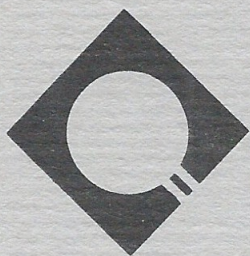




One



# THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

*First performance December 8th, 1979*

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Whilst browsing through the library late last year I came upon a copy of this play. I hadn't seen the film but it had created such a stir at the time that my curiosity was aroused. I had no idea that it had been adapted for the stage. As soon as I read it I knew that I wanted to direct it at some future date. As luck would have it I was soon asked if I would like to direct an American play for the Jubilee season and had I any suggestions? *Cuckoo* was offered and immediately accepted. However, on application for the rights we were told that they were not available, as a West End production was planned for April, with Al Pacino in the leading role. So no *Cuckoo*, but *The Effects of Gamma Rays on Man in the Moon Marigolds* was chosen instead. By chance it was discovered some months later that Pacino had decided to play *Richard III*. I gather that it was unfortunate for him but not for us, as the rights became available, so out went *Marigolds* and the *Cuckoo* came back.

Ken Kesey was born in Colorado in 1935. He founded the Merry Pranksters, a group which toured the U.S.A. for three years filming the country and the people. Accused and later convicted of possessing marijuana, he took refuge for a time in Mexico. He became a cult hero through Tom Wolfe's documentary book about him 'The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test'. Following its outstanding success in the States, *Cuckoo* was published in Great Britain in 1962 and is now on its seventeenth reprint.

Dale Wasserman then accepted the unenviable task of adapting this for the stage. It was first produced on Broadway in 1963 with Kirk Douglas, Joan Tetzl and Gene Wilder. Douglas bought the film rights, but it took several years before anyone would risk money backing it. It was eventually released in 1975, with Jack Nicholson and Louise Fletcher in the leading roles — both won Academy Awards for their performances.

As far as can be ascertained, there has been no London production of this play apart from one performance at the Mermaid on April 23rd 1972, by the University College Players and Wadham Drama Society. By coincidence the part of Scanlon was played by Questors own David Emmet. However, on discussing this play with David, it became clear that we were talking about different versions and on looking at his original script, it appears that at some time the play has been considerably revised, so it seems almost certain that this will be the first production, in London at least, of this version.

Fortunately, I still have not seen the film, but I did begin to read the novel. However, this hindered rather than helped — scenes and characters were naturally telescoped and I kept finding dialogue which I wanted to put into the play. Luckily I soon realised my mistake, put the book aside, and concentrated on the play. Dale Wasserman had done his job so why tamper with it?

*Dale Wasserman's*  
*Flew Over The Cuckoo's*  
*from the Novel by Ken Kesey*

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Chief Bromden . . . . . MICHAEL LANGRIDGE  
Aide Warren . . . . . RICHARD LEWIS  
Aide Williams . . . . . JOHN TURNER  
Nurse Ratched. . . . . FRANCES MARTIN  
Nurse Flinn . . . . . SYLVIA HYSON  
Dale Harding . . . . . MICHAEL DAVIS  
Billy Bibbit . . . . . EDDIE GROSSMAN  
Scanlon . . . . . PETER LYONS  
Cheswick . . . . . MICHAEL MOUNTAIN  
Martini . . . . . ROBERT HINES  
Ruckly . . . . . ALAN CHISHOLM  
Randle P. McMurphy . . . . . GRAHAM WILLIAMS  
Dr. Spivey . . . . . KEN MASON  
Aide Turkle . . . . . RODNEY PRYNNE  
Candy Starr . . . . . AMANDA SUMMERS  
Technician . . . . . STEPHEN QUINN  
Sandra . . . . . FIONA WILLAN

*Directed by*  
JOHN HOLLOWAY

*Designed by*  
JACKIE LANCASTER

*assisted by*  
GEOFF MOORE

A ward in a state mental hospital in the Pacific North West, in the late 1960s.

