

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

In the Studio

Ti-Jean and his Brothers

by Derek Walcott

For the final Studio production of the season, we present an excellent West Indian play by this Nobel prize winner.

Ti-Jean and his Brothers is a fable in rhyme, with stylistic influences from Lorca and Brecht. Three brothers take it in turn to beat the Devil (or is it God?) at his own game.

July 23-30 at 7.45pm

In the Studio

Theatrestorm

Telling Rashomon

by John Wilson

Prior to the 1994 Edinburgh Festival. With all its familiar, bizarre, gothic style and fury, *Theatrestorm* presents this new adult work inspired by Kurosawa's film. A servant speaks... a piano plays... a girl is raped... a man dies... tongues lie.

9, 10, 11 August at 7.45pm

Tickets £4.00, Members and Guests

In the Playhouse Start of season 1994/95

Pack of Lies

by Hugh Whitmore

A gripping and moving play, half thriller, half tragedy, based on the true story of a family forced to come to terms with the fact that their best friends were Soviet spies. Betrayed by lies, they are forced by the Security Services to become liars themselves.

17, 20-24 September at 7.45pm; 18 September at 2.30pm

In the Studio

Amongst Barbarians

by Michael Wall

A Mobil Playwriting Award Winner

This controversial new play set in Malaysia and based on the true story of two young Englishmen facing the death sentence for drug trafficking.

8-15 October at 7.45pm

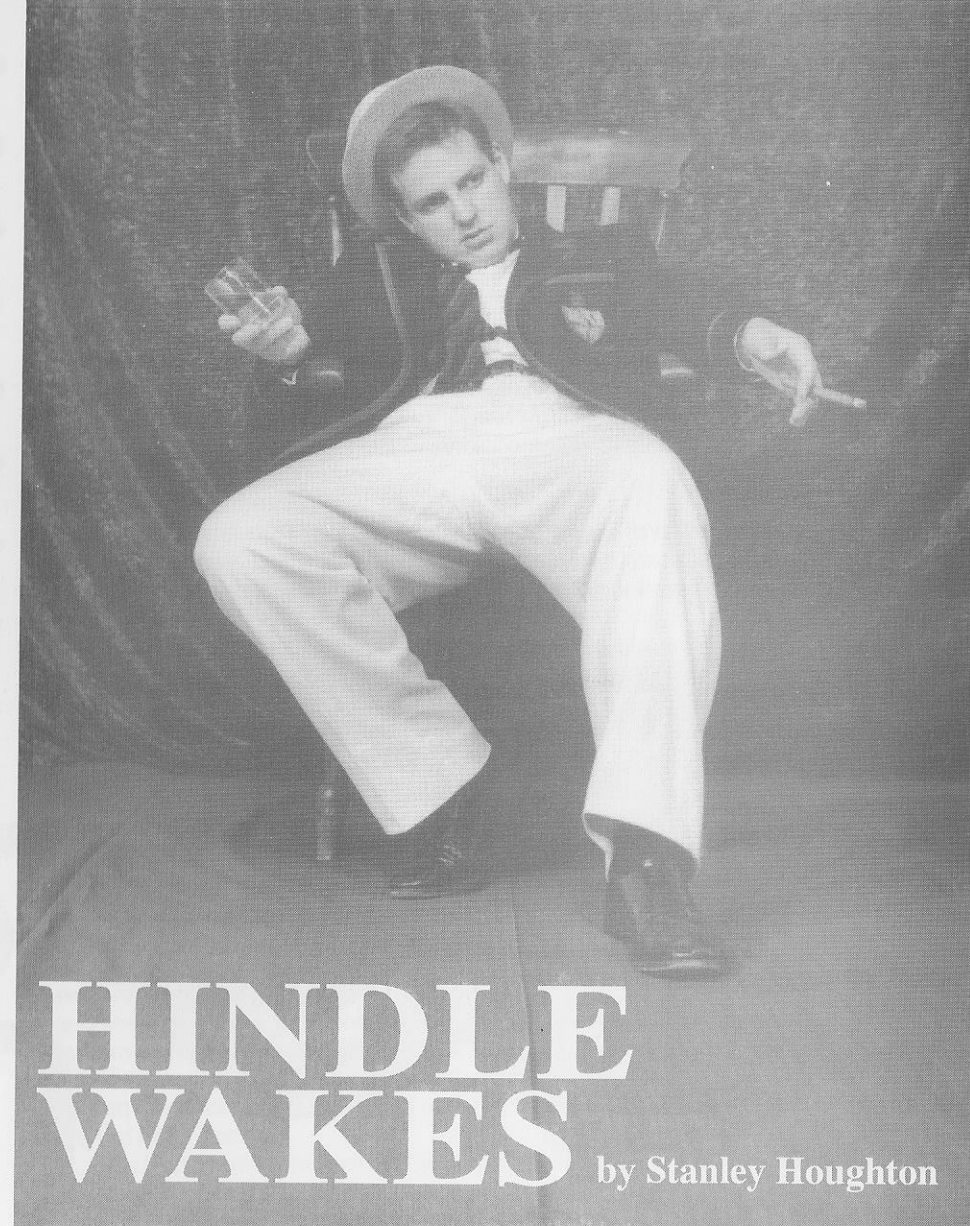
In the Playhouse

The Changeling

by Thomas Middleton & William Rowley

A Jacobean tragedy; a powerful drama of sex, murder and madness in which the central female figure becomes more and more embroiled in her own deceptions and falls under the spell of a man she despises and fears.

