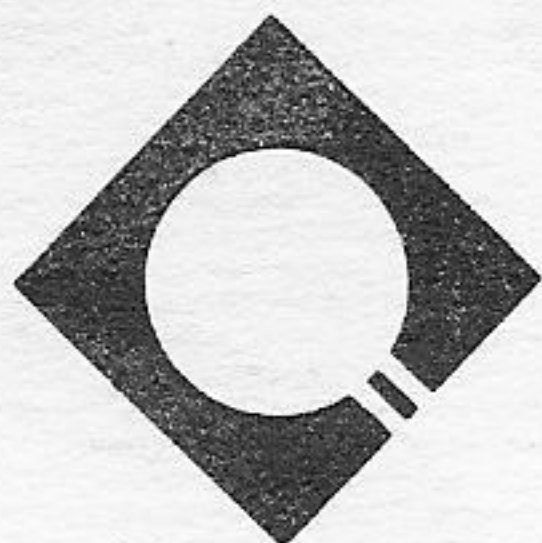


July 1979

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

BY RODNEY ACKLAND

From the novel by
FYODOR DOSTOIEVSKY



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

First performance July 14th 1979

DOSTOIEVSKY

Fyodor Dostoevsky was born in 1821, the son of a doctor. Commissioned into the Army, he soon retired to devote himself to writing. In 1849 he was arrested and sentenced to death for 'sedition' but the sentence was commuted to penal servitude in Siberia. It was there, at a time of great mental suffering and self-analysis, that he first conceived the novel which was later to become *Crime and Punishment*. The earliest draft was written in the first person as a form of confession by Raskolnikoff, but this was later abandoned and it was not until 1865 that he started work in earnest on the book as we know it. Dostoevsky's best known other works include *The Gambler*, *The Idiot*, *The Possessed* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. It is interesting that all of these have been dramatised at one time or another. Stage versions of *Crime and Punishment* have frequently been made in many languages. Rodney Ackland's is the best known in English, though a new version by Alan Brown was done last year at the Leicester Haymarket and, of course, a three part serialisation of the novel was recently seen on television. The Polish Popular Theatre brought a version to Peter Daubeny's World Theatre Season in 1966. Gaston Baty's famous French adaptation was produced in Paris in the early 1930s.

RODNEY ACKLAND

Rodney Ackland, born in 1908, was trained as an actor and had his first play produced in London at the age of 21. London productions of 10 more plays followed in the next 10 years, including *Strange Orchestra* and *After October*, which brought him both critical and popular acclaim, and *The Old Ladies*, his highly successful adaptation of Hugh Walpole's novel. He was widely hailed as 'the English Chekhov' (he has admitted that Chekhov was his god). To have achieved commercial success in the 1930s with serious plays, dealing, however entertainingly and amusingly, with people's loneliness and self-centredness, their incomplete and empty lives, was no mean feat. Many other plays followed, of which *The Dark River*, *Crime and Punishment* and *A Dead Secret* (1957) were probably the most successful, but Ackland never again achieved the recognition that was his in the earlier decade. He was too serious for the commercial theatre, having achieved a measure of popular success was too 'commercial' for the art theatre and the subsidised theatre arrived too late for him. The plays of this most neglected of English dramatists are surely long overdue for revival.

"For all the vagaries of fashion, there is not an English playwright this century more certain of being understood and loved by posterity than Rodney Ackland".

..... John Spurling: *Contemporary Dramatists*

Ackland's *Crime and Punishment* was first produced at the New Theatre in 1946 with John Gielgud, Edith Evans and Peter Ustinov, directed by Anthony Quayle. Of this Alan Dent (*News Chronicle*) wrote: "Ackland's dramatisation of Dostoevsky's great novel touches sublimity at almost as many points as the novel does. The total effect is that of an original masterpiece in play-shape by Dostoevsky". The New York production the following year, also with Gielgud, and with Lillian Gish as Katerina, was directed by Komisarjevsky.

