

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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.

11 - 13 April at 7.45pm. Tickets £6.50

In the Studio

Anna Christie

by Eugene O'Neill

Set in America in the 1920's. Anna is reunited with her estranged father, Captain of a coastal barge. She is careful to keep her father ignorant of her worldly past, although this emerges as she becomes involved with a sailor whom she and her father have rescued from "Dat ole devil sea". This tragic comedy is resolved in a tempestuous final act.

20 - 27 April at 7.45pm

In the Playhouse

Metamorphosis

by Steven Berkoff

based on the story by Franz Kafka

The world of the play is a strange one indeed, for here a man has a metamorphic transformation into a gigantic insect. The mainstay and breadwinner of a happy family, he awakes one morning to find himself transformed into a loathsome bug-like creature.

How his family try to cope with this grim situation is treated with dark humour and promises a rare and exciting theatrical experience.

27, 30 April, 1 - 4 May at 7.45pm; 28 April at 2.30pm

Sponsored by YORKE PEST CONTROL



In the Studio

Permanent Damage

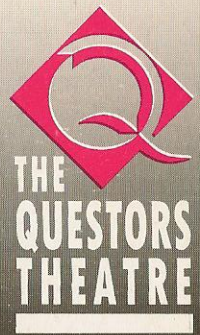
by Tony Green

Tony Green's compelling play was the runner up to *Scorched*, in The Questors National Student Playwriting Competition.

The Play is set in a cluttered attic where two men are holding a third man hostage. Hard hitting and uncompromising, drama, comedy and sexual intrigue interweave as the kidnap attempt falls apart with disastrous results.

