

Pinero's Farce



April 1981

THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY



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First performance April 4th 1981

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Arthur Wing Pinero (1855 - 1934) started his theatrical career as an amateur actor, later joining the Edinburgh Stock Company and making his first professional appearance at the Theatre Royal Edinburgh in 1874. He first came to light as a dramatist with the play *Two Hundred a Year* in 1877 but it was not until *The Magistrate* was produced at the Court Theatre in 1885 that he became popular. *The Magistrate* heralded a series of farces at the Court which became the talk of the town and included Pinero's *The Schoolmistress* (1886) *Dandy Dick* (1887) and *The Cabinet Minister* (1890). Many critics have felt that this period showed English farce at its best. Pinero went on to consolidate his reputation as a more serious playwright with among others, *The Profligate* (1889) and the triumphant *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* (1893) which many felt at the time to herald a new dramatic dawn. His most important work was done before 1900 by which time his work was beginning to seem outdated to audiences of the day though he continued to write until the failure of his final play *A Cold June* (1932).

In retrospect Pinero stands out as an excellent craftsman whose serious plays Cookman thinks were able to set a spark to polite controversy - "When the fashion in which he had risen disappeared a part of his reputation went with it". He is now best remembered for the sparkling farces with which he began his career. In these the farcical situations reminiscent of the boulevard farceurs of French theatre such as Feydeau and Sardou are allied to an athletic use of the comic possibilities of the English language. In the famous climax to the Second Act it is not just the piling on of incident which adds to the fun but the music of the dialogue has the quality of a tarantella or other maniac dance.

ALAN CHAMBERS

# THE MAGISTRATE

by Arthur Wing Pinero

## CAST

*In order of appearance*

CIS FARRINGTON . . . . .	SIMON SURTEES
<i>(Mrs. Posket's Son by her first marriage)</i>	
BEATIE TOMLINSON . . . . .	MARGARET HALBERSTADT
<i>(a Young Lady, reduced to teaching music)</i>	
WYKE . . . . .	GEOFF WEBB
<i>(Servant at Mr. Posket's)</i>	
POPHAM . . . . .	CORNELIA CARDEW
<i>(Servant at Mr. Posket's)</i>	
AGATHA POSKET . . . . .	RUTH LISTER
<i>(late Farrington, née Verrinder)</i>	
MR. POSKET . . . . .	MICHAEL GODLEY
<i>(Magistrate of Mulberry Street Police Court)</i>	
MR. BULLAMY . . . . .	MICHAEL HILLER
<i>(Magistrate of Mulberry Street Police Court)</i>	
CHARLOTTE VERRINDER . . . . .	LESLEY BILTON
<i>(Mrs. Posket's Sister)</i>	
ISIDORE . . . . .	COLIN THOMAS
<i>(a Waiter)</i>	
ACHILLE BLOND . . . . .	STEPHEN HALLMARK
<i>(Proprietor of the Hôtel des Princes)</i>	
COLONEL LUKYN . . . . .	JACK WOOD
<i>(from Bengal — Retired)</i>	
CAPTAIN HORACE VALE . . . . .	ALAN DRAKE
<i>(Shropshire Fusiliers)</i>	
INSPECTOR MESSITER . . . . .	PAUL MANGAN
<i>(Metropolitan Police)</i>	
CONSTABLE HARRIS . . . . .	GERRY BLAKE
<i>(Metropolitan Police)</i>	
MR. WORMINGTON . . . . .	TED SCRIVENER
<i>(Chief Clerk at Mulberry Street)</i>	
SERGEANT LUGG . . . . .	JOHN KEARNS
<i>(Metropolitan Police)</i>	

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*Director* : ALAN CHAMBERS

*Designer* : JACKIE TYE

*Costumes devised and*

*produced by* : GRACE LACAILLE

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## ACT I

### THE FAMILY SKELETON!

At Mr. Posket's, Bloomsbury.