THE QUESTORS SECOND YEAR STUDENT GROUP
augmented by past members of Student Groups
present

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

a play by Rodney Ackland
from the novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky
A Jubilee Year Production

Characters in order of their appearance:

Katerina Ivanovna Marmeladoff	* Sarah Andrews
Poletchka } <i>her children</i>	Naomi Critcher
Leda }	Anika Udell
Sonia, <i>her stepdaughter</i>	* Jane Gillan
Amalia Ludvigovna Lippewechsel, <i>a Lodging-house Keeper</i>	* Oenone Grant
Daria Frantzovna, <i>a Procureess</i>	Lyn Langridge
Nastasia, <i>a Maid of all work</i>	* Krystyna Pierzchala
A Porter	Robin Ingram
A Street Vendor	Keith Godman
Anyutka, <i>his wife</i>	* Amanda Summers
His Assistant	Ian Pinkerton
A Widow	Kay Scrivener
Marya, <i>her daughter</i>	Julie Bridgman
An ex-Soldier	Tom Jennings
Andrei Semenovitch Lebeziatnikoff, <i>a Socialist</i>	Leigh Scheindlinger
A Very Old Lady	Sandra Healy
A Gentleman with Gout	John Davey
A Government Clerk	Colin Thomas
His Wife	Dorothy Boyd Taylor
A Lady with Knitting	Jo Arundel
Rodion Romanovitch Raskolnikoff, <i>a Student</i>	* Robert Hines
Elizavieta, <i>an Old-Clothes Dealer</i>	Catherine Grubb
Simon Zakharitch Marmeladoff, <i>a Drunkard</i>	Victor Pompini
Dmitri Prokovitch Razoumikhin, <i>Raskolnikoff's Friend</i>	* Dale Randall
Zametoff, <i>Assistant to the Chief of Police</i>	* Tari Khan
Pyotr Petrovitch Luzhin, <i>Fiancé of Dounia</i>	* Paul Messing
A Policeman	Stanley Goodchild
A Coachman	Jeremy Bentham
A Doctor	Frank Wyse
A Priest	Peter Field
Stretcher-bearers	Patrice Bacon
	Walter Plinge
Thomitch	Tony Hill
Pulcheria Alexandrovna Raskolnikoff, <i>Raskolnikoff's Mother</i>	* Fiona Willan

*Lodgers
in
Amalia
Ludvi-
govna's
establish-
ment*

Dounia, <i>his Sister</i>	* Rosalind Thomas
Porfiri Petrovitch, <i>Chief of Police</i>	* Eddie Grossman
A Stranger	Stanley Goodchild
Nikola, <i>a House Painter</i>	Peter Field
Two Hungarians	Frank Wyse
	Jeremy Bentham
A Hurdy-Gurdy Player	Frank Wyse

Passers-by:

**Margaret Halberstadt, Gillian Kerswell, Sue Sotheran
Patrice Bacon, Peter Field, Dale Randall.**

The Play directed by — **Alfred Emmet**

Setting designed by — **John Rolfe**

Costumes designed by — **Catherine Grubb**

The action of the play takes place on the Ground Floor of Amalia Ludvigovna's Lodging House in St. Petersburg.

Scene 1 — A summer evening, 1866
Scene 2 — Morning, a week later
Scene 3 — The following evening
Scene 4 — The following afternoon
Scene 5 — The next morning.

There will be an Interval of fifteen minutes after Scene 3

** signifies a member of the present Second-Year Student Group.*
The rest of the cast are past members of The Questors Student Group.

Stage Management	—	George Benn, Geoff Webb
Assisted by	—	Sue Baker, Tina Creighton, Bridget Murdoch, Chris Sydenham, Melissa Wyer
		and many other Active Members of The Questors
Lighting Designers	—	Jeremy Hall, David Chamberlain
Assisted by	—	Murray Cooke, Sue Kendrick, Nigel Roffe
Sound	—	Alan B. Smith
Assisted by	—	Maury Horwich
Set Construction	—	Colin Brown, Graham Coote
Properties	—	Ivana Cooke, Kath Harrington, Adrienne Howell, Sacha Mannin, Iris Phelps, Jo Phelps
Wardrobe	—	Anna Belej, Eleanor Panayi, Jean Robertson, Sylvia Wall

Hurdy-Gurdy realised by **Julia Cooke**

Food kindly supplied by **Safeway Food Stores Ltd.**

RODNEY ACKLAND AND THE QUESTORS

The Questors' first contact with Rodney Ackland was in 1943 when we presented the premiere of *The Dark River*. Mr. Ackland records this in his autobiography 'The Celluloid Mistress':—

"One morning to my horror I received a letter from the producer of The Questors..... announcing a production of the play in which del Guidice wanted to present Miss Gynt... I went nervously to the opening night, expecting to find a vicar's lady and a colonel's widow interpreting my heroine and her confidante with their eyes fixed firmly on the floor throughout, in self-conscious modesty at having so many people looking at them. Instead, I saw what seemed to me a moving and beautiful production."