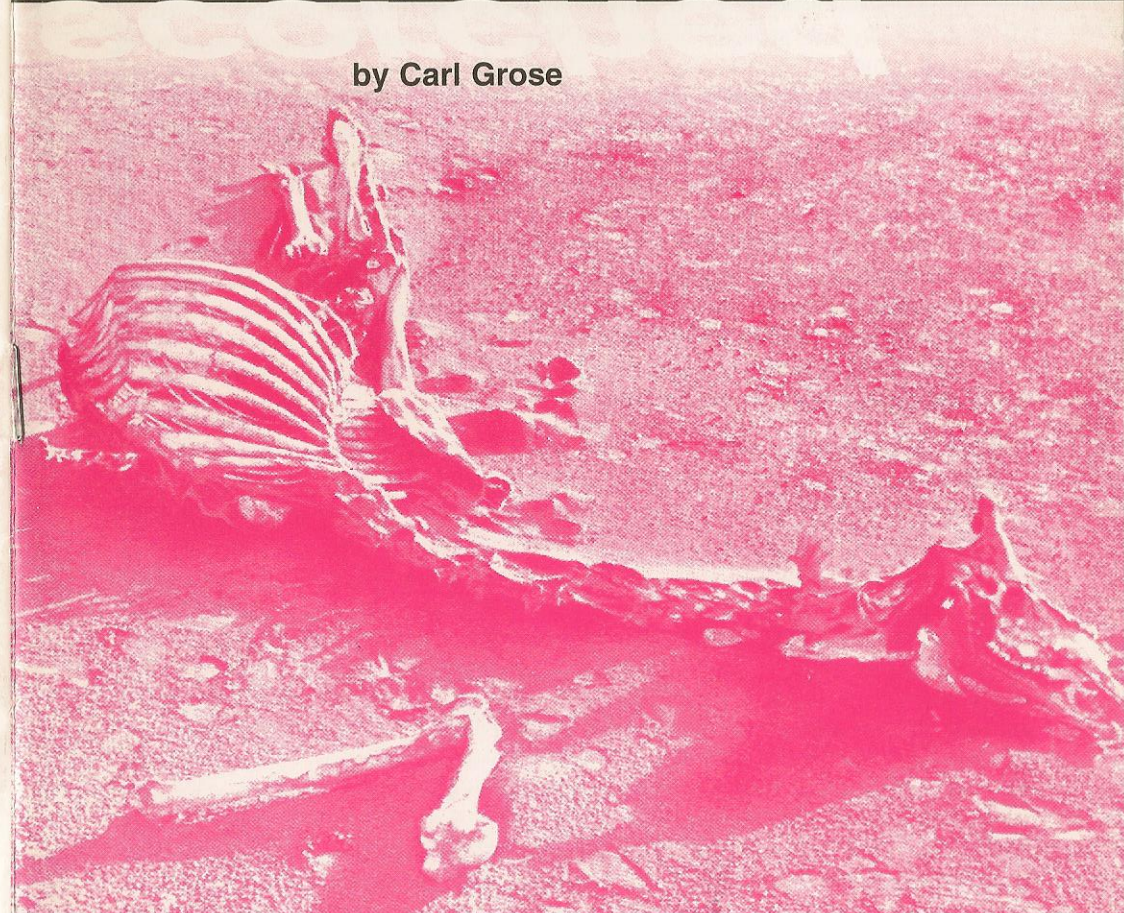
11 - 18 May at 7.45pm

winner of
The Questors National Student
Playwriting Competition



world première of **scorched**

by Carl Grose



A Rough Diary on Scorched by the Director – Spencer Butler

13 June 1995: Read *Scorched* for the first time. It had been entered for the 1994/95 Questors National Student Playwriting competition, and had been short-listed by our team of play readers. It was written phonetically in order to recall in the reader's mind the sounds of the Cornish accent. I found it hard going to begin with, but having lived in the South West, although not in Cornwall, I soon slipped into its rhythms. The play's tough dialogue and beautiful imagery soon took hold, and I read it straight through, finishing at one in the morning. By the end of the final scene – one of the most powerful I have ever read – I was completely hooked. The play was finally awarded first prize by Dame Judi Dench, Michael Williams and Oliver Ford Davies.

It was decided that I would direct it in the Playhouse, opening 30 March 1996. I read it only twice more prior to starting my research at the beginning of November 1995 – after *Nasty Neighbours*, which I had been directing, had closed.

26 November 1995:

The first casting reading – four actors turned up – decided not to panic, and through eight further readings and auditions eventually found the most wonderful cast. In what I already understood about the play, I knew I was looking for strong individual characters. Also, a feeling I had about the clarity of the writing and the difficult nature of some of the stage directions, I had decided to put everything on to the actors, to have no set that would distract from the story telling.

28 December 1995:

To Cornwall with Lyn Jones – we visit Jillyan Healy in Devon on the way and take her with us to Bodmin Moor. The play is set in the future. The ice cap has melted and the oceans are rising. I realised that this is not what the play is about. I realised it is about how the last few characters – on the island of Cornwall – hang on – how their beliefs, or lack of them, will dictate what happens to each of them in their last few hours. Finally, the play takes place on the highest point in Cornwall – hence our visit to Bodmin Moor, around the area of Rough Tor and Brown Willy. I wanted to see the terrain on which these people would be living – the play describes an area with no trees, of granite outcrops. The temperature was -5°C on this particular day. Lyn, Jillyan and I, with Basil the sheep dog, set off to climb Rough Tor, granite outcrops like Barbara Hepworth sculptures. The ground littered with small, and not so small granite rocks. It felt desolate. I tried to think what it would feel like for the characters in the play, if the sun was beating down. The freezing temperature got to us. We didn't make the summit but may be we didn't need to to realise just how uncomfortable the characters would feel. Lyn commented on our way down the hill how biblical the terrain looked and felt – if one imagined searing sun – like some of the paintings by Holman Hunt. This fitted exactly with the many themes of the play. How the experiences of each character eventually is related to religious belief, or the lack of it, to spirituality and even mysticism.

