the part is a stock one.

Wendy Jolly's general picture of an East End crone is cleverly authentic — and again, full marks to the make-up artist.

The settings are economically effective, but why on Tuesday did the final arms factory backcloth protection disappear even as I admired it? Never to return.

The group are helped by one or two ex-students. Tony Shipley directs, with George Benn as stage manager

The play opened a six night run on Saturday.

T.H.T.

STUDENT GROUP 19 (1964-1966)



Amongst this Group's first year students was **Roger de Toney**. He had made previous brief appearances in the 1965 New Plays Festival and had doubled as a "lord" and a "shepherd" in the 1965 production of **Henry V**. He didn't make it into this Group's second year but went on to Group 20 where he graduated in the part of Rev Parris in **The Crucible** (qv).

It was his Uncle, Michael McOwan, who suggested that Roger should join Questors. Previously he had been working as a scene shifter in a Guernsey Repertory Theatre. In addition to being a pillar of strength in the Student Group he was a familiar figure in the Grapevine (on both sides of the bar) and became a regular actor through to the late 1980s. He joined the Committee of Management in 1972 and became Chairman in 1984.

The Kensington Post

29 July 1966

ENTHUSIASM WANTED

The Questors Theatre Student Training course will embark in September on its 20th year. The course is run by the Questors Theatre on behalf of and under the auspices of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing Education Committee in conjunction with the Ealing Technical College.

The aim of the course is to give preliminary training to amateur actors and actresses who wish eventually to act at The Questors Theatre. This presupposes a serious interest in the theatre and in the art of acting. The course is not designed as a training for those wishing to go on the professional stage.

Previous acting experience is not at all necessary. What is essential is

enthusiasm, willingness to work hard, and a potential talent likely to be developed by training. A high standard of accomplishment is not what is looked for. Admission is subject to interview and audition, and all applicants are given auditions, which begin at the end of this month.

The present student training group is presenting Christopher Fry's version of "**Ring Round the Moon**" by Jean Anouilh for six performances from 23rd July to 30th July.

Middlesex County Times

16 July 1966

TRAINING FOR YOUNG ACTORS AND ACTRESSES

The Questors Theatre Student Training Course in September opens its nineteenth year of operation. The course is run by the theatre on behalf of, and under the auspices of, the Council of the

London Borough of Ealing Education Committee in conjunction with Ealing Technical College.

The aim of the course is to give preliminary training to amateur actors and actresses wishing eventually to act at The Questors Theatre. This presupposes a serious interest in the theatre and in the art of acting. The course is not designed as training for those wishing to go on the professional stage.

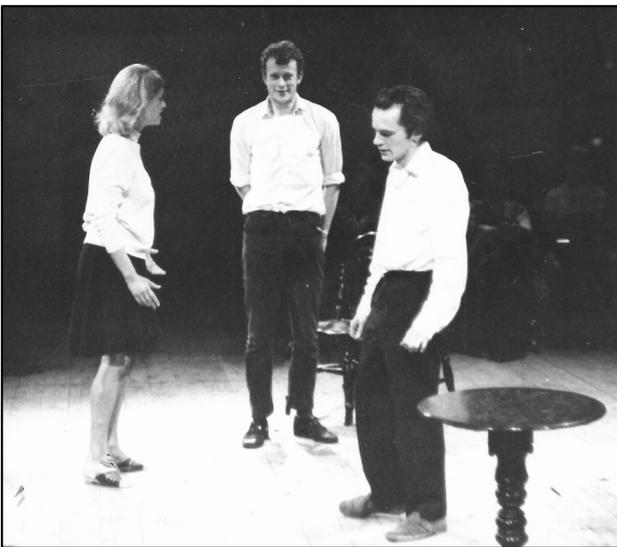
Previous acting experience is not necessary. Essentials are enthusiasm, willingness to work hard. And a potential talent likely to be developed by training. A high standard of accomplishment is not sought. Admission is subject to interview and audition and all applicants are given auditions.

There is no formal lower or upper age limit for the group. But it is exceptional for a student less than 16 years of age to be accepted. The majority of the group

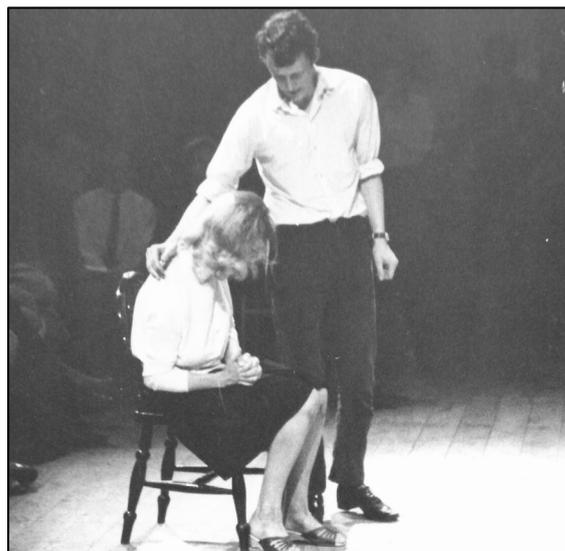
are generally between 17 and 24, but students above that age are readily accepted if they fulfil the conditions and are able to fit in with the group.

A high standard of discipline and punctuality is required from students, who are expected to attend all classes regularly. The acting classes are on Saturday afternoon from 3pm to 5.30pm at The Questors Theatre. They are conducted by Alfred Emmet, director of Studies. Occasional Saturday classes are set aside for makeup. The Movement classes taken by Miss Ludmila Mlada are on Thursday evenings at the Grange School from 7.15pm to 8.15pm. Speech classes are held at the school.

Applications for the 1965/66 course are now beginning to come in and auditions are expected to be held from the end of this month.



**Student Group 19
in class**



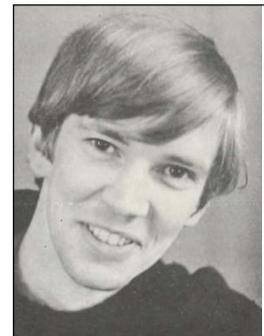
**Student Group 19
February 1966
STUDENT ONE ACT PLAYS**

**THE OTHER SON by Luigi Pirandello
A NIGHT OUT by Harold Pinter
THE RED VELVET GOAT by Josephine Niggli**



The cast of this triple bill included **Jillyann Healy, Sonia and David Pearson, John Turner and Michael Langridge.**

Also appearing for only the second time on the Questors stage (the first being as a "walk on" in **The Silver King** (1965) where he nearly brought the show to a stop by missing an entrance - "*I was putting my makeup on, actually*") was **Richard Gaunt**, who was a first year student in Group 20 at the time, a future leading actor and editor of **Questopics** as well as a core member of the **Coarse Acting** team.



STUDENTS' ONE-ACT PLAYS

(Extract from Questopics)

The growth and success of the Questors Theatre, like any other society, depends upon the constant influx of new faces and new personalities. Each year at this time Questor members have the opportunity of seeing the production of three one-act plays by those students who are in their final year of training. In a few months' time many of them will be joining the main acting group, and, if past history is anything to go by, will soon be displaying their talents both regularly and creditably on the Questors stage.

Here, then, is the chance to have a preview of what is to come; a chance to see these young people in their first production and to pick from them a face or personality which in the future may very well become one of Questors leading performers.



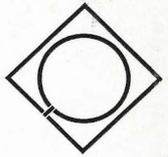
**Student Group 19
in
A NIGHT OUT**



**Student Group 19
in
THE OTHER SON**

**Student Group 19
in
THE RED VELVET GOAT**





THE QUESTORS THEATRE

FIRST PERFORMANCE
WEDNESDAY, 23rd FEBRUARY, 1966

STUDENT ONE ACT PLAYS

A NIGHT OUT

by Harold Pinter

Mrs. Stokes	JILLYANN HEALY
The Girl	VERONICA BEND
Eileen	PATSY FEATHERS
Joyce	SONIA DOWDEN
Betty	HELEN SOROKOU
Albert	JAMES HARROP
Sealey	JOHN TURNER
Kedde	CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR
Gidney	LAURENCE PHILLIPS
Mr. King	DAVID PEARSON
Freda	CHARLEEN AGOSTINI
Old Man	TREVOR HOPKINS
Barrow	TONY GARNER
Home	RICHARD GAUNT
Mr. Ryan	JULIAN TAYLER

The action of the play is continuous.

INTERVAL of fifteen minutes

THE OTHER SON

by Luigi Pirandello (translated by Frederick May)

Margherita	HELEN SOROKOU
Ninfa	CHARLEEN AGOSTINI
Marassunta	DIANA DEVLIN
Marinise	ROSALINDE NISSEL
Galuzza	JILLYANN HEALY
Tuzza La Dia	VERONICA BEND
Rocco Trupia	JULIAN TAYLER
Jaco Spina	TREVOR HOPKINS
Tino Ligreci	LAURENCE PHILLIPS
The Doctor	MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
Caticchio	MORRIS ROSEN

Music specially composed by DAVID POPE

INTERVAL of five minutes

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking in the auditorium.

THE RED VELVET COAT

by Josephina Niggli

Mariana	DIANA DEVLIN
Ester	SONIA DOWDEN
Lola	ROSALINDE NISSEL
Carmen	PATSY FEATHERS
Dona Berta	CHARLEEN AGOSTINI
Esteban	TREVOR HOPKINS
Lorenzo	LAURENCE PHILLIPS
Ramon	JULIAN TAYLER
Don Pepe	DAVID PEARSON
Villagers	RICHARD GAUNT, JAMES HARROP, JOHN TURNER, CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR, HELEN SOROKOU, VERONICA BEND, TONY GARNER, JILLYANN HEALY

Applause music composed by DAVID DAVIS

The plays produced by MICHAEL HODDELL

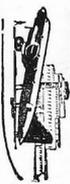
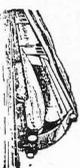
Assisted by AUDREY HEWLETT

Settings and Costumes designed by SHEILA SORLEY

For the Student One Act Plays :-

Stage Manager	TOM BLEASDALE
Deputy Stage Manager	OLIVIA MURTAGH
Assistant Stage Managers	BARRY TOLKIEN, MICHAEL JACOBS, PETER WALL, ANNE FRYE, DAVID SMITH, ERIC WILLIAMS, CHRISTINE REID (Cont.)

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Middlesex County Times

4 March 1966

THREE PLAYS THAT DIDN'T COME OFF

With the best will in the world, I have to report that, in the Questors' students' triple-bill, directed by Michael Hoddell last week, I found the first segment wrongheaded and inadequate; the second ineffably dull; and the third, unentertainingly trivial.

The saddest failure was the opening piece, Pinter's "**A Night Out**," since it was the only good play of the trio. Pinter is one of those dramatists (Racine and Noel

Coward are others) who positively demand a particular, rigid form of stylization in performance, by virtuoso actors alert to every demi-semi-quaver of class-consciousness, sarcasm, colloquialism, verbal poetry, sexuality, and threatened violence in the author's scrupulous text.

The secret of Pinter's art is that his apparently naturalistic writing is in reality subtly and mesmerically formalised. Played accordingly, "**A Night Out**" is a painfully gripping study of an over-mothered youth.

For the naively old-fashioned naturalism of the Questors' production, which reduced the drama almost to the level of a henpecked music-hall joke, I'm inclined to blame less Mr Hoddell than the limitations of the student cast.

POSSESSIVE

Jillyann Healy sketched a strident, shallow and unconvincing cartoon idea of a

possessive older woman, whilst James Harrop, as her son, similarly sounded a single caricatured note of gaucherie, missing the character's deepest frustrations and eruptive savagery.

The rest of the evening was Mediterranean, with a vengeance. Lamb tried all his life to like Scotsmen: I have been trying for a fair slice of mine to like Pirandello. But he still appears to me to beat Beckett by a neck (Beckett's neck buried in sand, of course) for the wooden spoon as the twentieth century's most criminally overrated playwright.

"**The other Son**" is a peasant melodrama, chock-a-block with black-shawled old crones witting doomily around stirring stews and the cast was quite unable to prevent it seeing the swiftest soporific since Seconal.

UNFUNNY

The same sentiments applied, too, to the last item of this eminently forgettable three-decker: "**The Red Velvet Goat**" (yes, goat, not coat: such is the quality of the humour), by one Josephina Niggli. A doggedly unfunny tale of ham Thespians it only served to remind us (as if we needed the reminder) how genuinely funny are the mechanicals of "**A Midsummer Night's Dream**". The Mattock-lane Thesps postured through it with a stentorian and inexplicable enthusiasm.

DOUGLAS McVAY

**Student Group 19
July 1966**

RING ROUND THE MOON



QUESTOPICS

July 1966

STUDENTS' MOON SHOT

'**Ring Round the Moon**' was the first of Anouilh's play to be presented successfully on the London stage. It was produced at the Globe Theatre in 1950 by Peter Brook who attributed much of its success to Christopher Fry's unique ability to capture the original charm of the French and translate it into English.

