

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

*In the Studio*

# THE CUCKOO SCHOOL

by Phillip Sheahan

The Questors Theatre Reminiscence Project Group "Playback" follow up their success with *Soapsud Island* with a play based on the reminiscences of staff and pupils of the old Hanwell Cuckoo Schools in the twenties and thirties.

2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 November at 7.45pm

*In the Playhouse*

# PERICLES

by William Shakespeare

At last, an opportunity to see a play by Shakespeare you may not have seen but one that was very popular in it's hey-day. It is a magical story of love and adventure told in very simple language with a clear story-line.

9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 November at 7.45pm  
Sunday matinée 10 November at 3.00pm

REHEARSED READING IN THE UPPER FOYER

# SEPTEMBER IN THE RAIN

by John Godber

Sunday 13 October at 7.45pm

Printed and published by THE QUESTORS LIMITED



THE  
**QUESTORS**  
THEATRE

*BT Biennial*  
*1991*



*Happy*  
**FAMILIES**

*A World Premiere*  
*by John*  
*Godber*



on behalf of the Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain



and



HAYMILLS [Contractors] LTD

# THE BT BIENNIAL 1991

## — A TRIBUTE TO COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP

It is extremely gratifying to see an idea come to fruition that has generated such excitement and interest in recent months, but which for years has only been an idea in the heads of a few members of the Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain. For this production of *Happy Families* would never have happened but for the support of BT and the work of James Cooke, Lorna Cameron and our Chairman, Martin Bowley, who took the idea away and found a sponsor.

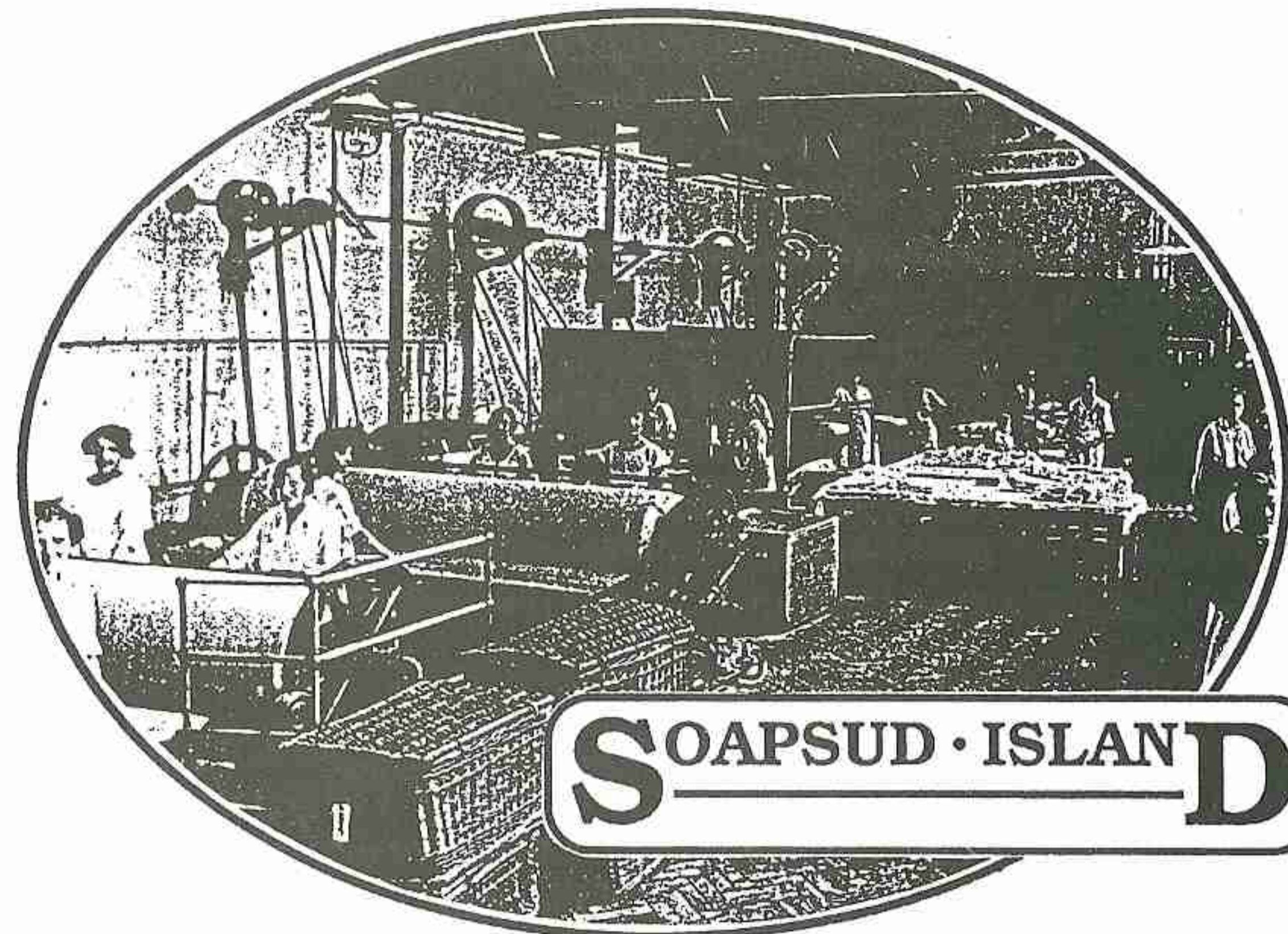
For us, the members of the audience, this play is a small, but important, piece of theatre history. *Happy Families* will break a world record, premiering in 49 theatres across the country in the space of a few weeks. It is also the first play commissioned especially for the Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain, a body of some 60 theatres which represent the cream of amateur theatre in this country.

