

COMING SOON

ALSO AT THE QUESTORS THIS CHRISTMAS

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA by Bernice Wolfenden

In the Studio, 20th December - 11th January

Magic is needed to find a real princess for Prince Nigel. There are princesses aplenty, but before he finds the real one he has to dance with a lot of unsuitable girls.

Join him in his search in this enchanting retelling of a traditional fairy tale with songs, dancing comedy and, of course, a pea!

(age 2 - 7, 45mins.)

BOUNCERS by John Godber

In the Studio, 20th December - 10th January

This is one of Godber's most popular plays, a fast moving comedy set in the world of a nightclub. Four actors portray a cast of over forty characters, young and old, comic and tragic and, of course, both male and female. Meet the smooth talking DJ, the lager swilling lads looking for a lay and the lipsticked, lacquered girls gyrating to the pulse of the dance floor. Whilst outside in the freezing cold, skulk the ever watchful, ever ready, ever observent Lucky Eric, Judd, Les and Ralph. And so begins the journey into the secrets of a Friday night. Definitely not for children!

COMING NEXT

Michael Green presents:

COARSE ACTING RIDES AGAIN

In the Playhouse, 22 - 24 January

Yes folks..there's no hiding place. The infamous Coarse Acting strikes again! Spend a hilarious evening in the company of an accident-prone amateur dramatic society as they present four of the best plays from the Coarse Acting Championships held over the years. First is *Streuth*, winner of the original contest in 1972, followed by *A Collier's Tuesday Tea* (both were in the triumphant Edinburgh Fringe tour of 1977). They are followed by two more recent winners: *A Fish In Her Kettle*, David Pearson's award-winning pastiche of a French farce, and John Davey's hilarious Tennessee William's take-off *The Glass Ménage à Trois*.

The Questors Youth Theatre presents:

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM by William Shakespeare

In the Playhouse, 10 - 14 February

In its 50th year, the Questors Youth Theatre presents one of Shakespeare's best-loved plays. Behind your safe, ordinary world, there's another, darker place, just out of sight, where fairies live. Not nice, floaty, twinkly fairies, but hoards of shadowy, greedy scavengers ready to get their sticky fingers on your possessions. But on this night, there's real trouble in the air after two young men and two young women, confused in love, stumble into the fairy realm. They find themselves at the mercy of the Fairy King and Queen, and the anarchic Puck, and when a band of actors blunder in looking for somewhere to rehearse, everything is plunged into chaos.

THE QUESTORS THEATRE presents



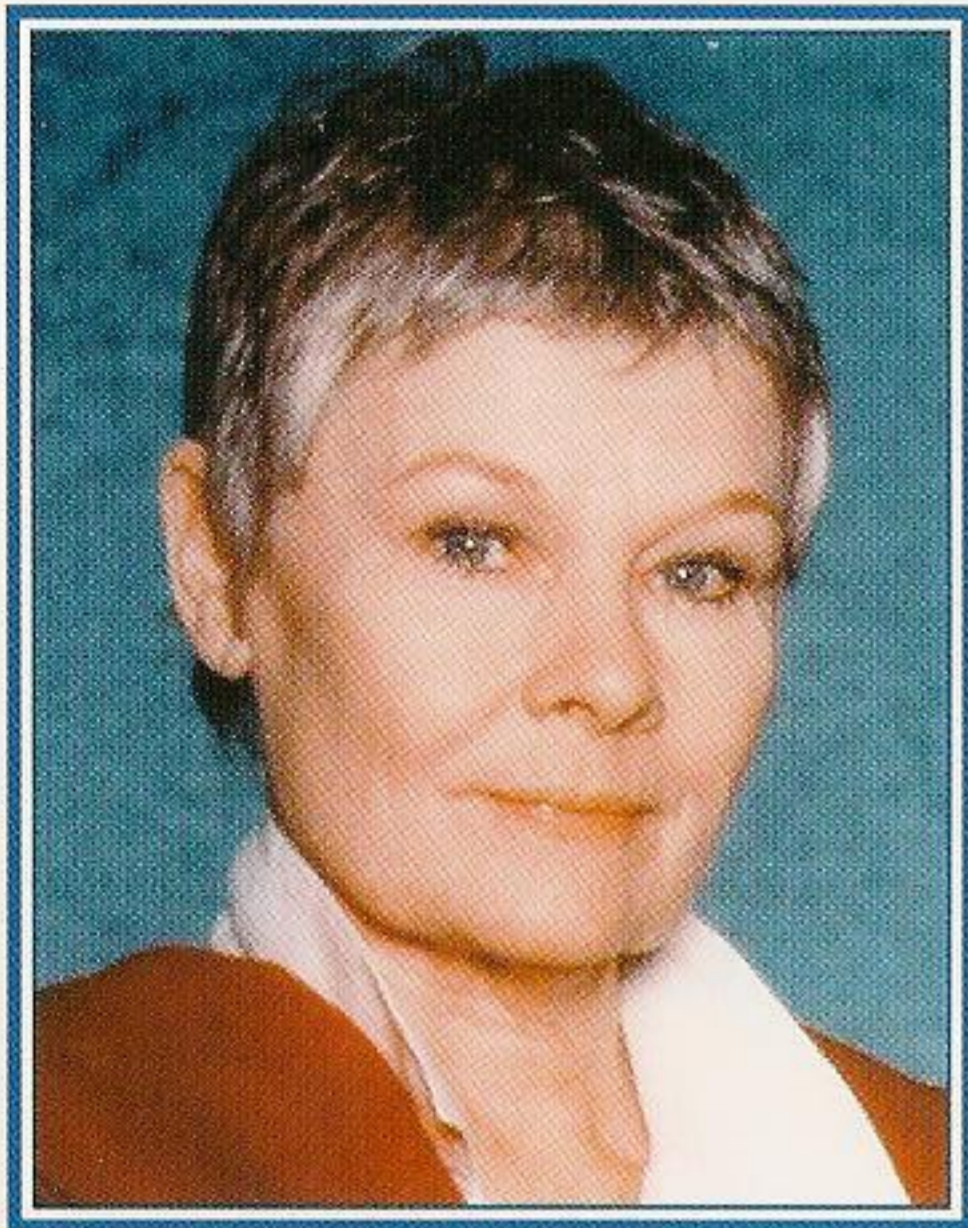
The Witches

by **Roald Dahl**, adapted by **David Wood**



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SOUVENIR PROGRAMME



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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 17 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.