Originally entitled "**L'Invitation au Chateau**", it was written in the tradition of the comedia dell'arte, a style not as familiar to the English audience as to the French, and with its translation into English came the problem of deciding what sort of play it really was. Fry discarded the suggestion of comedy, farce, or even ballet, and dreamt up the sub-title 'A charade with music'.

With this in mind, the audience is transported at will into a delightful fairy story world where animated characters dance and play among the ferns and twinkling lights of a winter garden.

The young actors who are themselves delighted with the play, bring to the production a joyful animation which will in turn delight the audience, while the setting, by Sheila Sorley, and costumes designed by Jacci Learner, harmonise to conjure up visions of pre-First World War French chateau society at its most delightfully decadent.

There is no message, no teaching and no moralising; it is, to quote The Times: "An exhilarating little fairy tale full of laughing grace, with its sentiment cleverly masked by cool, brittle, elegant mockery".



Michael Hoddell whose production of '**Ring Round the Moon**' represents the culmination of two years intensive study by the Cast, has been working with the Questors Student Group since 1960. At Mattock Lane he derives most satisfaction from "working with people whose enthusiasm is equal to one's own".

"Approaching forty" Michael left the Fleet Air Arm in 1947 and after a spell with ENSA and then of stage management at Watford Rep. spent a year at the Central School of Speech and Drama. He later taught speech and drama in various schools. Having completed a British Drama League Course for Producers, he was co-founder of an amateur group called London Little Theatre where he produced and acted for three years. He was then appointed Producer at Goldsmith College (where he met his wife) and later Head of the Drama Department of a Comprehensive School.

He lives at Bourne End with his wife and three small children. He is a very familiar figure on British Railways' Western Region, for in addition to travelling to Ealing three or four times per week, he commutes each day to Paddington en route for one of the North London suburbs where he is now deputy head of a comprehensive school.

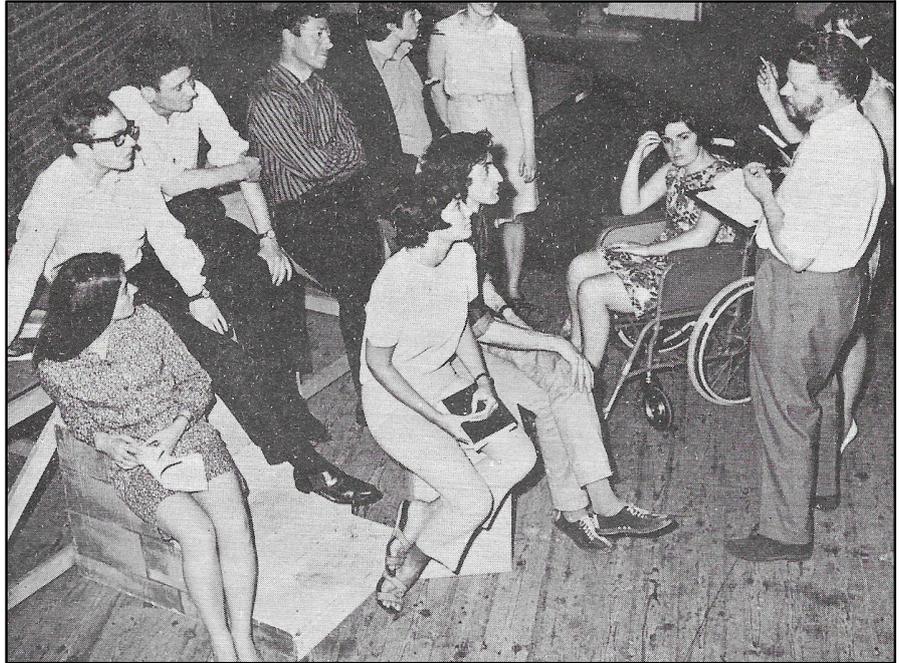
The Students

One of the Pillars of Questors, Michael Hoddell will be known only by name to most of our members. The inclusion of his photograph in Questotopics now that we are using a new printing process, will enable you to put a face to him in future. All this emphasis on Students will also we hope assist in convincing you that the work to which Michael Hoddell devotes so much of his spare time is worthy of your support at least to the extent of attending one of the performances of 'Ring Round the Moon'

The Students' performances in '**Ring Round the Moon**' represent only part of the work put in each week by the Questors' students and their teachers. This is an enormously important side of The Questors of which the general membership is not always aware.

Students embark on a two year course, the entrance to which is by means of an audition and interview. There is no age limit, and the course is open to anyone who can satisfy the directors of the Course as to his or her potential. About 25 students are admitted to the first year each September. These will have been selected from upwards of 60 applicants.

During the first year the Students spend 1½ hours per week on voice production with **Derek Harmer Morris**; one hour on movement (**Ludmila Mlada**) and 2½ hours per week on acting, directed by **Alfred Emmet**. Discussion and interchange of ideas are encouraged to stimulate the Students' interest in drama generally.



Only 12 of the first year's students are selected to go forward

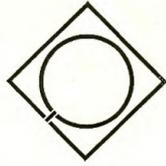
for the demanding second year of the course. This top-flight dozen continue with training in the basic skills of the actor, but now add 5½ hours per week on acting with **Michael Hoddell** from which emerge actual productions of three one-act plays every February and a major full length play in July such as the forthcoming production of '**Ring Round the Moon**'.

Apart from helping students to develop their own personalities and teaching them the essential techniques of the actor, the Student Group acts as a 'seed bed' for future acting members. In the New Plays Festival last month for example, probably not many members realized that among the cast lists was an impressive number of quite recently graduated students - **John Turner, Wendy Stone, Michael Langridge, Carol Allen, Monyene Kane** among them. What is probably even less well known is the fact that actors and actresses who have been part of The Questors scene for more years than they care to remember first joined The Questors as students - **Sylvia Estop, Dorothy Barber, Edward Pitt, Ruth Tremayne Smith, Tony Barber, Jo Irvin, Helen Blatch, Sandra Healy** to name but a few.



**Student Group 19
in
RING ROUND
THE MOON**





THE QUESTORS THEATRE
FIRST PERFORMANCE
SATURDAY, 23rd JULY, 1966

RING ROUND THE MOON

(A Charade with Music)
by Jean Anouilh, translated by Christopher Fry

Joshua, a crumpling butler LAURENCE PHILLIPS
Hugo, a young man-about-town KEITH GODMAN
Frederic, his twin brother KEITH GODMAN
in love with
Diana Messerschmann, engaged to Frederic SONIA DOWDEN
secretly in love with Hugo
Lady India, Messerschmann's mistress CHARLEEN ACOSTINI
secretly in love with
Parrice Bombelles, Messerschmann's secretive secretary TREVOR HOPKINS
Madame Desmores, Aunt to Hugo, Frederic and Lady India ... DIANA DEVLIN
Capulet, her faded companion VERONICA BREND
Messerschmann, Diana's father, a melancholy millionaire JULIAN TAYLER
Romainville, a lepidopterist JAMES HARROP
patron of
Isabelle, a ballet dancer HELEN SOROKO
Her Mother, a teacher of the pianoforte JILLYANN HEALEY
A General TONY GARNER
Footmen HUBERT BLACKMORE, PETER WALL
Directed by MICHAEL HODDELL
Associate Director AUDREY HEWLETT
Set designed by SHEILA SORLEY
Costumes designed by JACQUELINE LEARNER
Music composed by RICHARD ADDINSELL

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking
in the auditorium

The action of the play passes in a Winter Garden in Spring

ACT I
Scene 1 Morning
Scene 2 The same evening, before the Ball
ACT II
The same evening: the Ball
ACT III
Scene 1 The same evening, after supper
Scene 2 Dawn
There will be an interval of 15 minutes between Acts 1 and 2, and one of five minutes between Acts 2 and 3.

For 'Ring Round the Moon':

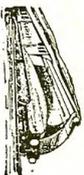
Stage Manager JOHN WINDER, I. D. MALONEY
Lighting TOM BLEASDALE
Sound STEWART PENNEY
Props BARRY CLARKE, FRANK HILLIER
Wardrobe RITA FROST, JACQUELINE PINCHIN
Set constructed by MAIRE STEADMAN, HILDA COLLINS
Assistants in all departments ... ANN FRY, DIANE WILLIAMS,
PETER WALL, HUBERT BLACKMORE, STEWART PENNEY,
GEORGE RICHARD & CHRISTOPHER BENN,
ROGER HARTILL, BARRY TOLKIEN, MARK MORAN,
JULIUS THURGOOD, MARGARET MCKENZIE,
CHRISTINE REID, VALERIE HUNT, CAROLE SPENCER,
LIZ WOODHOUSE

Tutors to the Student Group LUDMILLA MLADA,
DEREK HARMER-MORRIS

Thanks are due to William Wood & Sons of Taplow, for their
kind loan of the garden furniture.

Stage Director TONY SHIPLEY

Sandwiches and coffee are available in the Bernard Shaw Room
before performances, and refreshments will be served there during
the first interval.



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The Middlesex County Times

22 July 1966

**They Make a Ring
Round Anno Domini**

TWO years' intensive study will reach a climax tomorrow (Saturday) with the premier at Ealing Questors Theatre of Jean Anouilh's "**Ring Round the Moon**" presented by the theatre's Student Production Group.

The production will represent for some of the students taking part, the threshold of the wider theatrical world ahead.

This workshop for young actors has reaped outstanding benefits at Questors. As the theatre's young mentor and director, Michael Hoddell, puts it: "We are trying to establish at Questors a backcloth against which young actors can develop their own personalities, and to teach them the essential techniques of the actor."

VITAL YOUTH

Mr Alfred Emmet, Questors director, says; "Youth plays a vital part in the future plans for this theatre. We do all in our power to encourage and nurture potential acting talent on a sound foundation. The student group acts as a form of 'seed bed' for future acting members."

A nursery or indoctrination centre for budding actors, the group is also a shop

window for up and coming actors. At last month's New Plays Festival, for example, the casts included talent recently graduated from the student courses and training, including John Turner and Wendy Stone.

This year's crop of enthusiastic students will include more winners if its interpretation of Anouilh's play is any guide.

A CHARADE

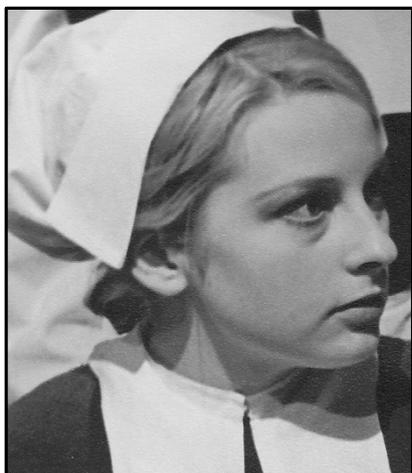
They have brought a joyfully animated savoir faire to this "charade with music."

Director Michael Hoddell in fact, spends 5½ hours per week teaching his young actors the basic principles of the profession and stimulating the interest in acting.

Net result is a major full-length play, such as the much-awaited "Ring Round the Moon," and three one-act plays to be performed next February.

STUDENT GROUP 20 (1965-1967)

24 students were selected (10 men and 14 women) out of the 43 who were auditioned, and of the 19 rejected, 6 were recommended to enter the Young Questors. 11 of the first year students were accepted into the second year along with **Roger de Toney** and **Jacquelin Pinchin** from the Group 19 first year.



Also among the first year students were **Richard Gaunt**, **Ann Bevan** (left), and **Lyn Jones** (right) - all long standing Questors actors - and **Michael Healy** who didn't progress to the second year but returned as an acting member in 1980.



There was also a young woman in the first year who didn't remain with The Questors very long but made a name for herself in a completely different field - **Vivienne Westwood**.

Student Group 20
February 1967

THE DAMASK DRUM
by Yukio Mishima
POISON, PASSION
AND PETRIFICATION
by Bernard Shaw
A PHOENIX TOO
FREQUENT
by Christopher Fry





**Student Group 20
in
POISON, PASSION AND
PETRIFICATION**



**Student Group 20
in
THE DAMASK DRUM**





THE QUESTORS THEATRE

FIRST PERFORMANCE
WEDNESDAY, 22nd FEBRUARY, 1967

A PHOENIX TOO FREQUENT

by Christopher Fry

Dynamene VIRGINIA BROWN
Doto MARILYN JONES
Legens TONY GARNER

THE DAMASK DRUM

by Yukio Mishima

Kayoko CYNTHIA RIDOUT
Madame ANN BEVAN
Fuyama GEORGINA SKILTON
Hanako JACKIE PINCHIN
Assistant
Iwakichi ROGER DE TONY
Toyama PHILIP IRVING
Kameko HUBERT BLACKMORE

POISON, PASSION AND PETRAFACTION

by C. B. Shaw

Magnesia Fitzfollemasho GEORGINA SKILTON
Phyllis CYNTHIA RIDOUT
Lanrlady ANN BEVAN
Adolphus TONY GARNER
Fitz ROGER DE TONY
P.C. PHILIP IRVING
Doctor HUBERT BLACKMORE
3 Angels JACKIE PINCHIN,
MARILYN JONES, VIRGINIA BROWN

The three plays directed by MICHAEL HODDELL
Assisted by AUDREY HEWLETT
Set designed by SHEILA SORLEY
Costumes designed by JACQUELINE LEARNER

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking
in the auditorium.

