

#### THE MIDNIGHT SUN

#### Playwright's note:

Travelling on an iron-ore ship between Narvik (Northern Norway) and England, many years ago, I heard one evening the true story of a Polish seaman who, having absconded from his vessel and taken refuge on an English ship, found himself stateless, able neither to return to his homeland nor to immigrate into any other country. Apparently there was nothing to be done for the man, and he was obliged to remain with the ship, for what was already at the time of telling a period of years, being locked up whenever the ship was in dock. How the situation resolved itself I never heard.

In some ways the sailor's predicament resembles that of the legendary Flying Dutchman, condemned to spend an eternity at sea, unable to end his life or come to harbour, allowed to land just once in seven years, until he can find the true love of a woman to redeem him. In the most familiar version of this legend, the Dutchman lands finally on the coast of Norway, where he meets a girl, Senta, who throws over her lover to pledge her troth to the foreigner. Her true love finally redeems the Dutchman, and breaks the spell which has held him so long.

In writing this play (in the Spring and Summer of 1979) I drew both on the story and the legend.

DAVID MOWAT

David Mowat has had about twenty plays presented in Britain, Europe and the USA (five have been published, including four by Calder & Boyars). A number of his plays have been presented at Questors, including *Jens, The Others, My Relationship with Jane*, and *John*.

# THE MIDNIGHT SUN

### by David Mowat

#### Cast in order of speaking

SENTA	Judith Jones
LEIF	John Kearns
WHEELER	Vic Pompini
JOOP	Steven Hallmark
CHERRY	Margaret Turner
VOICE OF SVAVEK	John Turner

Directed by Neville Raschid
Sets designed by Norman Barwick
Costumes designed by Anna Piet
Lighting designed by Frank Wood
Sound designed by Steve Hames

The action of the play takes place between twelve noon and midnight.

The day, the 21st of June.

The place, Hammerfest, northern Norway.

Act I Scene i The Maritime Office (at noon).

Scene ii An outdoor bar. Scene iii Cherry's bedroom.

Scene iv The Maritime Office (later).

Act II Scene v Cherry's sitting-room.

Scene vi The seashore at night. Scene vii Senta's sitting-room.

There will be one interval of fifteen minutes between Acts I and II.

Patrons are respectfully asked to refrain from taking refreshments into the auditorium.

Stage Manager
Deputy Stage Managers Chris Roberts, Neville Bradbury
Assistant Stage Managers Roger Adams, Sandy Bhardwaj,
Rod Edwards, Andrew Evans,
Georgie Glen, Kate Goodson,
Murray Horrex, Kath Riley
WardrobeKathy Skinner
assisted by Mary Angus, Evelyn Curry, Edith Ricket
Properties
assisted by Glynn Backshall, Sue Carroll
Construction Richard Fernley, Rosalind Norman
Lighting Operators Francis Stevenson, Philip Rawe
Sound Operators Stuart Dollin, Tony Swaby
'Flying' Pete Kendrick, Alan B. Smith
Assistants in all departments Roger Brace, Roy Brierley,
Bob Charles, Tony Dodd,
Emma Francis, Harry Udall



#### DISCUSSION

The usual Discussion on this production, open to all members of the audience, will be held on TUESDAY, 3rd MAY, at 7.45 p.m. in the BERNARD SHAW ROOM.

It will be led by the well known playwright

#### **JAMES SAUNDERS**

author of Next Time I'll Sing to You, A Scent of Flowers, Bodies, The Borage Pigeon Affair, Hans Kohlhaas, and many other plays, produced in many countries of the world.

At the first production of a new play, one is in at the birth of something new, which it is particularly interesting to discuss. What impression has it made on you? What impression on others? Do come along, whether to join in or just to listen.

#### DON'T FORGET

TUESDAY, 3rd MAY at 7.45 p.m. in the BERNARD SHAW ROOM

Admission is free

All are welcome

## THE QUESTORS PREMIERE FESTIVAL April 21 – 30, 1983

The Midnight Sun is part of The Questors Première Festival which opened on April 21st in the Studio, with productions of three plays by Questors writers — Robert Jones, Jim O'Conner and Phillip Sheahan. On Monday April 25th Igor Dimont, the Russian director, gave an illustrated talk about his work.

During the run of *The Midnight Sun* there will be other events in the Studio:

Tuesday April 26th at 10.30 pm

CHOICES — a short play, compiled by the cast, which deals with some of the choices presented by contemporary opportunities and expectations.

Wednesday April 27th at 8.00 pm

O FOR A MUSE. The 'words and wine' company present an evening of poetry, prose, songs and snippets on the theme of aspirations to artistry.

and at 10.30 pm

4

CHOICES

Thursday April 28th at 10.30 pm

AS IF . . . . . — a short play, devised by the cast and director, set in a dressing room where a group of Stanislavsky-trained actors are preparing for a performance.

Friday April 29th at 8.00 pm

COLUMBANUS by James Mateer. A rehearsed reading of a play set in the Dark Ages.

and at 10.30 pm

AS IF .....

Saturday April 30th at 8.00 pm

THE ACTRESS AND THE ENGINEER by Patry Trench

by Patsy Trench

A rehearsed reading of a play about the brief encounter between George Stephenson, the railway engineer, and Fanny Kemble, the actress.

#### COMING EVENTS

#### IN THE MAIN THEATRE

May 19 - 28

#### CABARET

Book by Joe Masteroff. Based on the play *I Am a Camera* by John van Druten and stories by Christopher Isherwood. Music by John Kander, Lyrics by Fred Ebb.

Berlin in the 1930s before the start of the Third Reich. Yet already, beneath the tap-dancing feet of the girls in the infamous Kit Kat Klub, can be distinguished the sinister sound of the goose-step.

May 29 - June 4

#### **ENGLISH AMATEUR THEATRE WEEK**

May 30 & June 2 Bolton Little Theatre presents

NO ORCHIDS FOR MISS BLANDISH

by R.D. MacDonald from the novel by James Hadley Chase

May 31 & June 3 South London Theatre Centre presents ZOO, ZOO, WIDDERSHINS ZOO

by K.B. Laffan

#### June 1 & 4 Loft Theatre, Learnington Spa presents THE SHORT-SIGHTED BEAR

by Andrew Davies

The Questors Theatre gratefully acknowledges the generous financial assistance from Marks and Spencer plc towards The English Amateur Theatre Week.

HOTPLATE. Delicious food available in the upper foyer from 6.30 pm during main theatre productions.

#### IN THE STUDIO

April 26 - 29

THE QUESTORS PREMIERE FESTIVAL continues.

For details see previous page.

May 12 - 15

#### THE LAST DAY OF NOVEMBER

by John Yorath

South London Theatre Centre present a new play dealing with the amazing events of the 85 years between the opening of Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace at the Great Exhibition of 1851, and its destruction by fire on November 30th 1936.

June 9 - 12

#### CALIGULA

by Albert Camus

Not just a study of the psychology of a monster in human form, but a study of the consequences of taking a nihilistic response to the absurd to its apparently logical conclusions.

If you would like to know more about The Questors, you are welcome to attend one of our OPEN EVENINGS which are held every Wednesday at 7.45 pm. Information and tour.