

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

*In the Studio*

### THE STRANGENESS OF OTHERS

*by Nick Ward*

A contemporary play by a contemporary author which won him the George Devine Award when it was first presented at The Royal National Theatre in 1985.

8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 February at 7.45pm

*In the Playhouse*

### THE THREEPENNY OPERA

*by Bertolt Brecht*

*Music by Kurt Weill*

*Translated by Hugh MacDiarmid*

Our European Season continues with Brecht's up-dating of John Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. Composer Kurt Weill contributed the haunting music including the legendary "Mack-The-Knife" describing the eponymous hero.

15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 February at 7.45pm  
Sunday Matinée 16 February at 3pm

*Sponsored by The Royal Bank of Scotland*

*In the Studio*

### HOMESICK

*written and directed by Kevin Madeley*

From the pen of the writer of *D Minus* and *A Plus*, the play is written as a series of monologues for three generations of women. Moving, witty, perceptive . . . not to be missed!

6, 7 March at 10.30pm. *Tickets: Members and Guests £2.00*

*In the Playhouse*

### TEMPTATION

*by Vaclav Havel*

A variation of the Faust legend. A witty, powerful and extraordinary play from an extraordinary playwright. Dealing with the oppression of the individual by the bureaucratic state, the result is a dazzling, teasing and serious comedy.

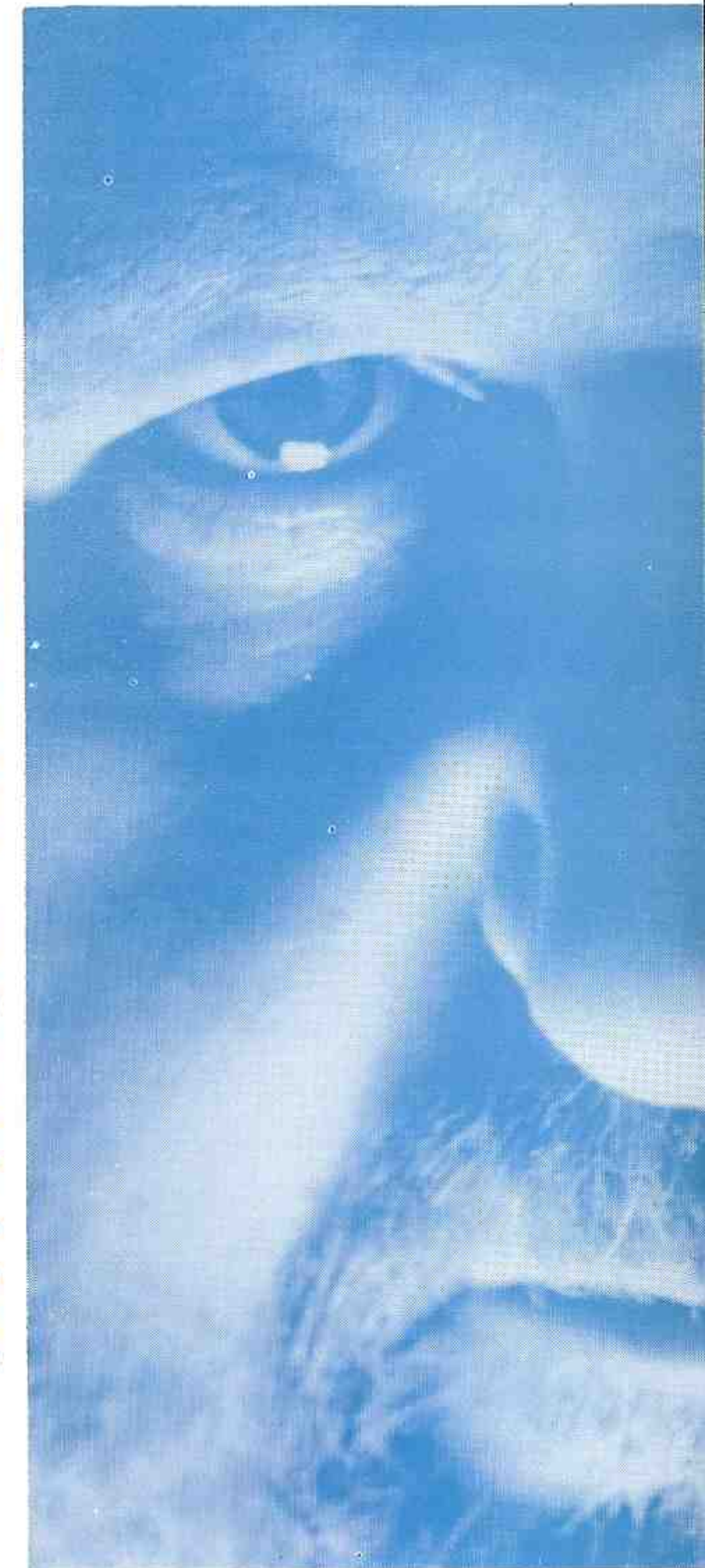
14, 18-21 March at 7.45pm  
Sunday Matinée 15 March at 3pm

