

# THE QUESTORS THEATRE

is based in West London where it has its own premises including a modern, flexible Playhouse, a Studio theatre, three rehearsal rooms, a workshop, an extensive wardrobe department and, of course, the Grapevine Bar, which is the hub of the theatre.

It has nearly 3,000 members, all of whom get involved in one way or another, either in the 20 plus productions that are staged each year, in the day to day running of the theatre, or as members of the audience.

As well as presenting a wide variety of plays, the Questors runs a two-year course for actors, plays host to visiting companies from home and abroad, mounts regular art exhibitions, runs workshops and clubs for young people and tours productions in this country and abroad.

In short, there is something for everyone at The Questors.

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## The Questors Theatre

Mattock Lane  
Ealing, W5 5BQ

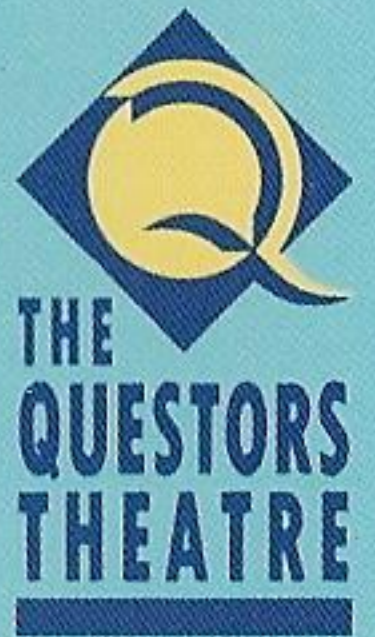
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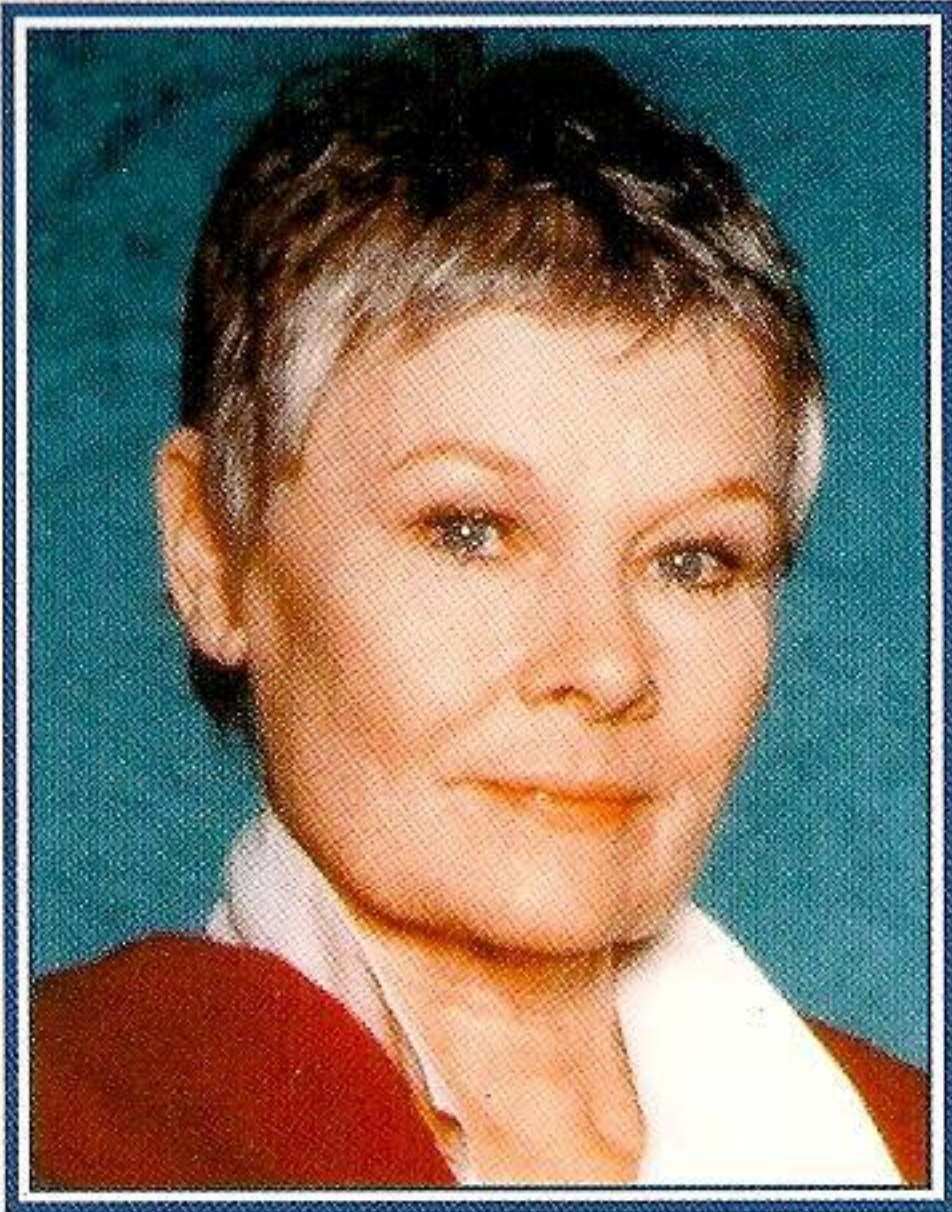
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TIME and the  
CONWAYS

