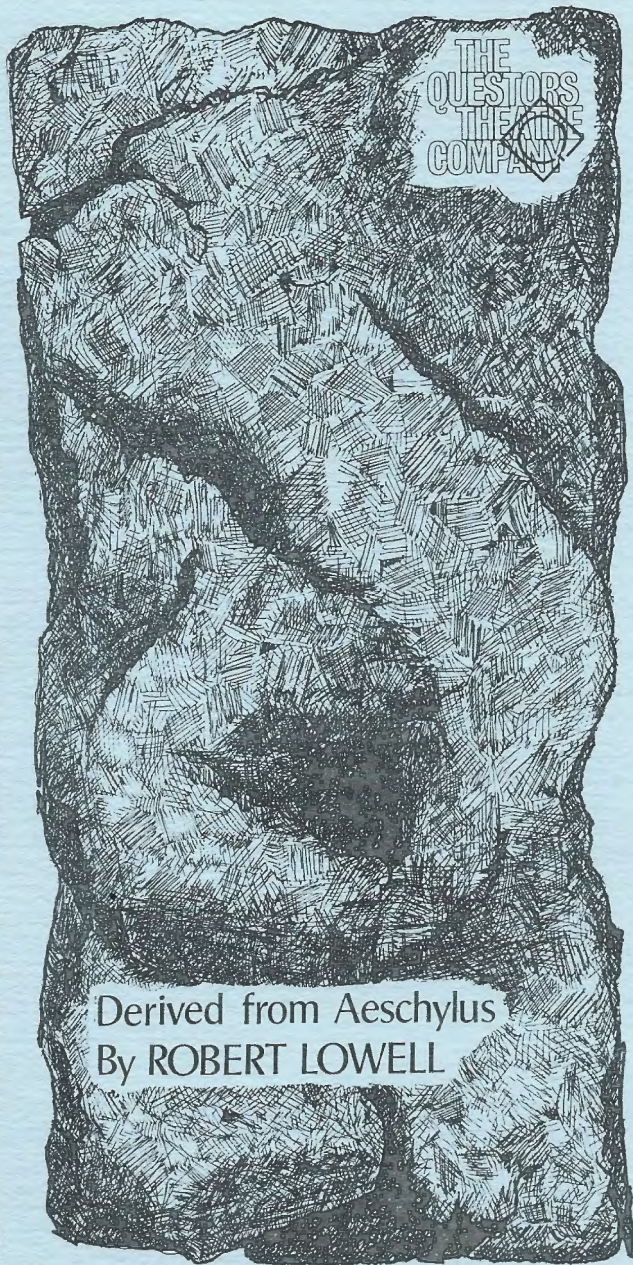


PROMETHEUS BOUND.



Derived from Aeschylus
By ROBERT LOWELL

 THE QUESTORS
THEATRE COMPANY



The Questors Theatre

First Performance, Saturday
January 22nd, 1977

Robert Lowell (1917 –) American.

A major contemporary poet whose other plays are: *Phaedre*, an adaptation (as with *Prometheus Bound*) and *Old Glory* – a trilogy. 'An unglorious view of American history.' He now teaches for one term a year at Harvard University.

When asked to comment on his poetry he refused, saying that that was the work of professors and the critics, adding 'I don't like to see..... what was comprehensible made dull.'

Aeschylus (525 – 456 B.C.)

Of his ninety plays only seven have survived: *Suppliants*, *The Persians*, *Prometheus Bound*, *Seven Against Thebes*, *The Oresteian Trilogy – Agamemnon*, *Choephoroi* and *Eumenides*. (*Prometheus Bound* is the remainder of a trilogy).

Aeschylus started his career as a tragic actor and in 484 B.C. his talent won him first prize. As a playwright he was a continual prize winner—gaining the highest honours no less than thirteen times at Athens (until finally he was ousted by the young upstart, Sophocles). Despite his political conservatism he was an innovator in the theatre. The introduction of a second main character, and therefore dialogue, was his idea, as were the use of a raised stage and elaborate tragic costume.

He seems to have played an honourable part in the fighting during the Battle of Marathon against the Persians.

The music used during this production is taken from *Orestia* and *Persephassa*, both composed by **Iannis Xenakis**, a Greek born composer who studied at the Paris Conservatoire with Messiaen. Prior to his music career he worked as an architect with Corbusier. He was wounded in the face fighting in Greece during the war.

