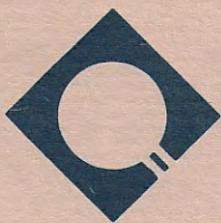




 THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY



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*First performance September 13th 1980*

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Shelagh Delaney began writing *A Taste of Honey* in 1956 when she was only seventeen, after seeing Terence Rattigan's *Variations on A Theme* and deciding that she could write a better play. She has written only one other play, *A Lion in Love*, which never achieved the success of *A Taste of Honey*. Being way ahead of its time in content and style it still, therefore, has much to offer audiences in 1980. Moreover, the timeless qualities of earthy comedy, sensitive pathos, and a striving for happiness have maintained their appeal.

Joan Littlewood took Shelagh Delaney's play and adapted it in her inimitable style for performance at her Theatre Workshop. It subsequently transferred to the Wyndham's Theatre in 1959. In the early 60's it was made into a very successful film with Dora Bryan, Rita Tushingham and Murray Melvin, who continued to play the part of Geoffrey which he had made very much his own when creating it in the original stage production. The film, however, loses the magical dream-like quality of the stage version by taking us into the real, outside world.

The play established Miss Delaney as the first 'angry young woman' of the theatre, and she found herself becoming something of a cult figure with young people — especially those girls who could identify with the emotionally-deprived Jo. The play itself caused a considerable stir at the time as a result of the controversial subject-matter and the nature of the characters.

In the original script the part of Peter was very different; Shelagh Delaney made him change character at the end and offer Jo and her baby a home with himself and Helen! In the final scene Jo was rushed off to hospital, and Geoff left holding the (plastic) baby. This, however, appears to be the only radical change which Joan Littlewood made, and it is quite obvious that the two central figures Jo and Helen are still the same restless and changeable characters — we are still left to wonder when (or if) they will ever grow up.

RITA WALLIS

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# *A Taste of Honey*

by SHELAGH DELANEY

## CAST

*in order of apperance*

HELEN . . . . .	RUTH LISTER
JO . . . . .	JUDY EMMET
PETER . . . . .	DAVID MORGAN
JIMMIE . . . . .	LENNOX THOMAS
GEOFFREY . . . . .	RAYMOND CHILDE

## MUSICIANS

Saxophone (Helen) . . . . .	John Rolfe
Clarinet (Jo) . . . . .	Larry Whelan
Trumpet (Peter) . . . . .	Michael Jackson
Bass guitar (Jimmie) . . . . .	Kim Wallis
Piano (Geoffrey) . . . . .	Gordon Peace

## STREET CHARACTERS

John Griffin, Judith Jones, Patrick Larkin, Maureen Lewis,  
Siobhan Nicholas  
(Members of The Questors Student Group)

*Directed by* RITA WALLIS

*Designed by* JACKIE TYE

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The play is set in Salford, Manchester, in 1960.

ACT ONE Scene 1 The street and the flat. November.  
Scene 2 The same. December.

## INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

ACT TWO Scene 1 The street and the flat. May.  
Scene 2 The flat. July.  
Scene 3 The flat. September.

The music is improvised around *A Taste of Honey* by Bobby Scott.  
Lyrics by The Beatles from the song by Ric Marlow.

*Stage Manager* : Neil Fitzgerald  
*Deputy Stage Manager* : Simon Crombie  
*Assistant Stage Managers* : Alison, Campbell, Hillary Carr,  
Peter Dodd, Patricia McGrail,  
Sacha Mannin  
*Wardrobe* : Bridget Murdoch  
*assisted by* : Cathy Skinner  
*Properties* : Barbara Sexon  
*assisted by* : Cornelia Cardew  
*Lighting Design* : Richard Broadhurst  
*assisted by* : Les Smith  
*Sound Design* : Sue Kendrick and Peter Kendrick  
*Sound Operator* : Barry Green  
*Prompts* : Sally Morris  
Helen Sniadek

*Our thanks to SAFEWAY STORES for their assistance in this production.*

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## DISCUSSION

Continuing our series of after-show discussions, that on *A Taste of Honey* will be held on TUESDAY, 23rd SEPTEMBER, at 7.45 p.m. in the Bernard Shaw Room. It will be led by

### CLIVE BARKER

Clive Barker started in the theatre as an actor in Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop, where Shelagh Delaney's work was first produced. He himself first directed her second play, *The Lion in Love*, when it was produced at the Royal Court Theatre. Since then his wide theatre experience has included a spell as Associate Director of the Northcott Theatre, Exeter, and as Lecturer in Drama at Birmingham University. He is currently Lecturer in the Department of Theatre Studies at the University of Warwick and is also Associate Editor of *Theatre Quarterly*. Few theatre people could be better qualified to lead a discussion on this particular play.