THE QUESTORS THEATRE



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**Welcome** to The Questors Theatre, one of London's best kept secrets - except to its 3,000 members. How do I know about the Questors? I am proud to have been their President for over 16 years. Founded in 1929, it has since grown into the largest community theatre in Europe with a reputation for the highest standards, not only in acting but in direction and design as well. Luckily, with so many members, we have a wealth of talent to call on for all aspects of production and members are encouraged to be as actively involved as they would like. Alternatively, they simply enjoy the social side of the club, including the friendly Grapevine Bar (one of the many perks of membership) and the many and varied shows in our newly refurbished 350 seater Playhouse Theatre and more intimate Studio Theatre.

The Questors runs a professionally recognised two-year acting course in conjunction with Kingston College. There are also acting courses for beginners, free backstage training courses, visiting companies from home and abroad, regular art exhibitions, and workshops and clubs for young people. In short, there is something for everyone and with annual membership costing as little as £23.50 (including up to 10 free shows) it's great value for money as well.

But don't just take my word for it, the next time you're in West London call into The Grapevine Bar on any Wednesday evening at 8pm for a free tour of the theatre and a drink on us!

Worth looking into?

Definitely!

Dame Judi Dench  
 President of The Questors Theatre



# TIME and the CONWAYS

by J. B. Priestley

## Time and J.B. Priestley

One critic claimed that, as a dramatist, Priestley wasn't much more significant than 'What's My Line?', Neil Sedaka and trouser turn-ups. However an author of a book on Priestley felt he wrote "The most fascinating group of plays of any playwright of the twilight decade which we call the thirties." As John Atkins says in 'J.B. Priestley: last of the sages', historians "will probably think of Priestley as the author of some remarkable plays which managed to make drama out of speculation about the nature of time. These plays reflect a sense of loss which was one of the chief legacies of the First World War to those that survived it."

Priestley fought in the trenches of that war and although he rarely used the war in his work some say his work is tinged with the trauma of surviving a horrific war, a yearning to revisit a lost golden age, the Edwardian Age, before 1914.

'Time and the Conways' opens just after the war, and has a middle act which precedes the next war, where we see the hopeful young things of 1919 become depressing middle-aged failures, embittered and forlorn; before returning, in Act Three, to re-examine the 1919 crowd where we left them, but this time with the hindsight of the knowledge of what the future holds for them and their dreams.

Priestley wrote three Time-plays ('Time and the Conways', 'Dangerous Corner', 'I Have Been Here Before') as well as various novels where time is an essential character, particularly, 'Bright Day', to which 'Time and the Conways' bears more than a passing resemblance.

Priestley believed there were three kinds of time: passing time, which is clock or chronological time; a time for slowing down of experience, for contemplation; and a time for speeding up, creative and imaginative. Of course, we all talk about time passing slowly or quickly but we don't believe it. Priestley does. He believed there were many dimensions to time. The fourth dimension may simply be our clock time, passing time. But suppose there is a fifth dimension, enduring time, in which anything that has happened goes on happening. In "Man and Time" Priestley explained: "The past has not vanished like pricked bubble. To understand this dimension of things we move in time as a blind man's finger moves over a piece of carving. Our consciousness travels along this track as we might travel on a railway journey. Then the past is the station we have just left, and the future is the station we are approaching. The past has not been destroyed any more than the last station was destroyed when the train left it. Just as the station is still there,

with its porters and ticket inspectors and bookstall and its noise and bustle, so the past still exists, not as a dim memory, but in all its colour and hum."