PROMETHEUS

Derived from Aeschylus

CAST

In order of appearance

Prometheus	—	PETER FIELD
Hephaestus	—	RICHARD LEWIS
Daughters of Ocean	—	JULIA COOKE JUDITH WEBB ANN MARIE TIGHE
Ocean	—	JOHN MARTIN
Io	—	MICHELE MIKARDO
Hermes	—	ANDREW WHEATON
The Voice of Force	—	NORMAN WILKINSON

Directed by
MICHAEL MORIARTY

Designed by
JOHN STACEY

Lighting Designed by
LES SMITH

Costumes Designed by
JEANNE WALPOLE

THERE WILL BE NO INTERVAL

JS BOUND

By ROBERT LOWELL

- Stage Manager* — Tim Hayward
- Deputy Stage Manager* — Roger Sturm
- Assistant Stage Managers* — Geoff Moore
Barbara Yerolemou
Fiona Willan
June Bowie
Lesley Montgomery
Chris Roberts
- Wardrobe* — Jeanne Walpole
assisted by — Pam Docherty
- Construction* — Eleanor Panayi
assisted by — John Parkinson
Stefanos Panayi
- Lighting assistants* — Joy Corbett
Philippa Forster
- Sound* — Tim Wybrow
assisted by — Christine Gilbert
- Design assistants* — Bob Anderson
Geoff Moore
Amanda Sullivan
-

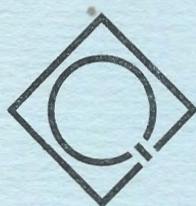
Robert Lowell derived his play from a translation of Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* — in fact the dullest translation he could find so there would be no temptation to 'steal phrases.' His idea was for some marriage between the old play and a new one.' He says in his preface to the plays 'Using prose instead of verse, I was free to tone down the poetic eloquence and shove in any thought that occurred to me and seemed to fit'.

Is the Myth timeless, or merely a well-tryed peg on which writers can hang their contemporary hats? Stories of the gods were as relevant to the ancient Greeks as the Bible is to modern Christians; but to *us*?

It is tempting to read into a play details of the author's life or to derive from the play theories about his character and philosophy of life. What could we make from the fact that before the Military Junta in Greece, Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* was performed with the purpose, and effect, of inciting political activism? No more than from the fact that Shakespeare's *Richard II* was used for precisely the same reason in the Essex plot against Elizabeth I. Or is it relevant to know that Robert Lowell was imprisoned during the war as a conscientious objector?

Evidence indicates that Aeschylus was a conservative. He expressly disapproved of the democratic developments of his time. He came of a noble family and was strongly influenced by the cult of Demeter — a cult particularly concerned with mystery and ritual. Perhaps though, he abandoned this as Lowell did the Catholicism he had adhered to until the fifties. And Lowell's poetry would show him to be concerned more with the inner than the outer world though his Prometheus could well be hailed as a hero of the Aldermaston marchers. (The period can be shown to fit).

Questions can be like seeds; they must be left to germinate before they will flower into answers. If, like children, we keep poking at them to see if a shoot's growing.... the result is obvious. Lowell's *Prometheus Bound* is a question. There are 'confusions and insights.... in the archaic plot.... and are irreconcilable with reason only if one wants to translate the old myth into marching orders.'



The Questors Theatre

MATTOCK LANE EALING W5 5BQ

567 0011 *Administrator*

567 5184 *Box Office*

EXHIBITION

During the run of *Prometheus Bound* there will be an exhibition in the foyer by Brigit Youngday.

DISCUSSION

A discussion is held after each production by The Questors to which all members are invited. The Discussion on *Prometheus Bound* will be held after the performance on Saturday, January 29th.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Building for phase one of our Development Programme is due to start on January 3rd. We apologise to members for any inconvenience during the period of reconstruction.

PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE IN THE AUDITORIUM.

PLEASE DO NOT TAKE DRINKS INTO THE AUDITORIUM.

Next Production:

FEBRUARY 12 – 19 at 7.45 p.m.

LANDSCAPE & SILENCE

by Harold Pinter

directed by David Pearson

Members Free:

Guests: £1.25 · £1.00 & 75p