

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.

The Questors Theatre

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Molly Sweeney

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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.

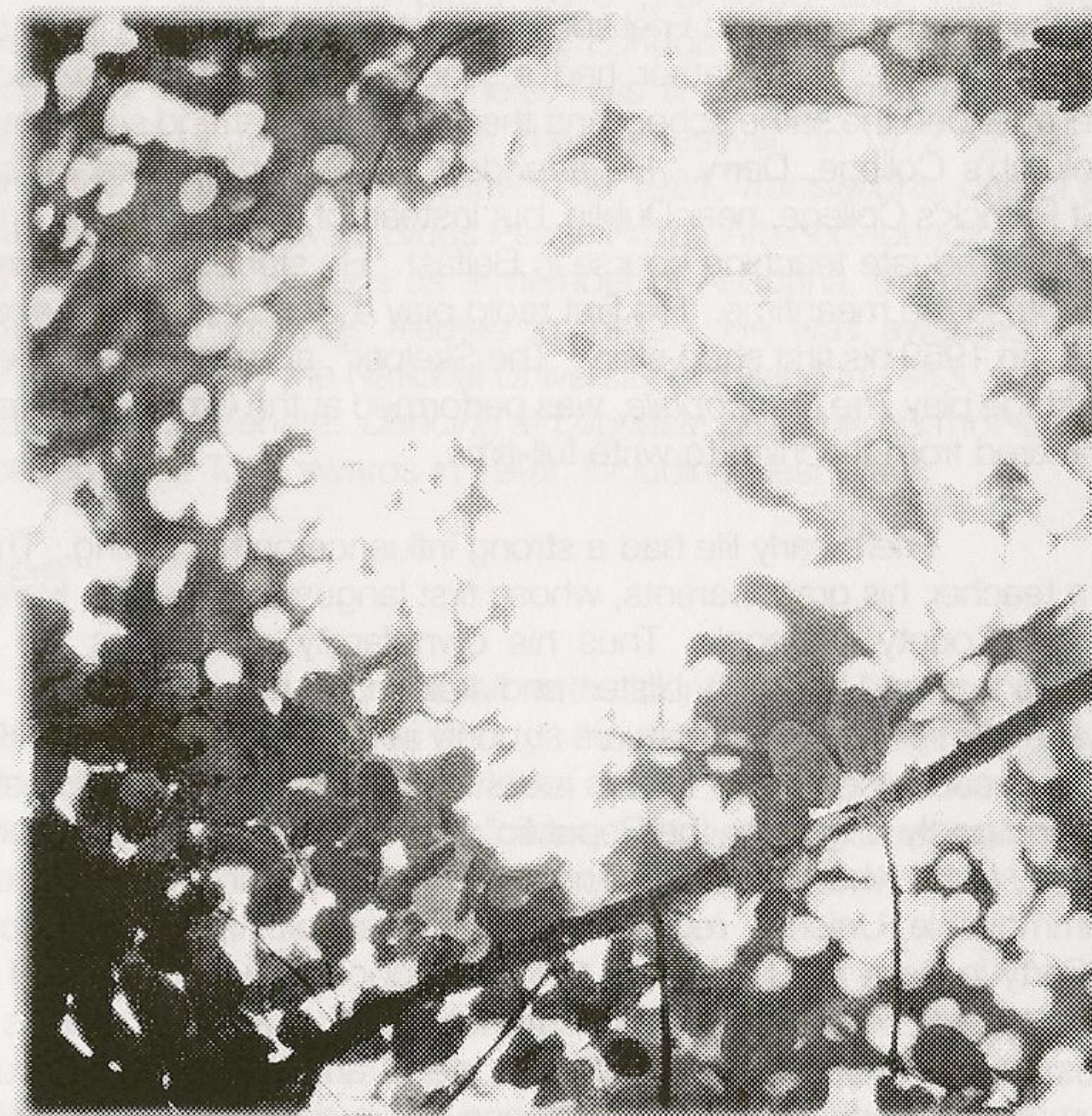
The Questors runs a professionally recognised two-year acting course in conjunction with Kingston College. There are also acting courses for beginners, free backstage training courses, visiting companies from home and abroad, regular art exhibitions, and workshops and clubs for young people. In short, 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



Molly Sweeney

by Brian Friel

Brian Friel

Born on the 9th January 1929, a Catholic, in Omagh, County Tyrone in Northern Ireland, Brian Friel is one of Ireland's most prominent playwrights. In addition to his published plays he has written short stories, screenplays, film, TV and radio adaptations of his plays and several pieces of non-fiction on the role of theatre and the artist.