Stage Manager Tom Bleasdale
Deputy Stage Managers Ann Frye, Peter Wall
Wardrobe Ann Flack, June Lowe, Liz Symon
Sound Barry Clark, David Evans
Lighting John Winder, Dennis Maloney, Michael Wilson
Properties Joan Saunders, Marie Crabbe
Assistants in all Departments Clive Booth, Nigel Cowell,
Richard Gaunt, John Goldman, Jim Moss, Dick Bennett,
Kevin Fells, Joy Peacocke, Diana Slee

Angelic host by courtesy of the choir of Holy Trinity, Tulse Hill.

TUTORS TO THE STUDENT GROUP

Ludmila Mlada Derek Harmer-Morris

Stage Director TONY SHIPLEY

Coming shortly

THE CORRUPTIBLE CROWN

Richard III is possibly the most controversial character in English history. For most people his image is that of the arch-enemy of Shakespeare's play. But it is almost certain that, however wonderful a play he wrote, Shakespeare got his history wrong. The truth of Richard, and his determined attempt to rule with justice and mercy, defeated by treason, makes no less dramatic a story. From this Lydia Ragosin has fashioned the first of her two plays—"A Cry of Treason".

The second play, "A Crown for the Strong", deals with the early part of the reign of Henry VII. His struggle was in part against the power of the dead Richard, but he also tried in his own way to rule without recourse to violence. In this he also failed.

The two plays together give a lively and enlightening picture of the last two decades of the 15th Century. But the theme, the corrupting effect of the struggle for power, though hardly a new one, is as vital and pertinent as ever.

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In his effusive review of this production, the reviewer in the County Times typified the Questors student as "*animated, highly eloquent and knowledgeable*" as epitomised by **Lyn Jones** in her performance as Doto in **A Phoenix Too Frequent**.

The Middlesex County Times

3 March 1967

STARLETS ON SHOW AT QUESTORS

The Annual students' production at Questors Theatre, Ealing has always proved an exciting shop window from which to spot stars of the future. This year's presentation, which ended on Saturday was no exception. It offered a galaxy of potential stars.

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

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

STILL LEARNING

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

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

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

It was Roger's uncle, Michael McOwan, a pillar of LAMDA, who suggested Tony join Questors, He had previously been working as a scene shifter in a Guernsey repertory theatre.

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

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

WORKS BACKSTAGE

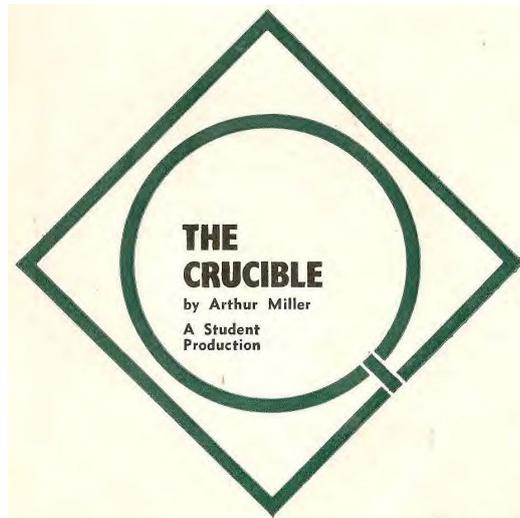
A member of the Props Committee, she has made a name for herself working backstage, also. Her range of talent stood up remarkably well to the challenge of a Japanese characterization. "Jackie" Pinchin is a name to remember and a talent to nurture.

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

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

**Student Group 20
July 1967**

THE CRUCIBLE



This was the second of three student productions of **The Crucible**, although the first, by **Group 13** in 1960, was only an extract. The third was by **Group 35** in 1982 and was followed by two further productions by the main acting company in 1999 and 2015.

**QUESTOPICS
(July 1967)**

**JULY PRODUCTION
THE CRUCIBLE**

(A Pro-Fusion of Students)

*As members will recall from the Student One-Act plays in January, this is quite a vintage year for students. Add to this fact a soupcon of talented ex-students – **Mike Langridge, John Turner and David Pearson** among them, and you have a sure recipe for an enjoyable evening. What better way could there be to end the 1966/67 Questors season than by supporting the Students in their first main venture in the Theatre – **Michael Hoddell's** production of "The Crucible". **David Pearson**, an ex-student himself, writes on this page about the play.*

Like Trofimov in "The Cherry Orchard", some of us are eternal students. Each year since I graduated I have returned to the womb for a student production. The attraction is an excitement, a sense of occasion and a team spirit which is seldom found elsewhere. It is a particular pleasure to join the students in a play as magnificent as "The Crucible".

Salem in the spring of 1692. This little Puritan community in the wooded hinterland of the Massachusetts Bay Colony worked the soil of the new continent under the stern eye of an austere church. The villagers' lives were dedicated to sanctity, and children were denied any outlet for their natural energies. Fear, guilt and frustration bubbled under the calm surface of this society. One night a group of young girls danced naked in the woods. In the days that followed, a flood of terror swept through Salem. Innocent and bewildered citizens were taken from their homes, tried and slaughtered. The devil possessed the girls and there was no defence for their victims. Twenty people died.

The impact of the Salem witch hunt has lasted through the centuries. It is a terrifying reminder of man's inhumanity to man. From the verbatim records of the trials the characters of the accusers and victims emerge as clearly as those of people we know. This is the fascination of Salem.

Arthur Miller had known the story for many years before McCarthyism arrived and it had always remained "an inexplicable darkness" to him. But then he too found himself 'cried out' on. He too was caught up in an atmosphere of public terror, of fear cut off from reason, of the guilt which destroys individual conscience and creates a new subjective reality under the control of higher authority. His masterpiece "The Crucible" is the result of this insight.



At the first performance in this country, at the Bristol Old Vic in 1953, "the audience reacted as if someone had thrown a firecracker into the audience". The fuse is lit once more with **Michael Hoddell's** production with the Second Year Student Group in July. This is the culmination of two year's work in acting, speech and movement. In the first year, the students learn the principles of acting under the benign direction of **Alfred Emmet**. The methods used are broadly based on Stanislavski's teachings - the methodical application of imagination to characters and dramatic situations and the training of the voice and body as expressive instruments. Theory is translated into practice by means of improvisations, which, when they work, are for me the most fascinating and rewarding of all theatrical

experience. The students who are accepted into the second year apply what they have learnt to the written play.

The present group was 'blooded' in the one act plays seen in February. "The Crucible" is the final test before the audition for the main acting group. Most of the students will apply for an audition, and their performances in "The Crucible" could decide whether or not they are seen on the Questors stage again. The choice of play is therefore a matter of the highest importance. Everyone must be given a fair chance to display his talents. It is not easy to find a suitable play. The array of strong parts in "The Crucible" makes it an excellent choice. Apart from that, it is a play which the students should do well. The strength of student group productions lies not so much in quality of individual performances but in the group acting. The students have worked and played together for two years, and developed an understanding, a sympathy, which emerges in their acting. The impact of "The Crucible" largely depends on the creation of a highly-charged atmosphere of mass hysteria, which itself demands group acting of a high order. The success of "**Dark of the Moon**" three years ago gave evidence of student aptitude for religious hysteria. The proximity of the auditions probably helps.

A brief introduction to the newcomers: The sweet, deadly ringleader of the possessed girls, Abigail Williams is played by **Marilyn Jones**. Lyn will be remembered for her delightful Doto in the February student production of "**A Phoenix Too Frequent!**" Two

of her companions in homicide are **Cynthia Ridout**, a LAMDA gold medallist, and **Ann Bevan**, film extra, who hopes to join a repertory theatre. **Richard Gaunt**, a solicitor in the making, faces the wrong end of a justice gone mad as John Proctor, the defiant hero of "The Crucible". His wife, Elizabeth, is played by another LAMDA gold medallist, **Georgina Skilton**, who leaves for Philadelphia in the autumn for two years of medical social work. Attractive **Jacqueline Pinchin** (the revolting Mrs Ann Putman) is off in the other direction, to Hong Kong. The husband she leaves in Salem is **Philip Irving**. The two Reverend gentlemen, Parris and Hale, are portrayed by **Roger de Toney** and **Tony Garner**, who is subsequently seeking sanctuary in the Rose Bruford Drama School. **Hubert Blackmore**, as Ezekiel Cheever, rounds off the Second Year Student Group.

The cast is completed by 3 first year students and 6 ex-students – all refugees from "Dark of the Moon". The latter have all had some experience in the main acting group, but this does not mean that "The Crucible" is in any sense less of a student production. We 'old boys' are just as much a product of student group tuition as the present bunch. True we had fallen into the slack ways of the outside world, but here we are – caught up in a fine play – surrounded by an enthusiastic cast simply dripping 'units and objectives' – bullied and coaxed by our bearded mentor of yore, **Michael Hoddell**, assisted by not-so-bearded **Diana Devlin** – placed on a scaffold, the stark, simple (and so right) setting by **John Rolfe** – and terrorised by the wildest girls in swinging London. Rehearsals have never frightened me so much. It tones up the muscles no end.

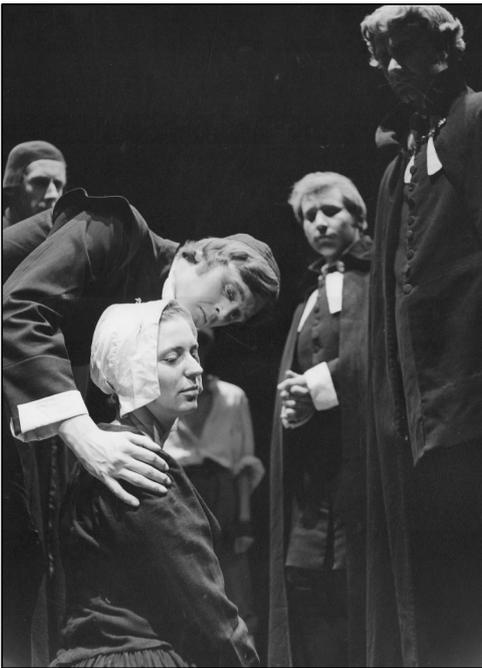
DAVID PEARSON, the writer of the feature article in this issue, joined Questors as a student in 1962. He had already played a wide variety of parts for The Players, Isleworth, but "wanted to start from scratch – Stanislavsky and all that" with Questors. He is one of the few students in recent years who, having shown considerable talent, has not gone on to RADA or one of the other professional schools. "All the fun would go out of acting if I had to make my living by it!" Thus he is happy to be a successful Civil Servant (in the Ministry of Defence) during the day and to devote a large proportion of his spare time to acting at Questors.



Having played Preacher Haggler in "**Dark of the Moon**" during his last year as a student he sailed through an audition for acting membership in the main group and played his first major role as Colonel Jeffrey in Mike Green's revival of **Sweeney Todd**. He firmly established himself as a 'natural' melodrama actor last Christmas as Harry Hallyard's partner Jo in "**My Poll**". In between he has played in "**Fairy Tales of New York**" (three parts), "**Macbeth**" and "**The Beaux Stratagem**" (Gibbet).

Currently he is writing a play. When pressed to explain the plot, he said he wasn't sure what it was although Alfred had expressed 'some' interest three years ago. In "The Crucible" he plays Giles Corey.

**Student Group 20
in
THE CRUCIBLE**





The following review by "C.C." in the *County Times* is a bit confused. Either a portion of his review was edited out or he simply wasn't paying attention! It was, of course, not Rev Parris but John Proctor (played by **Richard Gaunt**) who ends up in jail and "chooses death and honour."

The Middlesex County Times

28 July 1967

**Questors invoke Satanism
in 1692 America**

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

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

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

The choice of play is sensible, requiring

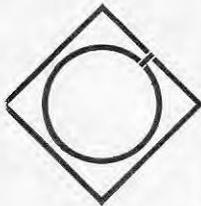
young actors and actresses with energy and ability to induce a Satanic stage atmosphere.

In the play, the God-fearing town of Salem discovers that its young girls have nightly danced naked around a fire. Some have been forced to drink blood. Others have yelled curses on respected villagers – including the Rev. Mr. Pariss, played by Roger de Toney.

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

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

C.C.



