

Coming productions

In the Playhouse

Little Women by Louisa M. Alcott, adapted for the stage by Peter Clapham

This delightful dramatisation of the famous novel is a classic story of human emotions – a mother's love for her children and their appreciation of it and her. It is the first production of the 1997/1998 season and will be seen initially at The Minack Theatre, Porthcurno, Cornwall for the summer season.

20, 22 - 27 September at 7.45pm; 21 September at 2.30pm

1997/98 SEASON

Listed below are some of the 23 productions planned for next season, many of which are **FREE** to members

LITTLE WOMEN by Louisa M Alcott, adapted by Peter Clapham

A DOLL'S HOUSE by Henrik Ibsen, translated by James MacFarlane

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER by Oliver Goldsmith

LETTICE AND LOVAGE by Peter Shaffer

HEARTBREAK HOUSE by George Bernard Shaw

THE ROSE TATTOO by Tennessee Williams

THE CHALK GARDEN by Enid Bagnold

ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST by Dario Fo

THE TEMPEST by William Shakespeare

THE DREAMS OF ANNE FRANK by Bernard Kops

FIREMAN SAM by Alison Boyle

THE DRESSER by Ronald Harwood

QUARTERMAINE'S TERMS by Simon Gray

JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK by Sean O'Casey

COME BACK TO THE FIVE AND DIME JIMMY DEAN, JIMMY DEAN

by Ed Graczyk

HARD TIMES

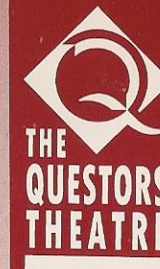
by

CHARLES DICKENS

adapted by

STEPHEN JEFFREYS

The Christmas Show will be **GRIMM TALES** adapted by Carol Ann Duffy, dramatised by Tim Supple, based on the famous fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm.



Director's note

In 1837, while researching for his third novel, Charles Dickens, twenty-five years old and already a celebrity, travelled north to see the dark satanic mills of Lancashire. Through the fog, grime and misery he could discern, "no great difference between the best and worst of them". Disgusted and astonished he vowed "to strike the heaviest blow in my power for these unfortunate creatures", perhaps in Nicholas Nickleby, he thought, though in the event the blow was withheld until *Hard Times*.

Some 17 years later, with a dozen more novels behind him, he travelled incognito to Preston, where the cotton workers had been on strike for nearly six months. He didn't like the place, although the orderly democratic meetings of strikers that he witnessed commanded his respect. Before starting to write *Hard Times* Dickens wanted to observe for himself the reality of an industrial life ruled by materialistic laws of supply and demand, the system of high profits, cheap labour and even cheaper lives that practised what the utilitarians preached as politico-economic orthodoxy.

The completed novel, which drove him "three-parts mad" crushed as it was into short weekly instalments and written specifically to increase the dwindling circulation of his periodical 'Household Words', is short, dark and dramatic, full of fairy-tale imagery pervading the depiction of a group of characters for whom reading fairy-tales would be a total waste of time. "In a utilitarian age, of all other times, it is a matter of grave importance that fairy-tales should be respected". Bernard Shaw characterised the book as "Karl Marx, Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris, Carpenter, rising up against civilisation itself as a disease, and declaring that it is not our disorder but our order that is horrible; that it is not our criminals but our magnates that are robbing and murdering us. Dickens' indignation has spread and deepened into a passionate revolt against the whole industrial order of the modern world".

Hard Times is sponsored by Lister Beck in
memory of Alfred Emmet

The Questors Student Group

There cannot be many courses outside universities that have run for 50 years. But that remarkable milestone has been reached at The Questors. In September 1946 the first ever group of acting students got onto the stage of the Old Tin Hut and had their first lesson with Alfred Emmet. They finished their course 1 year later, in July 1947, with a production of short excerpts from various plays. In July 1997, the 50th Student Group finish their course with their production of *Hard Times*.

Things have changed over the years, of course. The course lasted one year for only 4 groups. It developed quickly into a 2-year course. In the early years, the group usually consisted of about 12 - 15 students, almost all of them women. It was quite a struggle to find enough people to make the course viable. Nowadays there is tremendous competition to get on to the course, and we usually begin the first year with 12 men and 12 women. The record number of applications for those places is 83.

The course consists of weekly classes in Acting, Speech and Movement in the first year, with a double dose of acting and many additional rehearsals in the second year. Students who are involved in the course quickly find that it takes over their whole lives for two years. The dedicated ones who complete the course go on to become acting members of The Questors or go on to drama school and into the profession.

The first year acting classes (which are the core of the course) were taught by Alfred continuously until 1983. Group 37 was taught jointly by Alfred and myself; I took over with Group 38 and plan to carry on for many years yet! So the development of the course has been continuously fluent, and what is taught on the course today is the culmination of 50 years of steady thought and experiment. Perhaps it is because of that continuity that the course is so successful and of such high quality.

And highly successful it is. About a third of The Questors' actors are graduates of the Student Group, and they are to be seen in virtually every production that goes on in the Playhouse and the Studio. The professional theatre is full of our ex-students as well, and they occasionally bump into each other. Only this year I went to see a production in the West End and was able to re-introduce two of the cast to each other as ex-Questors students. They had been working together for several weeks without realising they shared a common background!

To mark the graduation of the 50th Group a grand gala reunion of all ex-students is being held on Saturday 12th July.