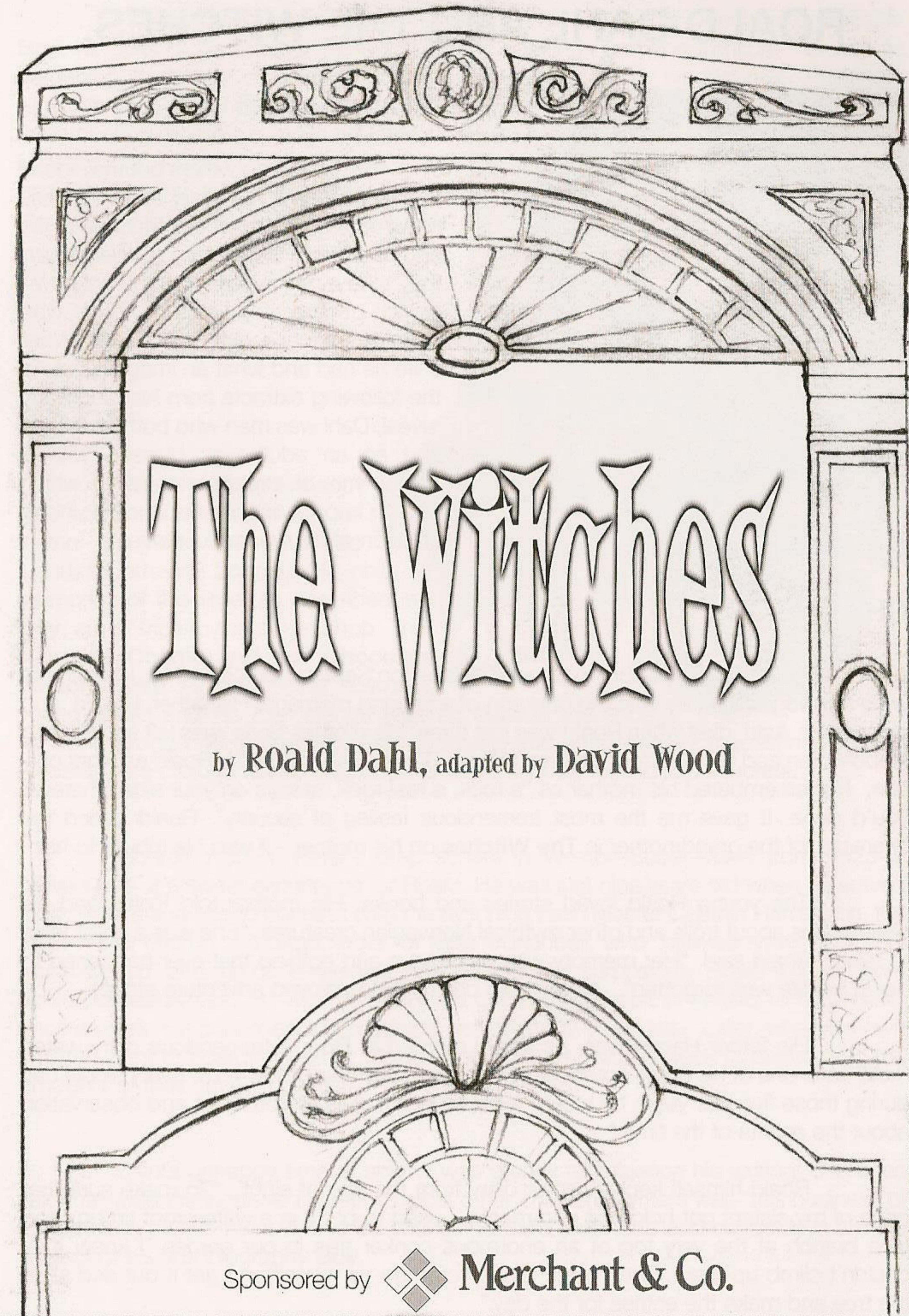
The Questors runs a professionally recognised two-year acting course in conjunction with Kingston College. There are also acting courses for beginners, free backstage training courses, visiting companies from home and abroad, regular art exhibitions, and workshops and clubs for young people. In short, there is something for everyone and with annual membership costing as little as £23.50 (including up to 8 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!

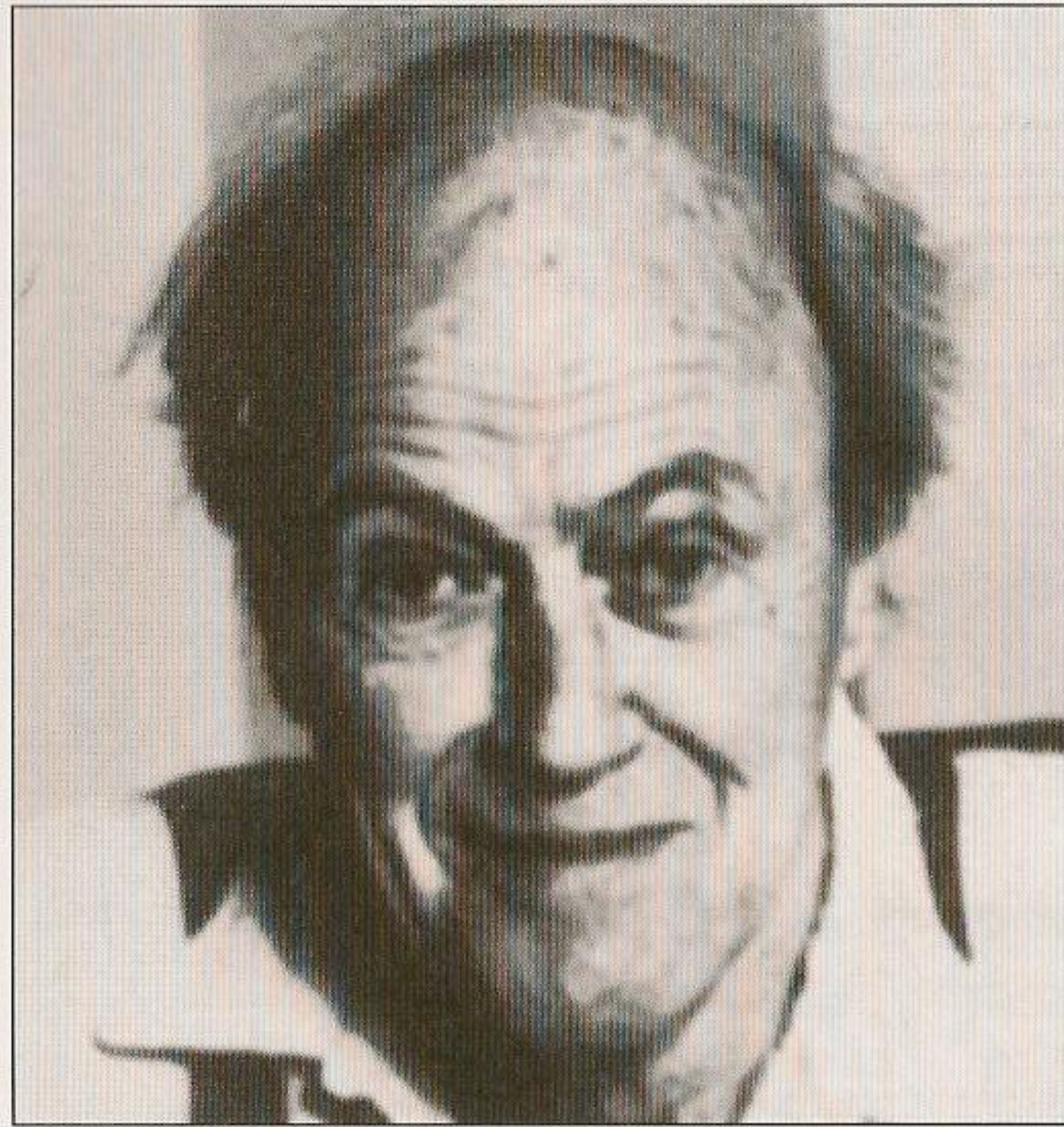
Judi Dench

Dame Judi Dench
 President of The Questors Theatre



Sponsored by  **Merchant & Co.**

ROALD DAHL AND THE WITCHES.



All is revealed!

Where do writers get their ideas and inspiration? Generally speaking they draw on their own experiences of life and, clutching them close to their heart, they take a mighty leap into the unknown world of the imagination. That was certainly the case with Roald Dahl. What a life he had and what an imagination! As the following extracts from his biography reveal, Dahl was a man who both as a child and as an adult was blessed with a unique mix of experiences, all of which had an impact one way or another in the creation of his wonderful stories.