Friel's father was a native of Derry and a primary school principal. His mother was from Donegal and Friel spent many holidays there. In 1939 the family moved to Derry, where Friel's father had a teaching position at the Long Tower school. Friel attended the same school and then went on to attend secondary school at Saint Columb's College, Derry. He attended the Republic of Ireland's national seminary, St Patrick's College, near Dublin, but instead of going on to the priesthood, he took a post-graduate teaching course in Belfast. He started teaching in Derry in 1950 and wrote in the meantime. His first radio play *A Sort of Freedom* aired on the BBC in 1958. In 1959 his first short story, "The Skelper", appeared in the New Yorker and his first stage play *The Francophile*, was performed at the Group Theatre, Belfast. In 1960 he retired from teaching to write full-time.

Friel's early life had a strong influence on his writing. Though his father was a teacher, his grandparents, whose first language was Irish, were illiterate peasants from County Donegal. Thus his own family exemplifies the divisions between traditional and modern Ulster and Ireland, a recurring theme for Friel. Donegal is another influence that features strongly in Friel's life and work. He moved there in 1969 because he always felt his roots lay in Donegal, "partly to get into the countryside and partly to get into the Republic"; he left partly because of the political situation in the North, where he says, "The sense of frustration which I felt under the tight and immovable Unionist regime became distasteful". He had joined the Nationalist Party in Derry but had left in 1967, disappointed with its lack of initiative. Many of his plays are set in Ballybeg, 'in a remote part of Donegal' and, as Seamus Deane notes, in "that borderland of Derry, Donegal and Tyrone in which a largely Catholic community leads a reduced existence under the pressure of political and economic oppression".

In 1980, Friel helped found the Field Day Theatre Company which is committed to the search for "a middle ground between the country's entrenched positions" to help the Irish explore new identities for themselves.

Brian Friel married Anne Morrison in 1954 and has four daughters and one son. Shy, elusive, yet playful and sceptical, he has made very few personal statements. In his "Self Portrait" he says,

I am married, have five children, live in the country, smoke too much,

fish a bit, read a lot, worry a lot, get involved in sporadic causes and invariably regret the involvement, and hope that between now and my death I will have acquired a religion, a philosophy, a sense of life that will make the end less frightening than it appears to me at this moment.

Awards and Achievements

Brian Friel's plays have premiered and been produced at prestigious venues like the Abbey Theatre, London's West End and Broadway and have been highly successful everywhere. His first major play *Philadelphia Here I Come!* was the hit of the 1964 Dublin Theatre Festival. In 1972 he was elected as a member of the Irish Academy of Letters. In 1981, *Translations*, one of his seminal pieces, was awarded the Ewart-Biggs Peace Prize. After co-founding Field Day, Friel continued his interest in the arts as a member of Aosdána, the national treasure of Irish artists, to which he was elected in 1982. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Literature by the National University of Ireland in 1983, and in 1987 was nominated to the Irish Senate. *Dancing at Lughnasa*, probably his most successful play so far, received three Tony awards in 1992, including Best Play.

Themes

Friel's plays deal with identity, the notion of truth, and communication, which he explores through the nature of language. Identity is formed through memory, both public and private, and it is the collective memories of a community which distinguish it from others. However, communal memory often conflicts with individual experience and several communal memories may exist simultaneously even within an individual.

The different associative and emotive memories and experiences of individuals and communities allow for different perspectives and perceptions of reality to exist. In examining the issue of memory, Friel exposes the falsity in the notion of a single, comprehensive history or truth. What becomes important is not a factual history or identity but exploring different histories and identities.

Language, for Friel, is closely implicated with identity. The names of places, for example, contain within them the history and memories, both public and private, associated with them. However, because of this difference in association, there is always a gap in communication. Friel's later plays expose the inadequacy of language in any real communication and move towards an exchange beyond language.