David Emmet

The Questors 50th Student Group present

HARD TIMES

by

Charles Dickens

adapted by Stephen Jeffreys

First performance, Friday 12th July 1997

Cast (in order of their appearance)

Mr Gradgrind (*proprietor of the model school, later MP*)
Sissy Jupe (*a stroller's daughter*)
Bitzer (*a pupil, later light porter at the bank*)
Louisa (*Gradgrind's daughter*)
Josiah Bounderby (*a self-made man, friend to Gradgrind*)
Mrs Gradgrind (*Gradgrind's wife*)
Mrs Sleary (*proprietor of Sleary's Horse Riding*)
Emma Gordon (*a performer in the above*)
Mrs Sparsit (*Keeper of Bounderby's House*)
Tom (*Gradgrind's son*)
Stephen Blackpool (*a weaver*)
Rachel (*a weaver*)
Mrs Blackpool (*Stephen's wife*)
Mrs Pegler (*an old woman from the country*)
James Harthouse (*a young man of means*)
Slackbridge (*a Trade Union delegate*)
Mary Stokes (*a weaver*)
Chairwoman/waiter/station master
Narrators

KIERON KERR
LANA ASODI
NATASHA POWELL
FIONA HAMILTON
WAYNE ATKINSON
NATASHA POWELL
ANGELINA HOWARD
SARAH CROKER
DEANNE EARL
IAN BUCKINGHAM
MICHAEL SMITH
SARAH CROKER
ANGELINA HOWARD
NATASHA POWELL
MATTHEW LYON
SHERI DESBAUX
NATASHA POWELL
ANGELINA HOWARD
SHERI DESBAUX
SARAH CROKER
NATASHA POWELL

Production

Director/Set Designer
Assistant Director
Costume Designers
Lighting Designer
Sound Designers
Stage Manager
Deputy Stage Managers
Props
Assistant Stage Managers

Wardrobe
Lighting Operator
Sound Operators
Construction

Make-up & Wigs

Photography
Special Effects

JOHN HORWOOD
LUBNA MALIK
BRYANNE MELVILLE, MELISSA BOAG
DWAYNE DAWSON
ALISTAIR LARK, MARK STUART
CLAIRE WHITELEY
SALLY MILTON, BRIN PARSONAGE
STEVE WELYCZKO
KAREN MILBURN, ELEANORA MURPHY
KATRINA PLUMB, TALLY LEIGH
JOHN MOONEY, LEO PHELEN, EDDIE TOLLAND
LORAIN MORRISON, CORINNE NEILD
KRIS COLLIER
ELEANORA MURPHY, NEIL PAMMENT
RICHARD MURPHY, JENNY COOKNELL
LUBNA MALIK, JOHN MOONEY
JAMES PHELAN, EAMMON TOGHES
SJAAN GILLINGS, HELEN DUGGARD,
ASHLING SHEERHAN of GREASEPAINT
STEVE MALLETT, MARTIN SAPSED
NIGEL WORSLEY

The scene is set in and around Coketown, Lancashire during the 1840's.

There will be one fifteen minute interval

*With thanks to: RHIANNON & REBECCA RICHARDSON,
JULIE CRUTTENDEN, JAMES HORADA, RICHARD BUNN,
CELIA WENBAN-SMITH, BARRY JONES*



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.

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 Gallery

5 July - 2 August

EALING & HAMPSHIRE HOUSE PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

This year Ealing & Hampshire House Photographic Society will hold its 106th Annual General Meeting which must make it one of the oldest established photographic societies in West London if not the whole country. The Society is always keen to recruit new members and if you are interested in joining please contact the publicity Secretary, Keith Adams, on 0181 578 7713.

In the Grapevine Gallery

5 July - 2 August

ANDREW WALWORTH

Andrew Walworth was born in 1952 in Somerset. He obtained an Honours Degree in Latin American Studies. Andrew paints figurative works in oils and is currently working on an exhibition on a theme that explores a modern expression for St Francis from an original painting by Zurbaran.

HARD TIMES

'So many hundred hands in this mill; so many hundred horse steam power. It is known, to the force of a single pound weight, what the engine will do; but, not all the calculators of the National Debt can tell me the capacity for good or evil, for love or hatred, for patriotism or discontent, for the decomposition of virtue into vice, or the reverse, at any single moment in the soul of one of these its quiet servants, with the composed faces and regulated actions. There is no mystery in it; there is an unfathomable mystery in the meanest of them, for ever. Supposing we were to reserve our arithmetic for material objects, and to govern these awful unknown quantities by other means.' Hard Times, Book the First, Chapter II.

Questors 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 it 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.

For The Questors Theatre

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

Dame Judi Dench
Spencer Butler
Anne Gilmour, Norman Wilkinson
David Emmet
John Davey
Steve Hames
Sue Blake
Christine Garland
Ken Kettle
Nick Hawker
Sonja Garsvo
Elaine Orchard
Christine Greening
Alice Pennicott
Fleur Lloyd
Vincent McQueen
John Dobson
Alan Drake
Bridgett Strevens
Val Blaxland
Eric Lister
Sandra Hutchinson
Persil, Comfort and Stergene
Courtesy of Lever Bros.
Dry-cleaning by C.D.S.

Administration

The Questors office is open from 9.30am until 5.30pm 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;