

Next Rehearsed Readings

Sunday 16th February

Faith, Hope and Charity

Set in the world of petty crime of 1930s Germany

by Odon von Horvath
director Michael Gerrard

Sunday 15th March

'Vanek' plays

by Vaclav Havel
director Ron Bloomfield

THE
VIKINGS



by **Henrik Ibsen**

director **David Gowman**

An early heroic play by the Norwegian master

Sunday 26th January 7:45pm in the Foyer

Rehearsed Readings at Questors

Admission by programme 50p

 **THE QUESTORS THEATRE**

The Vikings

by Henrik Ibsen (1858)

Rehearsed Reading, Sunday January 26th, 7:45 pm

CHARACTERS

Örnulf, an Icelandic Chieftain	John Turner
Sigurd, his Son in Law	Robin Ingram
Dagny, Sigurd's wife	Amy Finegan
Gunnar, a rich chief of Helgeland	John Davey
Hjördis, his wife and Örnulf's Step-daughter	Margaret Turner
Kaare, Gunnar's enemy	David Wheatley
Thorolf, Örnulf's youngest son	Sue West
Egil, Gunnar's four year old son	"

Other Vikings and natural elements by members of the cast

Director David Gowman

Act 1. A rocky coast of Helgeland, Norway.

Act 2. Gunnar's Banquet Hall that night.

Interval

Act 3. Gunnar's Banquet Hall next morning.

Act 4. The shore at night, nearby a grave-mound.

The Situation

Örnulf the ancient chief of Iceland has come to Helgeland (Northern Norway) to avenge two insults: Gunnar of Helgeland had carried off his step-daughter Hjördis and (less resented and settled in the first few minutes) Sigurd stole his daughter Dagny.

Hjördis, meanwhile, begins to feel her husband lacks the strength she worships. She is the most authentic Viking of them all, perhaps.

The Play

The Vikings was an attempt to write a taut "saga drama". Written in prose, it yet echoes the poetic qualities he caught from translations of the sagas.

Ibsen has invented a plot in which the starkly primitive Viking respect for strength, honour, revenge, blood-brotherhood, kinship and masculinity blends together with a more modern exploration of the feminine psyche in Hjördis's thwarted passion for Sigurd. There is also a hint of the twilight of the Viking Gods undermined by Christianity.

Eventually the play became much performed in Norway. In England in 1903 Ellen Terry appeared in a famous (mainly for its designs) production by her son Gordon Craig at the Imperial Theatre.