

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### *In the Playhouse*

#### **Noises Off** by Michael Frayn

Michael Frayn's wickedly funny play pays homage to that very British theatrical form, the farce. What starts out as an affectionate pastiche subtly transforms into a brilliant and anarchic homage to the genre, presenting us with a melée of stock characters, sexual innuendo and outrageous coincidence.

9, 12 - 16 March at 7.45pm; 10 March at 2.30pm

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### *In the Studio - The 49th Student Group in*

#### **Here Comes a Chopper** by Eugène Ionesco

This is one of Ionesco's most powerful plays, overwhelming, prophetic, often extraordinarily funny in its details.

13 - 17, 19 - 23 March at 7.45pm

### *In the Playhouse*

#### **Scorched** by Carl Grose

Winner of the 1994/95 Student Playwriting Competition, *Scorched* is set on the island of Cornwall in the not too distant future. A catastrophic story seen through the eyes of Cornwall's last society, using humour, ritual and finally tragedy to explore the extreme situation that these people have been forced into. Spiritual, mythical, apocalyptic.

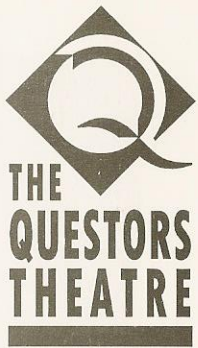
30 March, 2 - 6 April at 7.45pm; 31 March at 2.30pm