 THE QUESTORS THEATRE

The 1992 European Season

IBSEN

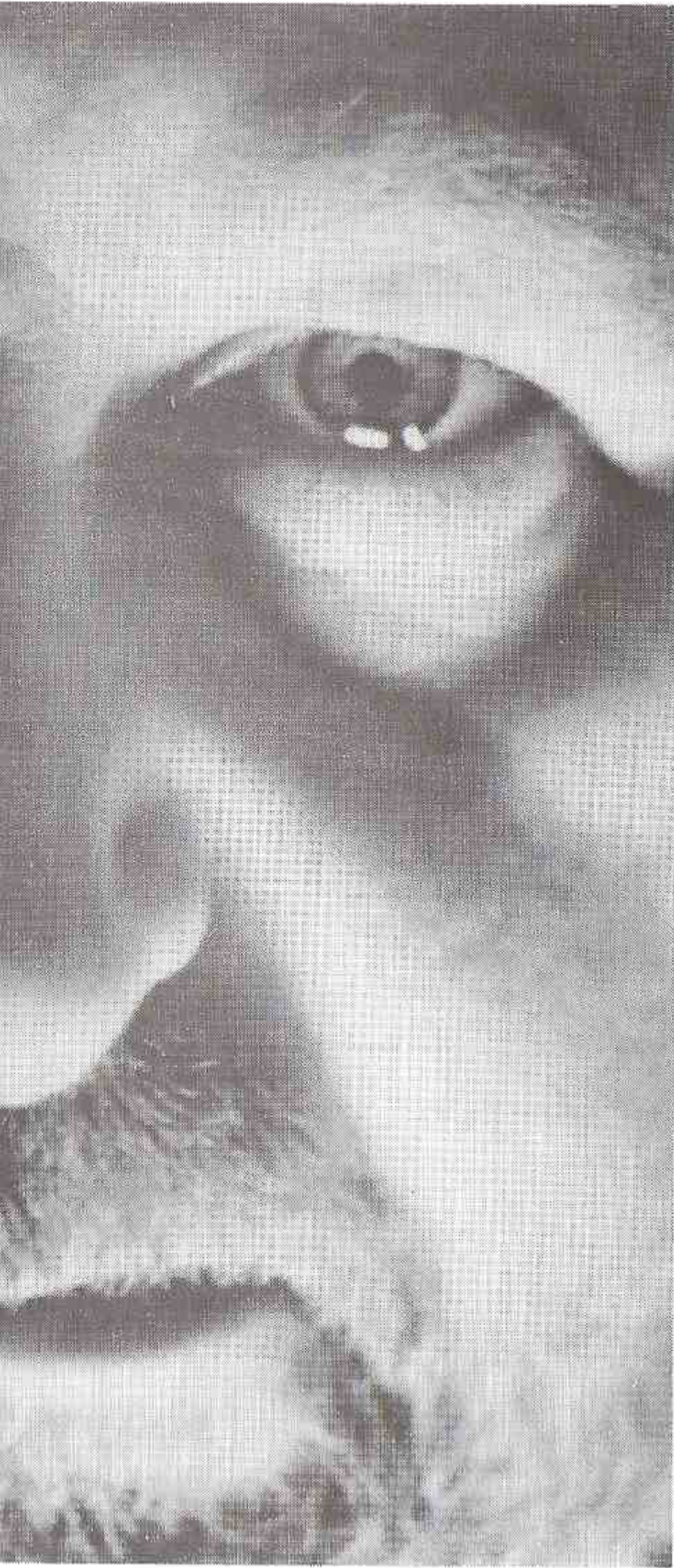
JOHN GABRIEL BORKMAN



Translated by Michael Meyer

## ENCOUNTERS WITH MR IBSEN HALFWAY UP A MOUNTAIN

The great advantage of dead playwrights is their absence. There's little danger they'll phone you up and ask to drop in on rehearsals,



