

# 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

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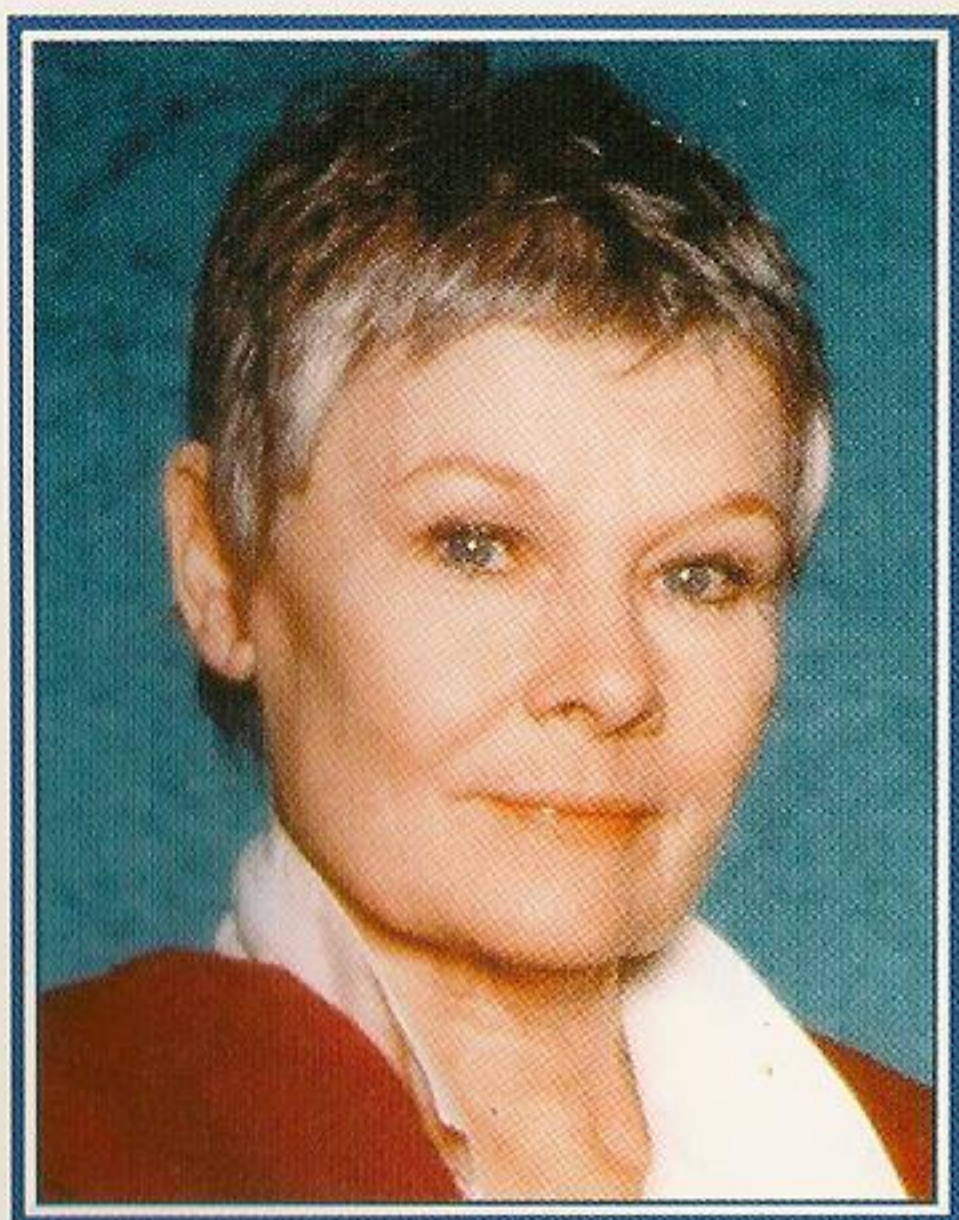
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*Look Back in Anger*

**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



## *Look Back in Anger*

by John Osborne



*Look Back in Anger* is a play about an angry young man in the same way that *Hamlet* is a play about an angry young man. Both young men loved their fathers and want to avenge their deaths and both young men are uncertain about love and relationships with women. Shakespeare heralded a period of new play writing and when John Osborne's play was premiered at the Royal Court in 1956, that too heralded a new wave of writing. The writing of the angry young men.

The dominant names among British playwrights in the fifties were Terence Rattigan (*The Deep Blue Sea*) T.S. Eliot (*The Cocktail Party*) and Christopher Fry (*The Lady's Not For Burning*) and other productions at the time were musicals which reflected a mood of conservative nostalgia, such as *Salad Days* and *The Boyfriend*. Osborne's play was very different.

George Devine of the English Stage Company read the unsolicited script and was very excited by it as it met his wants for the theatre. "I want to have a contemporary theatre...I want to make the theatre have something to say and be part of the intellectual life of the community". However Devine had a job to persuade the Board to accept this play as they felt it "too difficult a play to swallow".

