

Coming Productions

In the Foyer and Studio

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW: PARTS 1, 2 and 3

To mark World Aids Day on December 1st. These nine plays are all previously unperformed in the UK. They are some of the newest writing on the subject of HIV and AIDS and those who are affected by it, ranging from 3-page monologues to full-length plays. Some will be read (in fact some are written only to be read) and some performed.

November 30, December 1 and 4 in the Foyer. December 5 in the Studio.

In the Studio

A FAMILY AFFAIR

by **Alexander Ostrovsky**. Translated by **Nick Dear**

Bolshov, the merchant, thinks everyone is getting something for nothing so he instructs his vodka-swilling solicitor to set up some dodgy deals with his clerk. His wife is desperate to find an aristocratic husband for their daughter. "Nick Dear has produced this inventive version of a Family Affair" wrote the Guardian; "I doubt that there is any greater feast of comedy in London today."

Saturday 13 -- Saturday 20 December 1997

In the Playhouse

CAROL CONCERT

Always a popular event with mince pies, mulled wine and traditional singing by The Questors Choir

Sunday 14th December 1997

In the Playhouse

GRIMM TALES

In the retelling of these Grimm tales, we journey on the paths that wind us through the dark woods of fairy tales into the bright warped world of a child's imagination. From the goriness of Ashputtel's sisters to the cute surrealism of the house-sharing bird, mouse and sausage, and the braying humour of the magic donkey, from whose every orifice shower invisible gold coins, to the wholly different Hansel and Gretel.

"In the true sense of the word, enchanting":

THE GUARDIAN.

Wednesday 31st December 1997 - Saturday 10th January 1998

The Christmas Production

Juno and The Paycock

by

Sean O'Casey



IRELAND: 1916 - 1923

1916; The Easter week Rising (background of O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*). The Sinn Feiners, spearheaded by the Irish Volunteers and the Citizen Army, proclaim a Republic and attempt to seize Dublin. The Rising, which lasts less than a week, is violently suppressed by the British Army. In its course, 1351 people are killed, seriously wounded or maimed for life, 14 of the ringleaders are sentenced to death and shot, thus becoming revolutionary martyrs. Within a few weeks of the executions W.B. Yeats writes "A terrible beauty is born".

1918 Military rule imposed by the British; many Sinn Feiners arrested. The Irish Nationalists (moderates) are almost obliterated in the general election, which shows a big swing to the Sinn Feiners.

1919 Many of the elected Sinn Feiners are in gaol; those who are not assemble in Dublin, where they set up their own Dail Eireann (Irish Parliament). They import arms for the Irish Volunteers, now known as the Irish Republican Party. Guerrilla activity begins against British forces.

1920 The Royal Irish Constabulary is reinforced by the hated 'Black and Tans' - mostly ex-servicemen recruited in England, Scotland and Wales. They behave as if at war with the Irish people. The IRA retaliates. This is a year of atrocities and reprisals, ambushes and midnight raids (background of O'Casey's *Shadow of a Gunman*) On the morning of 'Bloody Sunday' - November 21 - the IRA shoots 14 British officers and civilians in Dublin. During the afternoon British troops and Black and Tans open fire and kill 12 members of a football crowd.

1921 The British Parliament passes an act partitioning Ireland into North and South, each of which is given Home Rule. A treaty is signed, granting Ireland dominion status but still requiring a modified oath of allegiance to the Crown. British troops evacuate the country.

1922 The Irish parliament votes in favour of the treaty. Civil war breaks out between the Free Staters, who support the Treaty and partition, and the Diehard Republicans, who reject both. The latter are led by the anti-treaty members of the IRA, otherwise known as the Irregulars (background of *Juno and the Paycock*).

1923 The Civil War ends with the defeat of the Irregulars. The government of the Irish Free State is established as the supreme authority in Southern Ireland. In Edgar Holt's words: 'The tragedy for Ireland was that the coming of freedom had brought division and bitterness that were to last for years'.

DUBLIN TENEMENTS

These were the homes of those who pushed aside
The broken children of a sweeter race:
These are the cast-off garments of their pride
Because of whom a thousand heroes died:
Alien and sinister; these hold their place.

The light has died upon the pavements grey,
From shattered window and from blackened door
Where, in a sunny, heartless yesterday
Silken and jewelled beauty was at play,
Stare out the hopeless faces of the poor.

Susan L. Mitchell, circa 1920

This production of
Juno and the Paycock
is supported by Mary Anderson.

Perspiration, paper-stripping and paint!

In the early years of the Playhouse I was lucky to have many opportunities to design sets, and I am supporting *Juno and the Paycock* in gratitude for those fascinating and exhausting experiences. It is also a tribute to the workshop and backstage staff who change the floor levels, build impossible structures, and generally aid and abet the designer.

Mary Anderson

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Juno and the Paycock was the third work by Sean O'Casey to be presented at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin in 1924. The first was *Shadow of a Gunman* (1923) and the second a one-act play called *Cathleen Listens In* which was produced in the same year. But it was *Juno* that placed him among the masters of 20th century drama.

He was the last of 13 children, 8 of whom had died in infancy. He had grown up in extreme poverty - unskilled, self educated, often unemployed yet committed to the workers' cause. When he first met Lady Gregory, W.B. Yeats and later, Lennox Robinson, who ran the Abbey Theatre, he was still a labourer and remained so during the run of *Juno*. He was 43 years old when it opened.