THE QUESTORS THEATRE

FIRST PERFORMANCE

SATURDAY, 22nd JULY, 1967

THE CRUCIBLE

by Arthur Miller

Betty Parris CYNTHIA RIDOUT
 Reverend Samuel Parris ROGER DE TONEY
 Titubah, a serving woman RETA SAXTON-HOWES
 Abigail Williams MARILYN JONES
 Susannah Walcott JANE RHYDOUT
 Mrs. Ann Putnam JACQUELINE PINCHIN
 Thomas Putnam PHILIP IRVING
 Mercy Lewis PAULINE BRADY
 Mary Warren ANN BEVAN
 John Proctor RICHARD GAUNT
 Rebecca Nurse WINIFRED FRASER
 Giles Corey DAVID PEARSON
 Reverend John Hale ANTHONY GARNER
 Elizabeth Proctor GEORGINA SKILTON
 Francis Nurse JOHN TURNER
 Ezekiel Cheever HUBERT BLACKMORE
 Marshal Willard MARTIN RUTHERFORD
 Judge Hathorne STANLEY GOODCHILD
 Deputy Governor Danforth MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
 Sarah Good JACQUELINE PINCHIN
 Constable Hopkins PHILIP IRVING

Directed by MICHAEL HODDELL

Associate Director DIANA DEVLIN

Designed by JOHN ROLFE

The action takes place in the community of Salem, Massachusetts in the Spring of 1692.

ACT ONE

Scene 1 A bedroom in the house of the Rev. Samuel Parris
 Scene 2 John Proctor's house, 8 days later

INTERVAL

ACT TWO

Scene 1 Salem Meeting House, 2 weeks later
 Scene 2 A cell in Salem jail, 3 months later

Stage Manager DIANE WILLIAMS

Deputy Stage Manager PETER WALL

Lighting JOHN WINDER and DENIS MALONEY

Sound BARRY CLARKE and GRAHAM EVANS

Wardrobe JOAN PYLE and KATIE BLACKFORD

Props KATH HARRINGTON and ADRIENNE VINSON

Constructor BOB STOCK

Assistants in all departments FRANCES ALLEN,
 RICHARD BROADHURST, ROGER COWARD,
 CAROLINE CHAPMAN, ROGER HARTHILL,
 ROSEMARY ISAACS, WENDY LEAR,
 BRIAN MOAKES, JIM PHELAN,
 LIZ SYMON, ROBIN TROWSDALE

Tutors to the Student Group LUDMILLA MLADA
 DEREK HARMER-MORRIS

Stage Director TONY SHIPLEY

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STUDENT GROUP 21 (1966-1968)

Described in QUESTOPICS as "a particularly promising and attractive group," Group 21 included **Barbara Butters** (destined to be the mother of our current Artistic Director); **Cherry Kane**, Monyene's younger sister; **Kevin Fells**, a regular on our stage until the late 1970's; and **Richard Halberstadt** (left), fresh from the Young Questors group and a continuing presence on our stage, in the director's chair and generally behind-the-scenes right up until his recent untimely death.

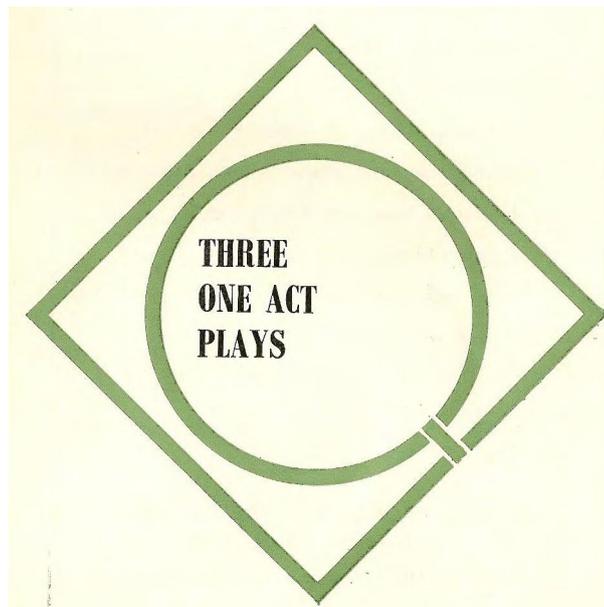
Robin Ingram (right) also appeared on the roll call for this and Group 22's first-year, although he didn't make it into a second year. But that didn't matter because he had already established himself as an indispensable young Questors actor in half a dozen productions prior to this and went on to chalk up over a hundred appearances on our stage - and is still going strong!

The soon to be award-winning film director **Alan Clarke**, who was currently causing ripples at The Questors, stood in for Alfred Emmet while he was away and took the first year acting classes - how exciting that must have been.



Student Group 21 February 1968

CALL ME A LIAR by John Mortimer
THE GIRL by Norman Trevor
THE MAYOR OF TORONTAL by Gwynneth Jones



Special February Production
STUDENTS SHOP WINDOW

Have you ever envied the Questors' greybeards — those pillars of the establishment who pour out reminiscences in the Grapevine at each other. "Yes, I remember the first time Harold set foot on the Questors' stage. He rushed in, fell over the sofa and bent his scabbard." It's easy, and the beer is good. All you need to start is a ticket for the Student Group one-act plays in February. Here are some of the stars of the future. They are a particularly promising and attractive group. The three plays have been carefully chosen to display their undoubted talents and to provide an absorbing and varied evening's entertainment. Each student is given the chance to prove his mettle in at least two contrasting parts.

"CALL ME A LIAR" by John Mortimer is a telling study of the loneliness of a self-created extrovert. The kaleidoscopic episodes in the love-life of the main character are created in an ingenious simultaneous setting by **Sheila Sorley**. The main parts are played by **Cherry Kane** and **Nick Hunt**, both of whom are well-established figures at Questors. Nick appeared in a number of productions, and Cherry is the sister of ex-student **Monyene Kane**. The other major role is taken by **Martin Rutherford**, who was Perkin Warbeck in **"A Crown for the Strong"** and a murderer in **"Macbeth"**. Film goers may also spot him in "The Billion Dollar Brain" and "Oliver".

The second play, **"THE MAYOR OF TORONTAL"**, has been described as a comedy in the style of Tchekov. Although this may be a little presumptuous, it is a delightful fantasy which gives the whole cast a chance to enjoy themselves and to share their enjoyment with the audience. The setting is an imaginary Central European town about 1890 which is thrown into an indignant furore by the machinations of a beautiful femme fatale. The harrassed mayor is played by **Richard Halberstadt**, a lecturer in Law, who was a Young Questor. **Pauline Brady**, one of the trouble-making young ladies in the last student production, **"The Crucible"**, stirs up more trouble as the lovely Madame Baranya. Ranged against her, with claws flashing, are **Barbara Butters**, **Liz Symon** and **Avril Lotinga**. As an exercise in style, the play is a challenge to the students.

The last play, **"THE GIRL"** by William Trevor, was originally produced on ITV last August Bank Holiday. **Michael Hoddell** was greatly impressed by it and saw it as ideal material for the students. So he persuaded the author to write a stage version specially for the Questors. So this is the stage premier of a play which deals sympathetically yet realistically with the conflicting attitudes of two generations. The callousness of youth and the unbending lack of comprehension of their elders are contrasted sharply in this story of the intrusion into a peaceful middle-class home by a young girl who brings in her wake a gang of hooligans bent on violence and destruction for kicks. The pathos of the attempt by this apparently sophisticated but basically naive girl to communicate with a world far beyond her is the task set **Jane Ridout**, the youngest member of the group and another Young Questor. The brow beaten head of the household is played by **Kevin Fells**. His wife is

played by **Hilary Ellwood**, who was heard, if not seen, as the singer in "**Mother Courage**". **Paul O'Connor** a wild Irish architect and the only married man in the group, plays the leader of the young tearaways. "**The Girl**" provides fascinating end to what promises to be an entertaining and satisfying evening of theatre.

All three plays are produced by **Michael Hoddell**, assisted by **Jill Champion-Torrance** with sets designed by **Sheila Sorley**, constructed by **Bob Stock**. Wardrobe is in the capable hands of **Jacqueline Learner**, and lighting is by **John Winder**.

Members free seats are available for this triple bill but you should note that there are only four performances and that the first night is on Wednesday the 21st February.

The Middlesex County Times
16 February 1968

Students to stage play from ITV

"**THE GIRL**", a one-act play by William Trevor, will receive its stage premiere at the Questors Theatre as one of three one-act plays to be presented by the Questors Student Group from February 21 to 24.

Originally produced by I.T.V. last August Bank Holiday, "The Girl" was seen by Questors' producer Michael Hoddell, who considered it ideal material for the students. He persuaded the author to write a special stage version.

The play deals with the conflicting attitudes of two generations. The callousness of youth and the unbending lack of comprehension of their elders are contrasted sharply.

Other plays to be presented are "**Call me a Liar**" by John Mortimer, in which the main parts are played by Cherry Kane and Nick Hunt, and "The Mayor of Torontal", by Gwynneth Jones, which has been described as a comedy in the style of Tchekov.

The Middlesex County Times
1 March 1968

STUDENT ACTORS DESERVE A CLAP

THE QUESTORS Theatre Student Group is to be congratulated not only on its performance, but on its choice of the three one act plays presented at the group at the theatre last week. The play provided a wide choice of characters, all within the capabilities of the students.

"**Call Me a Liar**" was perhaps the most disappointing. Originally written for television, it called for a snappy pace. I felt the players took the script a little too slow and easy. The acting did not come up to the standard shown in the following two plays, with the exception of Martin Rutherford, who gave a telling character study of a businessman who has not spoken to his wife for years although they live in the same house.

Gwynneth Jones' "**The Mayor of Torontal**" was an excellent piece of work. Richard Halbertstadt as the tubby, bumbling Mayor, established himself as an up and coming comic actor and Martin Rutherford's talent was again evident.

Avril Lotting, who made a brief appearance in "**Call me a Liar**", was well cast as Zucka Szabadka, a dizzy and amorous wife.

"**The Girl**", by William Trevor, a slightly black comedy, showing the unexpected results 17 years after one 'debauched night in the life of an otherwise respectable suburban husband, was skilfully directed by Michael Hoddell, and there were fine performances from a versatile cast.

THE STAGE

Questors triple-bill

IN the triple bill presented by the Questors' Student Group at the Questors, Ealing, on February 21, the work of greatest interest was the stage premiere of William Trevor's television play "**The Girl**", adapted by the author for this company.

The theme of the reactions of an ultra-respectable suburban family when a young girl turns up with a valid claim to being the husband's illegitimate daughter makes excellent theatre and provided the students with emotional opportunities of which they took every advantage. Kevin Fells, as the quiet husband whose image, in the eyes of his wife and sister-in-law, has been brought to ruin, gave a sensitive portrayal of shame and rejection of responsibility and Hilary Ellwood also did well as the wife faced with the thought that her childlessness might be a deficiency in herself and not, as she had always assumed, in her husband.

MAIDEN SISTER

Pauline Brady succeeded in lifting the part of the primly salacious maiden sister out of its usual rut and was both amusing and convincing. The character of Felicity Mellors, the teenager who, for kicks, turns up each week-end at the home of one of her possible fathers and lets in her "gang" to break things up, was played with finesse and feeling by Jane Rhydout.

The bill opened with a stage version of another television play, John Mortimer's "**Call Me a Liar**", which seemed less at ease in this medium, as the company did in the play.

Gwynneth Jones's "**The Mayor of Torontal**", an amusing little farce almost in the French style in which a pompous mayor tries to sort out the village's matrimonial tangles, gave pleasant opportunities for some clever comedy playing to Richard Halberstadt, Avril Lotting, Martin Rutherford, Barbara Butters and Pauline Brady.

Michael Hoddell, who directed all three plays, varied the styles very satisfyingly and kept the pace going well.

L.G.S.



**Student Group 21
in
THE MAYOR OF
TORONTO**



**Student Group 21
in
CALL ME A LIAR**



**Student Group 21
in
THE GIRL**

The Questor's Student Group presents

CALL ME A LIAR

by John Mortimer

Martha Heinz CHERRY KANE
Sammy Noles NICHOLAS HUNT
Landlady BARBARA BUTTERS
Lady Boarder JANE RHYDOUT
Business Man CHRISTOPHER LEY
Professional Man KEVIN FELLS
Mr. Pheeming MARTIN RUTHERFORD
Dr. Bowker RICHARD HALBERSTADT
Swedish Girl ELIZABETH SYMON
Bar Girl AVRIL LOTINGA
Man in Bar PAUL O'CONNOR
Club Members ROSALIE BECK
DIANA WATKINS
JARLATH CONROY
CHRISTOPHER LEY

LONDON 1958

Interval of 15 minutes

THE MAYOR OF TORONTAL

by Gwynneth Jones

Stanislaw Tokolyi, the Mayor RICHARD HALBERSTADT
Anna, his Housekeeper HILARY ELLWOOD
Zucka Szabadka AVRIL LOTINGA
Alexander Szabadka MARTIN RUTHERFORD
Madame Sloboda ELIZABETH SYMON
Miss Svidnik BARBARA BUTTERS
Poprad PAUL O'CONNOR
Somogy KEVIN FELLS
Madame Baranya PAULINE BRADY

A small town in Central Europe
circa 1895

Interval of 15 minutes

THE GIRL

by William Trevor

Mr. Green KEVIN FELLS
Miss Cathcart PAULINE BRADY
Mrs. Green HILARY ELLWOOD
Felicity Mellors JANE RHYDOUT
Mr. Bateman DAVID PEARSON
Tony PAUL O'CONNOR
Marco NICHOLAS HUNT
O'Brien MARTIN RUTHERFORD
Tom-Tom RICHARD HALBERSTADT
Angie MARTIN RUTHERFORD
Katie CHERRY KANE
Joan ELIZABETH SYMON
Shirl AVRIL LOTINGA
BARBARA BUTTERS

The Suburbs—The Present

The lights will be lowered twice during the play to indicate the passage of 12 hours.