What was it about the play that was so difficult to swallow? Free love, misogynist attitudes, squalor, left wing sympathies or just Jimmy Porter's loud mouthed ranting about the society of the day and his wife's family in particular? It was all of these things in a heady and passionate mix. Osborne writes of the fifties that the word to sum it up is "inertia. Enthusiasm there was not, in the climate of fatigue.....The country was tired, not merely from the sacrifice of two back-breaking wars but from the misery and defeat between them. The bits of red on the map were disappearing as the flags came down and the names we knew on mixed packets of postage stamps were erased. Like so much else, it all happened without people being very aware of it.....In the summer of 1955 it was still easy enough to identify what we regarded as permanent Establishment. The continued acceptance of hanging, the prosecution of homosexuals, and censorship in film and theatre made life easy for the liberal conscience. The Conservative Party could be stigmatized as figures of fun on their grouse moors; Etonians dominated the cabinet." Jimmy Porter spoke for the liberal left wing conscience.

And it was these same Conservative Party members and Etonians who were shocked by the play when it was first performed at the Royal Court in 1956. The left wingers and those with a liberal conscience saw it as a revelation and a breath of fresh air on the stage and welcomed Jimmy Porter's mix of cheerful malice and sincerity, freebooting cruelty and tenderness.

*Look Back in Anger* is not just a play about an angry young man it is a play about complex human relationships and the characters of Alison, Cliff, Helena and the Colonel are as important as that of Jimmy Porter. The writing of the Colonel shows that Osborne had sympathy for the older generation and an

understanding of their confusion. There are characters spoken of but never seen that one feels one knows as well as those on stage by the end of the play.

Each generation delivers a new playwright to shock us and stretch the bounds of what is acceptable on stage. Recently we have had Patrick Marber and Sarah Kane, who have not only extended the boundaries so far as content is concerned but also altered our understanding of play structure. Who is the new young man on the block? It must be McDonagh and his brave and bloody Lt of Inishmore.

What did the angry young men of the fifties do for us? They paved the way for the sixties and the satirists. They cut a swathe through convention and removed deference.

Looking back on the canon of work that comes under the heading of "Angry Young Men" we find John Osborne, Colin Wilson, Kingsley Amis and Philip Larkin. All of whom have written works that continue to be read and performed and have resonance for readers and audiences today.

Osborne's diary entry for 4 May 1954 read "Began writing *Look Back in Anger*" and he recalls that he began writing in a vacuum. "It was simply something for myself." Something for himself that touched a nerve in the British theatregoing public and marked a period of theatre history. Deciding on the title seemed to be more difficult than writing the play

## **BARGAIN FROM STRENGTH**

## **CLOSE THE CAGE DOOR BEHIND YOU**

## **MY BLOOD IS A MILE HIGH**

## **MAN IN A RAGE**

## **ANGRY MAN**

## **FAREWELL TO ANGER**

## **LOOK BACK IN ANGER**

**The play was written from the heart and it shows.**



# Look Back in Anger

by John Osborne

First performance of this production 5<sup>th</sup> October 2002

## CAST

Jimmy Porter	Simon Roberts
Alison Porter	Rachel Murray
Cliff Lewis	Charles Bertram
Colonel Redfern	Robin Ingram
Helena Charles	Carol Fullilove

*The action takes place in the attic bed-sit of a large house  
in the Midlands in 1956*

*act I: early evening, April*

*act II scene I: two weeks later*

*act II scene II: the following evening*

*act III scene I: several months later*

*act III scene II: a few minutes later*

*There will be one interval of 15 minutes after act II scene I*

## PRODUCTION

Director	Bernice Wolfenden
Set Designer	John Wibberley
Stage Manager	Jo Matthews
Lighting Designer	Richard Lewis
Sound Designer	Paul Wilson
Costume Designer	Kirsty Packham
Set Constructors	John Horwood, John Wibberley, James Bowler
Deputy Stage Manager	Brin Parsonage
Assistant Stage Managers	James Bowler, Justine Forrest, Lydia King, Heather Stamford
Lighting Operators	Richard Lewis, Gary Tapley
Sound Operator	Paul Wilson
Furnishings and Properties	Justine Forrest, Harriet Parsonage
Special Effects	Mark Ayres
Make-up and hair	Sharon Holloway, Sophia Knight
With thanks to	Chris Storer, Tom Butler, Roy Brierley, Peter Kennedy, Nigel Worsley, Freddy Henry



# THE QUESTORS THEATRE PRESENTS

## Sheila Steafel in

# STEAFEL RE-REQUESTED

Sheila was last seen at the Questors three years ago with 'Victoria Plums'.

She liked it here so much that she's wanted to come back ever since.

To convince us that she was serious she came up with the extremely funny pun on our name for the title of her new show. She's written it especially for us, so lets not let her down (or heaven knows what other puns she'd come up with!). Her new show is as polished and witty as always and packed with stories, songs and soliloquies. So, if you saw her last time, then come again, and if you didn't then this is your chance to see what you missed.