## ACT II

### IT LEAVES ITS CUPBOARD!!

Room at the Hôtel des Princes, Meek Street.

## ACT III

### IT CRUMBLES!!!

Scene 1 : The Magistrate's Room, Mulberry Street.

Scene 2 : At Mr. Posket's again.

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*There will be two intervals of fifteen minutes each.*

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*Stage Manager* : Tim Hayward  
*Deputy Stage Manager* : Bron Beckford  
*Assistant to Designer* : George Benn  
*Properties* : Jean Derby  
*Wardrobe Mistress* : Grace Lacaille  
*Assisted by* : Sylvie Michel  
Vera Maidment  
Lesley Taylor  
Lindsay Udell  
Peter Bacos  
*Sound* : John Hadley  
*Assisted by* : Peter Mansell  
*Pianist* : Andrew Brixey  
*Lighting* : Malcolm Robertson  
*Lighting Operator* : Philippa Forster  
*Construction* : Chris Sydenham  
Roger Brace  
*Assisted by* : Andrew Muir  
Colin Horne  
Colin Brown  
Peter Mansell  
Geoff Moore  
Roger Sturm  
Phil Pinkham  
Richard Cruse  
Gerry Blake  
Martin Stoner  
Roger Kelly  
Alec Atchison  
Leon Henry  
*Assistant Stage Managers* : Barbara Yerolomou  
Dorothy Wood  
Barbara Coulton  
Stan Glebocki  
Marguerite Ford  
Helen Sniadek  
Vanessa Timmons  
Suzy Gabbay  
Helen Janz

*Champagne by courtesy of Moët et Chandon*

In the WEST FOYER there is a display of photographs and programmes of previous productions by THE QUESTORS of plays by Pinero.

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Come to the

## DISCUSSION

on this production, which will be held on TUESDAY, 14th APRIL, at 7.45 p.m., in the Bernard Shaw Room.

Many eminent figures in the theatre have visited The Questors to lead Discussions, regularly held after each production. On this occasion, the Discussion will be led by

## KITTY BLACK

playwright (particularly known for her English versions of Anouilh, Sartre and Hochwalder), one time Play Agent, promoter of children's theatre, producer and editor of simultaneous translations for the Aldwych World Theatre Seasons, Secretary of the Apollo Society (whose programme with Janet Suzman and Jeremy Clyde was recently seen at The Questors) and, most recently, associated with Stewart Granger in his best selling autobiography, *Sparks Fly Upward*. Kitty Black has a great fund of experience of theatre and of theatre people at all levels. You may be sure of a lively and interesting discussion, so do come along, whether to join in or just to listen.

### NOTE THE DATE

**TUESDAY, 14th APRIL at 7.45 p.m.**  
**in the Bernard Shaw Room**

**All are welcome**

**Admission is free**

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Other productions of plays by ARTHUR WING PINERO at THE QUESTORS include:

DANDY DICK *November 1937 and May 1964*

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS *May 1971*

TRELAWNEY OF THE WELLS *(A student Group production) July 1974*

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COMING UP

IN THE MAIN THEATRE

APRIL 25 – MAY 2

**NO MAN'S LAND**

by HAROLD PINTER

The Questors first staged a play by Pinter twenty-two years ago (*The Birthday Party*, 1959). *No Man's Land* (1975) joins the list of major plays by this most distinguished of modern British dramatists to be presented at the theatre.

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MAY 30 – JUNE 7

**THE BOY FRIEND**

by SANDY WILSON

*By arrangement with Samuel French Ltd.*

The immensely popular musical (it ran for five years in the original production) glides smoothly onto the Questors stage at the end of May. Don't miss it!

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AND IN THE STUDIO . . . . .

MAY 21 – 24

**KING OEDIPUS**

by SOPHOCLES

Forget Freud!

Come and see the real thing!

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JUNE 11 – 14

**THIS STORY OF YOURS**

by JOHN HOPKINS

(author of many television serials and plays, including the much-acclaimed tetralogy, *Talking to A Stranger*.)

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