But perhaps most importantly, it combines the best in commercial sponsorship with artistic excellence and innovation. For John Godber readily admits that he would never have written this play unless he was commissioned to do so. Professional theatre has so many financial constraints placed upon it. Just walk through the West End and see how many plays have small casts and single sets and you will see what limitations are place on writers today. John himself is well known for such plays as *Bouncers* and *Up 'n' Under* in which a small cast play many roles. However, for *Happy Families* he was briefed to write for a large cast, and the cost restraints of professional theatre were, to a great extent, forgotten.

Yet best of all, he was allowed to write a play that he wanted to do. BT placed no constraints on the work that you will see tonight — a sure sign that commercial sponsorship of the arts can work when the sponsor respects the artist and the artist respects the sponsor. Even so, in this they took a significant risk, linking their name and reputation with something which was in the head of one man until a few months ago. I believe that the risk has paid off handsomely.

So, on behalf of The Questors Theatre, and all the other members of The Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain, our thanks to BT, James Cooke and Lorna Cameron, and particularly John Godber for providing us with the chance to be part of the world première of *Happy Families*.

ROBERT GORDON CLARK  
Marketing Manager  
for The Questors



## Memories of the Acton Laundries

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*Copies of Playback's first collection of reminiscences are now available from the Foyer Bookstall priced £1.50 . . . excerpts from the interviews on which "Soapsud Island" was based.*


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THE QUESTORS THEATRE  PLAYBACK

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# HAPPY FAMILIES

by John Godber

A new play specially commissioned by **BT**   
for The Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain

First performance Saturday 12th October 1991

*Cast: in order of speaking*

John ..... **MARK THOMPSON-NEALE**  
Vic ..... **HOWARD BENBROOK**  
Dot ..... **LORNA DUVAL**  
Liz ..... **FFRANGCON WHELAN**  
Jack ..... **KEN RATCLIFFE**  
Doris ..... **CARLA FIELD**  
Edna ..... **MONYENE KANE**  
Rebecca, Lynn Sutton, Mrs Scott, Mrs Cooper ..... **JULIE WOODS**

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The play is set in a home in the north of England and follows John Taylor's memories of growing up from 1969 to 1980.