CHILDHOOD

Roald Dahl was born in Llandaff, Wales, on September 13th 1916. His parents were Norwegian and he was the only son of a second marriage. His father, Harald, and elder sister, Astri, died when Roald was just three. His mother, Sofie, was left to raise two stepchildren and her own four children (Alfhild, Roald, Else and Asta). Roald was her only son. He remembered his mother as "a rock, a real rock, always on your side whatever you'd done. It gave me the most tremendous feeling of security". Roald based the character of the grandmother in **The Witches** on his mother - it was his tribute to her.

The young Roald loved stories and books. His mother told Roald and his sisters tales about trolls and other mythical Norwegian creatures. "She was a great teller of tales," Roald said, "Her memory was prodigious and nothing that ever happened to her in her life was forgotten". As an older child, Roald enjoyed adventure stories.

His father Harald was, as Roald recalled in **Boy**, a tremendous diary-writer. "I still have one of his many notebooks from the Great War of 1914-18. Every single day during those five war years he would write several pages of comment and observation about the events of the time."

Roald himself kept a secret diary from the age of eight. "To make sure that none of my sisters got hold of it and read it, I used to put it in a waterproof tin box tied to a branch at the very top of an enormous conker tree in our garden. I knew they couldn't climb up there. Then every day I would go up myself and get it out and sit in the tree and make the entries for the day."

Roald's parents seem to have instilled in him a number of character traits. In **Boy**, he talks of his father's interest in "lovely paintings and fine furniture" as well as gardening. In spite of only having one arm, he was also a fine woodcarver. Paintings, furniture and gardening would all be passions of the adult Roald Dahl. Similarly, remembering his mother, in **Roald Dahl's Cookbook**, he recalls "she had a crystal-clear intellect and a deep interest in almost everything under the sun, from horticulture to cooking to wine to literature to paintings to furniture to birds and dogs and other animals". Roald might very well have been describing his adult self.

SCHOOL

Roald had an unhappy time at school. From the age of seven to nine, he attended Llandaff Cathedral School. His chief memories of this time, as described in **Boy**, are of trips to the sweet shop. The seeds of **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** were already being sown as young Roald and his four friends lingered outside the shop window, gazing in at the big glass jars of sweets and pondering such questions as how Gobstoppers change colour and whether rats might be turned into liquorice.



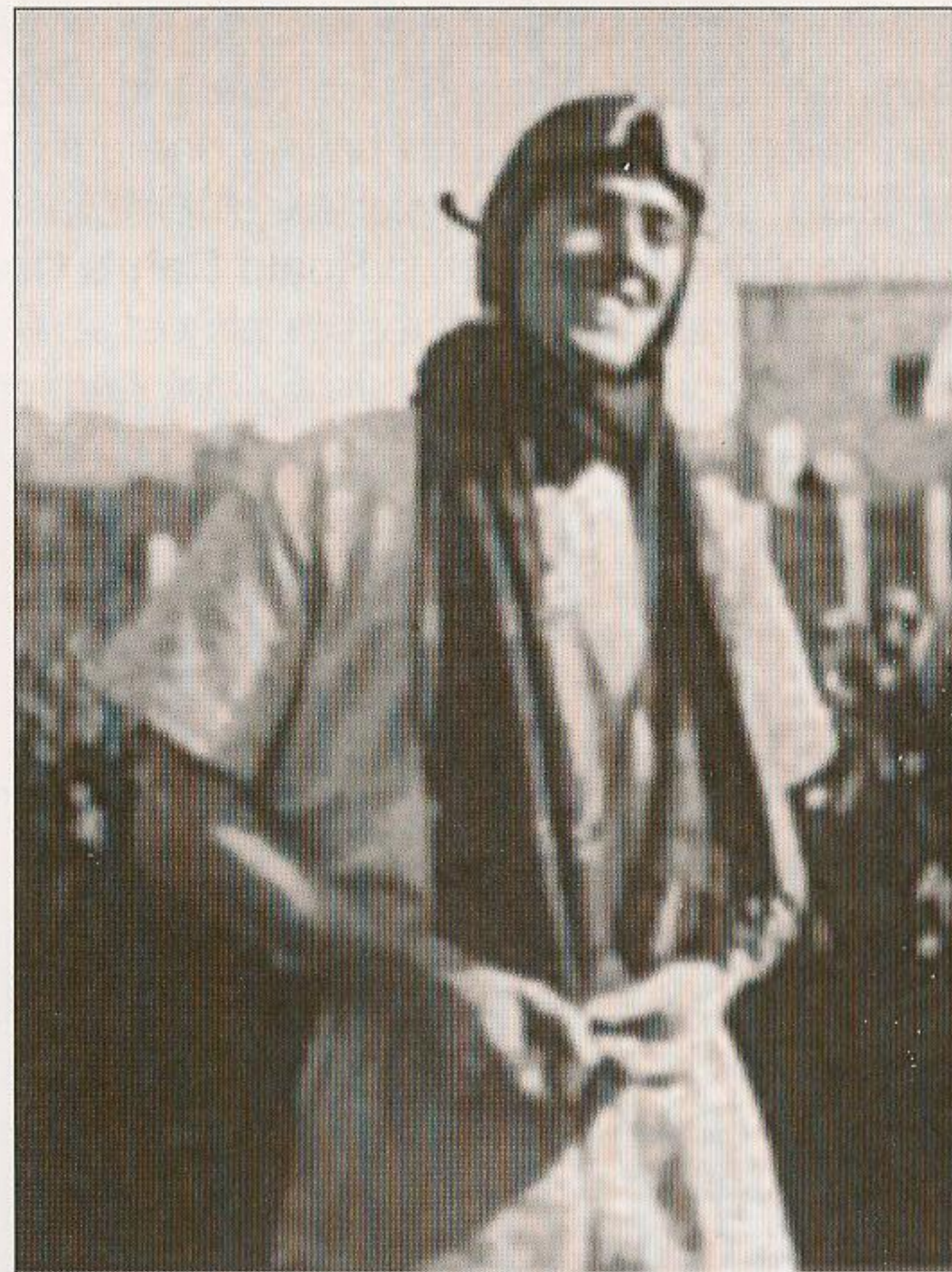
Boarding at St. Peter's prep school in Weston-Super-Mare, from 1925-9, proved less of a sweet experience for Roald. He was just nine years old when he arrived at St. Peter's and had to contend with the twitching Latin Master Captain Hardcastle, the all-powerful Matron - a dead ringer for Miss Trunchbull, who "disliked small boys very much indeed" and the cane-wielding Headmaster. Not surprisingly, Roald suffered from acute homesickness. At St. Peter's, Roald got into the habit of writing to his mother once a week. He continued to do so until her death 32 years later. Later, when his own children went to boarding school, Roald wrote to them twice a week to brighten up the drudgery of their school days.

Dahl's unhappy time at school was greatly to influence his writing. He once said that what distinguished him from most other children's writers was "this business of remembering what it was like to be young." Roald's childhood and schooldays are the subject of his autobiography **Boy**.

WAR & ADVENTURE

At 18, rather than going to university, Roald joined the Public Schools Exploring Society's expedition to Newfoundland. He then started work for Shell as a salesman in Dar es Salaam. He was 23 when war broke out and signed up with the Royal Air Force in Nairobi.

Dahl's exploits in the war are detailed in his autobiography **Going Solo**. They include having a luger pointed at his head by the leader of a German convoy, crashlanding in no-man's land (and sustaining injuries that entailed having his nose pulled out and shaped!) and even surviving a direct hit during the Battle of Athens, when he was sufficiently recovered to fly again – this time in Hurricanes. Eventually, he was sent home as an invalid but transferred, in 1942, to Washington as an air attaché. It was there that he would meet an important writer who would set him on the path to a new career.