All are welcome

Admission is free

### NOTE THE DATE

TUESDAY, 23rd SEPTEMBER at 7.45 p.m.  
in the Bernard Shaw Room

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*Shelagh Delaney* was born in 1939 in Salford, Lancashire, and brought up there in a working-class environment. She was a late developer at school and, unlike most of the 'angry young men' writing at the time, never went on to higher education. *A Taste of Honey* was first performed in May 1958, two years after John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, and when Shelagh Delaney was only nineteen. Graham Greene described the play as having 'all the freshness of Mr Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* and a greater maturity'. Joan Littlewood was responsible for the direction of the play which was performed by her Theatre Workshop at the Theatre Royal, Stratford, London. It was her decision to include the music (originally a jazz trio) and to make the musicians very much part of the play. Her style of direction was intended to make the audience feel involved in the production and many of the 'throw-away' lines were directed by the actors to the audience.

Shelagh Delaney's only other play, *The Lion in Love*, was first performed at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, and later at the Royal Court Theatre, London. In 1964 she published a collection of short stories entitled *Sweetly Sings The Donkey*.

*Joan Littlewood* (born 1914) was the founder and, until 1961, the manager of Theatre Workshop. After training at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art she went to Manchester where, with her husband Ewan McColl, she founded an amateur group, Theatre Union, which soon made a name for itself with unconventional productions of experimental plays. On the outbreak of war the group dispersed, but came together again in 1945, and in 1953 took over the lease of the Theatre Royal at Stratford, London, where Joan Littlewood, working on a system entirely her own (although to some extent it may derive from both Stanislavsky and Brecht) was responsible for the success of a number of productions which were subsequently transferred to the West End, and also made the company famous on the Continent. Of these, perhaps the best known is *Oh, What a Lovely War*, first performed in 1963, and seen at The Questors in a very successful production in the Main Playhouse in 1978.

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#### THE GIFT STALL

Meg Kirby's ever-popular Annual Gift Stall springs back into action during the run of *Pygmalion* (including extra opening hours of 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on the two Saturdays and 12 - 2 p.m. on the two Sundays). This year it expands to take over both Foyers - the Gift Stall in the Main Foyer and the Book Stall in the West Foyer. Wares change each night. All proceeds go to the Development Fund. Gifts for the Stall are still needed.

CAN YOU AFFORD TO MISS IT??

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## THE NEW SEASON AT QUESTORS

COMING IN THE MAIN THEATRE .....

11 – 18 OCTOBER

**PYGMALION** by George Bernard Shaw

The classic comedy about social class and language; forget about My Fair Lady and get it straight from the 'orse's marf!

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26 OCTOBER

**ONE NIGHT ONLY**

A rare opportunity to see the THEATRE ACADEMY from PUNE, INDIA in

**GASHIRAM KOTWAL**

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SATURDAY 1st NOVEMBER

**INSTANT SUNSHINE**

YES! It really is them. 'The middle-class answer to punk rock.'  
QUESTOPICS MAGAZINE

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15 - 22 NOVEMBER

**THE WHITE DEVIL** by John Webster

A Jacobean tragedy of murder and intrigue. Strong stuff!

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6 – 13 DECEMBER

**A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE** by Arthur Miller

Originally banned from public performance by the Lord Chamberlain, this play by America's best-known modern playwright centres on the plight of two illegal immigrants in the Sicilian section of Brooklyn.

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31 DECEMBER – 10 JANUARY

**THE CHRISTMAS SHOW**

**CINDERELLA** : A traditional pantomime by

V.C. Clinton-Baddeley

Rags to riches with all the traditional Christmas ingredients!

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AND IN THE STUDIO .....

2 – 5 OCTOBER

SOUTH LONDON THEATRE CENTRE presents

**SING BREL**

An entertainment based on the songs of composer and poet Jaques Brel.

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