



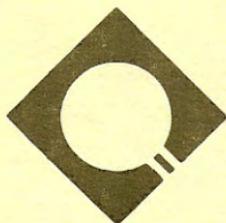
THE WHITE DEVIL

John Webster

November 15-22



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

First performance 15th November 1980

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The White Devil was probably first performed in 1612 and was the first play that Webster had written entirely on his own. For the previous ten years, however, he had enjoyed an active writing career, being concerned in collaborations with playwrights such as Dekker, Heywood and Marston. The introduction to *The White Devil* can be read as his statement of independence from his past. He places himself firmly with the 'learned' Jonson and Chapman as opposed to the 'popular' Shakespeare, Dekker and Heywood, though he wishes that what he writes 'may be read by their light' for he knows them all 'so worthy'. Evidence of his learning can be found in his familiarity with the classics and with contemporaneous writers, from both of which sources he was not afraid to borrow in his writing. It is perhaps ironic in the light of this that the first performance was probably a failure, caused to some extent by the nature of the theatre in which it appeared. The Red Bull at Clerkenwell is reputed to have been a rowdy house, with an audience showing little appreciation for the subtleties of dramatic poetry!

Webster has always had to live in the shadow of Shakespeare, but of all the other Jacobean dramatists he is probably the one with the greatest sweep of imagination. He combines a study of the 'prodigious comets' of the great dukes with their private faces and the ambitions and lusts of their courtiers. Their actions may be motivated by self-interest, but through this we see the human animal at its meanest and also at its greatest, as it struggles with the problems of living in a hostile world. This is not a play that shows man in a rosy light, but it is ultimately a humane vision. In his despair at living, Webster has created a defiance of the pain and darkness, which brings with it a meaning to life. His expression of that defiance helps us to see that life, whatever it brings, must go on being lived — and to the full.

Webster's reputation rests largely on his two tragedies *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* (1613-14), though he also wrote *The Devil's Law Case*, *Appius and Virginia* and the lost tragedy *The Guise*.

THE WHITE DEVIL

John Webster

THE CAST

in order of appearance

COUNT LODOVICO, <i>in love with Isabella</i>	KEITH PARRY
<i>later a conspirator in the pay of Francisco</i>	
GASPARO, <i>friend of Lodovico</i>	RICHARD LEWIS
THE DUKE OF BRACCIANO, <i>husband . . .</i>	MICHAEL GODLEY
<i>first of Isabella, and later of Vittoria</i>	
CAMILLO, <i>first husband of Vittoria; . . .</i>	MARTIN WOODRUFF
<i>cousin to Monticelso</i>	
FLAMINEO, <i>secretary to Bracciano;</i>	FRANK DI RIENZO
<i>brother to Vittoria</i>	
VITTORIA COROMBONA, <i>a Venetian</i>	JENNIFER TUDOR
<i>Lady; wife first of Camillo, later of Bracciano</i>	
ZANCHE, <i>a Moor; servant to Vittoria</i>	LESLEY BILTON
CORNELIA, <i>mother to Vittoria, Marcello</i>	PAM GOWER
<i>and Flamineo</i>	
FRANCISCO DE MEDICI, <i>Duke of Florence;</i>	JACK WOOD
<i>in the last Act, disguised as MULINASSAR, a Moor</i>	
MONTICELSO, <i>a Cardinal, later. . . .</i>	PHILLIP CLAYTON-GORE
<i>Pope Paul IV</i>	
MARCELLO, <i>younger brother of Flamineo; . . .</i>	ROGER DE TONEY
<i>of Francisco's household</i>	
ISABELLA, <i>first wife of Bracciano;</i>	SYLVIA HYSON
<i>sister to Francisco</i>	
GIOVANNI, <i>Bracciano's son by Isabella</i>	BILL TAYLOR
JULIO, <i>a doctor</i>	SCOTT COOK
CONJUROR.	RICHARD LEWIS
MATRON	BETTY RUDDERHAM
HORTENSIO	PATRICE BACON
COURTIER	MIKE DINEEN
SERVANT	MARTIN STONER
CARLO	MARTIN WOODRUFF
PEDRO	JOHN STACEY
ATTENDANTS AND SERVANTS	JANE RUDDERHAM
	CLAIRE RUDDERHAM, SCOTT COOK,
	RICHARD CRUSE, PAUL MANGAN,
	PHIL PINKHAM