### *In the Playhouse*

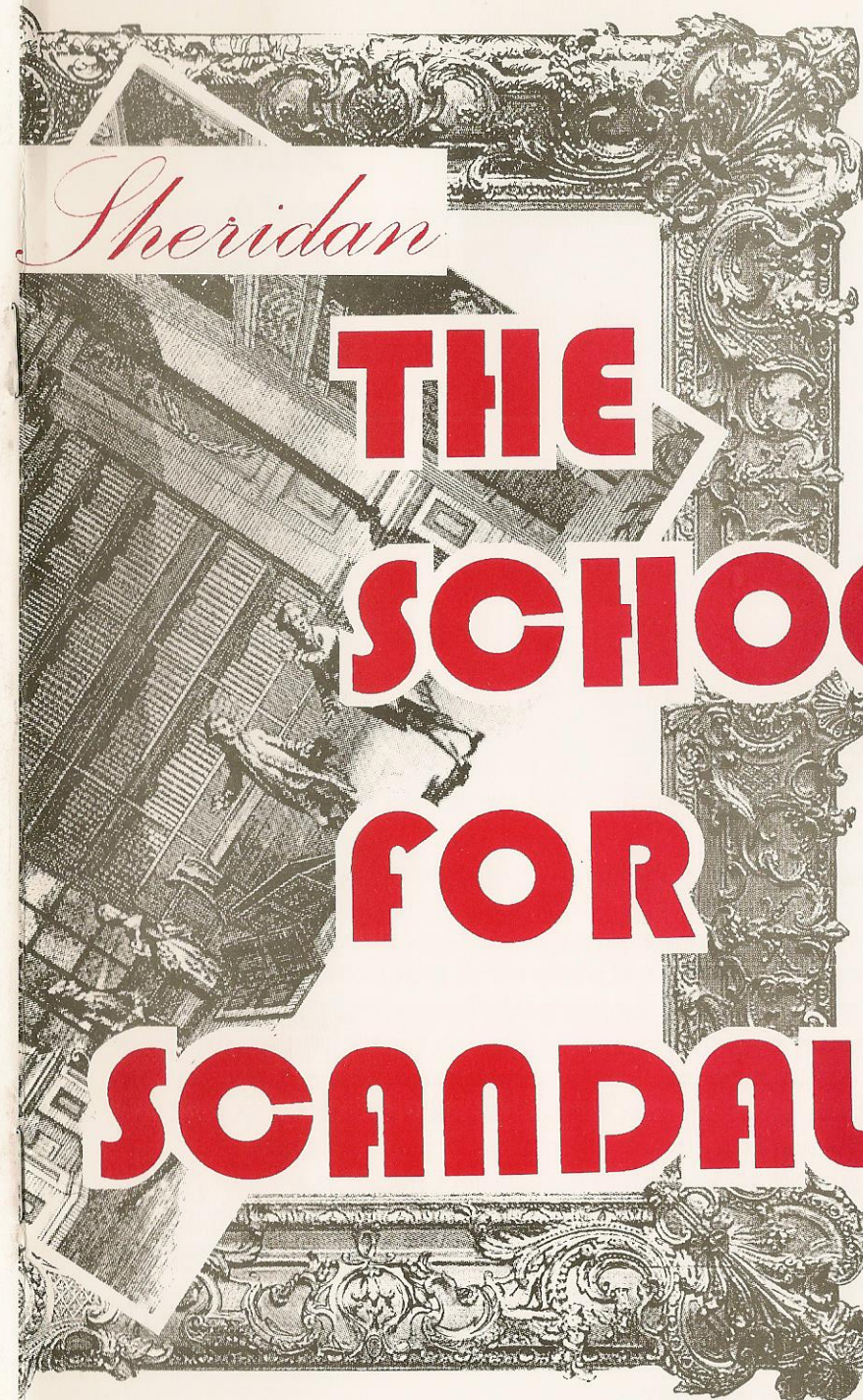
#### **Coarse Acting - The Revenge**

Returned by overwhelming popular demand, the best of the World Coarse Acting Championships. If you missed it last time, hurry to book your tickets now. A hilarious evening awaits you.

10 - 12 April at 7.45pm. Tickets £6.50



THE  
QUESTORS  
THEATRE



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## The School for Scandal

### *Director's Note:*

Three years ago I adjudicated the Richmond (North Yorkshire) Drama Festival in The Georgian Theatre Royal and fell in love with this jewel of a theatre which was built in 1788.

When the opportunity arose for me to direct *The School for Scandal* at The Questors Theatre I was strongly influenced by the memory of my visit to Richmond. With my designer, Haibo Yu, we thought about converting The Questors' large open space into a Georgian theatre. I did not want to create a museum piece but wanted to explore some of the stage conventions of the period and its unique actor/audience relationship.

Ironically, once this concept had been transposed into a working stage model I found that the administrator of The Georgian Theatre Royal, Bill Sellars, would be delighted for our production to be played in Richmond and for it to coincide with the official opening of their new theatre museum. The wheel had come full circle.

We are told that on the first performance of the play, on May 8th 1777, fashionable London society were in the boxes at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. They had come to be seen and to see themselves mirrored on the picture frame stage and, above all, to *talk* about what they had seen both on and off the stage.

The scandal sheets and newspapers of the period are no strangers to a contemporary audience; the tabloids have a voracious appetite for scandal. (Sheridan's original title for the play was *The Slandervers*.) The Royal family, politicians, pop-stars, writers and actors are all grist to the mill as far as the media are concerned. Indeed the play's relevance to today is extraordinary. The contemporary press have had a field day over the rift between the Prince and Princess of Wales and have made comparisons with the Prince Regent's marital situation: a mistress (Mrs Fitzherbert) who secretly became his wife even though he was later to officially marry Caroline of Brunswick.

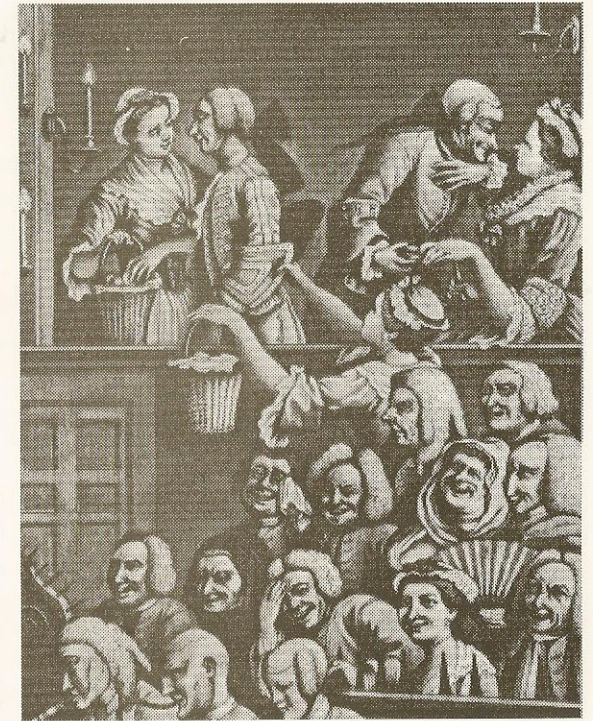
However, what really matters is Sheridan's play. It is a comic masterpiece, eighteenth century comedy of manners at its very best. We hope that our performance will bring you some of the pleasure that its first audience received over two hundred years ago.