15, 18-22 October at 7.45pm; 16 October at 2.30pm



HINDLE WAKES

by Stanley Houghton

THE QUESTORS THEATRE

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Manchester and the Modern Repertory Movement

It was in 1907 that Miss A. E. F. Horniman, who had already formed a repertory theatre in Dublin — the Abbey, took over the old Gaiety in Manchester, now demolished, and there established the first repertory theatre in England. Her statement of aims was as follows:

- (a) A repertory theatre with a regular change of programme, not wedded to any one school of dramatists, but thoroughly catholic, embracing the finest writing of the best authors of all ages and with an especially widely open door to present day British writers, who will not need to sigh in vain for a hearing, provided only that they have something to say worth listening to, and say it in an interesting and original manner.
- (b) A permanent Manchester stock company of picked front-rank actors.
- (c) Efficient productions.
- (d) Popular prices.

She went further, "There will be no star nonsense. Plays will be chosen, not because they are London successes, but because they are fine plays; and actors and actresses will be chosen to perform them not because they photograph well or have good friends, but because they can act".

By sticking doggedly to these principles Miss Horniman succeeded magnificently. She employed a permanent, balanced ensemble of mainly Mancunian actors who worked together in the new "naturalistic style". She introduced Manchester to Ibsen, Galsworthy and Shaw, and a major part of the repertoire was given to producing new works. The "Manchester School of Drama" was born at the Gaiety and was comprised, most notably, of the playwrights Harold Brighouse (*Hobson's Choice*), Alan Monkhouse (*The Conquering Hero*) and Stanley Houghton.

Houghton's *Hindle Wakes* was a daring play for 1912 but it struck an immediate chord with the Manchester ensemble and received every care and attention to detail from its director, Lewis Casson. It transferred to London and New York and it was this play more than any other that brought fame to the Gaiety and its acting tradition. The London critics were unanimous in their support. H. M. Walbrook writing in the *Pall Mall Gazette* — "To see every member of the cast of a long play acting his or her part with absolute sincerity and seemingly without a thought of the audience on the other side of the footlights is a rare joy in London theatre these days". Confessing that he would like to write columns about the acting, Walbrook noted particularly, "its repose, its truth to type, its mastery of art and its concealment of it", and added, "these evenings with the Manchester players are red letter ones".

Miss Horniman's tenure of the Gaiety lasted until 1921, but by this time, due to the war, it had returned to being a receiving house. She was never to take an active part in theatre again and died peacefully in 1937.

Manchester today is particularly rich in its repertory theatres, from the tiny proscenium-arch Library Theatre, deep in the bowels of the Central Library, the University's Contact Theatre, Wythenshawe's Forum, Bolton's Octagon, Oldham's Coliseum to that incredible theatre in the round, the lunar landing module suspended in the old Corn Exchange which is the Royal Exchange Theatre. All of these theatres owe their existence to Miss Horniman. May her spirit remain alive and kicking.

JOHN HORWOOD

1. The taking of food and drink into the auditorium is NOT permitted.
2. The use of cameras, video-cameras or tape equipment during the performance is also prohibited.
3. Patrons are requested to turn off portable telephones and beepers in the auditorium, since the activation of these during performance is offensive to audience and actors alike.

ART EXHIBITION IN THE UPPER FOYER

4th July — 7th August 1994

Ann Ryves NS and Maryann Ryves

Ann Ryves was twice awarded the Silver Cup of the Federation of British Artists, and has exhibited at the Royal Institute of Oil Painters at the Mall for many years. Since 1986 she has been a member of the National Society of Painters, Printmakers & Sculptors (NS) who exhibit annually at Smith's Gallery, Covent Garden. She also belongs to the Ridley Art Society who exhibit annually in the West End. In 1987 two paintings were hung in the Paris Salon.

Maryann Ryves trained at Manchester in printed textile design and freelanced for several years selling designs to companies including John Lewis and Sandersons. She has exhibited in Paris and New York but has recently been concentrating on painting, specialising in decorative watercolours.

ART EXHIBITION IN THE GRAPEVINE GALLERY

16 — 31 July 1994

Maria Palmer

Maria Palmer was born in 1969 in Essex. She studied art at Ware College and Stevenage College. In 1992 she successfully completed a BA Honours Fine Art Degree at Kent Institute of Art and Design at Canterbury. Maria's speciality is sculpture, mainly stone carving; however collages are a practice she holds important in the development of her work.

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STANLEY HOUGHTON

Houghton was born at Ashton-under-Mersey in 1881. Following his formal education at Wilmslow and Manchester Grammar Schools, at the age of 16 he joined his father's company, and began his informal education which was to serve him so well in his ambition to write. During the day he worked as a salesman in his father's cotton warehouse, mixing with the Lancashire traders in the Cotton Exchange, while in his leisure hours he served his dramatic apprenticeship acting for amateur stage societies. From 1907-1912 he regularly contributed criticism and articles to *The Manchester Guardian*, and became known and respected for his fairness.

In 1908 when Miss A. E. F. Horniman acquired the Gaiety Theatre in Peter Street for her Repertory Company, it was inevitable that Houghton should write for her. The one-act *The Dear Departed* was his first play she presented, in November 1908, the beginning of a long and fruitful partnership.

After the great success of *Hindle Wakes* in 1912 Houghton decided to live by his writing, and moved first to London, and then to Paris, where he started writing a novel. In the summer of 1913, on holiday in Venice, he contracted an infection, and after two operations returned to Manchester. The expected recovery was not to be; meningitis set in, and Stanley Houghton died on December 11, 1913.

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.