*Flying Training,
Nairobi*

THE FIRST CHAPTER: ROALD BEGINS TO WRITE

Roald Dahl's first book for children was not, as many suppose, **James and the Giant Peach** but **The Gremlins**, a picture book published in 1943 and adapted from a script written for Disney. Walt Disney had invited the 25 year-old Roald to Hollywood, given him the use of a car and put him up at the Beverly Hills Hotel. The story of **The Gremlins** focused on the mischievous spirits that, according to RAF legend, cause aircraft-engine failures. In the end, the project to make a movie version was abandoned but the book was published. Roald was never very keen on **The Gremlins** and didn't really think of it as a children's book.

Roald's career as a children's book author did not begin in earnest until the 1960s, after he had become a father himself. In the meantime, he devoted himself to writing short stories for adults with devilish twists in the tale.

THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE CHILDREN'S AUTHOR

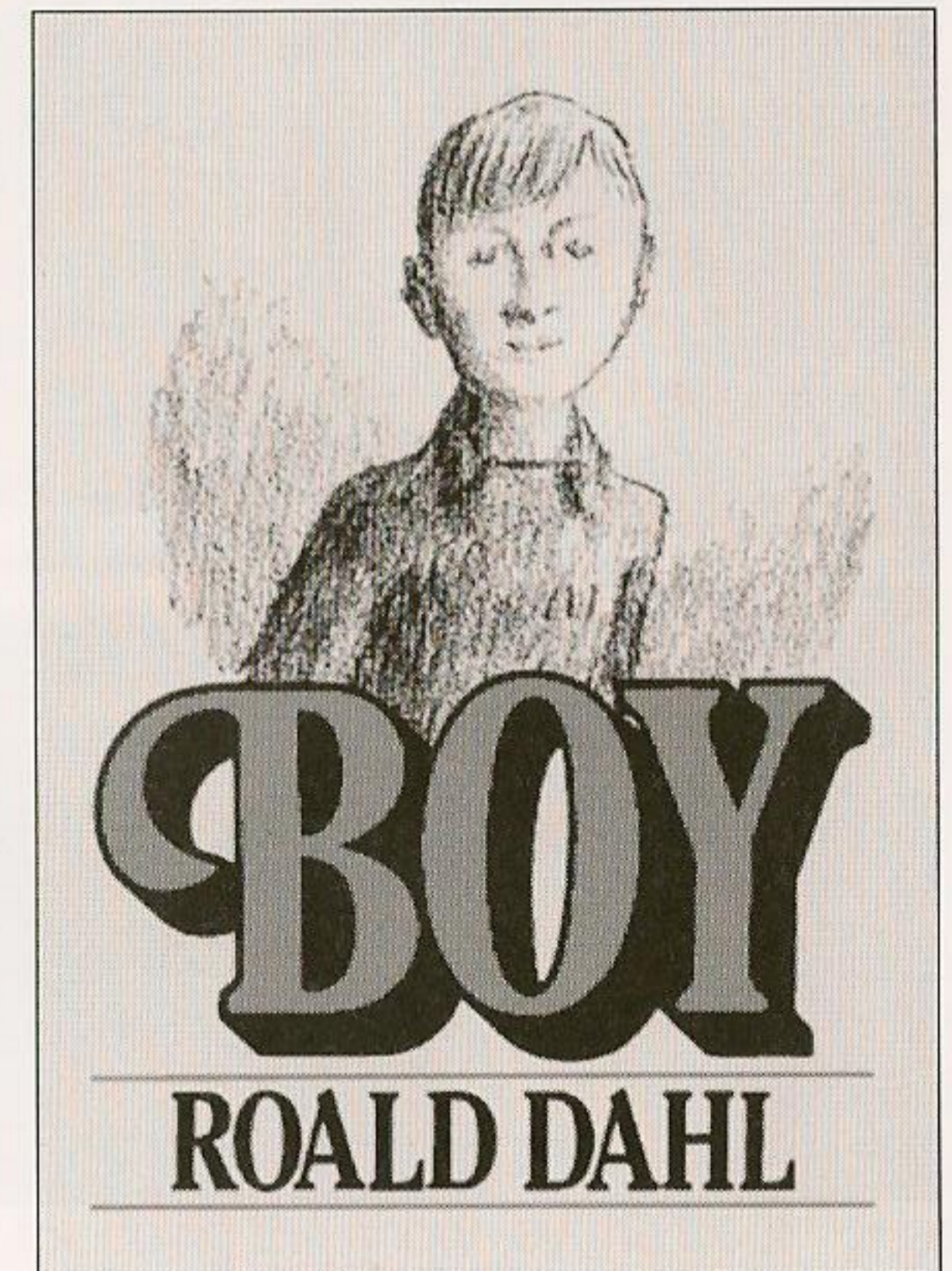
Dahl first became interested in writing children's books by making up bedtime stories for his daughters Olivia and Tessa. This was how **James and the Giant Peach** came into being. The book was published in America in 1961 and the UK in 1967.

His second book, **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** also debuted in the USA (in 1964) before being published in the UK (1967). It was a significant success on both sides of the Atlantic. In the UK, Elaine Moss wrote in **The Times**, "It is the funniest children's book I have read in years; not just funny but shot through with a zany pathos which touches the young heart." The book went on to achieve phenomenal success all over the world. The Chinese edition was the biggest printing of any book ever – two million copies!

An unbroken string of bestselling titles followed, including **The BFG**, **Danny The Champion of the World**, **The Twits**, **The Witches**, **Boy** and **Going Solo**. Sales of **Matilda**, Roald's penultimate book, broke all previous records for a work of children's fiction with UK sales of over half a million paperbacks in six months.

The Dahl magic has proved unstoppable throughout the world. In addition to the UK editions, his work has been translated into 34 languages, reaching everywhere from Estonia to Finland; from Greece to Japan. In spite of his unrivalled success, Roald Dahl won only a handful of awards, including, in the UK, the Whitbread Award 1983 for **The Witches** and the Children's Book Award (from the Federation of Children's Book Groups) in 1988 for **Matilda**.

Roald Dahl was a great believer in the importance of reading. "I have a passion for teaching kids to become readers," he once said, "to become comfortable with a book, not daunted. Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrific advantage." He would, then, have been gratified by his obituary in **The Independent**, which paid tribute to the huge role he played "in getting children hooked into reading by offering them the kind of stories they really wanted to read. Stylistically too, he helped new readers by using language simply and accurately. The quality of his writing is easily discernible by the fluency with which it can be read aloud... For many children Roald Dahl is synonymous with reading. He is the one author whose books are currency among children, being passed eagerly from hand to hand as soon as they appear."





Times Newspapers Ltd.

Felicity Dahl talks about her husband, and John Cleese... and mice.

Out of all Roald's books, **The Witches** should be my favourite. Why? Because he dedicated it to me. Occasionally, I wondered what his reasons were. However, the first time I met John Cleese, he said to me that he thought this book was the greatest love story in the world. This stopped me worrying.

Not many of you will know that this book was a tribute to Roald's Norwegian mother who, like the grandmother in **The Witches**, was a very brave and intrepid woman. Her husband died when she was very young, leaving her with two step-children, three of her own children and a baby on the way. She had to bring them all up alone in a country foreign to her (Britain), with a language that she found difficult to speak (English).

Each summer she would pack up their trunks and catch a train to Newcastle and take them all to Norway for their holidays on the island of Tome. In his book **Boy**, Roald describes excursions in a funny little white motor boat, his mother calmly handling the tiller 'with waves so high that as we slid down into a trough the whole world disappeared'. She could not swim and there were no life-jackets. No wonder he created the grandmother in **The Witches** as a woman capable of handling any situation, including that of a boy being turned into a mouse.