These ideas of time fed into his idea of Eternity: "Eternity is not unending time. It is outside time. It involves another dimension of things. If we think of time as a line, then eternity is a plane. Life in time is existence along the one way train from the cradle to the grave. Eternal life is always a new and heightened experience of the here and now...all moments of noble living, the ecstasy of love, the compassion and understanding that enter into every genuine personal relationship. All demand the unknown dimension, this timeless being."

The critical critic mentioned earlier also remarked that Priestley's plays are seriously flawed because they lack care: "That is compassion, involvement. We, the audience, are perforce as detached as he is." Atkins, however, states that one of Priestley's skills is "his sensitive reaction to audience reflexes. He knows, perhaps better than any other living playwright, that there is a paradoxical demand for illusion and reality at the same time." In his lecture 'The Art of the Dramatist' Priestley explained that a play is experienced on two levels: you identify yourself with what is happening on the stage but at the same time you do not forget that you are sitting in a theatre. We allow our minds to function on two different levels at the same time. The child is often responsive on each level, appreciating what is happening on the stage but also very aware that he is sitting next to his mother. "So it may well be that it is the child in us who makes us responsive to this magic. Men and women who are completely removed from their childhood, who for one reason or another have had to tame the child in them and wring its neck, generally dislike the theatre and are reluctant and unresponsive playgoers."

Priestley felt that the task of the playwright was to make the audience feel. Although he littered his plays with theories of time, recurrence, precognition and intervention, he recognised that the important thing was to make the audience feel first and think later; that feeling may influence their thinking. Again and again in his work Priestley stops and says, in effect: "How like the theatre this is." The theatre seems to represent for him a link between this world we live and work in, what we sometimes call the real world, and the world of dream that may provide an entry to an even more profound reality. "I have always felt that the miniature world of action and feeling in the lighted area of the stage is profoundly symbolic of all our lives here in this world, so that the actors may be seen as representative of our common humanity."

The Questors 55<sup>th</sup> Student Group presents

**TIME and the CONWAYS**

by J. B. Priestley

First performance of this production 13 July 2002

**CAST**

Mrs Conway	Kate Forrester
Alan Conway	Laurence Vernon
Madge Conway	Anna Warburton
Robin Conway	Danny Vardanian
Hazel Conway	Kerry-Ann Ladwa
Kay Conway	Alison Bartley
Carol Conway	Katherine Pagoon
Joan Helford	Natasha Meadmore
Ernest Beevers	Patrick Doherty
Gerald Thornton	David Hovatter*

**Synopsis of scenes**

ACT I

That night. Kay's twenty-first birthday.

ACT II

Another night. And another birthday.

ACT III

That night again. Her twenty-first birthday.

The scene throughout is a sitting-room in Mrs Conway's house, a detached villa in a prosperous suburb of a manufacturing town, Newlingham.

There will be **two** fifteen minute intervals, one between each of the acts.

\* David is an acting member of the Questors Theatre

**PRODUCTION TEAM**

Director	John Horwood
Set Designer	John Wibberley
Lighting Designer	Charlie Lucas
Sound Designer	Joel Milton
Costumes	Elizabeth Bisinotto, Ruth Jackson
Properties	Sylvia Wall, Heather
Stage Managers	Liz Prior, Luke Green
Deputy Stage Manager	Sally Milton
Assistant Stage Managers	Chris Ifould, Richard Williams Mark Ayres, Gerry Bradley James Bowler, James Farrar
Lighting Operator	Jason Armstrong
Lighting Riggers	Damien Lazell
Sound Operator	Annabel Morris
Set and Furniture Construction	John Horwood, Colin Horne, Jenny Bunn, Tina Harris, Roger Brace, Adrienne Talbot, Jenny Richardson, John Wibberley, Joel Schrire, Ann Beckenham, Jim Craddock Bridgett Strevens, Richard Bunn
Hair and Make up	Megan Cox, Kelly Treacher, Joanna Grover
Photography	Cathy Kelleher, Martin Sapsed
Voice Tutor	Victoria Fairbrother
Movement Tutor	John Wilson

The Questors Student Group is run in association with Kingston College.

# FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS

## AUTUMN SEASON

### SEPTEMBER

#### **ABSENT FRIENDS** by Alan Ayckbourn

A well-loved and polished comedy about the usual human messes all discussed over tea and sympathy.

### OCTOBER

#### **LOOK BACK IN ANGER** by John Osborne

The seminal play of the 1950's, which still continues to pose urgent questions about Britain's identity.