The three plays directed by MICHAEL HODDELL
Assistant Director JILL CHAMPION TORRANCE

Sets designed by SHEILA SORLEY

Sandwiches and coffee are available in the Bernard Shaw Room before performances and refreshments will be served there in the interval.

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking in the auditorium.

For STUDENT ONE ACT PLAYS

Stage Manager DIANE WILLIAMS
Deputy Stage Manager DICK BENETT
Assistant Stage Manager MARTIN RAVEN
Wardrobe JACQUELINE LEARNER
Properties FRANCES ALLEN
Construction BOB STOCK
JOHN STACEY
Lighting JOHN WINDER
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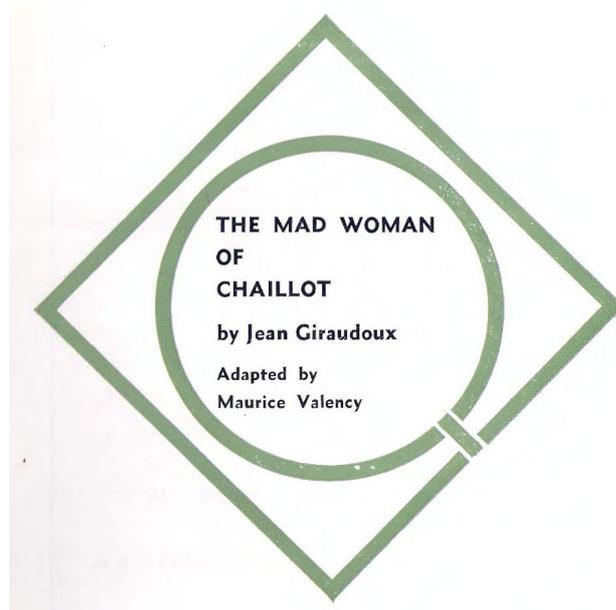
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金星樓

**Student Group 21
July 1968**

THE MAD WOMAN OF CHAILLOT



**Extracts from
QUESTOPICS July 1968
(Student Edition)**

July production
THE MAD WOMAN OF CHAILLOT

The Questopics management, in line with its policy of reflecting the social movements in the country, and paying regard to the current student violence in support of demands for greater control over the administration of their institutions, has more than willingly transferred the editorship of this edition to student representatives and gone into hiding.

The students intend to take control of the theatre during July and all members are invited to 'sit in' to observe their activities. On 10th July the first year group, under the direction of **Alfred Emmet**, will present a varied and mostly spontaneous programme of improvisations, dance, choral speaking etc. in the Stanislavsky Room.

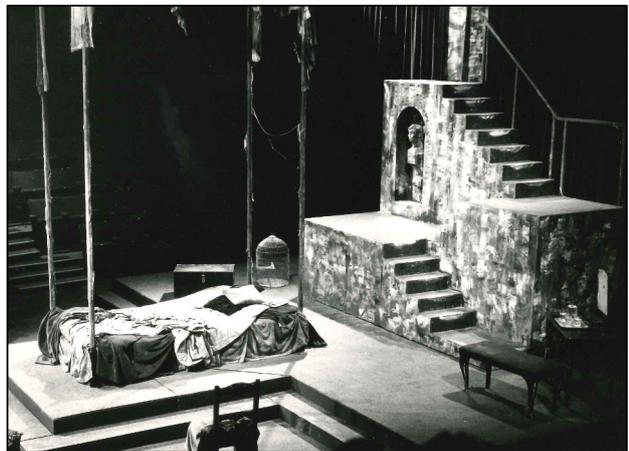
This is followed by the second year students presentation of '**The Mad Woman of Chaillot**' in the theatre from July 20th to 27th. **Jill Champion-Torrance**, the Associate Director, writes about the production on this page.

Other contributions to this special student issue include a piece by **John Rolfe**, the theatre's Head of Design, on his experience of working with students—and a frank disclosure by **Michael Langridge** on the efforts of a student to sabotage major productions.

Jean Giraudoux observed as early as 1915, when involved himself as a soldier serving France '*.... I grow more and more bitter.... against humbugs and swindlers. We will kill*



**Student Group 21
in
THE MAD WOMAN
OF CHALLIOT**



them after the war, which fortunately will have already killed some of them.'

What Giraudoux feared, though at times unwilling to admit it even to himself, was a progressive erosion of the fibre of humanity through which in the end the whole value and beauty of life should disappear. 'It will not be so much a case of ugliness taking possession of the world', he wrote, 'as of a kind of paralysis which will remove from the world all flavour and all light, and make our state the most desperate of all, that of barbarism devoid of simplicity and naturalness.'

To attribute, as he does in *La Folle de Chaillot*, the possibility of humanity relapsing into such a condition to the insidious yet brutal penetration of unscrupulous exploiters is perhaps not very far from the truth. It is certainly the idea of a crusading moralist intensely and humanly preoccupied with the state of the world and of his fellow beings, whether in 1944 or 1968.

Louis Jouvet presented *La Folle de Chaillot* for the first time in 1945, at the Athénée in Paris, following Giraudoux's death in 1944; for Jouvet it was a play ideally suited to the times,— he writes of it in *Témoignages sur le Théâtre*:... 'The real use of a play is to, warm one's body and one's heart.'

'The Madwoman' is the one of all Giraudoux's plays which comes closest to being an actor's play first and foremost: that in which the merit is more visible on the stage than in the peace and quiet of the study; there are few parts in this play which are not rewarding for the actors interpreting them.

We have found this in rehearsal: reading the play, although intensely rewarding, is not an experience to be compared with the warmth, humour and illumination of reality achieved by the involvement with character and mood. 'The Madwoman' is true theatre—both for audience and actors, and is a play that both producer and cast feel is yet a testament of our times,—as real today as it was for Giraudoux, for Louis Jouvet, who both produced the play, and created the role of the Ragpicker, and for the audiences of Paris, who had survived a war of dreadful privations and destruction, and were faced with a breakdown of normal moral standards.

Louis Jouvet, returning to Paris after five years of occupation, felt surer than ever that in the great authors such as Moliere and Giraudoux was to be found the salvation of the theatre and the justification for its existence: '*I have seen the romantic theatre of melodrama, the symbolist theatre, the realist theatre, the boulevard theatre, and the literary, the surrealist, the cubist. After two wars have passed over it, the Theatre remains the Theatre.*'

In 'The Madwoman', we are presented with a unique experience,—for those who had not read Giraudoux previously, or seen any of his plays in performance, it has proved to be a fascinating journey, into a bright reality, unlike any other the theatre can offer. The 'miracle of Giraudoux' is still alive, in the words his characters are called upon to speak, and only from the text springs the life of the play. We are fortunate, or unfortunate, in never having seen a Jouvet production of Giraudoux's plays. We even precede the film, being shot in France with Katharine Hepburn in the title role. None of this is a deterrent. —the play lives,—for the actors and the audience, and that is enough for us.

The Student Group could not be presented with a bigger or more exciting challenge by **Michael Hoddell** the director, via Giraudoux whose conception of the theatre is where '*all is nothing save for the need for communication and communion.*' For the second year Students, 'The Madwoman' will be the crowning achievement of two years hard

Second Year Student Group Production

THE MAD WOMAN OF CHAILLOT

by Jean Giraudoux

Adapted by Maurice Valency

Cast, in order of appearance :—

The Waiter ERIC SMITH
The Prospector NICK HUNT
The President MARTIN RUTHERFORD
The Baron RICHARD HALBERSTADT
Therese CHRISTINE RICHARDSON
The Street Singer DIANE WATKINS
The Flower Girl LINDA PORTER
The Rag Picker PAUL O'CONNOR
Paulette JANE COLLINS
The Deaf Mute JARLETH CONROY
Irma JANE RHYDOUT
The Broker CHRISTOPHER LEY
The Juggler GEOFFREY WEBB
Dr. Jadin KEVIN FELS
Countess Aurelia, The Mad Woman of Chaillot HILARY ELLWOOD
The Policeman PHILIP IRVING
Pierre RICHARD GAUNT
The Sergeant MICHAEL CARTWRIGHT
The Sewer Man KEVIN FELS
Mme. Constance, The Madwoman of Passy BARBARA BUTTERS
Mlle. Gabrielle, The Madwoman of St. Sulpice AVRIL LOTINGA
Mme. Josephine, The Madwoman of La Concorde CHERRY KANE
The Presidents MARTIN RUTHERFORD, CHRISTOPHER LEY, KEVIN FELS
The Prospectors NICK HUNT, ERIC SMITH, TONY RICHARDS
The Press Agents RICHARD HALBERSTADT, MICHAEL CARTWRIGHT.
The Ladies CHRISTINE RICHARDSON, JANE COLLINS, PHILIP IRVING
The Adolph Beraut ROSALIE BECK
..... ERIC SMITH

ACT I : The Cafe Terrace of Chez Francis

ACT II : The Countess' Cellar—21, Rue de Chaillot

The time is Spring, next year.

Director

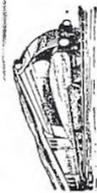
Associate Director

MICHAEL HODDELL
JILL CHAMPION-TORRANCE

Sets designed by SHEILA SORLEY and NIGEL COWELL

Costumes designed by JOHN ROLFE

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Stage Director TONY SHIPLEY
Stage Manager DAVID EVANS
Deputy Stage Manager PAT DIGBY
Assistant Stage Managers GRAHAM WATT, TONY RICHARDS,
FRANK WOOD, MARK MORAN, JOHN STACEY,
GILLIAN FLEMING, NORA NELSON, ROSALIE BECK
Wardrobe MAIRE STEADMAN
Assisted by EVELYN THORNTON
Properties MARTIN RAVEN, ADRIENNE VINSON, BRENDA MARCHAM
Construction JOHN STACEY, NIGEL COWELL, MARK MORAN
Lighting JOHN WINDER
Assisted by BRYAN PITTMAN
Sound GRAHAM EVANS
Assisted by IVOR WILLIAMS
Ghost Mazurka played by LESLIE HARRIS and arranged by LUDMILA MLADA

Sandwiches and coffee are available in the Bernard Shaw Room before performances and refreshments will be served there during the interval.

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking in the Auditorium.

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work,—for us all the astonishing opportunity to share in the makings of a play in which none involved feel superfluous or without value. With such a large cast our resources have been strained to the utmost: first year Students have been recruited, and some ex-Students, to contribute to the herculean task of 'going up'.

Hilary Ellwood takes the title role of the Madwoman, Countess Aurelia. **Paul O'Connor** plays the Ragpicker, with **Barbara Butters** as Mme. Constance, **Avril Lotinga** as Mlle. Gabrielle, and **Cherry Kane** as Mme Josephine. **Jane Rhydout** plays Irma, **Richard Gaunt**, Pierre; **Martin Rutherford** the President; **Richard Halberstadt**, Baron Tommard; **Nicholas Hunt**, the Prospector, and **Kevin Fells**, Dr. Jadin, to mention but a few of the large assembled cast.

Michael Hoddell directs: **Sheila Sorley** the designer, is assisted by **Nigel Cowell**, and **John Rolfe** has designed the costumes, with **Maire Steadman** to interpret his ideas from Wardrobe. To **John Stacey** and **Nigel Cowell** has gone the exciting task of constructing Sheila's imaginative settings. With **David Evans** as Stage Manager, lighting by **John Winder**, and sound by **Graham Evans**, we are promised a smooth technical background to what we hope will be six memorable evenings of theatre.

We leave the last words to Louis Jouvet, who wrote in *Réflexions du Comédien*: 'We all need to feel that faces and hearts are turned towards us, to be sure of that. The baker who sells his bread, the flower-girl who sells her flowers do so not so much in order to live as in order to feel themselves less alone'.

Jill Champion-Torrance, Associate Director

WORKING WITH STUDENTS

'Write something about the students', said the editor, 'You have worked with them before'.

This is a fact.

I can remember spreading sand in the Stanislavsky Room for barefoot students in '**Liola**', making mobile mountains for their first show in the new theatre, '**Dark of the Moon**', suspending the rafters for '**The Crucible**' and now designing costumes for '**The Mad Woman**'. Why do I work so often with the student group?

There are two reasons, I think. The first is that sense of belonging to an interested team. Students' team playing has been mentioned frequently enough for Questors to be tired of hearing about it, but it remains a fact, particularly for those working in the team.

It would be difficult for any group of people meeting three or more times a week, sharing the same interest and similar experiences not to develop a sense of understanding of each other. With students I feel this understanding is more than a conscious anticipation of another's reaction, it is a response to each other on an intuitive level.

