

## Coming productions

### In the Studio

#### **Privates on Parade** by Peter Nichols

It's Singapore in 1948, and Pte. Flowers is recruited into S.A.D.U.S.E.A. (Song and Dance Unit South East Asia). Can he survive life with the outrageously camp Terri Dennis, the aggressive Sgt. Major Drummond and the well-meaning but obsessive Major Giles Flack? And then there's Sylvia: will Steven remain faithful to his girlfriend in England? This is a beautiful acidic comedy, interspersed with a collection of wonderful songs by Denis King. The play contains strong language and may not be suitable for young children.

24, 27 - 31 May, 3 - 7 June at 7.45pm; 25 May & 1 June at 2.30pm

### In the Playhouse

#### **GODSPELL** by John-Michael Tebelak and Stephen Schwartz

A jubilant celebration of the Gospel as told by St Matthew. This Broadway and London musical of the 70's was described by Alan Jay Lerner as "part rock, part revival singing". *Godspell* sprang from the youth culture of the swinging sixties and offered its first audiences a contemporary approach to the world's most famous story. The staging using pantomime, children's games, vaudeville, tap and soft shoe dancing with folk, ballad, pop and rock songs such as *Day by Day*, *Prepare Ye*, *Turn Back O'Man* and *By My Side* providing the musical colour.

14, 17 - 21 June at 7.45pm; 15 June at 2.30pm

### In the Studio

#### **Retreat** by James Saunders

A middle-aged man and a 19 year old girl together in a room late at night take each other on a journey of exploration into the realms of grief and guilt. As layer after layer is stripped away we see how they can find comfort and healing from each other: this is one of those plays that grips you so totally and affects you so beautifully that you feel you want to spend the whole night in the company of these two wounded but fascinating human beings.

21, 25 - 28 June, 2 - 5 July at 7.45pm; 22, 29 June at 2.30pm

### In the Playhouse

#### **Hard Times** by Charles Dickens, adapted for the stage by Stephen Jeffreys

The wide expanse of Dickens's novel, with its attack upon the stunting rigour of an industrial revolution which tended to convert workers into machines of hard labour, is triumphantly brought to life in this skilful adaptation for the stage.

11, 15 - 19 July at 7.45pm; 13 July at 2.30pm

# Requiem for Swallows

The 10th Questors Theatre

National Student Playwriting Competition winning play

by

**Henry Mason**

preceded by

# Three Masks of 'O'

by

**Dannie Abse**





Best wishes to  
The Questors Theatre  
and Henry Mason for  
the production of  
*Requiem for Swallows*,  
the winner of the  
National Student  
Playwriting  
Competition 1995/96.

**GlaxoWellcome**

## Three Masks of 'O'

by

**Dannie Abse**

John Griffiths }  
Oliver Ward }  
Archie Davies }

TERRY JERMYN

Director

DAVID GOLDSWORTHY

Stage Manager

CLAIRE WHITELEY

Crew as for *Requiem for Swallows*

## Three Masks of 'O'

Dannie Abse writes:

'Poems are inhospitable as a home for three-dimensional people. At best they allow the poet to present silhouettes of characters. So sometimes I have turned to the theatre. My first play, *The House of Cowards*, was produced for the first New Plays Festival at The Questors Theatre in 1960. It won the Charles Henry Foyle Award for the best play produced that year outside the West End. That auspicious beginning led me to write further plays for The Questors, encouraged as I was by Alfred Emmet.

So I am particularly pleased that after many a year a new play of mine, albeit only a curtain raiser, is being staged during this year's New Plays Festival. It was the example of Chekhov's cheerful stage monologue in one act, *On the Harmfulness of Tobacco* that triggered the writing of *Three Masks of O* – also a short piece for one actor. It amused me to write it. I hope that it also amuses you'

There will be an interval of twenty minutes between this and the main production.



