

The
PROMISE



by Aleksei Arbugov.



The Questors Theatre Company



THE QUESTORS THEATRE

First Performance

SATURDAY, 1st DECEMBER, 1973

"My plays are tragi-comedies. I call them optimistic tragedies. Always there is hope in life — hope for better things. Why deny it?"

Arbuzov: an interview published in the *Indian Express*, 1973.

Aleksei Nicolayevich Arbuzov was born in Moscow in 1908. His career in the theatre began when he joined a mime troupe at the age of fifteen: five years later he was not only directing plays in Leningrad, but also he was running touring companies — 'Sovietabouts' — whose mission was to combine entertainment with ideology.

Arbuzov's early sketches and plays — often rapidly adapted to suit local situations — were written for such a touring company. As he himself explains: "There was a train with four carriages. One was the stage, the second was our room, the third the kitchen, the fourth the library. It was an improvised stage. It had its limitations. But it was there that I learned my playwriting".

His first full-length play *Class* was completed in 1930 and since then Arbuzov has written fourteen plays. In Russia he has always been enormously popular: in 1963 five of his plays were running simultaneously in 71 theatres! But Arbuzov's appeal has not been limited to the Soviet Union: he is one of the few modern Russian playwrights whose plays are acceptable to both the Russian censor and Western audiences. Primarily this is because, although his plays are set in modern Russia and touch upon typical Soviet themes, Arbuzov is chiefly concerned with individuals and their striving to fulfil themselves:

"I feel for my 'hero' with his or her great potential. On the other hand he doesn't know how to use it. He is unhappy and he doesn't make other people happy. My plays start when he becomes aware that life defeats him. He begins searching, and that's what motivates me to write".

The Times, August 1968

The Promise was published in 1965. It was first performed in London in 1966, and was hailed as a breakthrough in Soviet theatre.

THE PROMISE

by

Aleksei Arbuzov

translated by

Ariadne Nicolaeff

Cast in order of appearance

MARAT	Don Starkey
LIKA	Lorna Duval
LEONIDIK	Michael Langridge

Act I March to May 1942

Act II March to May 1946

Act III December 1959

There will be an interval of 15 minutes
between Act I and Act II

(A warning bell will be rung before the performance
recommences).

Produced by	ROBERTA HORNSTEIN
Sets and Costumes designed by	BRIAN RICH
Music Composed by	PER KINCAID and DON KINCAID

Stage Manager	JOHN CLAYTON
Deputy Stage Manager	JACK WALSH
Assistant Stage Manager	BOB PORTEOUS
Wardrobe	VAL MORAN
Properties Assisted by	LAURIE KEOUGH ALLISON DARWIN GRACE LACAILLE
Construction	RICHARD LEWIS
Lighting Designer Assisted by	RICHARD BROADHURST DOUG BROWN
Sound	PETER KENDRICK SUE KENDRICK
Assistants in all departments	JULIAN PORTMAN ELIZABETH CHISHOLM JUDY RADCLIFFE CARYS FAICHNEY SUE PANKHURST

EXHIBITION

During the run of *The Promise* there will be an exhibition in the Foyer of ceramic paintings by Harold Elvin.

REFRESHMENTS

Sandwiches and coffee are available in the Foyer before performances and refreshments including ice cream will be served during the intervals.

FOYER BAR

The Foyer Bar is open on performance evenings from 7.00 p.m. to 7.45 p.m. and during the interval. It operates on a theatre licence and anyone attending a performance may use it, including guests. No bar membership is involved.

Interval drinks may be ordered at the bar before the performance commences. The Grapevine Club continues as a private bar.

ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY THE BAR IS ALSO OPEN AFTER THE SHOW.

DISCUSSION

A discussion is held after each production by The Questors to which all members are invited. The discussion on *The Promise* will be held after the performance on Saturday 8th December in the Foyer.

PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE IN THE AUDITORIUM.

PLEASE DO NOT TAKE DRINKS INTO THE AUDITORIUM.



THE QUESTORS THEATRE
MATTOCK LANE EALING W5 5BQ

567 0011 *Administrator*

567 5184 *Box Office*

Forthcoming Productions:

December 31st - January 12th

THE GHOST TRAIN

by Arnold Ridley

Members free seats NOT available

Tickets 60p & 40p

January 26th - February 2nd

THE CENCI

by Antonin Artaud

with

THE BREASTS OF TIRESIAS

by Guillaume Apollinaire

Members free seats available. Guests 60p & 40p

The Questors is a Club Theatre

Only members may book tickets, and membership Cards must be produced at the box-office.

Full details on membership are available from the Administrator, on request.

For The Questors Theatre:

Administrator: Gordon Caleb
House Manager: Stan Eamer
Box Office Manager: Win Wright
Stage Director: Adrienne Talbot