
**THE
FAMILY
REUNION**
by
T.S. ELIOT



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

THE FAMILY REUNION was produced by The Questors in 1954 (directed by Clifford Webb). The last London revival of the play was in 1956 in the Peter Brook season at the Phoenix Theatre where Harry was played by Paul Scofield and Amy and Agatha by Sybil Thorndike and Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies. It is interesting to note that our president, Sir Michael Redgrave, created the role of Harry at the Westminster Theatre in E. Martin Browne's production in 1939.

The play is a re-working of the classical myth – the story of Orestes as treated in the trilogy *The Oresteia* by Aeschylus. However, in *The Family Reunion* the action is transformed in the light of Christian belief.

Chorus: And whether in Argos or England
There are certain inflexible laws
Unalterable, in the nature of music.

THE FAMILY REUNION – T.S. Eliot

Orestes: You don't see them, you don't – but I see them:
they are hunting me down, I must move on.

THE CHOEPHOROI (THE ORESTEIA) – Aeschylus

Harry: Can't you see them? You don't see them, but I see them,
And they see me.

THE FAMILY REUNION – T.S. Eliot

"Eliot sees our society as being in a state of comfortable and obstinate hibernation. A state resembling death. But winter must change to spring, the dead roots must shoot green again. The process of returning to life, like thawing out after frostbite is painful – 'April is the cruellest month!' This image and many others like it first became familiar in Eliot's poetry and continue through this play".

Bamber Gascoigne – Twentieth Century Drama

"*The Family Reunion* is far from being a naturalistic play....."

D.E. Jones – The Plays of T.S. Eliot

What we have written is not a story of detection,
Of crime and punishment, but of sin and expiation.

Agatha – THE FAMILY REUNION

"In the reference to Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment* the playwright hints at a precedent for his device, for *Crime and Punishment* also begins as a murder mystery and ends as a tale of spiritual purgation. The fact that *The Oresteia* also follows the same pattern suggests the connection of this theme with RITUAL and MYTH".

Carol H. Smith – T.S. Eliot's Dramatic Theory and Practice



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

First Performance April 23rd, 1977

THE FAMILY REUNION by T.S. ELIOT

Cast

Amy, <i>Dowager Lady Monchensey</i>	MARY HODLIN
Ivy	ROSEMARY PURKIS
Violet	BARBARA HUTCHINS
Agatha <i>(Amy's younger sisters)</i>	SHEILA TIFFANY
The Hon. Charles Piper	ALFRED EMMET
Col. The Hon. Gerald Piper <i>(brothers of Amy's deceased husband)</i>	BERNARD McLAUGHLIN
Mary, daughter of a deceased cousin of Lady Monchensey	SUZANNE GREGERSON
Denman, a parlourmaid	JULIA COOKE
Harry, Lord Monchensey <i>Amy's eldest son</i>	NORMAN WILKINSON
Downing, Harry's servant and chauffeur	ROBIN INGRAM
Dr. Warburton	DAVID PEARSON
Sergeant Winchell	WILFRID SHARP

Production by Tony Rushforth
Setting designed by John Bush
Costumes designed by Val Moran
Lighting designed by Alan Smith
Sound designed by Steve Shedlock

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES



<i>Stage Manager</i>	Julian Portman
<i>Deputy Stage Managers</i>	Lesley Montgomery Michael Owens
<i>Assistant Stage Managers</i>	Penny Carstairs Jillian Gee Rosemary Hancock Jane Knight Max Lesser Doreen Pigram Chris Roberts Jenny Stevens
<i>Lighting Assistants</i>	Joy Corbett Nigel Smith
<i>Wardrobe</i>	Val Moran
<i>Wardrobe Assistants</i>	Alison Finch Sarah Herbert
<i>Properties</i>	Iris Phelps
<i>Assisted by</i>	Joan Curry
<i>Construction</i>	Gareth Rees
<i>Assisted by</i>	Jeremy Deacon Hugh Kent Doug Rankine Peter Walton

This is INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR THEATRE MONTH, declared by the International Amateur Theatre Association (IATA), to draw attention to the importance of international contacts and outlook in the field of amateur theatre.

To mark the occasion, there are on sale in the Foyer during the run of this production some IATA posters, designed and produced in Bulgaria.

These are moderately priced at £1.00 each and all proceeds will go to support the international work of IATA.

EXHIBITION

During the run of *The Family Reunion* there will be an exhibition of work by Sylvia Nasen and Margaret Russell.

DISCUSSION

All members of the audience are invited to a Discussion on this production, which will be held in the Foyer ten minutes after the end of the final performance on Saturday, 30th April. This will be led by Dannie Abse.

Dannie Abse, poet, novelist, playwright, has had a long association with The Questors, who have given first productions to a number of his plays, notably *A House of Cowards*, which won the national Charles Henry Foyle New Play Award in 1960 and was later published in 'Three Questor Plays', and *Dogs of Pavlov*, published in 1973. His autobiographical *A Poet in the Family* was published in 1974 and his Collected Poems are due for publication next week.

REFRESHMENTS

Sandwiches and coffee are available in the Foyer before performances, and refreshments will be served during the interval.

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.

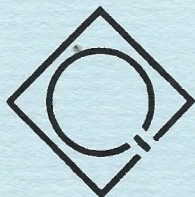
PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE IN THE AUDITORIUM

PLEASE DO NOT TAKE DRINKS INTO THE AUDITORIUM.

The Questors is a Club Theatre

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

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



THE QUESTORS THEATRE
MATTOCK LANE EALING W5 5BQ

567 0011 *Administrator*

567 5184 *Box Office*

Future Productions:

In the Main Theatre –

WHAT THE BUTLER SAW by Joe Orton

Members FREE. Guests: £1.25, £1.00 & 75p

May 21 to 28 at 7.45 p.m.

Studio Theatre in the Stanislavsky Room:

MOONSHIP by James Hepburn

Members and Guests 50p

May 13, 14 & 15 at 7.45 p.m.

For The Questors Theatre:

ARTISTIC DIRECTORATE

Director of Productions	—	BRIAN RICH
Plays Adviser	—	TIM DEHN
Productions Manager	—	SUE KENDRICK
Head of Design	—	NIGEL COWELL
Studio Theatre Director	—	SPENCER BUTLER
Stage Director	—	JACK WALSH

ADMINISTRATION

Administrator	—	DAVE LAWLER
House Manager	—	STAN EAMER
Box Office Manager	—	WIN WRIGHT