A Profile of Our Award Winning Playwright Carl Grose

Carl was born in Truro, Cornwall, in 1975. At the age of 17 he wrote and directed his first play *Bile* – which was swiftly followed by another *Revelations* – both of which were performed at Truro Sixth Form College. Also in that year he won a part in the Cornish entry for the RSC Antigones Project. The play was *Hell's Mouth* written by Nick Darke and directed by Mike Shepherd.

In 1993 Carl wrote a play *The Alice Analysis* for the Cornwall Youth Theatre's summer tour and co-founded GRINNING GARGOYLE THEATRE. He directed their first production, Nick Darke's *The Body* and continues to write for and perform in the company which is now in its third year.

He has put his training at Dartington College of Arts on hold to join the ranks of KNEE-HIGH THEATRE to perform in *The King of Prussia*, which has been doing an extensive four month sell out tour of the country.

With another GRINNING GARGOYLE tour imminent, and two new plays in the offing (*The Marshmallow Maidens* and also *Trinity Street* – a prequel to *Scorched*), the future looks set to be a busy one and we wish him luck in his theatrical adventures.

SCORCHED

is Carl's first play to be performed beyond the Tamar

11 February 1996:

I have read a lot about Cornwall – and especially Daphne du Maurier's wonderful book about her life in Cornwall – *Vanishing Cornwall*. Between casting and first rehearsal I had spent some time deciding how to rehearse the play with the cast and crew. I had still only read the play four times since first reading it in June 1995. Because I felt each character represented, or embodied, a different belief – even in some cases different religious figures, and that they together make up a kind of community, I decided not to "tie up" the whole production (sets designed, lighting and sound plot sketched out, moves written down) before discussing it with the cast and crew. I wanted to take the risk of spending two or so weeks discovering with the group what the play is about, to see how the characters grow from the text through the strong cast of actors I was to work with. From this also grew decisions on the set, on costumes and lighting and sound. It's a bit hair-raising to go into rehearsal with 35 cast and crew who might well be looking to you, the director, to have all the answers, and to have very little idea about what might happen – except the belief that the group is strong, and hopefully inventive. Getting the whole group – crew and actors – to work together became an important aspect of every rehearsal.

3 March 1996:

Some basic decisions have been made – we have dispensed with the idea of physically representing the 9 different locations called for in the script – or even to realistically

continued on page 6

Winner of The Questors 1994/95
National Student Playwriting Competition
The World Première of
Scorched
by Carl Grose

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: Saturday 30th March 1996

CAST
(in order of appearance)

Isabell	SOPHIE JAMES
Clymas	KEN RATCLIFFE
May	HANNAH WATKINS
Rufus	JOHN COURTNEY
Moon	ANDREW LUMMIS
Trez	TOM HAMPTON
Lummox	SANDRA HEALY
Agnes	RUTH LISTER
Orton	MICHAEL DINEEN
Monako	SOPHIE JAMES
Faull	ROBERT GOLDSBOROUGH
Argyle	SIMON SNASHALL
Poe	DAVID WATSON
Gideyon	KEN RATCLIFFE
May's Mother	GLENDA KERNEY
Faull's Mother	VAL WILDING
And the Voice of The Mother	FFRANGCON WHELAN

The action takes place on the summit of the Matterhorn, and in various locations on the island of Cornwall, in the not too distant future.

The play is in two acts, with an interval of 15 minutes.



THE PLAYHOUSE IS EQUIPPED WITH AN INFRA-RED SOUND TRANSMISSION SYSTEM FOR USE BY PEOPLE WITH HEARING DIFFICULTIES. IT IS ALSO 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 and Designer	SPENCER BUTLER
Assistant Director	RUSSELL PLOWS
Assistant Designer	GRAHAM CARPENTER
Costume Designer	CHLOE FAINE
Sound Score composed by	MICHAEL CARVER
Sound	IAN HOWLETT
Lighting	PETE WALTERS, ANDY MACDONALD
Dialect Coach	TONY HILL
Stage Manager	ERIC LISTER
Deputy Stage Managers	RICHARD BRIDGEN, MARGUERITE MINSTER
Assistant Stage Managers	TRISH KNIGHT, LUCY HURST, MATTHEW LYON
Properties	HARRIET SIMON
Prompter	SUSAN OLIVER
Construction Assistant	BILL VINEY
Lighting Operator	NIGEL BAMFORD
Lighting Riggers	TERRY, TERRY, MARK, CHRISTOPHER, CHRIS, WAYNE, NINA, STEPHANIE, ANNIE, SARAH
Sound Operator	MARK STUART
Make-up	SARAH TRIGGS, ALISON ROWLAND, GEORGE SQUIRE, MARIA VICTORIA DE LOS REYES