This is heightened by the fact that students are more or less within the same age group. This gives students an ease of communication among themselves which is the vital spark of drama. I am fascinated as I see a play growing in the imagination of this particular age group. This was one of the most intriguing aspects of '**The Crucible**'. You

may remember the selection of newspaper clippings displayed in the foyer during the run. These had been collected by the cast who were delighted with the parallel between the word 'witch' in the play and 'drugs' in the newspapers. The context was different but the hysterical reaction was the same.

The interest that produced that flood of clippings seems to work on every aspect of student shows. They are interested in the design and construction of the set. They want to understand and so want to be there helping when the job is being done. They want to provide parts of costume and props. In fact so many seemingly unavailable objects turn up that one wonders at the range of friends that students seem to have.

There is a tremendous enthusiasm about getting the complete show on stage that one sometimes does not find in non-student productions. Students expect to help in other departments. This results in real co-operation back-stage. Something of the team spirit spreads into wardrobe and workshop and stage even and one often finds the same Questors working together with the students.

This production made quite an impression on the Reviewers.

This has something to do with providing students with the best that the theatre can provide, to match their enthusiasm with our own, but also has something to do with **Michael Hoddell** who has led the students over a number of years. In fact the second reason for my working so often on student shows is the same as many others have, I find **Michael Hoddell** very easy to work with.

JOHN ROLFE

THAMES VALLEY TIMES

23 July 1968

'MAD WOMAN' TALKS WITH POISE, PRECISION

HAVING disposed of a dozen "pimps" who constituted a threat to the freedom of humanity, Aurelia, the "**Mad Woman of Chaillot**", proudly asserts: "Nothing is ever so wrong in this world that a sensible woman can't put right in an afternoon."

This line and many others are delivered with poise and precision by Hilary Ellwood in the Questors' Theatre Club's second-year student group production of Jean Giraudoux's play, "**The Mad Woman of Chaillot**," which is running for the rest of this week except Thursday.

Resembling an ageing hippie with a mop of frizzy ginger hair, Miss Ellwood gives distinctive lustre to this challenging role, which requires an odd mixture of madness and calculating perception.

She is well backed up by the rest of the cast, especially the three other mad

women of Passy, St. Sulpice and La Concorde, played by Barbara Butters, Avril Lotinga and Cherry Kane.

The scene at the beginning of the second act, where three of the four mad women foregather in Aurelia's basement room, is like a modernised version of one of the witches' meetings in "**Macbeth**". Just as Aurelia is about to announce a proposal that will alter the fate of the world, Constance, the Mad Woman of Passy, protests: "Can't it wait until tomorrow? I want to wash my slippers."

MORE TO IT

Later in the conversation, Aurelia learns of the virginity of Gabrielle, the Mad Woman of St. Sulpice: "She can't be that innocent... she keeps canaries." Obviously there is much more to "The Mad Woman" than the zany, often absurd, dialogue would have us believe. Giraudoux, who died in 1944, feared the stranglehold of the plutocrats. As a soldier in France during the first world war, he wrote: "I grow more and more bitter against humbugs and swindlers. We will

kill them after the war."

In the play, Aurelia hits on the idea of killing off the "humbugs and swindlers" of Chaillot by shutting them in an endless underground passage, having convinced them all of the existence of an oil well at its base.

The large cast has been extremely well handled by director Michael Hoddell and his associate, Jill Champion-Torrance. Although there were often more than a dozen players on stage at the same time, one never had the feeling of overcrowding.

Sheila Sorley and Nigel Cowell were responsible for the imaginative sets, and costumes were designed by John Rolfe.

Middlesex County Times

26 July 1968

GIRAUDOUX HIT STIRS QUESTORS' AUDIENCES

THE most entertaining and stimulating play I have seen at the Questors Theatre had its opening night last Saturday and closes tomorrow (Saturday) evening.

The play, "**The Madwoman of Chaillot**", was put on by The Questors Second Year Student Group, and if the students maintain this standard it augurs well for the long-term future of the theatre.

The theme of this play by Jean Giraudoux, like the new Beatle's cartoon film, is a whimsical plea for eccentricity and individualism to take the place of self-interested bureaucracy.

Countess Aurelia, the Madwoman of Chaillot, lives in a cocoon world- shielded from the harshness of reality by an assortment of society rejects—a clown, a deaf mute, a flower girl, a waiter and a street singer.

One day they are all at her pavement cafe when a group of bureaucrats discuss ways of getting richer. Their plan is to drill for oil in the heart of Paris.

EVIL WORLD

This is too much for the society rejects. They decide the world has become so evil it is time the Countess faced the truth; so they tell her the world is not the happy place she believes it is. Aliens are corrupting the goodness, and are forcing others to join them. She decides to put things right, discusses the situation with three other "madwomen," holds a mock trial and sends the representatives of evil bureaucracy — The Presidents, The Prospectors, The Press Agents, and the women behind them — in search of more power and money. It is a search that will end in death.

Every part was well acted, but especially the title role, played by Hilary Ellwood. With her striking red hair, piercing eyes and haughty voice, she handled her part to perfection.

In the most amusing scene, her tea party for the other "madwomen", she was ably supported by Barbara Buttress [*sic*], Avril Lotinga and Cherry Kane.

SPINE-CHILLING

The play was always entertaining, witty in places, sometimes provocative — and in one passage, at least, very dramatic. This was towards the end of the trial scene when the defendant was asked his ultimate aim.

"War," he said. And suddenly the lights went out and searchlights started flashing round the theatre, into the faces of the audience. This may be commonplace at productions like "US," and other audience participation happenings, but it was most unexpected and spine-chilling here.

The sets — a cafe terrace and the countess's cellar bedroom — were simple, but

cleverly designed by Sheila Sorley and Nigel Cowell.

P.C.

Student at Work

The Testimony of Michael Langridge



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'.

A first year student gets many opportunities to work on major productions and this had not been by any means my debut at the Questors. My first play was 'Henry IV Pt One' and I had been given the part of John of Lancaster. One night during the second week of

performances I managed to get caught in a traffic jam in Southwark having accepted a lift from a colleague at work, who insisted that he could get me to the theatre much faster than any tube train. Back at the theatre it was ten minutes before curtain-up and our very competent stage manager had got hold of **John Turner** who up to then had been playing Hotspur's servant, Third Traveller and Hotspur's army. 'You're playing Lancaster', the stage manager said 'get his wig on.' Reluctantly John climbed into my costume and put on the blonde wig I had to wear for the part. I arrived at the theatre just in time to hear the dying chords of the National Anthem. I submitted my abject apologies to the stage manager and learnt what measures had been taken to cover my absence.

When John came off the stage he offered a few obscenities in my direction and religiously returned my costume. 'I stood with my back to the audience all through the first scene,' he said 'with any luck no one will notice you've grown six inches in the next council scene.' He was right, no one did notice.

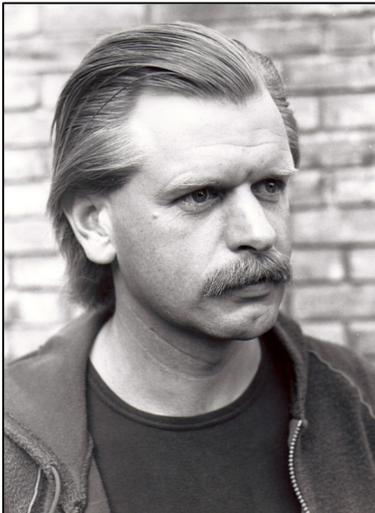
The last production I was allowed in during my first year was a very memorable production in the New Plays Festival, a play called '**The Children of Saturn**' - a title that brings tears to the eyes of many a member even now. One incident from this play that I remember vividly happened during a scene which re-created the storming of the Winter Palace by the peasants during the Russian revolution. The set for the play was divided into three sections, a drawing room at the front of the stage, an attic at one side and a large rostrum standing about five feet off the ground upstage. For some reason only known to the producer the peasants, of which I was one, had to negotiate armchairs, sofas and tables, etc. which remained on stage throughout the play, even in the outdoor scenes.

The incident I am referring to occurred when the peasants entered following their leader Father Gapon. The cast of peasants numbered about twenty-five and before going on we had to line up outside the theatre (there were no wings in the old Theatre), sometimes in the pouring rain, having been called at least half an hour before we were due to go on. Eventually we got our cue, and we filed onto the stage; that is to say, some of us. Most of the crowd never got there, because of the size of the stage, and remained in the pouring rain, waving their icons for the duration of the scene. Those who managed to get in front of the audience did not last very long; they were instantly massacred by another two first-year students, who mowed them down to an unconvincing recording of gunfire, which seemed to have been extracted from the '1812'. At the sound of the guns, we had to fling ourselves into the cyclorama pit to clear for the next scene, and crawl out over broken gelatines and lights making sufficient noise to wake, not only the dead, but half the audience as well.

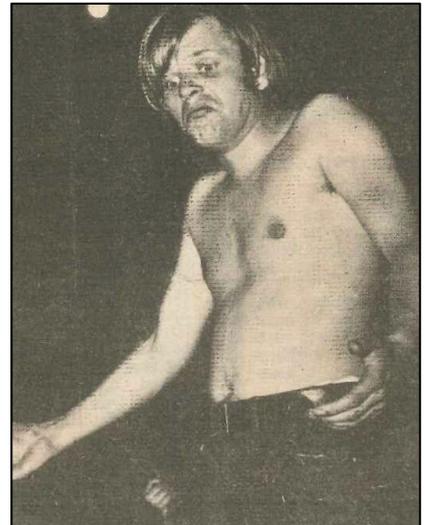
STUDENT GROUP 22 (1967-1969)



21 of 32 applicants who auditioned for this Group were accepted into the First Year (8 male, 13 female) of which 13 made it into the Second Year. Among these were **Judy Lane** (*left*), newly wedded **Maggie Turner** (*right*) and **Geoff Webb** (*below*) - all of whom are so thoroughly a part of our history that there would not be enough room here to give anything like an adequate account of them.



Geoff Webb had already graced the Questors stage as a sailor in **The Flying Dutchman** (1967) before joining the First Year Group. Here he is featured in the Hounslow Post's review of the "exciting, stimulating and very



The Hounslow Post

19 July 1968

AN EXCITING, stimulating, and very entertaining evening—'that's the 'POST's" verdict on the annual presentation by first-year students at the Questors Theatre, Mattock Lane, Ealing, called "**Students at Work**," held last week in the rehearsal room.

The audience sat round a space cleared in the centre of the room, and watched as Questors' director, Mr. **Alfred Emmet**, put the young amateur actors and actresses through their routine class exercises, starting from the very simplest principles of voice-training, and going on through movement, communication spoken and unspoken, and leading up to group actions.

It was the efficient control of Mr. Emmet, and the boundless enthusiasm of his 18

students, that held the audience enraptured and involved all the way through.

Mr. Emmet, who helped to build the Questors Theatre with his own hands, and has been director there for 21 years, told the audience that "Simplicity is the keynote of what we try and teach the students to do" — and it was this very simplicity that helped the students to lead up to some very intense dramatic scenes, none of which were "hammed-up" or over-acted because of the excellent training they have had.

Actions and words were clear and direct, even when the students were asked to deliver a speech in "Gobble-de-gook," an imaginary language, in order to practise an interplay of characters.

Student Group22 February 1969

COLLECT YOUR HANDBAGGAGE by John Mortimer
A SLIGHT ACCIDENT by James Saunders
THE TROJAN WOMEN by Euripides



Extract from QUESTOPICS
February 1969

STUDENTS' SHOP WINDOW

In the last ten years 120 young actors and actresses have in turn been members of the Second Year Student Group. Many of these have subsequently become members of the main acting group and seldom a production is staged at Questors without an ex-student taking part. The current production of **TANGO** is no exception, for it includes two recent ex-students in leading parts.

THE FEBRUARY PRODUCTION OF ONE ACT PLAYS BY THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS IS YOUR CHANCE TO SPOT THE STARS OF THE FUTURE.

The three plays should provide a varied and fascinating evening's entertainment.

COLLECT YOUR HAND BAGGAGE by John Mortimer, deals with the trials of an ageing perpetual adolescent who, in the words of the playwright 'trips over the truth of what happened last night to fall flat on his face.

A SLIGHT ACCIDENT, by James Saunders is a comedy of both situation and words. The play is a parody of the conventional thriller suspense situation and the verbal comedy includes a cross-talk act that verges on vaudeville.

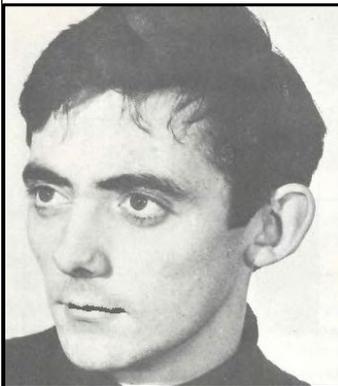
Finally, on a more serious note, a modern translation of Euripides' **THE TROJAN WOMEN** brings home the brutality and agony of war by concentrating attention on the fate of the individual mind. The tragedy of Hecuba has for centuries been among the great themes of drama, and as such it is only right that the students should number it among their early experiences.