TONY RUSHFORTH

## The Prince of Wales, Mrs. Fitzherbert and the Duchess of Devonshire

It is ironical that it was the Duchess of Devonshire (who had been one of the Prince's mistresses) who was largely responsible for introducing the Prince to a lady who was the most lasting love of his life, Mrs. Fitzherbert. Maria Fitzherbert was a widow twice over when she first met the Prince of Wales. The Duchess of Devonshire induced her to visit the Prince at Carlton House but she soon after went abroad to escape further solicitations. However, they were married in 1785 in her own drawing-room at Richmond, by an Anglican clergyman.

It was a curious affair. By the Royal Marriage Act of 1772 any marriage contracted by a member of the Royal Family without the King's consent was invalid. Also, as Mrs. Fitzherbert was a Roman Catholic, the Prince, by marrying her, forfeited his right to the Crown under the Act of Settlement. She on her part might be expected to regard *any* Protestant marriage as invalid. And even after his marriage to Caroline of Brunswick, her own (Catholic) Church advised her that it was lawful to live with him. She continued to do so (except for a short interval after other mistresses and his marriage to Caroline) for the rest of his life. George IV died with her portrait round his neck. She survived him by seven years, dying in the year of Queen Victoria's accession.



*The Laughing Audience* after William Hogarth

# The School for Scandal

by Richard Brinsley Sheridan

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: Saturday 10th February 1996  
First performance at The Georgian Theatre Royal, Richmond, N. Yorkshire: Friday 22nd March 1996

## CAST

The Maid ..... DOROTHY BOYD TAYLOR  
Mr. Snake ..... ROBIN INGRAM  
Lady Sneerwell ..... MONYENE KANE  
Joseph Surface ..... ROBERT SEATTER  
Maria ..... SIOBHAN FLYNN  
Mrs. Candour ..... ANNE NEVILLE  
Mr. Crabtree ..... VINCENT McQUEEN  
Sir Benjamin Backbite ..... FRANCIS LLOYD  
Sir Peter Teazle ..... TONY BARBER  
Rowley ..... ROBIN INGRAM  
Lady Teazle ..... SARAH GALTON  
Sir Oliver Surface ..... JOHN TURNER  
Moses ..... JOHN MARTIN  
Trip (*Charles' servant*) ..... ROBERT BRAZIER  
Charles Surface ..... PIERS WHIBLEY  
Careless ..... CHRISTOPHER NASON  
First Gentleman ..... NEIL DICKINS  
Second Gentleman ..... TERRY JERMYN  
Sir Toby ..... DON KINCAID  
William (*Joseph's servant*) ..... TERRY JERMYN  
Footmen ..... ROBERT BRAZIER, NEIL DICKINS,  
CHRISTOPHER NASON, TERRY JERMYN

H.R.H. The Prince of Wales ..... GRAHAM WILLIAMS  
Mrs. Fitzherbert (*secretly married to the Prince*) ..... MARIA BRUSA  
Duchess of Devonshire (*the Prince's former mistress*) ..... SARAH ANDREWS

### Orchestra:

DON KINCAID - *Conductor and flute*  
LUCY BEVAN - *Oboe*  
JULIA COOKE - *Cello*  
KAREN GLENN - *Harpsicord*  
HELEN CARRICK - *Violin*

*The action of the play takes place in London in the late eighteenth century.*

*There will be one interval of fifteen minutes.*

*The performance will end at 10.35pm approximately.*

## PRODUCTION

Director ..... TONY RUSHFORTH  
Set Design ..... HAIBO YU  
Costume Design ..... SYLVIA WALL  
Lighting Design ..... STEVE HAMES  
Musical Director and Music Composed by ..... DON KINCAID