It was as a result of this production that backers were found to present the play at the Whitehall Theatre, where it ran for six months with Peggy Ashcroft in the leading role (understudied by Betty Mercy, The Questors' actress who had first played it).

Three years later Rodney Ackland invited us to present the English premiere of *The Diary of a Scoundrel*, his adaptation of a comedy by Ostrovsky, which we did, in this case in the absence of the author who was in New York. The next association was in 1952 when, again at Mr. Ackland's request, we presented a carefully rehearsed reading of his *A Stranger In This City*, a powerful drama on the Jekyll and Hyde story. It is interesting to record that this was laid on within three months of being first approached by the author to consider the idea: a good example of the way in which The Questors Theatre can give help to a playwright with work in progress. The play was scheduled for professional performance but the management had lost so much money on its previous production that it went broke and the play has still never been performed. In 1964 Mr. Ackland again approached us: would we be interested in doing the premiere of his new play *The Other Palace*. We would and we did, in December of that year. This also resulted in the play being bought for London production, but the impresario concerned died before it could be put on, so that is another play by this author waiting for full justice to be done to it.

You are invited to attend an

OPEN DISCUSSION

on this production on Tuesday, 24th July at 7.45p.m. in the Bernard Shaw Room led by

JOHN SPURLING

John Spurling is Art Critic of the 'New Statesman' and the writer of many plays. His *Macrune's Guevara* was presented by the National Theatre in 1969 and other plays have been produced at the Traverse Theatre, the Marlowe Theatre and others.

Rodney Ackland will also be present.

So, NOTE THE DATE:

**TUESDAY, 24th JULY at 7.45p.m. in the
BERNARD SHAW ROOM**

THE STUDENT GROUP

THE QUESTORS' first Student Training Course for Actors, under the auspices of the then Middlesex County Council, began in 1947. Since then several hundred actors have received their first training at The Questors. Of these some have gone into the professional theatre, though that is in no way part of the purpose of our training course; some have moved on to develop their talents in other parts of the country or with other groups; many have remained with The Questors to act with the main company (of the present total acting strength of The Questors, 35% are past members of our Student Groups).

For this Golden Jubilee Year Student Production, 23 members of previous Student Groups have joined the company, many of them playing no more than 'walk-ons', to support the 12 members of the present Second Year Group in the leading roles.

For the members of the present Student Group, tonight's production is the culmination of two years' work.

The Student Training Course is run under the auspices of the Ealing Education Committee. A new Second Year Group is now being formed from among those who have just completed the first year of the Course, while applications are being received for the First Year Course to start in September. For further information, apply to the Administrator.

Student Group Staff:

Director of Studies and Acting Tutor	—	Alfred Emmet
Deputy Director of Studies and Acting Tutor	—	James Chinn
Movement Tutor	—	Irene Bradshaw
Speech Tutor	—	Gordon Luck

COMING IN AUGUST.....

If you've seen COARSE ACTING before.....

..... you'll want to see it again!

If you haven't seen COARSE ACTING before.....

..... don't miss it now!

Making a triumphant return this year to the Edinburgh Festival—

THE COARSE ACTING SHOW 2

— the entirely *new* sequel to the show which *Punch* and *The Times* called 'the hit of the Edinburgh Festival 1977'. Only the acting remains unchanged!

Your chance to see the show in the Main Theatre —

AUGUST 14 and 15. Tickets on sale during the run of *Crime and Punishment*.

COMING IN THE STUDIO.....

JULY 24 - 28

LIGHT SHINING IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

by Caryl Churchill

AND TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN NOVEMBER.....

THE GOLDEN JUBILEE PRODUCTION OF

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA by John Gay

**NOVEMBER 10 -24, including a
SPECIAL GALA PERFORMANCE**