# Requiem for Swallows

The winning play of the 1995/96 Questors National Student Playwriting Competition

by  
**Henry Mason**

First performance, Tuesday 20th May 1997

## Cast

Misha, as an old man	LARRY IRVIN
Misha, as a boy	RUPERT WATES
Maggie, as an old woman	RUTH LISTER
Maggie, as a girl	VICKY KENT
Marcus, their son	DEREK PARKER

we envy streams and houses theatre sure  
but we are articed to error; we  
were never nude and calm like a great door,  
and never will be perfect like the fountains;  
we live in freedom by necessity,  
a mountain people dwelling among mountains

from Sonnet XXVII of In Time of War by W H Auden

The performance will last about 65 minutes.

## Production

Director	SIMON THOMAS
Set and Costume Designer	CHRYSTINE BENNETT
Choreography	DIANA NESBITT
Stage Manager	GERALDINE HAWKINS
Deputy Stage Manager	KAREN CHERRINGTON
Lighting Designer	TIM HAYWARD
Lighting Operator	CHRIS NEWALL
Sound Designer	COLIN HORNE
Sound Operator	MARTIN STONER
Wardrobe	ANTONIA HOTTOLA
Constructor	RICHARD MURPHY
Make-up	JULIE CRUTTENDEN of 'GREASEPAINT'

The music used in the production is 'There were Swallows . . . ' from *Twelve Moons* by the Jan Garbarek Group and 'I Concentrate on You' from Cole Porter's *Anything Goes* by Stephane Grappelli and Yo Yo Ma.



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.



# The 10th Questors Theatre National Student Playwriting Competition

Supported by Glaxo-Wellcome plc

Every year The Questors Theatre offers a prize of £1000 for the best play submitted in their National Student Playwriting Competition as well as a production of the winning play in the theatre. This year the judges were three of Britain's leading theatrical personalities: our president, Dame Judi Dench; Oliver Ford-Davies and Michael Williams.

The competition was the brainchild of the renowned Questor, Michael Green. It seeks to encourage the development of younger playwrights and to tap the wealth of talent in colleges and universities. It is restricted to full-time students at Institutions of Further and Higher Education. Invitations to enter are sent to every university, drama school and college in the country.

The Questors has a long tradition of encouraging new writers for the stage. Among the well-known writers whose works have been given premières here are James Saunders, Dannie Abse, Peter Whelan, Michael Green, David Storey, Rodney Ackland and Michel Tremblay.

The winning play in this year's competition is *Requiem for Swallows* by Henry Mason, an exciting young talent. Born in 1974, Henry Mason is currently completing a postgraduate degree in Theatre Practice at the University of Exeter. *Requiem for Swallows*, his second play, won third prize at the International Dramatists Competition of the National Theatre of Linz, Austria.

'My play is a remembrance, a play about history, responsibility, exile and the eternal unreliability of history. A bereaved son encounters the bemused spectres of his dead parents, his passive peaceful father and restless energetic mother as their older and younger selves. Misha and Maggie, returning to the limbo of a spare room cluttered with the bric-à-brac and family memorabilia confront their erratic life histories and, finally, the story of their estranged son Marcus.'

Henry Mason will be presented with The Questors Student Playwriting Competition prize of £1000, sponsored by Glaxo-Wellcome, following the performance on 24 May.

## 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.

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## Art exhibitions

### Upper Foyer Gallery

24 April - 24 May

### COLIN ALLBROOK

exhibits regularly in London with societies such as the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour; The Royal Watercolour Society, where he won the Daler-Rowney award for best painting; The Pastel Society, Equestrian Society and The Sunday Times/Singer Friendlander Watercolour competition. His work can be seen at the Waterside Gallery and the Elliot Gallery in Devon and in Hertfordshire at the Bow House Gallery.

### In the Grapevine Gallery

24 April - 23 May

### MARGARET EVANS

Margaret Evans began life in York, which perhaps accounts for her great interest in history and architecture. She has taken part in, and organised, group exhibitions, has had a solo exhibition at the Mermaid Theatre, and two years running had a D classification by the Royal Academy. A print of St Paul's was hung by the Bankside Gallery.