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THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

*Production*

Director ..... **HELEN WALKER**  
Designer ..... **JENNY RICHARDSON**  
Lighting Designer ..... **PETE WALTERS**  
Sound by ..... **ROBIN THOMPSON**  
Costume Designer ..... **SARAH ANDREWS**  
*assisted by* ..... **REBECCA SIMMONDS**  
Stage Management ..... **PAUL HARDY**

with ..... **ALLY COURT**  
..... **JO PERSE**  
..... **TRACEY THOMPSON-NEALE**

Construction ..... **PETER TERRY**  
*with* ..... **BRIN PARSONAGE**  
Set Painters ..... **TESSA CURTIS,**  
..... **JENNY RICHARDSON**  
..... **GEOFF MOORE**

Properties ..... **SALLY LISTER**  
Lighting Operator ..... **HENRY BROOM**  
Sound Operator ..... **ALAN COOK**  
Prompter ..... **BRIDGETT STREVENS**  
Hair and Make-Up ..... **ALEX VOLPE,**  
..... **ANTONIO GONZALEZ of GREASEPAINT**

Photographer ..... **PAUL WALKER**

*Thanks to* ..... **BRAD ASKEW, ROGER BRACE, KATHLEEN MULES,**  
**ROGER KLENK, RICHARD BROADHURST, LES SMITH, RUSSELL HILL,**  
**TOM CHALLENGER, ALISON BURNS, EDE & RAVENSCROFT**

The taking of food and drink into the auditorium is NOT permitted, neither is the use of cameras, video-cameras or tape equipment during the performance.

## JOHN GODBER: Author

Born in Upton, near Pontefract in West Yorkshire in 1956, the son of a miner, John Godber trained as a teacher at Bretton Hall College, Wakefield, gained an MA in Drama and did five years' part time M.Phil/PhD research into Drama at Leeds University. John is an honorary lecturer at Bretton Hall College and a Doctor of Letters at Hull University. Prior to his appointment as Artistic Director of Hull Truck Theatre Company in 1984, he was Head of Drama at Minsthorpe High, the school he attended as a student. It was whilst at Minsthorpe High that he won almost every major award at the National Student Drama Festival between 1981 and 1983. John has also won four Edinburgh Fringe Firsts, and in 1984 won the Laurence Olivier Comedy of the Year Award for *Up 'n' Under*. His plays have been across the world and include *Bouncers*, nominated for the Laurence Olivier Comedy of the Year Award in 1985 and winner of eleven Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards; *Teachers*; *Shakers* (with Jane Thornton); *Blood, Sweat and Tears*; *Cramp*, *Happy Jack*; *September in the Rain*; *Salt of the Earth* and most recently, *On the Piste*. His TV work includes *Crown Court*, *Grange Hill* and *Brookside*. In 1987 he wrote and co-directed the BBC2 six-part series *The Ritz* and its sequel *The Continental*. He has also written a sports documentary, *Body and Soul* for Channel 4, and a screenplay, *My Kingdom for a Horse*, for BBC1. He has recently devised a major ten-part drama series, *Chalk Face*, with the BBC, about the teachers in a Midlands comprehensive school.

## Helen Walker: Director

Helen started directing at The Questors in 1985 having been an acting member since 1982. Between that time and turning professional in 1988 she directed *Odour of Chrysanthemums*, *Cold Times*, *The Death of Joe Hill* and *Making Noise Quietly*. She was also Studio Director for eighteen months. Since 1988 her credits include *The Irving Project* by John Hole (Lyric Studio, Hammersmith), *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* and *Pride and Prejudice* (whilst teaching the 42nd Questors Student Group). She formed her own company, *Outrageous Acts Theatre* in 1989 to tour *Shakers* by John Godber and Jane Thornton and produced *Martine* by Jean-Jacques Bernard in Richmond earlier this year. Shortly afterwards she was a finalist for the BAC/Arts Council Young Director of the Year Award. The company's next production will be *More than Meets the Eye* which Helen has also written, which will open at the Finborough Theatre, Earls Court, next month.

## ART EXHIBITION IN THE UPPER FOYER

11 — 19 October 1991

### CONCHITA MOORE

Conchita Moore was born in Rio de Janeiro, educated in France, Belgium and Holland and in 1988 gained an Honours Degree from St Martin's School of Art. She has worked as a set and costume designer, a puppeteer and as a book illustrator and taught Art in schools and prison. She is now painting full time and has exhibited abroad, at the Royal Academy and with the London Group. Recent exhibitions include the Salisbury Arts Centre, Bracknell Arts Centre and the Small Mansion Art Centre. Conchita's paintings in this exhibition focus mainly on 'Oedipus Rex' and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', two plays with which she has been closely associated.

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