

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

In the Playhouse

Les Liaisons Dangereuses by Christopher Hampton

Christopher Hampton's brilliant adaptation is mercilessly witty. The dialogue is spare, sparkling and exquisitely funny, as Valmont the charming seducer, urged on by his ex-mistress the Marquise, wreaks havoc on vulnerable female hearts.

11, 14 - 18 March at 7.45pm; 12 March at 2.30pm


Sponsored by  **Merchant & Co.**
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
AND REGISTERED AUDITOR

In the Playhouse

Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller

At 60, Willy Loman is bewildered by his failure in life. After 30 years as a salesman his company in effect demotes him. Willy looks at his successful neighbours and can only draw unfavourable comparisons as flashbacks show some of his glorious past successes.

8, 11 - 15 April at 7.45pm; 9 April at 2.30pm

Sponsored by  **TAYLOR WOODROW**

In the Studio

Fair Slaughter by Howard Barker

This is the first time The Questors has performed one of Howard Barker's works. This play deals with a vast sweep of 20th century history — from the West's early and futile attempts to suppress the Russian Revolution through to 1930's music halls — all seen through the eyes of a veteran Communist who also happens to be Britain's oldest living murderer.


22 - 29 April at 7.45pm

In the Playhouse

You Never Can Tell by George Bernard Shaw

A comedy of family manners and morals. Shaw has his customary fun knocking down the idols of his time and includes not only female emancipation, but parental emancipation as well, with glancing blows at the health service to boot. A delicate and constantly entertaining play, spun with Shaw's inimitable teasing polemic and wit.

29 April, 1 - 6 May at 7.45pm
30 April at 2.30pm

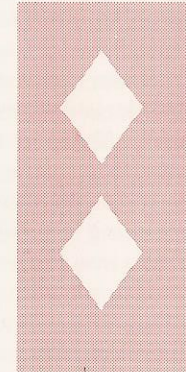
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SOLICITORS**

The Questors 48th Student Group



MARRIAGE

An Absolutely Incredible Incident in Two Acts



&

GAMBLERS

Deeds of Days Long Past

by

Nikolai Gogol

adapted by John Horwood



NIKOLAI GOGOL

HIS DEATH

Nikolai Gogol, the strangest prose-poet Russia ever produced, died Thursday morning, a little before eight, on the fourth of March, eighteen fifty-two, in Moscow. He was almost forty-three years old — a reasonably ripe age for him, considering the ridiculously short span of life generally allotted to other great Russian writers of his miraculous generation. Absolute bodily exhaustion the result of a private hunger strike (by means of which his morbid melancholy had tried to counter the Devil) culminated in acute anaemia of the brain (together, probably, with gastro-enteritis through inanition) — and the treatment he was subjected to, a vigorous purging and blood-letting, hastened the death of an organism already impaired by the after effects of malaria and malnutrition. The couple of diabolically energetic physicians who insisted on treating him as if he were an average Bedlamite, much to the alarm of their more intelligent but less active colleagues, intended to break the back of their patient's insanity before attempting to patch up whatever bodily health he still had left. It is horrible to read of the grotesquely rough handling that Gogol's poor limp body underwent when all he asked for was to be left in peace. With a fine misjudgment of symptoms, Dr Hurers had his patient plunged into a warm bath where his head was soused with cold water, after which he was put to bed with half-a-dozen plump leeches affixed to his nose. He had groaned and cried and weakly struggled while his wretched body (you could feel the spine through the stomach) was carried to the deep wooden bath; he shivered as he lay naked in bed and kept pleading to have the leeches removed: they were dangling from his nose and getting into his mouth.