Directed by **Michael Hoddell** in what is his 19th production with successive student groups, the twelve young people who make up this year's group present these plays in a spirit of humility but with a certain sense of pride. Their ages, backgrounds and experiences are varied, but this is their first venture as a group and as such it should be well worth seeing. Space prevents our introducing all of them to you, but just to whet your appetite here are a few of the faces you will be seeing when you take your seat for the February production.



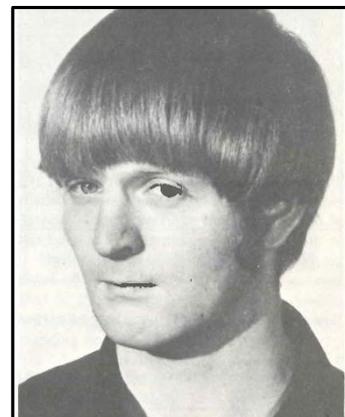
JUDY LANE admits to once having a job "gathering" wild oats for the Agricultural Research Laboratory! Now working as a teacher, she has so far confined her activities at Questors to painting scenery. She now faces the widely diverse roles of Andromache in **THE TROJAN WOMEN** and the featherbrained and harassed Penelope in **A SLIGHT ACCIDENT**.

DIANA WATKINS travelled 3,000 miles for her audition in the Student Group. While working in Canada she read an article about Questors and decided it was what she most wanted to do. She returned home, took a flat in Ealing and joined the students. In this, her first real part, she tackles the exacting role of Hecuba.



JARLATH CONROY from County Galway in the West of Ireland came to London via New York. He has so far made two appearances on the Questors stage, the first in a small non-speaking part and the second as a deaf-mute!! As Talthybius in **THE TROJAN WOMEN** it will be the first time his voice has been heard but it is certain it will not be the last.

CHRISTOPHER LEY is a Civil Servant who, apart from a few parts in school plays, had no acting experience until he joined Questors a year ago. He can be seen playing the lead in **A SLIGHT ACCIDENT** where he shows a delightful gift for comedy which may well in the future challenge those accomplished veterans of the Christmas Melodrama.



The Questors Student Group presents:

COLLECT YOUR HANDBAGGAGE

by John Mortimer
Announcer JUDY LANE
Liz MARGARET TURNER
Sweeper MICHAEL SMITH
Official CHRISTOPHER LEY
Bill RICHARD EARTHY
Jane ROSALIE BECK
Susan JANE COLLINS
Michael PETER MUSSELWHITE
Crispin GEOFFREY WEBB
Paddy ANNE HOWARD
Tourist DIANA WATKINS
Robert JARLATH CONROY

London Airport, departure lounge.

Time Late evening.

INTERVAL OF 10 MINUTES

A SLIGHT ACCIDENT

by James Saunders

Harry GEOFFREY WEBB
Penelope JUDY LANE
Camilla MARGARET TURNER
Roger CHRISTOPHER LEY

An apartment in London

Time: The present

INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES

Sandwiches and coffee are available in the Bernard Shaw Room before performances and refreshments will be served there during the fifteen minute interval.
Sweets and chocolates will be on sale only in the Bernard Shaw Room.

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking in the Auditorium.

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THE TROJAN WOMEN

by Euripides. Adapted by Neil Curry

Poseidon PETER MUSSELWHITE
Pallas Athene MARGARET TURNER
Hecuba DIANA WATKINS
Women of Troy ANNE HOWARD, PAT CONDON
MIRANDA HYMEN, HEATHER TOBIAS
SANDRA RIX, STEPHANIE CLARK
SANDRA RIX, STEPHANIE CLARK
Talthybius JARLATH CONROY
Soldiers CHRISTOPHER LEY, RICHARD EARTHY
Cassandra JANE COLLINS
Andromache JANE COLLINS
Astanax GENE WILSON
Menelaus MICHAEL SMITH
Guard JOHN WILSON
Helen of Troy ROSALIE BECK

A plain before Troy

Time: The Trojan Wars

The three plays directed by **MICHAEL HODDELL**

Assisted by **HILARY ELLWOOD**

Sets designed by **NIGEL COWELL**

Costumes designed by **HELEN BRAKE**

Music composed by **BRIAN MCLOONE**

Stage Manager DAVID EVANS
Deputy Stage Manager GRAHAM WATT
Sound GRAHAM EVANS, IVOR WILLIAMS
Lighting JOHN WINDER, DENNIS MALONEY
Props JOAN SAUNDERS, FRANCES O'NEIL
Construction MARK MORAN, JOHN STACEY
Wardrobe VALERIE HILL, YVONNE CONKLETON
Assistants in all Departments ... JACQUELINE HARRIS, MARI KETTLE
DAVID GILBERT, ALEX GRAINERT,
DAVID GILBERT, ALEX GRAINERT,
SEBASTIAN VERGHESE, DAWN MASTIN,
NORA NELSON, KATH HARRINGTON
SUSAN HASLEY, DAPHNE MAHLER
WENDY LOUGHRAN

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金星樓

Two extremely talented students were on loan from Group 23's first year for this production.

Heather Tobias (right) left to go to Chiswick Technical College after the first year and only got to appear as a peasant in the 1968 Christmas melodrama **The Shaughraun**, **Women of Troy** and **The Caucasian Chalk Circle** (see below) - although according to the press report by that time she was already at Chiswick TC. Within a few years she became an established film and TV actor her numerous credits including **The Singing Detective**, **Bleak House**, **Crime and Punishment**, **Holby**, **The Bill** etc. She has also made a name for herself in recent years as a puppeteer and visual artist.



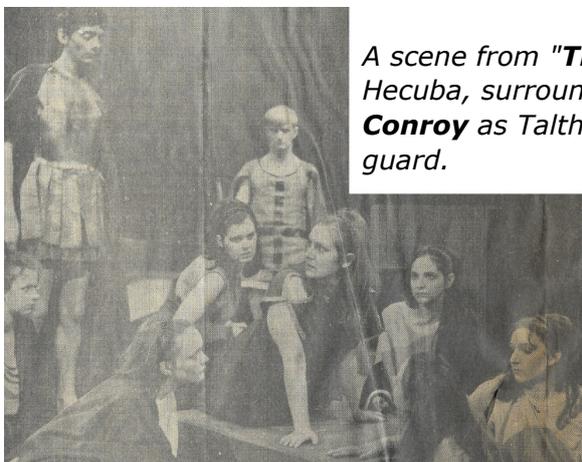
John Wilson hardly needs any introduction, especially to our current student group, and is likely to feature more fully in the next instalment of this survey.

There are no production photos of this production surviving in archives, but we do have these press photos, in the Gazette and Post of 27 February 1969...



A scene from "The Trojan Women" one of the three plays presented last week by the Questors Student Drama Group. The play depicted the brutality and agony of war by concentrating the attention on the fate [sic] of the individual mind. "The Women" was written by Euripides.

...and these from the County Times and Gazette of 21 February 1969



*A scene from "The Trojan Women". **Diana Watkins** as Hecuba, surrounded by women of Troy and watched by **Jarlath Conroy** as Talthibius, **Christopher Ley** in the background as a guard.*

*Hatred is registered on the face of **Diane Watkins** as she confronts **Rosalie Beck** as*



West London Observer

13 February 1969

STUDENTS SHOW THEIR TALENT

A MIXED bag of entertainment is being presented at the Questors Theatre, Ealing, when the Student Group stage three one-act plays on February 19, 20, 21 and 22.

"Collect Your Handbaggage", by John Mortimer, deals with the trials of an ageing perpetual adolescent who, in the words of the playwright, "trips over the truth of what happened last night and falls flat on his face . . ."

"A Slight Accident", by James Saunders, is a comedy of both situation and words. The situation is a parody of the conventional thriller and the comedy includes a cross-talk act that verges on vaudeville.

"The Trojan Women", by Euripides, brings home the brutality and agony of war by concentrating on the fate of the individual mind.

The tragedy of Hecuba has for centuries been among the great themes of drama and as such it is only right that the students should number it among their early experiences.

In the past 10 years more than 100 young actors and actresses have been members of the second-year student group at the Questors.

Many of them have subsequently become members of the main acting group and

seldom is a production staged without an ex-student taking part.

The current production, **"Tango"**, is no exception, with two students in leading roles.

Several of them have used their training to gain entry to drama schools and some are now working professionally on the stage or in television.

Acton Gazette

13 February 1969

Student theatre

For four days from February 19 the Questors Student Group present three plays each evening which should provide varied and fascinating entertainment.

The three plays, which begin at 7.45 at the theatre in Mattock Lane, Ealing, are **"Collect Your Handbaggage"** by John Mortimer, **"A Slight Accident"** by James Saunders and **"The Trojan Women"** by Euripides.

In the last ten years over 100 young actors and actresses have in turn been members of the Questors Second Year Student Group.

Many of them are now in the main acting group, and a small number have gained entry to drama school and are now working professionally on the stage or television.

Tickets for their latest production can be obtained from the theatre.

Middlesex County Times

28 February 1969

**TRIO OF PLAYLETS FROM YOUNG
QUESTORS**

THE Questors Student Group lived up to its expressed intention when, last week, it presented a programme three one-act plays.

In the programme, producer, Michael Hoddell, states that the choice of suitable material is difficult. The group wishes to give its students a chance to develop and display their potential as actors and actresses and at the same time it needs to provide a balanced and entertaining programme for the audience.

Both aims were very well achieved. The programme was interesting, stimulating and attractively presented. The attention of the audience was well held throughout and it was evident that each play was enjoyed. Many of the young members of each cast were called upon to demonstrate abilities beyond their years and this they did with success.

The first offering was John Mortimer's "**Collect Your Handbaggage.**" This amusing play concerned a group of young "anti-travellers," who meet nightly in London Airport departure lounge. There they delight in watching the departures and arrivals while revelling in the fact that they are not going anywhere.

Their leader, Crispin, an older man clinging tenaciously to his departing

youth, has stupidly invited his landlady's daughter to meet him there, to fly to Paris. He is mortified when she turns up and he learns later that she has done so to meet someone else.

COMPENSATION

Geoffrey Webb was excellent as Crispin. He gave a fine account of this difficult role, in spite of the fact that he did not look the part. However, excellence of diction, gesture and movement compensated for this defect. His four companions, Bill, Richard Earthy; Jane, Rosalie Beck; Susan, Jane Collins; and Michael, Peter Musselwhite, gave splendid support. Each was completely natural and believable.

Anne Howard was good in the unflattering part of Paddy, the landlady's daughter. Her hat was delightfully dreadful. Jarlath Conroy as Robert, Margaret Turner as the coffee bar counter-hand, Michael Smith as the sweeper and Christopher Ley as the official were all well cast in their minor roles.

The second play, "**A Slight Accident,**" by James Saunders, was set in a London apartment. This splendid comedy concerns Penelope who, as the curtain rises, somewhat offhandedly shoots and kills her husband, Harry. She telephones downstairs to her friend, Camilla. They are joined by Camilla's husband, Roger, who, in the end, meets the same fate as Harry, but at the hands of his own wife.

Judy Lane was superb as Penelope. She looked and lived the part admirably. This extraordinary character was made quite

believable.

QUITE AT HOME

Margaret Turner was equally at home as Camilla, although this was a more straightforward part. Her excellent diction and attractive appearance did much to help with the development of the role. Christopher Ley was first-class as the stodgy, routine-conscious Roger. His death at the end of the play was very well achieved. Congratulations, too, are due to Geoffrey Webb who, as the dead Harry, had to lie immobile throughout the entire play in full view of the audience.

The final play was "**The Trojan Women**," by Euripides, adapted by Neil Curry. This classic portrays the scene following the destruction of Troy. As it opens, a magnificent Poseidon, God of the Sea, is telling the story of the fall of Troy.

He is joined by Pallas Athene, his niece, who persuades him to invoke his powers to destroy the boats of the victorious Greeks as they depart from Troy. The rest of the play concerns events immediately prior to the Greeks' departure.

Peter Musselwhite made a highly imposing Poseidon. Regally garbed and larger than life, he personified Godlike dignity. Margaret Turner was well cast again as Pallas Athene, in which character she was eloquent and persuasive.

THE WOMENFOLK

Yet this was really Diana Watkins' play. As Hecuba, mother of the slain Paris and of

several daughters, she represented the distraught womenfolk of the vanquished. About to be sent into slavery herself, she reels from the impact of one dreadful event after another. This required a maturity which unexpectedly in a young performer, Miss Watkins was well able to supply.

Jane Collins, as the demented Cassandra, Judy Lane, as Andromache, Jarlath Conroy, as the Herald, Rosalie Beck, as Helen, and Michael Smith, as Menelaus, each gave a notable performance.