Imagine being a mouse and spending the rest of your life in a handbag. Roald used to say that good mothers always kept treats in their bags; wine gums, Polo mints or the odd toffee, among the lipstick and spare handkerchiefs. So I suppose it could be quite a comfortable mobile home.

What a challenge it would be for a parent to have a child turned into a mouse! An enormous amount of imagination would be needed to make life interesting and fun. Roald had quite an affection for mice. From where he sat in the dining room, he would watch the mice in the heather bed outside his window. He would refer to them as 'the mices'. I think he too might have coped quite well if his children had been transformed into mice.

And why did John Cleese call it a love story? I think you will discover the answer at the very end of the play.

The Witches: the challenge of staging a classic tale

Most acting editions of published plays come complete with a detailed list of staging instructions plus plots for sound, lighting, props and special effects. These are immensely helpful as either a complete blueprint for doing the show 'by the book' or as a springboard for a more individual interpretation. Our brilliant set designer, Jennie Rawlings, was already smitten by Dahl's book of the 'The Witches' and let her imagination loose to create a set reminiscent of a child's playroom with books, building blocks and a toy theatre.

I, also, shared Jennie's thoughts that a child's imagination was a rich playground for tales of magic, mystery and adventure. Indeed, no adventure is more real than the one created by the unique experience of one's own imagination. Who better to test this argument than Dahl himself? So, if you were wondering why we didn't opt for a set that mimicked a Bournemouth hotel, or a tree house shaped like a tree, or bedroom without a bed... the answer is simple, we've left it to your imagination. The only things that real are the witches.

Phillip Sheahan

The Witches

First performance of this production, 13th December 2003

CAST

Grand High Witch	Sarah Morrison
Grandmother	Sue Wheatley
Boy <i>(Depending on performance)</i>	Nick Sarbicki Ella Taylor
Bruno Jenkins <i>(Depending on performance)</i>	Sam Murray Guy Sleigh
Display Witch/Witch One/ Voice of Maid	Rosemary Johnson
Tree-House Witch/ Mrs Jenkins/Witch Two	Julia Cooke
Doctor/Mr Jenkins/Head Chef	David Wheatley
Lawyer/Doorman/Head Waiter	Evan Rule
Second Chef	Ian Buckingham
Conference Witches	Debbie Bloxam Grace Craddock Hope Deeney Abby Fadina Sylvie Fritche Vicky Hendron Cathi Hepburn Esther Lathan Dee Leahy Jenny Quille Stephanie Revell Selina Sykes Amanda Venning
Frog	Selina Sykes
Waiter	Matt Sheahan
Waitress	Lydia King

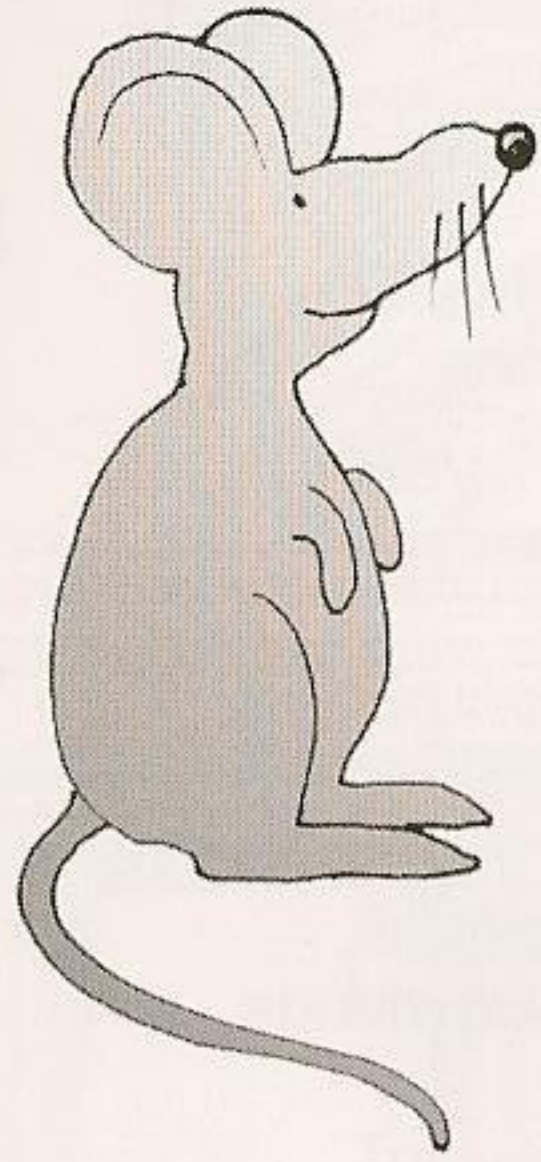
Other parts played by members of the cast

PRODUCTION

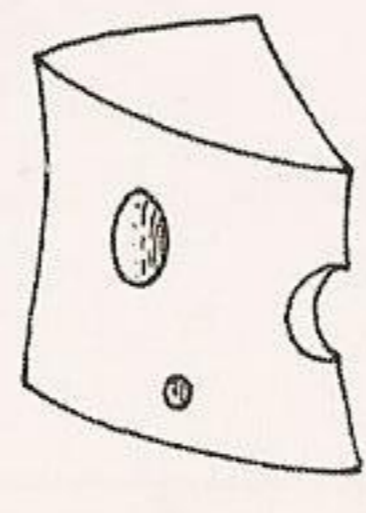
Director	Phillip Sheahan
Production Designer	Jennie Rawlings
Stage Managers	Adrian Asher, Deborah Jones
Lighting Designers	Richard Bunn Damien Lazell
Sound Designer	Mark Lucek
Deputy Stage Managers	Ruth Parry, Matthew Simpson
Assistant Stage Managers	Debbie Carey, Kyoungsu Cho, Niall Cullen, Milan Fernando, Rachel Griffiths, Deirdre O'Sullivan, Claire Rowlands, Allan Soper, James Lewis
Properties Designer	Nikki Sowah
Puppet Designer	Jenny Templeton
Master Carpenter	Mike Hagan
Assistant to the Master Carpenter	Karen Cherrington
Costume Designer	Corinne Darroux
Set Painters	Cathy Kelleher, Laura Benedict
Scenic Art	Denis Dracup
Special Effects	Nigel Worsley
Lighting Operator	Lee Dorman
Sound Operators	Mike Caddy, Paul Wilson, Anthony Enrione
Hair and Make Up	Lucy Boshier, Hannah George, Sarah Gray, Danielle Keightley, Sarah Scott
Front of House	The Questors Front Of House
Box Office	The Questors Box Office
With Thanks To	Bron Beckford, Jim Craddock, Rona Christie, Tim Edwards, Tina Harris, Brian Ingram, Damien Lazell, Charlie Lucas, Andrew MacDonald, Alex Marker, Nick Nurock, John Rolfe, Helen Scott, Christopher Tomlins, Jon Webster, Richard Williams, John Wilson. The Questors House Services, The Questors Grapevine Bar, The Questors Office, The Questors Marketing, Online Booking.

Can you help the mouse find the cheese?

Find the path by colouring in the even numbers.