Although the scene is unpleasant and has a human appeal which I deplore, it is necessary to dwell upon it a little longer to bring out the curiously physical side of Gogol's genius. The belly is the belle of his stories, the nose is their beau. His stomach had been his "noblest inner organ". In the months preceding his death he had starved himself so thoroughly that he had destroyed the prodigious capacity his stomach had once been blessed with; for none had sucked in such a number of macaroni or eaten so many cherry pies as this thin little man — now it was practically gone. His big sharp nose was of such length and mobility that in the days of his youth he had been able (being something of an amateur contortionist), to bring its tip and his underlip in ghoulish contact; this nose was his keenest and most essential outer part — now devils were dangling from its nostrils.

Vladimir Nabokov

"MARRIAGE"

In "sexual politics", Gogol was the odd man out. He was a homosexual and perhaps not even a "healthy homosexual", according to our current formula, but rather an "unhealthy" one with an "unhealthy" fear not unmixed with hostility toward the other sex. He did not write about homosexuality. No one did. No writer for the public stage could. But he did dramatize the more mention-

able parts of his own disposition, especially his fear of women, and, if many of his feelings had to remain bottled up, the pressure of the bottling-up is felt both in his characters and in the action of their drama.

The Gogol scholar — Vsevolock Setchkarev has talked of the form of this play, or rather its movement, as a rubber band repeatedly stretched and, each time, snapping back to its original size: the bachelor stretches himself into the suitor, then snaps back to bachelordom. One suspects that in the end Podkolyossin is confirmed in bachelordom, and is not going to permit such stretching in the future. Similarly, the movement is not sheer repetition, but develops to a final climax or rather anticlimax: the defenestration. Many comedies follow the rhythmic pattern of coitus and, since this is so, it seems appropriate that a Gogol comedy should do likewise up to a point and then flop. It is coitus interruptus.

Eric Bentley

"GAMBLERS"

The gambler is always an actor. Gambling is both acting and playing. The situation is given: it is the gambler's card hand. He must play within it. The swindler is an actor to the second power. He acts the part of the gambler, and, as the gambler he must play his cards. The swindler also plays a third role: that of a decent and naive citizen, who was lured into the game. He is not just an actor: he is the director of the whole play. He chooses his cast as well as his characters; he even brings his own props. When swindlers plot the group performance begins.

In *Gamblers* everyone is a swindler. All roles are played even those of losers. This one-act play is faultless. The spectator is also cheated. He thought cheats did not cheat each other. He falls victim to a comedy staged by swindlers. Now he has to pay. The swindlers laugh last. Gogol's play is merciless. The gambling house turns into all of Russia. *Gamblers* is an instant picture of a quiet town, far from Moscow. The play, like a funny mirror hung in a provincial inn, reflects the silhouettes of the guests, changing them into grotesque characters. This mirror is the *Theatrum Mundi*.

Jan Kott

HIS BIRTH

Gogol was born on the 1st of April, 1809. According to his mother (who, of course, made up the following dismal anecdote) a poem he had written at the age of five was seen by Kapnist, a well-known writer of sorts. Kapnist embraced the solemn urchin and said to the glad parents: "He will become a writer of genius if only destiny gives him a good Christian for teacher and guide". But the other thing — his having been born on the 1st of April — is true.

Vladimir Nabokov

MARRIAGE & GAMBLERS

by Nikolai Gogol

adapted by John Horwood

First performance of this production Wednesday, 1st March 1995

CAST

(in order of their appearance)

GAMBLERS

Glov LEAH COOK
Alexey PENNY SIMS
Utyesh LESLEY WHYTE
Shonhev ANDREA KENSHOLE
Ikharev PATRICIA TOMLIN

MARRIAGE

Podkolyossin *A government clerk* JON RYDER-OLIVER
Stepan *His servant* TIMOTHY WALLACE
Fyokla *A matchmaker* FRANCES CHILDS
Kochkaryov *Podkolyossin's friend* PAUL GITTUS
Agafya *A merchant's daughter* LISA MILNE HENDERSON
Arina *Her aunt* MELISSA REMUS
Donyashka *Her maid* PENNY SIMS
Omelet *A managing clerk* ROBBIE FRATER
Anutchkin *A retired infantry officer* SARAH HARROP
Zhevakin *A retired naval officer* ALEX BATTERBEE
Starikov *A merchant* TIMOTHY WALLACE

Synopsis of Scenes

Gamblers

A provincial inn, far from Moscow, in a year long past.