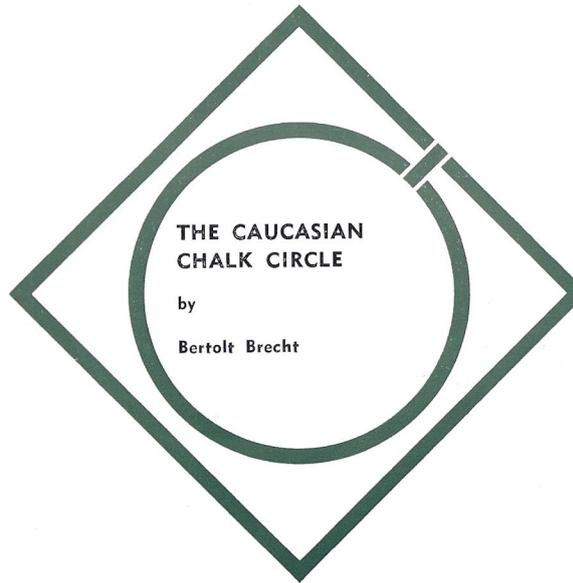
Well done, 12-year-old Gene Wilson, who gave a nice portrayal of Astyanax, Hecuba's grandson.

All the plays were produced by Michael Hoddell who is to be congratulated on the excellence of the programme. Some of the performances were well worthy of comparison with those to be seen in the main acting group of Questors and it is certain that some of these young actors and actresses will make the progression, before long.

W. R. NEAME

**Student Group 22
July 1969**

THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE



The July issue of QUESTOPICS announced:

*This is Michael Hoddell's last production for the students, as he leaves the area shortly to take up a much-deserved Headship in Brighton. We wish him the best of good fortune in this new sphere. **'The Caucasian Chalk Circle**, probably the most ambitious production the students could possibly*

However Michael's farewell production did not avoid controversy. There were rumblings "offstage" about the selection of this play for the Student's July slot.

Apparently the technical departments had not been consulted and there were fears that it would compromise preparations for the Minack production of **The Comedy of Errors**. Also it appears that a number of non-student acting members had been "approached" to supplement the cast.

After discussion it was resolved that *"the show would be dressed from stock and that the set would be made by the students themselves, under the supervision of a constructor."*

8 first year students and 4 acting members were brought in to support the second year students.

Second Year Student Group Production
THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE
 by Bertolt Brecht

Cast in order of appearance:

PART ONE
 The First Storyteller PAUL O'CONNOR
 The Musician NICK ELLIS
 The Governor MICHAEL SMITH
 The Governor's Wife MARGARET TURNER
 The Adjutant RICHARD EARTHY
 Corporal of Ironshirts GEOFFREY WEBB
 Blockhead, an Ironshirt PHILIP IRVING
 Simon Shashava JARLATH CONROY
 Maro, a Nursemaid HEATHER TOBIAS
 The Fat Prince ROGER DE TONEY
 Despatch Rider JOHN WILSON
 Grusha JUDY LANE
 Palace Servants
 The Cook BARBARA BUTTERS
 Nina DIANA WATKINS
 Asia JANE COLLINS
 A Groom SEBASTIAN VERGHESE
 An old peasant CHRIS LEY
 A merchant woman HEATHER TOBIAS
 A peasant woman HILARY ELLWOOD
 Lavrenti KEVIN FELS
 Aniko JANE COLLINS
 The Mother-in-law DIANA WATKINS
 A drunken monk JOHN WILSON
 A ussup RICHARD EARTHY
PART TWO
 The Second Story Teller DIANA WATKINS
 Azdak CHRIS LEY
 The Grand Duke JARLATH CONROY
 Shauwa PAUL O'CONNOR
 Bizergan Kazbeki RICHARD EARTHY
 An Inkeeper MICHAEL SMITH
 Ludov/ca BARBARA BUTTERS
 A Stablehand NICK ELLIS
 Irakli, the bandit ROGER DE TONEY
 Granny Grusinia JANE COLLINS
 The Lawyer KEVIN FELS
 Michael Abashwilli JAMES IRVIN
 An Old Man MICHAEL SMITH
 An Old Woman HEATHER TOBIAS
 The Chorus who in turn represent Servants, Ironshirts,
 Merchants, Wedding Guests and Petitioners MARY KENNEDY
 CAROL WISEMAN, MAGGIE BRACKEN
 RICHARD PAINES, DAVID TYSALL

THE FIRST PART

Which introduces the Noble Child; tells of the insurrection and the flight into the Northern Mountains and how Grusha stayed there until the child was taken from her.

FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERVAL

THE SECOND PART

Which tells how a rogue became a judge and how the child's true mother was determined by the famous test of the Chalk Circle.

Directed by MICHAEL HODDELL
 Assisted by HILARY ELLWOOD
 Sets designed by SHEILA SORLEY
 Costumes designed by MAIRE STEADMAN
 Music Composed by NICK ELLIS
 Grusha's songs arranged by GWEN BRAMWELL

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Stage Manager DOUGLAS BROWN
 Deputy Stage Manager EDDIE GOUGE
 Assistant Stage Managers CAROLINE CHAPMAN, NIGEL COWELL
 HELEN MCKAY, HUBERT BLACKMORE, IAN RUSSELL
 Wardrobe MARIE STEADMAN
 Assisted by GILLIAN EDWARDS, GLENDORA McBRIDE
 Props ADRIENNE VINSON, DAPHNE MARLER, IRIS PHELPS
 Construction BOB STOCK
 Lighting BOB HARRIS, PETER MILLER, COLIN FOX, ROGER KELLY
 Sound ROGER DRIVER, STEPHEN SHEDLOCK, JOHN BOYCE

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking in the auditorium

Refreshments are available in the Bernard Shaw Room before performances and will be served there during the interval. Sweets and chocolates will be on sale only in the Bernard Shaw Room.

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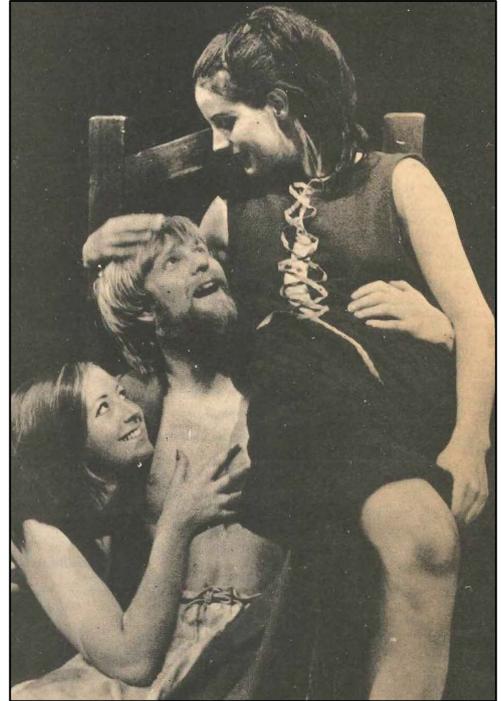
金星樓

Again there are no surviving photographs of this production in archives, but we do have these images from a newspaper cutting:



Left: **Diana Watkins** as the story teller.

Right: **Christopher Ley** as Azdak, with **Maggie** and **Carol Wiseman**



Below: **Mick Ellis**, a student from Ealing Technical College, plays to **Heather Tobias**, who was by then at Chiswick Technical College.



Thames Valley Times

24 June 1969

QUESTORS' STUDENT GROUP ON STAGE

Next month, the Questors' student group will be the centre of attention at the club's theatre in Mattock Lane, Ealing.

On Thursday, July 3rd, the first-year group will give other members a chance to see them in action for the first time in public.

Then on the 19th the second-year group will undertake a full-length production of "**The Caucasian Chalk Circle**" by Brecht. There are subsequent performances on July 20th, 22nd, 23rd, 25th and 26th.

The two-year training course is aimed at preparing young actors to take their place in the main acting group. It is a rigorous course, requiring enthusiasm and determination, plus a fair amount of dedication.

Alfred Emmet, director of studies, emphasizes that previous acting experience is in no way a requisite of admission. What they are looking for is potential talent that can be developed.

For the first year between 20 and 24 students are accepted (most years more applicants are turned down than accepted). From these about 12 are selected for the second year course.

During the first year no productions are attempted, although students sometimes have the opportunity of being in crowd scenes in the big productions, and all have a chance to work backstage in addition to their classes.

The minimum age for admission to the student group is 16. There is no upper age limit. There are also opportunities for those who have not yet reached that age, with two groups for the under-14s and no fewer than five groups in the Junior Drama Workshop.

Prospectus of the student group and further details of all the other young people's groups are available from the Administrator, Questors Theatre, Mattock Lane, Ealing, W.5.

County Times and Gazette

25 July 1969

Students play a spanking hit.

AN EXHILARATING theatrical experience more than half filled the Questors on Sunday evening—a creditable feat considering the counter attractions available.

It was the end of the summer season at the theatre in Mattock Lane, and following tradition, it was a students' production.

It was hard to believe these confident young actors and actresses performing Brecht's "**The Caucasian Chalk Circle**" had had only two year's training and in

some cases even less.

It is a delightful play, telling a moving and story of a woman aristocrat forced to flee her home after a rebellion.

FLIGHT

Forgotten in the haste is her baby, who is left with a peasant girl, Grusha. The first part shows Grusha's flight with the hunted baby, and the second is a court scene in which a judge decides whether Grusha or

the real mother should have the child.

Almost all the characters – vulgar soldiers, sneering aristocrats, frightened and selfish peasants, provocative women and all kinds of cheats and villains – gave the young cast full rein for extrovert interpretation.

The most extrovert and athletic of the lot was bearded and wild Chris Ley as Azdac, the bottom scratching vagabond who is elected people's judge.

Judy Lane in the other main part of Grusha was equally effective, gentle, preyed-upon – but with an indomitable will and a fiery temper when roused. Her performance was memorable.

MAGNIFICENT

Two others deserving mention were Nick Ellis and Paul O'Connor, who composed

and sang the music which tells the story as the play progresses. They succeeded magnificently in catching the mood of the evening.

Michael Hoddell, the producer has worked with students for ten years, and this was his final production before leaving for a post in Sussex.

The great thing about this production was its air of vivacious spontaneity – an effect which needs a disciplined guiding hand as well as youthful enthusiasm. Mr. Hoddell held out that hand with marked success.

T.C.

END OF PART FOUR

LIST OF STUDENTS (1962-1969)

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 17 (1962-1964)

Ingrid Adler
Graham Cherry
Donald Clarke*
Michael Davis*
Sonia Dowden
Virginia Fell*
Estelle Hampton*
Reta Saxton-Howes*
Wendy Jolly*
Gillian Kerswell*
Roger Kidd*
Earle Lewis*
David Evershed-Martin*
Earl Norder
Sylvia Parsons
David Pearson*
Jacqueline Rooney
Maureen Walsh
Thelma Whybrow
Cleo Wrighton*

GROUP 18 (1963-1965)

Ingrid Adler
John Aglioglu*
Julia Atkinson*
Ann Conheaney
Keith Godman*
Stanley Goodchild*
Jacqeline Hasland*
Audrey Hewlett*
Margaret Hughes
Wendy Jolly*
Ronald Lee
James Neil*
Rosalinde Nissel*
Peter Sharp*
Wendy Stone*
Chris Taylor*
Edward Topps
Jill Champion Torrance*
Teresa White
Thelma Whybrow

GROUP 19 (1964-1966)

Charleen Agostini*
Veronica Brend*
David Denyer
Diana Devlin*
Sonia Dowden*
Patsy Feathers*
James Harrap*
Jillyann Healy*
Kintinka Homboe
Trevor Hopkins*
Philip Irving
Margaret McDonald
Rosalinde Nissel*
Lawrence Phillips*
Jacqueline Pinchin
Helen Sorokou*
Jane Steel
Julian Tayler*
Roger De Toney
Robert Ellis-Turnbull

GROUP 20 (1965-1967)

Ann Bevan*
Hubert Blackmore*
Virginia Brown*
Geoffrey Burrige
Anthony Garner*
Richard Gaunt*
Michael Healy
Malcolm Hignett
Philip Irving*
Rosemary Isaacs
Lyn Jones
Margaret Mcdonald
Jacqueline Pinchin*
Cynthia Ridout*
Georgina Skilton*
Roger De Toney*
Vivienne Westwood

GROUP 21 (1966-1968)

Pauline Brady*
Barbara Butters*
Roger Coward
Hilary Ellwood*
Kevin Fells*
John Goldman
Richard Halberstadt*
Nicholas Hunt*
Robin Ingram
Cherry Kane*
Anna Kehela
Avril Lotinga*
June Lowe
Paul O'Connor*
Jane Rhydout*
Martin Rutherford*
Elizabeth Symon*
Cheryl Thomas

GROUP 22 (1967-1969)

Rosalie Beck*
Valerie Bleasdale
Patrick Campbell
Jane Collins*
Jarlath Conroy*
Richard Earthy*
Marianne Gingell
Jacqueline Handy
Anne Howard
Miranda Hyman*
Robin Ingram
Judy Lane*
Christopher Ley*
Peter Musselwhite*
Linda Porter
Christine Richardson
Eric Smith
Maggie Turner*
Diana Watkins*
Geoff Webb*