Here are some quotes that may or may not be relevant:

*'Excellent, brilliant, first class and wonderful.'*

*'Memorable one-woman show packed with top-class comedy material.'*



The Frost Report

October 29, 30, 31 at 7.45pm

November 1 at 7.45pm, 2 at 6.00pm and 8.30pm

### ***Ticket prices***

Monday - Thursday and Saturday at 6.00pm

£10.50 (£9.00 concessions)

Friday and Saturday at 8.30pm

£12.50 (£11.00 concessions)

## COMING SOON

### **HAMLET** by William Shakespeare

In **The Playhouse**, 19th - 26th October

Of all of his plays, Shakespeare's tale of the melancholy Dane seems the most modern. For Hamlet, as for us, the world assumes the shape of a question mark. He asks more, and more varied, questions than any other character in Shakespeare, and has learnt that truth is elusive, and that appearances deceive. In his acute awareness of ambiguity and his perplexity about where to begin looking for the truth, we can see ourselves.

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

In **The Playhouse**, 9th - 16th November

Set in the mountains of Connemara, County Galway, this gutsy play tells the darkly comic tale of Maureen Folan, a plain, lonely woman in her early forties, and Mag, her manipulative, ageing mother, whose interference in Maureen's first, and possibly final chance of a loving relationship sets in motion a train of events that leads inexorably towards the plays terrifying dénouement. Deceptions, secrets and betrayals are interspersed with just the right amount of twists and surprises, and things are, of course, not always what they seem.

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

In **The Studio**, 16th - 30th November

A fascinating and lyrical play by the writer of the hugely successful 'Translations'. Blind since infancy, Molly Sweeney lives a richly satisfying life in darkness until her impulsive husband Frank convinces her to seek medical treatment to get her sight restored. But is the world of light reward enough for giving up the world she has created for herself? Suffused with the rich tradition of Irish story-telling, this drama weaves three voices into a tapestry of the real and the imagined.

### **TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN**

by David Wood, from the book by Philippa Pearce

In **The Playhouse**, 7th December - 4th January

This is the magical story of a boy who journeys across the boundaries of time to a fantastic garden in a bygone age. Tom Long discovers the garden when the old grandfather clock in the hallway of his aunt and uncle's dreary flat suddenly strikes thirteen one night. The discovery leads him to many adventures and also to some mysteries. What does the strange inscription on the clock mean? And who is the reclusive Mrs Bartholomew?

Find out the answers with Tom in this award winning, beautiful and intriguing play which will appeal to adults and children alike.



# ART EXHIBITIONS

September 28<sup>th</sup> - October 12<sup>th</sup>

## ***In the Upper Foyer - "Enigma" by Lesley Chitty***

Born in Ealing and now living in the heart of Sussex, Lesley has acquired a love of travel that has taken her from Cornwall and Wales to Malta, Italy and now, more recently, to France and Australia. Her travels have given her an ability to view, capture and to portray in her own distinctive - often mystical - manner, the elemental nature of a diverse world.

## ***In the Grapevine - Tim Robinson***

Tim Robinson is holding an exhibition of colour photographs of local churches and pubs in Ealing and Fulham, night photography, and the Ealing Summer Festival. All photographs are for sale and some have recently been published.

## COMING NEXT

20<sup>th</sup> October - 16<sup>th</sup> November

## ***In the Upper Foyer - "The Great Escape" by Janette Martin***

A collection of mosaics inspired by travels of both a geographical and metaphysical nature. The images on these journeys are fertile, open to the observer's interpretation.

19<sup>th</sup> October - 3<sup>rd</sup> November

## ***In the Grapevine - a collection of works by John Stacey***

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Website: [www.questors.org.uk](http://www.questors.org.uk)

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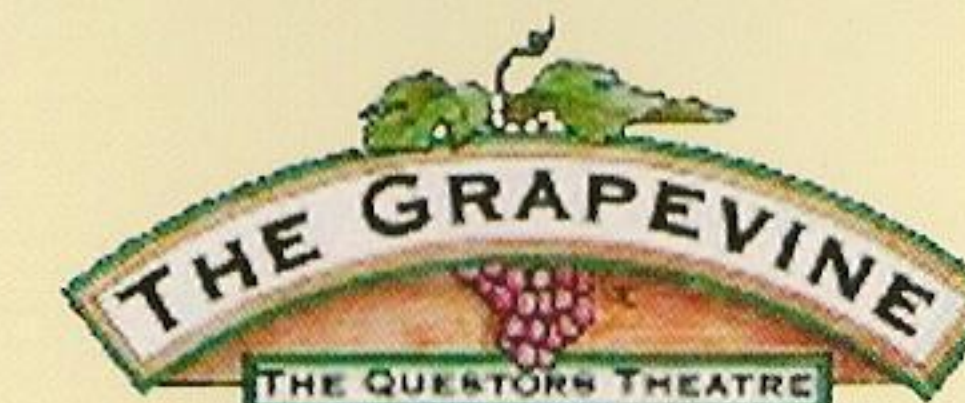
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## WORTH CROSSING EALING FOR!

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)