

THE QUESTORS THEATRE
MATTOCK LANE, EALING

SEASON 1947—48

THIRD PRODUCTION



present

“Six Characters in Search
of an Author”

by

PIRANDELLO

FEBRUARY 1948

PROGRAMME

- -

SIXPENCE

L. T. G.

This appears to be the age of initials, and in official parlance "L.T.G." stands for The Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain, of which The Questors were one of the founding members, and have been Secretary since its inception in March, 1946. That much is probably common knowledge among our members, but there seems to be considerable vagueness as to just what the L.T.G. does, and what the benefits of membership are.

The Guild came into being as the result of a war-time friendship between The People's Theatre, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, The Highbury Little Theatre, Sutton Coldfield, The Bradford Civic Playhouse and ourselves, and sprang from the need we all felt for the greater exchange of views and experiences with other Little Theatres working on much the same lines as ourselves, and for the establishment of a body which could represent the Little Theatre in negotiations with public bodies, Government departments and the like.

Starting with nine members, there are now fourteen member-theatres, and other applications are pending. It is no easy matter to gain membership of the Guild: an applicant has first to satisfy the Guild as to its independence, its bona fide control of an established Little Theatre, its general policy and its standard of play choice; it then has to find two existing members who are prepared to sponsor the application by vouching in particular for its artistic standards. As this may involve special visits to a series of the applicant's productions, the process of election may take a considerable time. But it has the result that membership of the Guild is an honour to be highly prized and does mean something in the way of artistic standards.

One of the chief activities of the Guild are the quarterly meetings, held in turn at one or other of the member-theatres, and to which each member may send up to six representatives. Part of the proceedings at these meetings is a critical discussion of the host-theatre's production, which is again a stimulus to standards. But apart from that, the value of these meetings, in the opportunity they give of discussing mutual problems, and exchanging ideas, and seeing similar organisations to one's own at work, is something that cannot be measured. Suffice it to say that our delegates have returned with a fresh inspiration, new ideas, a broader outlook and an added sense of purpose. Meetings have so far been held at Bradford (Bradford Civic Playhouse), Birmingham (Crescent Theatre and Highbury Little Theatre), Ealing, Leicester (Leicester Little Theatre), Norwich (Maddermarket Theatre), Great Hucklow (Great Hucklow Village Playhouse) and Stockport (Stockport Garrick Theatre). Subjects discussed have included such problems as publicity methods,

box office organisation, the advantages of a membership theatre, methods of play-choice, and, on the artistic side, rehearsal schedules and methods, training and student groups, décor, and the audience-actor relationship in the intimate theatre. All these discussions and contacts have without doubt done much to enrich our work in our own theatre, the quality of which it is and must always be our first aim to improve.

On a more practical level, the exchange of information, programmes, etc., is of much assistance. We have on a number of occasions been able to borrow play-scripts from other member-theatres, thereby saving much work and expense in having type-scripts made. Advice and information from other Guild members has on at least two occasions saved us substantial sums of money in respect of authors' royalties, and been of much assistance in negotiations with H.M. Customs and Excise. In common with other members we have benefited from the pooling of experience on such matters as Little Theatre Constitutions, Rating Assessments, and so on. We are kept in touch with the publication of new plays and theatre books; and the Guild has a service for the circulation of information about promising new plays which have not been published.

The Guild has been able to negotiate with H.M. Customs and Excise a satisfactory arrangement for its members regarding entertainments duty exemption, and has just negotiated also a very important agreement with the League of Dramatists regarding authors' royalties. Through the Guild, the Little Theatres are able to make their voice heard in the wider councils of the Theatre. We have representatives on the Council of the British Drama League, on the Preparatory Committee of the British Theatre Conference, on the Standing Conference of Drama Associations, on the Committee of the Poets' Theatre Guild; we were represented at a recent important international conference of the amateur theatre held at Rotterdam; we keep in touch with such bodies as the Arts Council of Great Britain. The Conference of Repertory Theatres, British Actors' Equity Association, The Old Vic Theatre Centre, in this country, and have contact with U.N.E.S.C.O., and with amateur theatre federations in Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Holland and South Africa. All this sounds very imposing, and of its importance to the Little Theatre movement as a whole there can be no doubt. But the greatest value of the Guild still lies in the close personal contact with the other Little Theatres, gained chiefly through the quarterly meetings.

