

THE CRIMSON ISLAND

MIKHAIL BULGAKOV



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY



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First performance April 17th 1982

MIKHAIL BULGAKOV (1889 - 1940)

"The citizen who loving his country, must tell the truth about what is wrong with it, if it is to survive."

(M. Bulgakov)

"Everything about Bulgakov — like the dazzlingly fresh collars . . . the pressed crease in his trousers . . . the almost regal ceremony of his bows — absolutely everything made him stand out . . . And also, of course, the long coat, in which he came full of dignity . . . inevitably holding his hands inside his sleeves."

(A fellow journalist in Moscow)

THE CRIMSON ISLAND

First performed in 1928. Banned after 4 performances.

"The first call for freedom of the press in the USSR".

(A German Newspaper)

CHARACTERS IN THE REVOLUTION

NICHOLAS II [Sizi-Buzi]. The last Tsar. Succeeded to the throne in 1894. Abdicated in March 1917.

ALEXANDER KERENSKY [Kiri-Kuki]. A socialist lawyer. An excellent orator. After the Tsar's abdication, led a "Provisional Government" until ousted by the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution.

LENIN [Ki-Kum]. Leader of the Bolsheviks.

TROTSKY [Farra-Teytey]. A prominent Bolshevik. Tipped as Lenin's successor, but ousted by Stalin after Lenin's death.

THE REDS. The Bolsheviks.

THE WHITES. A generalisation for the groups, mainly middle class, who opposed the Bolshevik Revolution and who waged a bitter Civil War with the Reds between 1918 and 1920.

In the West Foyer there is an exhibition of photographs and programmes of previous productions of Russian plays (excluding Chekov's) by The Questors.

THE CRIMSON ISLAND

by **MIKHAIL BULGAKOV**

Translated by C.R. and E. Proffer

THE CAST

GENNADI PANFILYCH/Lord Glenarvon . . . **KEN RATCLIFFE**
ALEXANDER PAVLOVICH RINSKY/
General Likki-Tikki. **MICHAEL DAVIS**
METELKIN/Passepartout **JOHN KEARNS**
VOLODYA **RODNEY PRYNNE**
VASILY ARTURYCH DYMOGATSKY/
Kiri-Kuki **DAVID EMMET**
LIDIA/Lady Glenarvon **SUSAN MOORE**
SUNDUCHKOV (Daisy)/Sizi-Buzi . . . **STANLEY GOODCHILD**
NASTASIA KARPOVNA/Betsy **JULIE BRIDGMAN**
CHUDNOVSKAYA/Captain Hatteras **GWENAN EVANS**
OLGA **JUDY LANE**
VONDAKLEEV/Ki-Kum **MIKE ROBOTHAM**
SHURKOV/Farra-Teytey **TONY DIGGLE**
SOKOLENKO/Tohonga **DAVID MORGAN**
STUDENTS/Natives, Sailors **STEPHEN QUINN,**
GLYN BACKSHALL, SUE SOTHERAN
PIANIST **ANDREW BRIXEY**
PROMPT **DOROTHY WOOD**
MADAM KOROLKOVA **ELAYNE GOMERSALL**
SAVVA LUKICH **WILFRED SHARP**

Directed by **RICHARD HALBERSTADT**

Designed by **JOHN ROLFE**

Musical Director **ANDREW BRIXEY**

Lighting by **LES SMITH**

Sound by **CHARLES LACAILLE**

The action of the play takes place in Gennadi Panfilych's theatre
in Moscow.

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

Stage Managers PETER WALTON, GRAHAM GOODALL
Deputy Stage Manager JOHN SPENCER
Assistant Stage Managers LESLEY HARRIS, LEON HENRY,
 SUSAN MORRIS, STEVE HAMES,
 STEVE FEATHER, ROZ STOCK
Wardrobe Mistress GRACE LACAILLE
Assistant Wardrobe Mistress JAQUI ROLPH
assisted by LUCY LACAILLE, EDITH RICKET, LINDSAY UDELL
Properties BOB RICKET
assisted by JANE POWELL, LINDSEY WILLIAMS
Lighting Assistant PHILLIPA FORSTER
Construction by PETER WALTON
assisted by ROGER STURM, STEVE FEATHER,
 STEVE HAMES
Sound Assistant IAN BRIGGS
Show Printing by STEVE SHEDLOCK

NOW

come along to the

OPEN DISCUSSION

on this play and its presentation, which will be held on **TUESDAY, 27th APRIL** at 7.45 p.m. in the **BERNARD SHAW ROOM**.