Meena Alexander

Molly Sweeney

by Brian Friel

First performance of this production 16th November 2002

CAST

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| MOLLY SWEENEY | Anne Neville |
| FRANK SWEENEY | Christopher Cullen |
| MR RICE | John Turner |

MUSIC

| | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| Violinist | Orpheus Papafilippou |
| Singer | Maria Brusa |

*The performance lasts approximately 2½ hours
with an interval of 15 minutes*

PRODUCTION TEAM

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Director/designer | Peter Field |
| Lighting designer | Sketchy |
| Sound designer | Mark Lucek |
| Stage manager | Les Fraser |
| ASM's | Jennifer Goldthorpe, Jo Brayton |
| Lighting Operators | Sketchy, Jasmine Wright, Chris Edwards |
| Sound Operators | Jennifer Goldthorpe, Jo Brayton |
| Prompt | Maria Brusa |
| Hair and Makeup | Christina Martin |
| Front of House | Roger Day |
| Photography by | Godfrey Johnson |
| With special thanks to | Victoria Fairbrother, John Dobson, David Hovatter, Sylvia Wall, Adrian Asher, Richard Lewis, Mark Ayres, Nigel Worsley, Chris Bennett, Mairead Ni Chaoimh (Limerick Leader) |

COMING SOON

In the new year...

STEEL MAGNOLIAS by Robert Harling

In **The Studio**, 18th January - 1st February

First produced in New York in 1987, Steel Magnolias ran successfully at London's Lyric Theatre in 1989. Hilarious and touching, this play for six women is set in a beauty parlour somewhere in Louisiana. Through four scenes spanning three years, Clairee, Ouiser, M'Lynn and Shelby - Truvy's regular customers - and Annelle, her eager but inexperienced assistant, engage in small-town gossip, running the gamut of the birth/marriage/death cycle. The play moves towards tragedy when Shelby - a diabetic - dies following a kidney-transplant operation, and the deep strength and purposefulness underlying the antic banter of the characters is ultimately revealed.

DESIGN FOR LIVING by Noel Coward

In **The Playhouse**, 8th - 15th February

Design for Living follows the fortunes of Gilda, Otto and Leo, a trio of decadent 30-something artists who travel from Paris to London to New York as their fame increases.

The complex and revolving relationships between the three conclude themselves in a highly provocative manner, flying in the face of convention and their public profile. The notion of a menage a trois, shocking in 1932 when the play was written, is still provocative today and Coward's play has much to tell us about celebrity status, sexual mores and the nature of fidelity.

In **The Studio**, 19th - 28th February

The Questors Youth Theatre presents a Double Bill of

Ernie's Incredible Illucinations by Alan Ayckbourn

Ernie is a boy with an incredible imagination - everything he imagines becomes real, much to the consternation of his parents. They take Ernie to the doctor's in search of a cure but things don't go exactly as planned. Secret agents, a boxing granny and mountaineering in the local library make this a hilarious story and fun for all ages.

and

The Chrysalids adapted by David Harrower from the novel by John Wyndham

Set in a post apocalyptic future, this play deals with issues of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. It tells the story of David, who lives in a world where those who consider themselves normal, the 'Norms' rule, and try to destroy anyone they see as different, the 'Mutants'. David is different, he is telepathic, but how can he hide this difference and avoid a terrible fate?

Tom's Midnight Garden

by David Wood, from the book by Philippa Pearce

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.

Particularly suitable for age 7 upwards.

PERFORMANCE DATES AND TIMES

| DATE | TIME | DATE | TIME |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Sat 7 th Dec | 2.00pm & 6.00pm | Sat 21 st Dec | 2.00pm & 6.00pm |
| Sun 8 th Dec | 2.00pm & 6.00pm | Sun 22 nd Dec | 2.00pm & 6.00pm |
| * Thur 12 th Dec - Questors Choir Carol Concert at 7.45pm - see below for special ticket offers! * | | Fri 27 th Dec | 2.00pm & 6.00pm |
| | | Sat 28 th Dec | 2.00pm & 6.00pm |
| | | Sun 29 th Dec | 2.00pm |
| Fri 13 th Dec | 7.45pm | Tue 31 st Dec | 7.45pm |
| Sat 14 th Dec | 2.00pm & 6.00pm | Thur 2 nd Jan | 7.45pm |
| Sun 15 th Dec | 2.00pm & 6.00pm | Fri 3 rd Jan | 7.45pm |
| Fri 20 th Dec | 7.45pm | Sat 4 th Jan | 2.30pm & 7.45pm |

TICKET PRICES

| | |
|----------|-------|
| Adults | £9.00 |
| Children | £7.00 |

Save money
- family ticket only £29.00!
(2 adults and 2 children)

* The Questors Choir - Carol Concert *

This is an old Christmas favourite, so this year we are offering you the chance to save money by booking both shows at once. For every Tom's Midnight Garden ticket you book, you can buy a Carol Concert ticket for 50p less! Make your Christmas complete, and make it a Questors Christmas. Tickets £5.00 (Conc. £3.50).