only to sit hunched up miserably in a corner chain-smoking while the actors mangle their favourite lines and the director wilfully misinterprets the text. I've recently had a recurring nightmare of coming face to face with Ibsen on a narrow mountain path. Neither of us can get by the other, so we are forced to confront each other there and then. There he stands, the bogey man Ibsen of my nightmares, done up like a painting, mutton-chop whiskers and all, glowering down at me from some Parnassian intellectual height and demanding to know "what precisely are you doing to my play?" Under those circumstances replying, "well, I just thought we'd explore it a bit" doesn't strike me as a sufficiently adequate response.

At this moment in my nightmare there is a frenzied Hitchcockian soundtrack and we're battling each other on a ledge above some inevitable Norwegian fjord. "Give me back my play", he hisses, pushing me over the edge, surprisingly strong for someone who died over eighty years ago. "I never have this

trouble with Shakespeare", I yell as I tumble to my doom.

Why do I feel queasy about tackling Ibsen on and off the mountainside? As Michael Meyer points out in what I call the Father-of-Modern-European-Theatre syndrome, "Few things put an audience off a play as much as reading beforehand that its author was the first man to do this or that. It's like being asked to sit for three hours in the first armchair or the first house to be equipped with central heating". For many people Ibsen appears to be the theatrical equivalent of castor oil — it's probably good for you but you wouldn't want to make a habit of it. He's proof positive that stature won't necessarily breed affection. When we think of Ibsen we don't think of sex, passion, poetry and exhilaration; we tend to think of actors stalking rooms of horsehair sofas, antimacassars and stovepipes, being — Norwegian.

Ah, Norwegians! A British director I know once found herself sitting in an Oslo restaurant with a Norwegian friend who was getting increasingly uncomfortable. When asked why, she replied, "It's a couple arguing at the next table". All the curious director could see was a couple murmuring quietly and making the minutest possible hand signals in the best tradition of the minimalist school of Norwegian social behaviour.

If pressed, most of us might finally admit to finding Ibsen a trifle humourless. "Where are the jokes?" the actors cry out eagerly in rehearsal and come to the disconsolate conclusion that there probably aren't any. This despite the fact that the Borkman family could easily move in next door to the Addams family, or settle down in Twin Peaks, without causing the slightest dismay.

Not that Ibsen didn't have a sense of humour — of sorts. His idea of a joke was to hang an enormous portrait of Strindberg over his desk, claiming gleefully that the constant presence of his 'delightfully mad' rival inspired his best writing efforts.

Call it synchronicity, good fortune, bizarre coincidence; but as the story of Robert Maxwell unfolded day by day with increasing absurdity it was difficult not to feel that we are doing the right play at the right time.

I have this dream in which Henrik Ibsen and Robert Maxwell meet on a boat in the afterlife . . . . .!

PATRICK KEALEY

# JOHN GABRIEL BORKMAN

by Henrik Ibsen

Translated by Michael Meyer

First performance Saturday 25th January 1992

Cast (in order of appearance)

Gunhild Borkman ..... SHEILA TIFFANY  
Malene ..... BRIDGET COSTELLO  
Ella Rentheim ..... SIBEAL McGUINNE  
Erhart Borkman ..... ROLAND BEARNE  
Fanny Wilton ..... PAMELA MAJOR  
John Gabriel Borkman ..... KEITH PARRY  
Frida Foldal ..... MEGAN WHELAN  
Vilhelm Foldal ..... PETER GARDINER

The action takes place during a winter evening in the Rentheim family mansion outside the Norwegian capital.