The Discussion will be led by

JOHN ELSOM

the distinguished theatre critic for *The Listener*

John Elsom has had a long career as a theatre critic, starting from his days as theatre correspondent for Paramount Pictures, and has written widely about the theatre, his books including *Theatre Outside London*, *Erotic Theatre*, *History of the National Theatre* and *Post-war British Theatre*, and has edited and introduced *Post-war British Theatre Criticism*. He is also himself the author of a number of plays and is chairman of a leading fringe theatre, the Bush, Shepherds Bush.

There will be much of interest to discuss about this play, so *note the date*:

TUESDAY, 27th APRIL
at 7.45 p.m.
in the BERNARD SHAW ROOM

All are welcome

Admission is free

How does your garden grow?

Whether it's on a windowsill or covers an acre come to The Questors on June 12th and 13th when plants for all seasons will on sale in the forecourt from 11 a.m.

If you could donate some plants — contact Kay Barwick on 997 4522.

Proceeds to The Questors Development Fund to be used to improve the theatre heating.

MIKHAIL BULGAKOV

- 1891 Born in Kiev. Eldest of 6 children.
- 1916 Qualified as a doctor.
- 1920 Gave up medicine. Began writing for a local newspaper. Extremely poor.
- 1921 Moved to Moscow. Continued with journalism, which he hated.
- 1925 The first 2 instalments of his novel *The White Guard* published in a magazine, which was then closed down.
- 1926 Invited by the Moscow Arts Theatre (M.A.T.) to convert *The White Guard* into a play. Given an advance of 1,000 roubles. Wealth! The play opened amid a storm of protest. Renamed (despite Bulgakov's opposition) *The Days of the Turbins*, the critics savaged it, public meetings were held to discuss it. All Moscow went to see it and, because it was so good, went back to see it again. M.A.T. had its biggest box office success since the Revolution. Fame!
- 1928 At M.A.T. *Flight* banned before its première. At the Kamerny Theatre *The Crimson Island* banned after 4 performances.
- 1929 *Zoya's Apartment* banned while in rehearsal. In March all Bulgakov's works were banned. Retired into obscurity shunned by all but his closest friends.
- 1930 Persuaded by his friends to write to Stalin. Instead of begging forgiveness, he proudly defended himself and demanded either to be given work or to be allowed to emigrate. Stalin, ever unpredictable, sent him back to M.A.T.
- 1932 M.A.T. received a letter giving it 4 days in which to revive *The Turbins* (The White Guard) for Stalin, who sat alone in the auditorium for the performance. As a result Stalin ordered M.A.T. to reinstate the play in its repertoire — it became his favourite play and he saw it 15 times.
- 1934 M.A.T. began work on another controversial play, *Molière*. Bulgakov and Stanislavsky constantly clashed over the play.
- 1936 *Molière* at last given its first performance but was so badly received that it was dropped after 7 performances. Bulgakov left M.A.T. and joined the Bolshoi Theatre as a librettist.
- 1937 While in the middle of writing his 'theatrical' novel, *Black Snow*, he fell ill. Gave up *Black Snow* to finish his last novel, his masterpiece, *The Master and Margarita*.
- 1939 Went blind. Dictated revisions to his novel.
- 1940 Finished *The Master and Margarita*. Died March 10.

COMING UP IN THE MAIN THEATRE

May 15 – 22

BETRAYAL

by Harold Pinter

This powerful love story is Pinter's most entertaining and accessible play so far.

June 12 – 19

TWELFTH NIGHT

by William Shakespeare

Shakespeare's great comedy of love, life and melancholy, set in Illyria where the ship-wrecked Viola finds herself cast up into the society of Sir Toby Belch, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Malvolio and other memorable characters

Sponsored by National Westminster Bank PLC

July 10 – 17

The Questors Student Group presents

THE CRUCIBLE

by Arthur Miller

A classic drama about mass hysteria and witchcraft trials in seventeenth century America.

AND IN THE STUDIO

May 6 – 8

Bradford Playhouse in

THE KNACK

by Ann Jellicoe

'One is born with an intuition as to how to get women. But this feeling can be developed with experience and confidence, in certain people, Colin, to some degree. A man can develop the knack.'

June 4 – 8

A JAPANESE STUDIO

An evening of Japanese Theatre including a dramatisation of two stories by Ryunosuke Akutagawa.

June 30

Students at work.