The play is set against the background of deprivation and poverty, strong religious faith and the political turmoil of Civil War. O'Casey stages the play in the tenement buildings which he knew so well. They had once been elegant eighteenth century, Georgian homes which in the 1920's were deemed the worst slums in Europe. But as O'Casey's dialogue reveals, within the grim, grey, tenement rooms human dramas were daily played out.

The enduring stereotype from the old tenement days of the feckless intemperate father and the saintly mother is, in truth, rooted much in fact. Beyond doubt mothers held most families together financially, physically and emotionally. As Juno opines, 'Amn't I nicely handicapped with the whole o' yous ! I don't know what any of yous would do without your ma.' Women were expected to care for the children, shop, prepare meals, budget the money, clean, wash, iron, go to the pawn shop, and settle family disputes.

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Juno and the Paycock

by Sean O'Casey

First performance of this production, Saturday 6th December 1997

Cast

Mary Boyle	.....	KATE DAVIE
Johnny Boyle	.....	MICHAEL SMITH
Juno Boyle	.....	WENDY MEGENEY
Jerry Devine	.....	KEVIN BOLAND
"Captain" Jack Boyle	.....	ROGER LEWIS
Joxer Daley	.....	TONY BARBER
Sewing machine man	.....	DON KINCAID
Coal block vendor	.....	MICHAEL GREEN
Charles Bentham	.....	NIGEL LAWRENCE
Maisie Madigan	.....	DOROTHY BOYD TAYLOR
Mrs Tancred	.....	FFRANGCON WHELAN
First Neighbour	.....	DOROTHY WOOD
Second Neighbour	.....	JOAN McQUEEN
"Needles" Nugent	.....	KEN RATCLIFFE
Irregular Mobilizer	.....	ROBIN INGRAM
Sean	} Furniture men	..... MICHAEL GREEN
Bill		..... DON KINCAID
Brendon		..... ERIC LISTER
Dermot, an Irregular	.....	NIGEL LAWRENCE

The play is set in a Dublin tenement in 1922

ACT 1 - A morning in September

ACT 2 - Evening, two days later

ACT 3 - Early evening, two months later

There will be an interval of fifteen minutes between Act 1 and Act 2

There will be a shorter interval between Act 2 and Act 3

THE PLAYHOUSE IS EQUIPPED WITH AN INFRARED 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 Team

Director	.....	TONY RUSHFORTH
Assistant Director	.....	NEIL DICKENS
Set Designer	.....	TESSA CURTIS
Costume Designer	.....	SYLVIA WALL
Lighting Designer	.....	TIM HAYWOOD
Sound Designer	.....	STEVE HAYMES
Musical Director and music composed by	.....	DON KINCAID
Voice Coach	.....	TONY HILL

Stage Manager	.....	ERIC LISTER
Deputy Stage Manager	.....	MELISSA NAYLOR
Properties	.....	HARRIET SIMON
Prompter	.....	SUSAN OLIVER
Assistant Stage Managers	.....	LISA CASTLE, DEBBIE JONES

Sound Operators FAYE MOODIE

Lighting Operator JENNY RICHARDSON

Wardrobe SUE MILLHOUSE, LINDSEY UDELL, JOAN GRIFFIN,
BRYANNE MELVILLE, ANTONIA MOTTOLA

Construction GRAHAM CARPENTER, JOHN MOONEY,
JIM CAITHNESS

Hair and Make Up ASLAUG SVAVA JONSDOTTIR
(of GREASEPAINT)

THANKS TO: Tina Harris, Helen King, Gordon Miller, Ann Neville, Jo Perse,
Jenny Richardson, Mary Rushforth, Chris Sydenham, George Tancred and
Geoffrey Keating at the Irish Embassy

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.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE (continued)

Many also worked in factories or did domestic work. By contrast men had minimal family responsibilities as they were free to merrily wend their way to the local pub benignly oblivious to their wife's woes.

Juno's plaintive lament, 'Your poor wife slavin' to keep the bit in your mouth, an' you gallivantin' about all day like the paycock!' expresses the plight of all downtrodden tenement women. But despite being poor they had deep pride and dignity and when times were hardest found solace in their religion and community. They also exhibited splendid wit and indomitable spirit that allowed them to survive life's cruelest blows – the loss of children, illness, fatigue and physical and emotional abuse.

Kevin Kearns (author of "Dublin Tenement Life")

In *Juno and the Paycock* O'Casey constantly vacillates between comedy and pathos, laughter and tears. The characters are immediately recognisable, though not stereotypes. The play deals with universal themes which are just as relevant today as when the play was first performed. It is O'Casey's most popular and enduring play. Over the years the Abbey Theatre has mounted some forty productions!

Tony Rushforth

ART EXHIBITIONS

UPPER FOYER GALLERY 15 November - 13 December, 1997

JOHN FLEMONS has exhibited at The Questors twice before. He studied first at Chelsea School of Art and later at University of London Institute of Higher Education and finally at Birmingham School of Art Education.

He was elected Member of Artists International Association in 1961 and has had one-man shows all over the country.

John is a Quaker and is married with four children.

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 both audiences.

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	Dame Judi Dench
Artistic Director	Spencer Butler
Artistic Directorate	Anne Gilmour; 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	Sonja Garsvo
Theatre Manager	Elaine Orchard
Productions Secretary	Kris Collier
Membership Secretary	Alice Pennicott
Programme Editor	Vincent McQueen
Questopics Editor	John Dobson
Sponsorship	Alan Drake
Box Office Management	Bridgett Strevens
Programme Sales Organiser	Val Blaxland
Front of House Manager	Eric Lister
Press Relations	Sandra Hutchinson
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 5.30pm 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 Foyer); 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.

Members of The Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain and The International Amateur Theatre Association