#### **HAMLET** by William Shakespeare

### NOVEMBER

#### **THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE** by Martin McDonagh

Set in a Galway town, this gutsy play portrays ancient, manipulative Mag and her virginal daughter, Maureen, whose mutual loathing may be more durable than any love.

#### **MOLLY SWEENEY** by Brian Friel

Suffused with the rich tradition of Irish story telling, this drama weaves three voices into a tapestry of the real and the imagined.

**ART EXHIBITION**  
**in the foyer**  
until 21st July  
**ERIC STANDING**

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

I/We wish to apply for membership of The Questors Theatre.  
BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

Name(s) .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Tel. no. ....

e-mail .....

Date of Birth .....

Membership Type *(please tick one)*

- |                                                                                                                                                                                       |        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual                                                                                                                                                   | £39.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joint                                                                                                                                                        | £71.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concessionary<br>Senior Citizens, UB40s, Leisure Pass holders                                                                                                | £23.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Concessionary                                                                                                                                          | £39.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single Family<br>One adult and all children under 17                                                                                                         | £47.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Family<br>Two adults and all children under 17<br><i>(please include names and dates of birth of all children for both types of family membership)</i> | £81.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student<br>All tickets at half price on production of NUS card - no free shows                                                                               | £13.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate<br>For those outside a 25-mile radius of The Questors - no free shows                                                                              | £15.00 |

Where did you hear about The Questors?.....

- I enclose a cheque/postal order payable to The Questors Ltd. for £.....
- I would like to pay by Credit Card - Mastercard / Visa.

Card No ..... Expiry date ..... /.....

Cardholder's Name .....

Address *(if different from above)* .....

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Signed ..... Date .....

## NEW MEMBERS TICK SHEET

Many members join just to see the shows. However, if you want to get more involved, please tick the areas you are interested in below. Remember that experience isn't always necessary.

- Acting**  
You will need to take an audition to join the acting company. Please fill in a form (available from the office).
- Directing**  
You will need either a proven track record or hands-on theatre experience for this.
- Backstage**  
Including stage management, construction, lighting, sound, props, and wardrobe.
- Design**  
Set and/or costume design
- Front of House**  
Including stewarding, box office, programme selling, Questors café.
- Publicity**  
Leaflet distribution, open day etc.
- Photography**  
Experience and own camera required.
- Grapevine Bar**  
Bar staff.
- Envelope Stuffing**  
Daytime - including general office help.
- Maintenance**  
Any + every odd job.

Details of any relevant experience:

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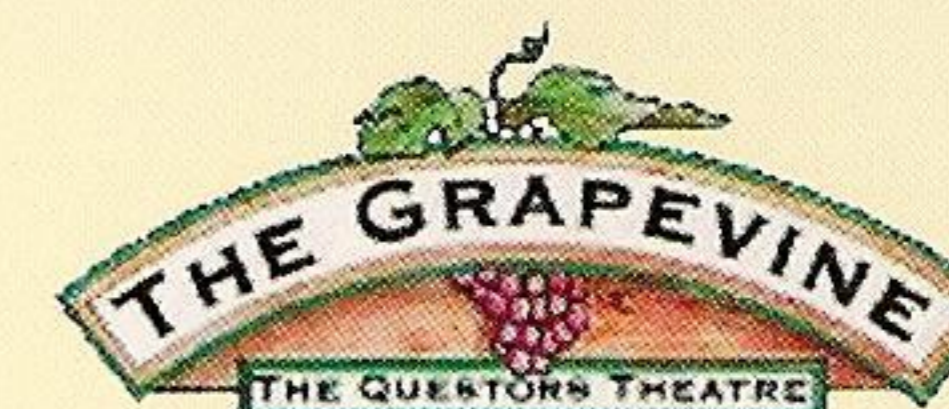
•  
Worldwide Flights

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£25 off every booking  
over £500 for  
Questors Members



## WORTH CROSSING EALING FOR!

For your interval or after show drinks visit the friendly and comfortable Grapevine Bar. It's open seven nights a week and Sunday lunchtimes. We pride ourselves on the quality of our cask ales, which usually include Fuller's London Pride, Fuller's Chiswick Bitter and a guest ale. We also provide a range of draft lagers and ciders as well as wines and spirits - all at very reasonable prices.

[www.myfavouritepub.com/questors](http://www.myfavouritepub.com/questors)