**The play is in two acts with one intermission.**

# Nest

*Stage Manager* LES SMITH  
*Deputy Stage Manager* KAREN BECKITT  
*Assistant Stage Managers* JULIA ANDREWS  
LAURA BOND  
SIMON CROMBIE  
JANE FENELON  
PAM GOWER  
CRUSTY GRIERSON  
RICHARD LEWIS  
STEPHEN QUINN  
LINDA RIVANS  
DEBBIE SAMPSON  
*Wardrobe* BRIDGET MURDOCH  
TERRY WIERZAN  
LUCIA HEAVER  
*assisted by* LYNDA SMITH  
*Properties* SACHA MANNIN  
*assisted by* NINA ROBINSON  
*Construction* THE CREW AND INMATES  
*Lighting* FRANK WOOD  
*assisted by* LAURI DAHL  
JOHN HOWARTH  
*Sound* CHARLES LACAILLE  
*assisted by* MALCOLM ROBERTSON

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**COME AND TALK ABOUT IT.....**

**or COME AND LISTEN**

There will be a Discussion on this production, open to all, on **TUESDAY, 18th DECEMBER**, at 7.45p.m. in the Bernard Shaw Room, led by playwright

**OLWEN WYMARK**

Olwen Wymark's name must always come to mind in any discussion on 'new directions' in the theatre. A prolific dramatist who always has something to say and always finds an original way of saying it, she is accustomed to being actively involved in the staging of her plays and is a widely experienced theatre person. She has also conducted playwriting seminars, both in the States and here.

This is a play and production on which there are likely to be many and varied views, so a lively discussion seems assured.

*Come along!*

**NOTE THE DATE —**

**TUESDAY, 18th DECEMBER at 7.45p.m.**

in the Bernard Shaw Room

Wire, brier, limber lock —  
Three geese in a flock.  
One flew east —  
One flew west —  
And one flew over the cuckoo's nest.

*Old children's rhyme.*

You hear it, Papa? The Black Machine. ...they're putting people in one end and out comes what they want. ...Each night they tip the world on its side and everybody loose goes rattling to the bottom. Then they hook 'em by the heels and they hang 'em up and cut 'em open. Only by that time they got no innards, just some beat-up gears and things and all they bleed is rust. You think I'm raving 'cause it sounds too awful to be true, but, my God, there's such a lot of things that's true — even if they never really happen.

*Chief Bromden.*

This ward is Society in miniature, and since Society decides who is sane and who isn't, you must measure up. Our goal here is a completely democratic ward governed by the patients — working to restore you to the Outside. The important thing is to let nothing fester inside you. Talk. Discuss. Confess!

*Dr. Spivey.*

Most of you are here because you could not adjust to the outside world. You broke the rules of society. At some time — in your childhood, perhaps— you were allowed to get away with that. But when you broke a rule you knew it. You wanted to be punished — needed it — but the punishment did not come. That foolish leniency on the part of your parents may have been the germ of your present illness... it is entirely for your own good that we enforce discipline.

*Nurse Ratched.*

The world belongs to the strong, my friend. The rabbit recognizes the strength of the wolf and hides when the wolf is about. He doesn't challenge the wolf to combat. My friend, I'm a rabbit. All of us here, rabbits, hippity-hopping through our Walt Disney world!

*Dale Harding.*



## COMING UP AT CHRISTMAS

*In the main theatre*

Don't miss

THE VAMPIRE *or* THE BRIDE OF THE ISLES  
by J. R. Planché

December 29, 30, 31. January 2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10,11,12 at 7.45p.m.

and bring your children to

COUNT CORNETTO'S CREEPY CHRISTMAS  
*a Questabout Christmas Play for Children*

Matinees at 3p.m. on January 5, 6, 12



*And at the Film Society*

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

December 14 at 11p.m.

THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH  
THE SEA

January 11 at 11p.m.



*Into 1980 in the Studio*

THE CONSTANT COUPLE by George Farquhar

January 17,18,19,20 at 7.45p.m.