	8	6	17	47	13	23	
	5	14	1	7	25	23	
13	25	37	40	25	3	21	47
11	17	45	16	27	15	11	9
51	26	12	10	13	34	40	42
6	28	7	5	27	36	15	44
26	17	19	16	22	26	31	8
4	18	34	42	45	21	17	



Alphabet Soup

Each soup bowl contains a word from The Witches, but there is a letter missing from each. Work out what the missing letter is, then on the grid below, fill in the letter that corresponds to the number of the soup bowl to reveal the secret message.

gl_ves 1	w_g 2	_orway 3
witc_es 4	form_la 5	no_el 6
mou_e 9	wait_r 7	sou_ 8

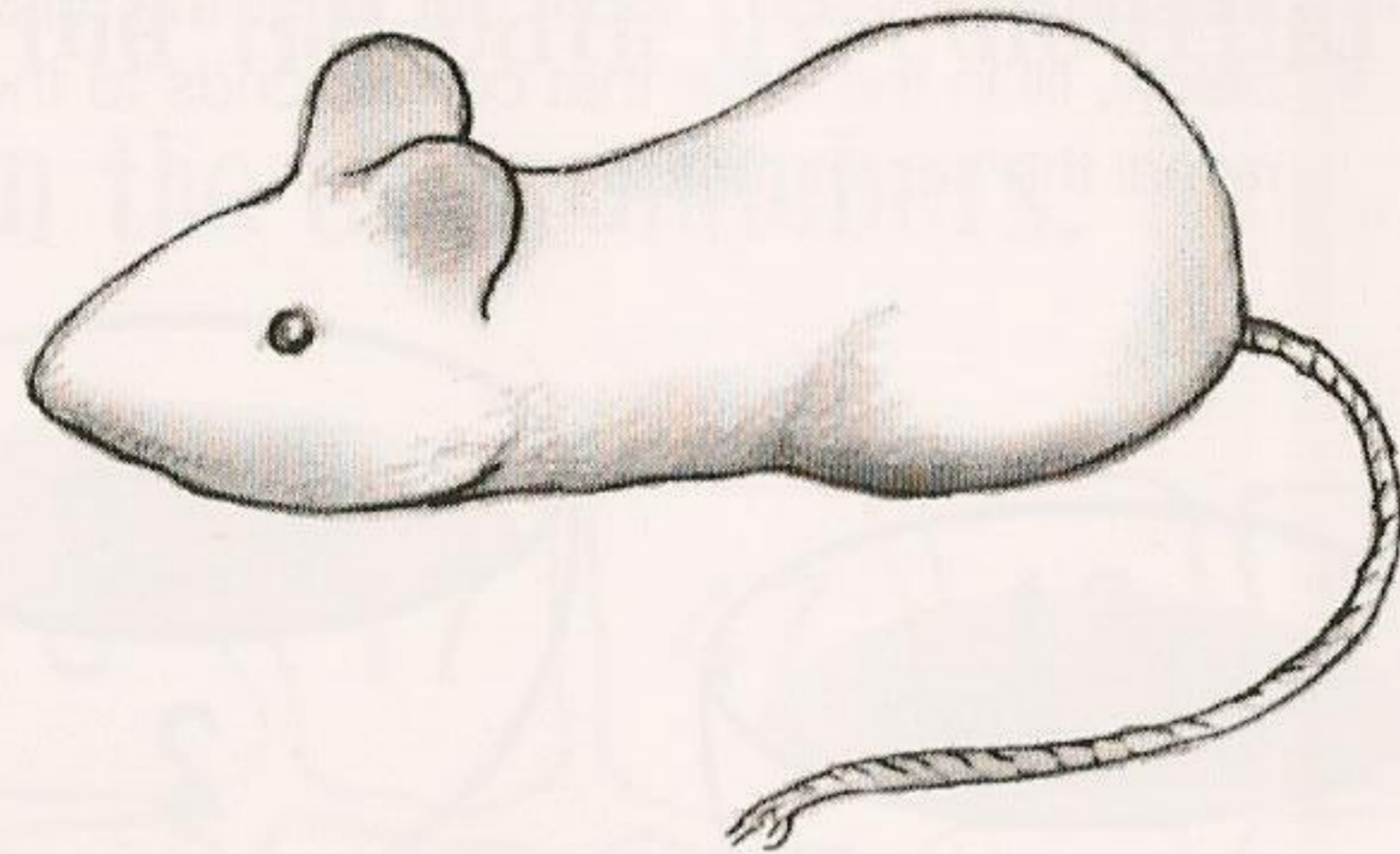
6 4 7 8 1 6 2 1 3 2 9 2 3 6 4 7 9 1 5 8

answer on page 13

HOW TO MAKE SUGAR MICE

(makes about 24 mice)

- 8 oz icing sugar
- 1/2 lemon
- 1 small egg
- pink colouring
- 1 packet of hundreds and thousands
- string



Sieve the icing sugar into a bowl. Separate the yolk of the egg from the white. Using a wooden spoon, mix the white of egg with the icing sugar. Squeeze the juice from the lemon and add it to the mixture drop by drop until it is soft but not runny.

Put 1 dessertspoonful of the mixture in another bowl and add pink colouring to it drop by drop. Mix it in until it is pink all through. Use the white mixture to make mouse shapes and the pink mixture to make the ears. Use the hundreds and thousands for the eyes and make the tails from pieces of string.

Leave the finished mice for about 3 hours to set.

Questors in the Kitchen

If you would like to try more recipes from friends and members of the Questors Theatre, you can buy a copy of "Questors in the Kitchen". The book contains over 60 recipes for soups, starters, desserts, cakes and authentic dishes from around the world which our members have gathered on their travels. Just fill in the slip below and return it to the Questors Theatre with a cheque or postal order for £6.00 per copy (includes postage and packing).

Please return to Questors in the Kitchen,
Questors Theatre, Mattock Lane, Ealing W5 5BQ

Please send copies of **Questors in the Kitchen**

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £

Name.....

Address.....

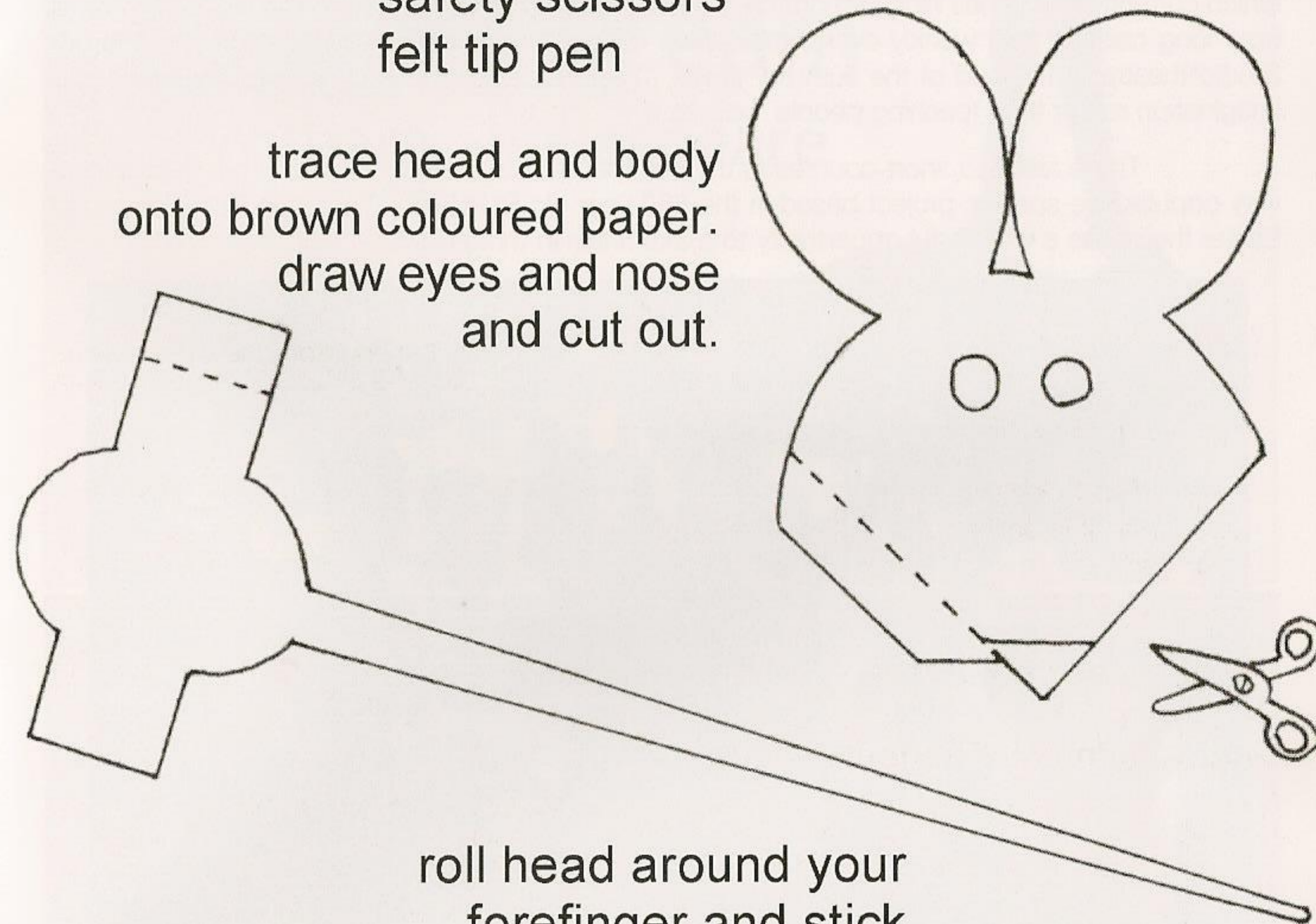
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Registered charity no: 207516