The friendly Grapevine Bar will be open for all performances and mulled wine, mince pies and ice cream will be available in the foyer, and don't forget New Year's Eve - come along to the bar for a great atmosphere with music, dancing and much more.

DON'T MISS OUT - BOOK EARLY



Join us in the spring for a magnificent production of

The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby

Adapted by David Edgar from the book by Charles Dickens

In the Playhouse, 24th May - 7th June 2003

Also at the Questors...

Julian Light Operatic Society presents...

Iolanthe by W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan

In the Playhouse - 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd November at 7.30pm - Tickets £10.00

Box Office: 020 8998 0639 (evenings only) or e.mail tickets@julianoperatic.org

Booking forms available in the foyers.

Ealing Shakespeare Players present...

Richard III by William Shakespeare

In the Studio - 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th December at 7.45pm (Saturday matinee 2.30pm)

Tickets £9.00 (concs. £7.00) £1.00 off if paid for in advance of the run.

Booking forms available in the foyers.

Literature Course

Spring 2003

Mansfield Park by Jane Austen

The subject for this term's Literature course is Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*. This thought-provoking and highly entertaining work is sometimes seen as the most problematic of Jane's six completed novels on account of the character of its heroine. Fanny Price is certainly no Elizabeth Bennet but is she as insipid as some people find her? Come along, share in the lively discussion and see what you think!

As ever, classes take place on Tuesday mornings from 10.00 - noon. This term's course will begin on January 14th 2003 and end on March 25th with a week's break in February. Participants will need a copy on *Mansfield Park*. It helps if we all have the same edition - ideally, the **Penguin Popular Classics** copy, £1.25, but this isn't vital. Copies can be ordered from the Pitshanger Bookshop 0208 991 8131. Course fee is £40.00 for members, £50.00 for non-members. Everyone is welcome. Further information from Susan Hamlyn, 0208 567 3233.

ART EXHIBITIONS

20th October - 16th November

In the Upper Foyer - 'The Great Escape' by Janette Martin

A stunning 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. Each piece is about 65cm x 85cm and weighs approximately 10kg. There are around 4,000 hand cut pieces of glass tesserae. The base used is of superior grade ply. When the mosaic is completed, it is grouted then framed, and the back is varnished to high sheen.

9th November - 30th November

In the Grapevine Bar - a collection of portraits by Ellen Reiman Filby

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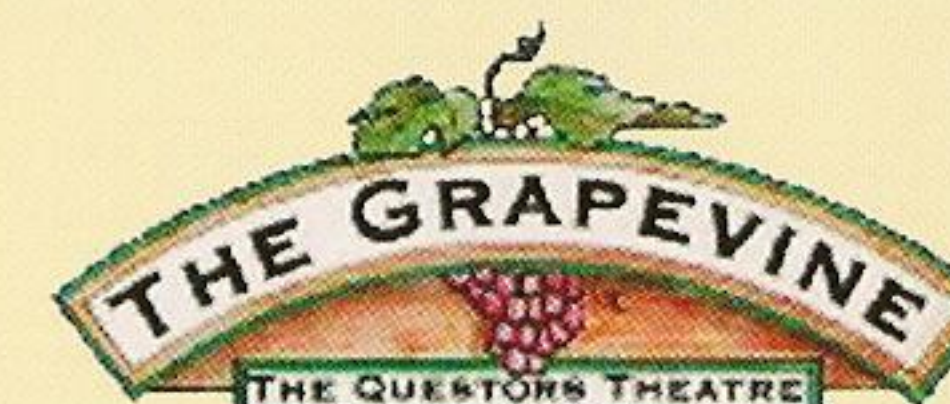
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Worldwide Flights

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UK Breaks

£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