Thanks to: DONALD McLEMAN, CLAIRE GOTT,
ROGER BRACE and PATRICIO CORTI-GERAGHTY

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.

ART EXHIBITIONS

UPPER FOYER – 9 MARCH – 6 APRIL 1996

JOHN FLEMONS – Watercolours from France

John Flemons trained at the Chelsea School of Art, and also studied at the University of London Institute of Education and the Birmingham School of Art Education. He was Senior Lecturer at Thomas Huxley College in Ealing, and for ten years was Head of Art at Morley College, where he still teaches.

He has had one-man shows at the University of Birmingham, Queen Mary College, the Cockpit Theatre, Brunel University, Thomas Huxley College and the Morley Gallery.

GRAPEVINE GALLERY – 9 MARCH – 6 APRIL 1996

MARTIN ROBBINS

Martin Robbins was born in Warwickshire 1957. He is a painter of both abstract and more figurative work. He was originally inspired by the landscapes of Brittany and Cornwall. He later abandoned the more representational landscapes, and pursued more abstract explorations into the relationship between painting and self-expression, using an individual technique and marks in order to convey a sense of energy, harmony and empathy with the media via expression of personal emotions.

continued from page 3

represent the island in any way – we have decided that the way to understand the dialogue – especially as the cast are doing excellent work in defining their characters – is to have no scenery to distract the audience from what each character is saying.

Many initial thoughts about the play, and what it is saying have changed since its first reading. The symbolism, and especially the way in which different theatrical conventions have been used by the author, have become more apparent. The cast have been using cassette tapes (of the Cornish dialect) which the author had recorded in Cornwall and Tony Hill has begun working with the cast on their accents. It is time to begin “tying down” the production. A lot has to be done of a technical and mechanical nature – with lighting, sound, the stage set we will have, what props will be needed, and how the auditorium will be used.

10 March 1996:

We do a run of the play for the author, three members of the cast are absent – but there are still three weeks to go, and plenty to be done.

15 March 1996:

We get into the Playhouse in two days time to begin building the set, rigging the lights – and rehearsing all those aspects we have so far been unable to rehearse in the Shaw Room. The group is working well together, I’m writing this diary in the office, and I’m excited about what we will be doing in the coming weeks.

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.

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.

For The Questors Theatre

Artistic Director	Spencer Butler
Artistic Directorate	John Horwood, Norman Wilkinson
Director of Studies	David Emmet
Chair	John Davey
Vice-Chairman	Steve Hames
Company Secretary	Sue Blake
Club Secretary	Christine Garland
Finance Director	Ken Kettle
Stage Director	Nick Hawker
Marketing Director	Colin Jervis
Theatre Manager	Elaine Orchard
Productions Secretary	Christine Greening
Membership Secretary	Alice Pennicott
Marketing Officer	Fleur Lloyd
Programme Editor	Vincent McQueen
Questopics Editor	Peter Knight
Sponsorship	Geoffrey Sellman
Box Office Management	Ken Parker
Programme Sales Organiser	Val Blaxland
Front of House Manager	Eric Lister
Press Relations	Sandra Hutchinson
Haberdashery	Tootal Craft
Wardrobe Equipment	Wilkinson Sword Scissors..Fiskars Ltd
Wardrobe Care	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.