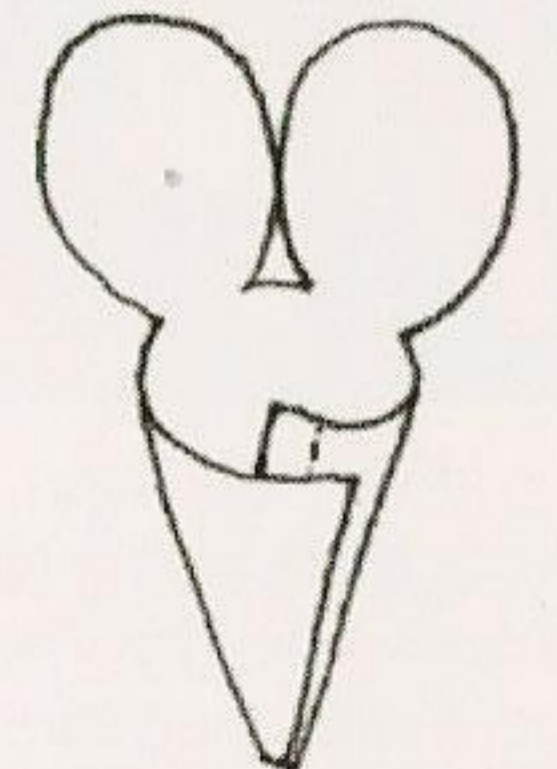
make your own mouse puppet

- you will need: brown coloured paper
glue
safety scissors
felt tip pen

trace head and body
onto brown coloured paper.
draw eyes and nose
and cut out.



roll head around your
forefinger and stick.
fold up ears.



roll body around
your forefinger
and stick. curl
tail around a pencil.



THE QUESTORS YOUTH THEATRE

The Questors Youth Theatre has been running for nearly 50 years and has presented an eclectic range of plays since the first youth production, *Gregory's Girl* by Bill Forsyth, twelve years ago. Other productions have included *The Gut Girls* by Sarah Daniels, *Helen of Troy* by Euripides, a double bill of *Ernie's Incredible Illucinations* and *The Chrysalids* and the musicals *Godspell* and *Runaways*.

All the young people in this production are drawn from the Questors Youth Theatre, which currently comprises nineteen drama groups. These drama groups provide a programme of hour long classes held weekly over three terms, culminating in a workshop performance in our Studio theatre at the end of the summer term. These sessions focus on developing ideas and imagination rather than teaching people 'how to act'.

There are also short courses in the summer and at Easter. This summer there was a very popular site-specific project based in the 850 year old St. Mary's Church in Perivale, and at Easter there was a wonderful opportunity to make a film in three days.



Every so often, there is the chance to audition for youth productions, such as the upcoming *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or roles in other Questors plays such as *The Witches* and *The Princess and the Pea*. The majority of young people that you have seen in Questors' productions over the years have been drawn from the Youth Theatre.

So, if you are between 6 and 17 and want to give the theatre a go, fill in an orange form from the foyer or enquire for details at the office on 020 8567 0011, during office hours. No previous experience is necessary.