A. E. J. E.

"SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR"

by

PIRANDELLO

CAST

The Characters

The Father	...	...	...	WILFRID SHARP
The Mother	...	...	...	JOYCE GRANT
The Step Daughter	...	...	...	CAROLYN SHERWOOD
The Son	...	...	...	SHALOM RACHMAN
The Boy	...	...	...	DEREK CUSDIN
The Child	...	...	...	{ CHRISTINE HUGHES DELIA CARSBURG

The Company

The Producer	...	...	...	FRANK WHITE
The Leading Lady	...	...	...	ELIZABETH ODDIE
The Leading Actor	...	...	...	FRANCIS W. SMITH
The Juvenile Lead	...	...	...	TREVOR ELDRID
Another Actor	...	...	...	JOHN HOWARD
The Ingenue	...	...	...	ANNE HORSFALL
Heavy Lady Lead	...	...	...	MARY HILLS
Fourth Actress	...	...	...	JEAN CANDY
Fifth Actress	...	...	...	PEGGY POPE
Stage Manager	...	...	...	ROSEMARY PURKIS
Doorkeeper	...	...	...	BARRIE PITT
Stage Hands	...	...	...	{ GORDON MACWILLIAM PETER BOWEN-EVANS

The play produced by ALFRED EMMET, assisted by MARY DEAN

Decor: BERYL ANTHONY

Stage Management:

Stage Manager: ALBERT GIBBS

Costumes: HELEN ENTWHISTLE and the Wardrobe Staff

Lighting: GERRY ISENTHAL and CARL JOHNSON

Properties: MARY HILLS

House Manager: ARCHIE COWAN

There will be an interval of ten minutes after Act I, during which refreshments will be served by the stewards.

There will be an interval of five minutes after Act II.

In the interests of both players and audience, you are requested to restrict smoking in the theatre while the play is in progress.

DISCUSSION

There will be a discussion on this production in the theatre on Tuesday, February 24th, at 7.30 p.m. All members of the audience are invited to be present and to offer their criticisms. Written signed criticisms will be welcomed. Refreshments will be served as usual.

A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

Luigi Pirandello was born in Agrigente in Sicily in 1856. Up to the age of fifty he had written only humorous and romantic novels, and it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that he began to write for the theatre. With his plays Pirandello broke the bounds set by the old-fashioned "sentimental" Italian stage by giving brilliant dramatic form to his theories on the nature of reality and illusion, the enigma of personality and the meaning of truth, problems which obsessed him until the time of his death.

In all his plays he goes far beyond accepted conventions set up by society to probe deeply into the labyrinth of the human mind, and his genius lies in the startlingly vivid theatrical life he succeeds in infusing into his philosophical theories.

ROUNABOUT

The following is reproduced with acknowledgments to "L'Amateur," the magazine of the National Federation of French-speaking Dramatic Groups of Belgium, who culled it from the pages of "Mining and Metallurgy," who in turn had it from "L'Efficiencie."

TEN WAYS OF KILLING A CLUB

1. Never go to a meeting ;
2. If you do go, be sure to arrive late ;
3. Lose no opportunity of criticising the work of the Committee and the other members ;
4. Never accept any official position—it is so much easier to criticise than to do a job yourself ;
5. Make a fuss if you are not on the Committee ; but if you do become a member, cut the meetings, and on no account make any suggestions ;
6. If the chairman asks your opinion, reply that you have nothing to say. After the meeting tell everyone that you have not understood what it was all about—or, better still, say how things ought to have been done ;
7. Do no more yourself than is absolutely necessary, but when other members roll up their sleeves and work for the club with a will, complain that it is run by a clique ;
8. Delay paying your subscription as long as possible ; you can count on remaining a member for a year or two ;
9. Don't trouble to introduce new members—what's the Committee for ?
10. Complain bitterly that no acknowledgment is made of your work ; but never yourself offer to write an article or make any suggestion.

Verb. sap !

COMING EVENTS AT THE QUESTORS

March 17th - - Club Night.

It is with great pleasure we announce that Michael Kelly's new play, "The Tuscan Artist," will be given a dramatic reading. We are quite sure that all members will wish to give this "preview" their fullest support and we hope the theatre will be filled to capacity.

April 10th—21st - Fourth Production—"The Trojan Women" by Euripides.

April 30th - - - Dance at Ealing Town Hall.

May 5th - - - Club Night.

May 29th—June 8th Fifth Production—"The Apple Cart" by Bernard Shaw.

June 23rd - - - Club Night.

July 10th—20th - Production by the Student Group—"The Pleasure Garden" by Beatrice Mayer.

SPECIAL NOTE.—A Dance for members and their friends will be held at the Ealing Town Hall on Friday, April 30th, in the Queen's Hall. It had been feared that this event would have to be cancelled owing to the abolition of the basic petrol ration, but we hope that by holding it at the Town Hall transport will not provide too many difficulties. Tickets, which are strictly limited in number to 180, may be obtained at the price of 8s. 6d. each, including supper, from Mr. John Howard, 2, Beaconsfield Road, W.5. Phone EALing 3895.

"Times," Ealing.