Directed by ALAN CHAMBERS
Designed by GEOFF MOORE
Lighting designed by LES SMITH
Costumes designed by ANNA PIET
Music composed by ANDREW BRIXEY
and played by : PENNY DAVIS (*Soprano*)
LIZ TAIG (*Alto flute*)
ANNE McANENEY (*Trumpet*)

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

Stage Managers : Alec Atchison
: Phil Dean
Deputy Stage Manager : Hilary Thompson
Assistant Stage Managers : Bronwyn Beckford
and Construction Team : Richard Cruse
: Suzy Gabbay
: Lesley Harris
: Phil Pinkham
: Sue Richardson
: John Stacey
: Martin Stoner
: Ian Viney
: Alan West
Wardrobe : Anna Piet
: Melba Beckford
: Hilda Collins
: Diana Lloyd
: Lesley Taylor
: Terry Wierzan
Properties : Joan Curry
: Carina Choy-Warry
Sound Operators : Grace Lacaille
: Rona Christie
Recording Engineer : Richard Guy
Lighting Operator : John Hadler

DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

If this production has pleased you or displeased you, excited you or infuriated you, interested you or bored you; if you would like to hear more about it or talk more about it, come to the *OPEN DISCUSSION*, which will be held in the Bernard Shaw Room on

TUESDAY, 25th NOVEMBER
at 7.45 p.m.

and will be led by

JOHN ALLEN

whose varied and distinguished career in the theatre has ranged from actor to director, from administrator and director of the Glyndebourne Children's Theatre to the B.B.C., from H.M. Inspector of Schools with national responsibility for drama to Principal of the Central School of Speech and Drama. He will bring a rich experience to commenting on *The White Devil* and its performance.

Don't miss the date

TUESDAY, 25th NOVEMBER at 7.45 p.m.
in the Bernard Shaw Room

Open to all

Admission free

From the critics . . .

Vittoria Corombona, that famed whore,
Desperate Ludovico weltering in his gore,
Subtle Francisco — all of them shall be
Gazed at as comets by posterity.

Samuel Sheppard 1651

Methinks a very poor play.

Samuel Pepys 2 October 1661

Flamineo especially, the ardent pimp, the enthusiastic pandar, who prostitutes his sister and assassinates his brother with such earnest and single-hearted devotion to his own straightforward self-interest, has in him a sublime fervour of rascality.

A.C. Swinburne 1886

. . . a part of Webster's universe. Human beings are writhing grubs in an immense night. And the night is without stars or moon. But it sometimes has a certain quietude in its darkness; but not very much.

Rupert Brooke 1916

Webster was much possessed by death
And saw the skull beneath the skin;
And breastless creatures under ground
Leaned backward with a lipless grin.

T.S. Eliot c. 1920

. . . an irony so varied, so subtle and so profound.

H.T. Price 1955

. . . the play leaves us with a sense of insecurity. The predicament which Webster presented is continual . . . But as we watch, awed and insecure, we will feel pity in our hearts for those who suffer, for those who by pain seek pain; with its horrors, its deadly laughter and its intricacies, the dramatic experience is humane.

John Russell Brown 1958

Vittoria and Bracciano suffer for their evil; but what drives them into evil is what drives them into love. They live superb in the vitality of their passion.

H. Jenkins 1961

These things will be our reward if I have pleased you.

Martial. Quoted by Webster as epilogue to *The White Devil*.

COMING IN THE MAIN THEATRE

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.

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!

Special Prices: £1.50 (adults), £1.00 (children)

Performances: 31 December, 1,2,3,6,7,8,9,10 January at 7.45pm.
3 and 4 January at 4.30pm.

Tickets on sale from mid-November

AND IN THE STUDIO

27 – 30 NOVEMBER

THREE PLAYS by JOHN NORMAN

John Norman is the author of a number of plays, three of which have been performed at Questors New Play Festivals: *Crincum Crancum*, *The Owl-Winged Faculty* and *Agitator*. Now you have an opportunity to see three of his shorter pieces.

16 – 18 JANUARY

DIRECTORS' SHOP WINDOWS

AND IN THE FOYER

AN EXHIBITION OF
OIL PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURE

by
THE ASSOCIATION OF POLISH ARTISTS
IN GREAT BRITAIN

12 – 29 NOVEMBER