ACT ONE

*Mrs Borkman's sitting room*

ACT TWO

*The drawing room upstairs*

INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

ACT THREE

*Mrs Borkman's sitting room*

ACT FOUR

*The courtyard outside the house; and a part of the forest*

THE PLAY LASTS APPROXIMATELY 3 HOURS

Production

Director ..... PATRICK KEALEY  
Designer ..... TIM SYKES  
Assistant Designer ..... PATRICIO CORTI  
Lighting Designer ..... MARTIN SAPSED  
Sound by ..... GUY MORROGH  
Stage Manager ..... ERIC LISTER  
Deputy Stage Manager ..... TRACY THOMPSON-NEALE  
Assistant Stage Manager ..... OLU BOTU  
Properties ..... HARRIET SIMON  
Construction ..... GRAHAM CARPENTER,  
STEVE GREGORY, BOB HOSKINS,  
ALISON OLGE-SKAN  
Prompter ..... SUSAN OLIVER  
Voice Work ..... SUE ALDRED  
Slides ..... GEOFF MOORE  
Lighting Operators ..... CLARE TURNER,  
HENRY BROOM, ANNA PRYCE  
Sound Operator ..... ANNE GILMOUR

Thanks to ST. BERNARD'S WING, EALING HOSPITAL;  
BLOSSOMS of GUNNERSBURY LANE, SYLVIA WALL

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.

# ART EXHIBITION IN THE UPPER FOYER

25 January — 1 February 1992

by JOAN STOKES

Joan Stokes gained a scholarship to Twickenham School of Art prior to the war but her career was interrupted by joining the Forces. After the war she went into the Civil Service and later marriage, but continued to paint for her own pleasure and local exhibitions.

Now in later years she paints chiefly garden and wildflower studies, also some still life and landscapes, working in water colour and gouache.

## In the Upper Foyer

### REHEARSED READING

## FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY

by Odön von Horváth

To complement *The Threepenny Opera* in the Playhouse, a reading from the same nation and of the same period. Like Brecht, von Horváth too was forced into exile for his outspoken criticism of Nazi Germany.

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# HARLEY WHITE



Harley White Group, Sinclair House, The Avenue, Ealing W13 8NT

081-998 4942

## INFORMATION

### THE GRAPEVINE CLUB

The Questors has a fully licensed Bar which is now open to all members. The Bar is open every evening plus lunchtimes on Sundays. Questors members are requested to sign in their guests when entering the bar.

### THE HOTPLATE

Delicious hot and cold food is available in the upper Foyer between 6.30pm and 8.00pm during the run of Playhouse productions, and coffee, tea, and cakes are served during the interval. No hot food will be provided at the Sunday matinées.

### NOTE

The Hotplate is not open for Studio productions, but when Studio performances coincide with those in the Playhouse, it will endeavour to serve those audiences whenever this is possible.

### NEW MEMBERS EVENINGS

Why not attend one of our new, or prospective members evenings, and have a conducted tour of the Theatre complex. Tours start and finish at the Grapevine Bar, 8.00pm every Wednesday.

### THE STUDENT GROUP

The Questors runs a two year part time student course in Acting; details can be obtained from the office.

### YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUPS

There are a number of groups for younger members. These cater for all age groups, from 5-17. The classes are intended to create awareness of the theatre and provide a stimulating channel for imagination.

### For The Questors Theatre

Artistic Director  
and

David Emmet

Director of Studies

Chairman

Martin Bowley

Vice-Chairman

Doug King

Secretary

Fiona Nicholson

Finance Director

Ken Kettle

Administrative Director

Jim Craddock

Stage Director

Steve Anderson

Theatre Manager

Elaine Orchard

Productions Administrator

Jill Gee

Membership Secretary

Alice Pennicott

Programme Editor

Ken Ratcliffe

Questopics Editor

Barbara Neville

Press Officer

Sam Jennings

Sponsorship

Geoffrey Sellman

Box Office Manager

Ken Parker

Programme Sales Organiser

Val Blaxland

Marketing Manager

Robert Gordon Clark

Front of House Manager

Roger Kelly

Floral displays

Barralets of Ealing

Haberdashery

Tootal Craft

Wardrobe Equip.

Wilkinson Sword Scissors . . Fiskars Ltd

Wardrobe Care

Persil and Comfort courtesy of Lever Bros.

Dry-cleaning by C.D.S.

### ADMINISTRATION

The Questors office is open from 9.30am until 5.00pm every weekday. If you wish to make contact for details of membership, or hiring the Theatre and rehearsal rooms, telephone the office on 081-567 0011.

### MEMBERSHIP

If you wish to become a member please fill in the application form (copies in the Foyers); just send it to the Theatre with the appropriate subscription. 081-567 8736.

### BOX OFFICE

For personal callers the box office is open evenings only from 6.45pm to 8.30pm on days of performance and five days prior to each Playhouse production.