Stage Manager ..... ADRIENNE TALBOT  
Deputy Stage Manager ..... CÉCILE RODRIGUEZ  
Assistant Stage Managers  
LOIS WILSON CÉCILE PAULIN  
VÉRONIQUE VANDEN EYNDE MARTIN BRIDGES

Properties ..... KRIS COLLIER  
Wardrobe  
JO ALEXANDER TESSA CURTIS  
MARY ANDERSON JEAN DERBY  
MARY ANGUS JOAN GRIFFIN  
GRACE CRADDOCK CORINNE NIELD

Lighting Operator ..... TREVOR CARDEN  
Construction  
NICK HAWKER JIM CRADDOCK  
JIM CAITHNESS ANTONY BRIDGES  
JOHN TURNER JON WEBSTER

Prompt ..... DOROTHY WOOD  
Tour Manager ..... JENNIFER REID  
Dances arranged by ..... DOROTHY BOYD TAYLOR  
Masks ..... SUSAN WORMLEIGHTON  
Finty trained by ..... KATH HARRINGTON  
Wigs & Make-up  
JEMMA BARTLETT ANDREA CASPARIS  
ASLAUG MEOLSTAD MARÍA VICTORIA-PROWSE  
OF "GREASEPAINT"

*We wish to thank the following for help given to the production:*

MARY RUSHFORTH, GORDON MILLER, JOHN STACEY,  
ADRIAN ASHER, JOAN McQUEEN, SINEAD O'KEEFE,  
JOHN HORWOOD, FIONA HAMILTON, NATASHA POWELL

**ART EXHIBITIONS**  
**10 FEBRUARY - 2 MARCH 1996**  
**UPPER FOYER - ROBERT CHAMBERS**

Robert Chambers lives and works in Southampton and also has a studio in Clermont l'Herault, Languedoc, France. He works in series on ideas based on naturally occurring phenomena. Small works are usually oil pastel on paper; larger works oil on prepared hardboard. He has exhibited widely in England, France and Andorra and has works in several public collections as well as private collections in the UK, France and Holland.

**GRAPEVINE GALLERY - ANGELA PANAYS**

Angela Panays graduated from the Central St. Martin's College of Art in 1994. This selection of work is based on refugees. *Rag Tree* - Pagan rag trees symbolic of refugees being suspended in time and space expressing human emotion, fear of death and hope for miracles. It is the everyday objects such as 'bath' and 'suitcase' that link the human with the fundamental.

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**THE QUESTORS THEATRE**

*President:* DAME JUDI DENCH

**SOME OF OUR OTHER FACILITIES**

**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.

**BACKSTAGE PREVIEW**

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.

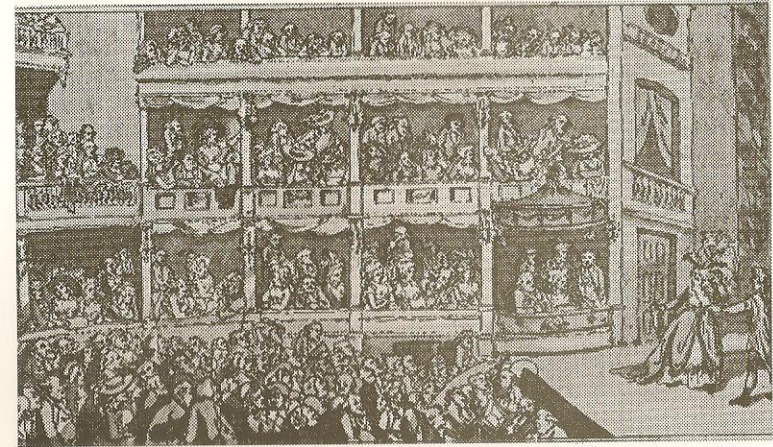
**THE STUDENT GROUP**

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.

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*Covent Garden audience in 1786. From a coloured aquatint by Thomas Rowlandson*

**RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN 1751 - 1816**

'Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been par excellence the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy (*The School for Scandal*), the *best* opera (*The Duenna*), the *best* farce (*The Critic*), and the *best* address (The monologue on Garrick) and to crown all delivered the *best* Oration (the famous Begum Speech) ever conceived or heard in this country.'

*- Lord Byron*

*The sponsors wish you  
an enjoyable evening  
with this revival of*

**THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL**



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