Marriage

Act 1, Scene 1

Podkolyossin's bachelor apartment, St. Petersburg, April 1st 1835. Morning.

INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

Act 1, Scene 2

Agafya's house, St. Petersburg, the same day. Noon.

Act 2

The same, later that afternoon.

Please note there will not be an interval between the end of *Gamblers* and the beginning of *Marriage*.



THE PLAYHOUSE IS EQUIPPED WITH AN INFRA-RED SOUND TRANSMISSION SYSTEM FOR USE BY PEOPLE WITH HEARING DIFFICULTIES. IT IS NOW POSSIBLE TO USE THIS SYSTEM WITH PERSONAL HEARING AIDS SWITCHED TO THE T POSITION. To obtain the appropriate receiver please contact the Duty House Manager.



THE PLAYHOUSE IS EQUIPPED WITH A LIFT, WITH ACCESS TO THE BAR AND UPPER FOYER LEVELS FOR THOSE WITH MOBILITY PROBLEMS.

PRODUCTION

Director & Designer JOHN HORWOOD
Lighting Designers JAMIE RICHARDSON
MARTIN SAPSED
Sound Designer NIGEL WORSLEY
Stage Manager ROZ PALMER
Deputy Stage Manager JANE MELBOURNE
Assistant Stage Managers JUDE ALLMAN
VICKY KENT
TRISH MAGEE
Lighting Operator CATHAL CAMPBELL
Sound Operator MARTIN BRIDGES
Costumes CELIA DOWELL
CLARE DUBERLEY
Properties TRACEY FRANCIS
Construction JON WEBSTER
Wigs & Make-up ANNA BALECAROS
TANIA GIANNANDREA
ELIZABETH MCCARTHY
Poster Design JOHN STACEY

Stage Champagne courtesy of
Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin

With thanks to Georgia Palmer, Trish Fox, Kris Collier

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 a performance is offensive to audience and actors alike.

SELL US YOUR GRANDMOTHER FOR A FIVER

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Or Brother.
Or any of your friends
or relations.

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- more friends to come to Questors with
- more friends to go to The Grapevine with
- More Fivers to get the drinks in
- *Most important* . . . more chance of a lift home afterwards!

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tors' office for the relevant forms or ring
0181 567 0011 during office hours and
ask about **Member Get Member**.

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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 thi 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 imagi-
nation.

For The Questors Theatre

Artistic Director
Studio Director
Director of Studies
Chair
Vice-Chairman
Company Secretary
Club Secretary
Finance Director
Stage Director
Marketing Director
Theatre Manager
Productions Secretary
Membership Secretary
Programme Editor
Questtopics Editor
Sponsorship
Box Office Management
Programme Sales Organiser
Front of House Manager
Press Relations
Haberdashery
Wardrobe Equipment
Wardrobe Care

Simon Thomas
David Emmet
John Davey

Sue Blake
Christine Garland
Ken Kettle
Kris Collier
Simon Green
Elaine Orchard
Christine Greening
Alice Pennicott
Vincent McQueen
Nigel Lawrence
Geoffrey Sellman

Ken Parker
Val Blaxland
Eric Lister
Trish Fox
Tootal Craft

Wilkinson Sword Scissors..Fiskars Ltd
Persil, Comfort and Stergene
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
0181-567 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.
0181-567 8736.

Box Office

For personal callers the box
office is open every
Wednesday evening
6.45pm to 8.30pm;
Monday to Friday 11.00am
to 12 noon; during
productions 6.45pm to
8.30pm; Sunday matinées
2.00pm to 2.30pm; Studio
productions 6.45pm to
8.00pm.