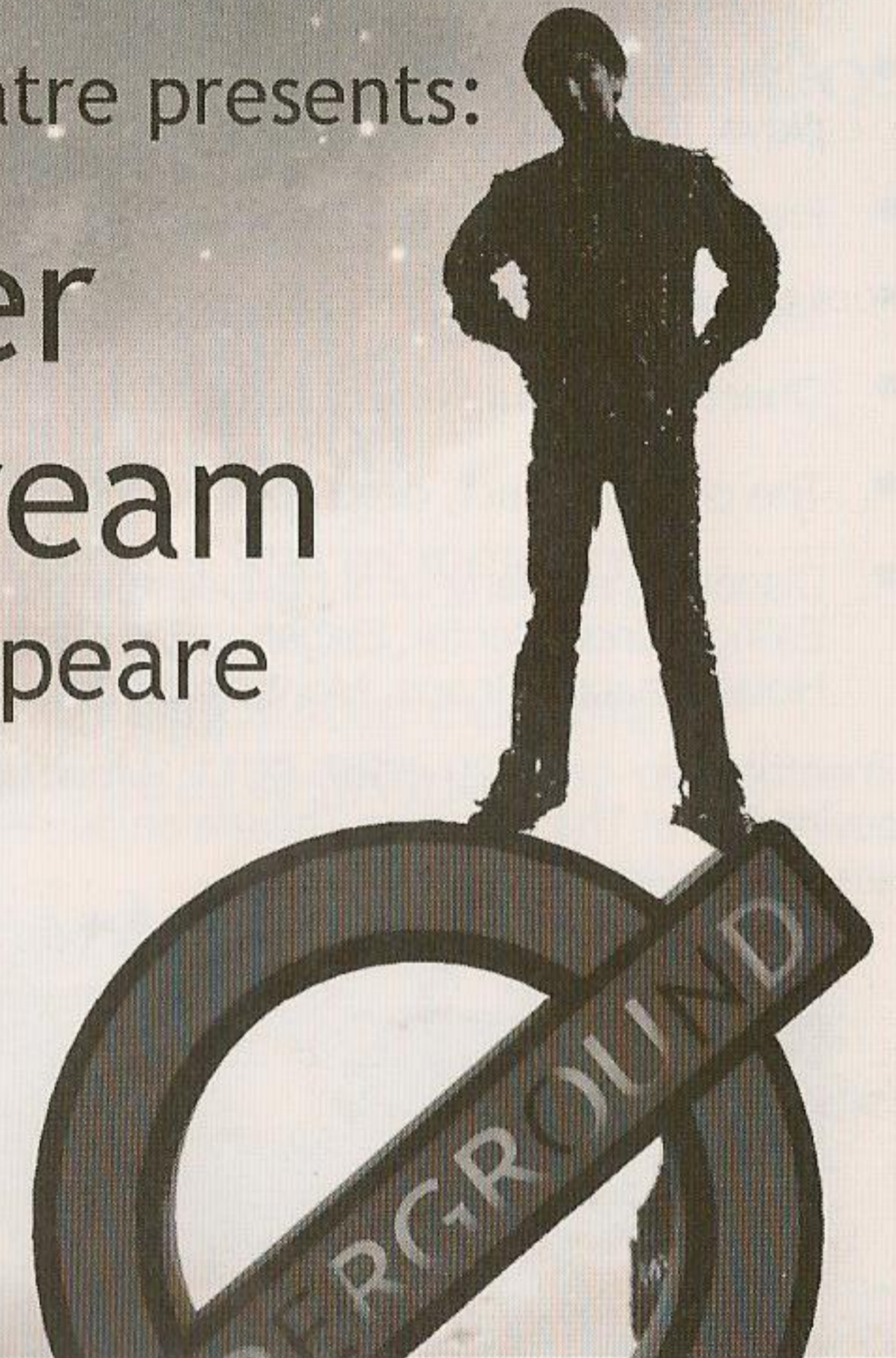
Alex Marker
The Questors Youth Theatre

In its 50th Year
The Questors Youth Theatre presents:

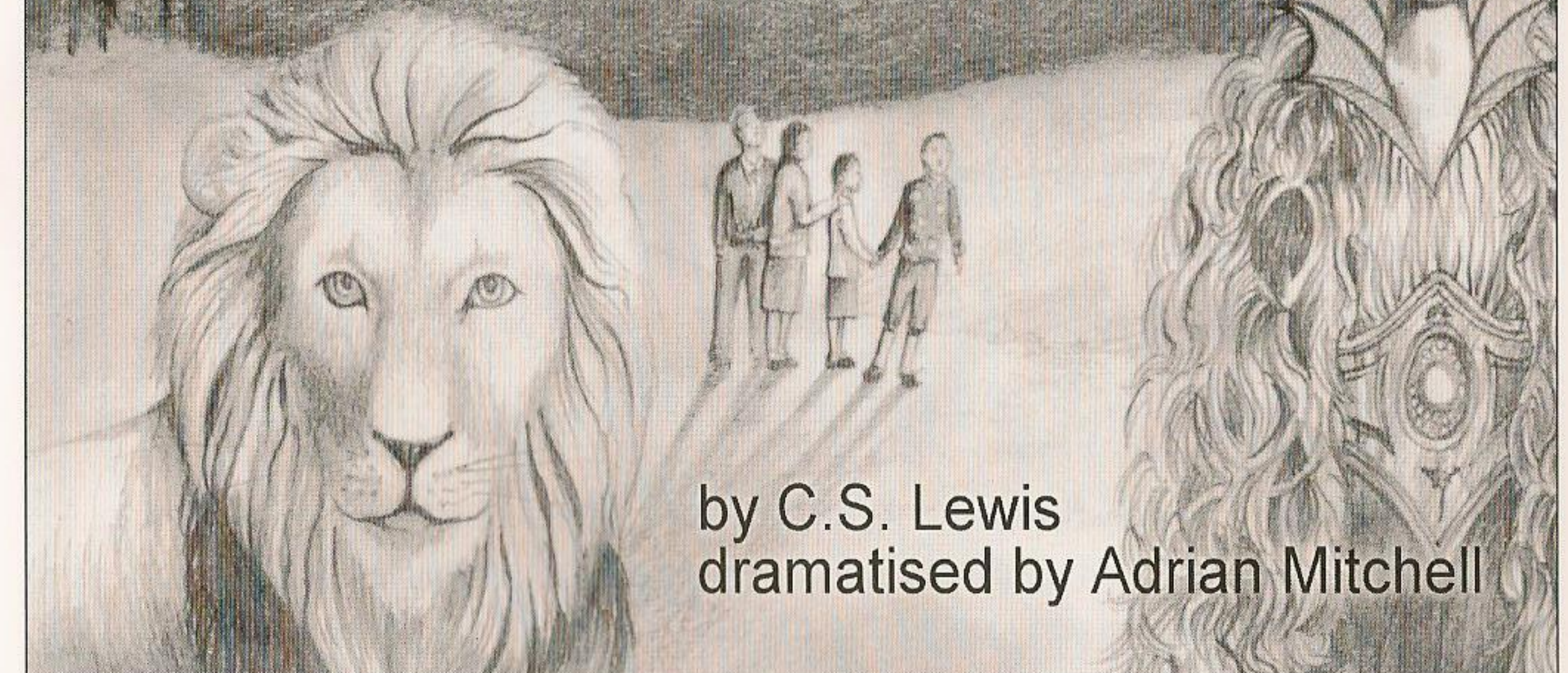
A Midsummer Night's Dream

by William Shakespeare

In the Playhouse
10 - 14 February



Join us next Christmas for
*The Lion, The Witch
and the Wardrobe*



by C.S. Lewis
dramatised by Adrian Mitchell

Questors Membership Gives You...

- Access to over 17 productions a year - classic, contemporary, international and new plays, from just £6.50 a ticket!
- Free tickets for up to 8 shows a year.
- Membership of the exclusive Grapevine Bar.
- Questopics - our lively club magazine.
- The chance to act, direct, or get involved backstage.
- Discounts at many local businesses, including Holmes Place, Café Uno, Ealing Dance Centre, Elegance Dry Cleaners, Art Bar and Grill at Jarvis International Hotel, Snappy Snaps, Monty's Tandoori (Broadway Centre) and Butler's Restaurant.

For membership call 020 8567 0011, Monday - Friday, 9.30am - 5.30pm or join us in the Grapevine Bar at The Questors Theatre on any Wednesday at 8.30pm for a free guided tour of the theatre and a drink on us.

The Grapevine Bar



Courses at The Questors

The Questors runs:

- A two-year part-time Foundation in Acting in association with Kingston College.
- A one year part-time Introductory course in Acting.
- The Questors Youth Theatre: weekly drama classes for 6 - 17 year olds.
- Acting For All: friendly Friday night acting workshop for adults who are new to acting.
- Literature course, from January there will be two courses on the subjects of *Twentieth Century Short Stories* and *Comedy Restored*.

The Partners & Staff of Merchant & Co.

are once again delighted to sponsor
The Questors' Christmas production-

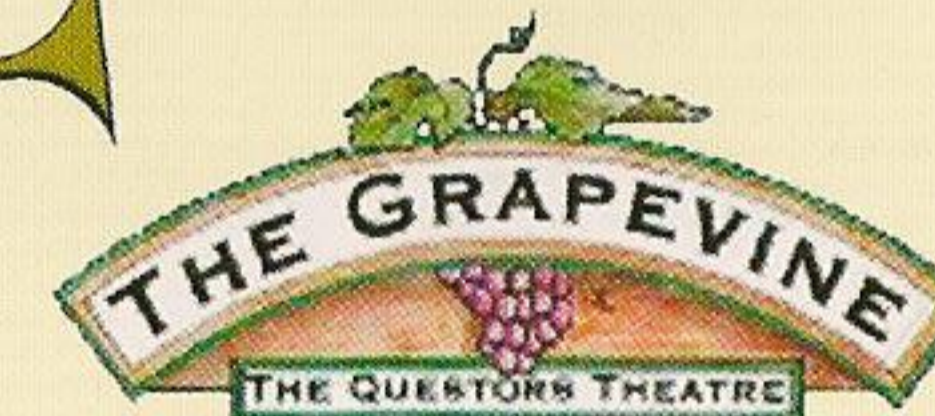
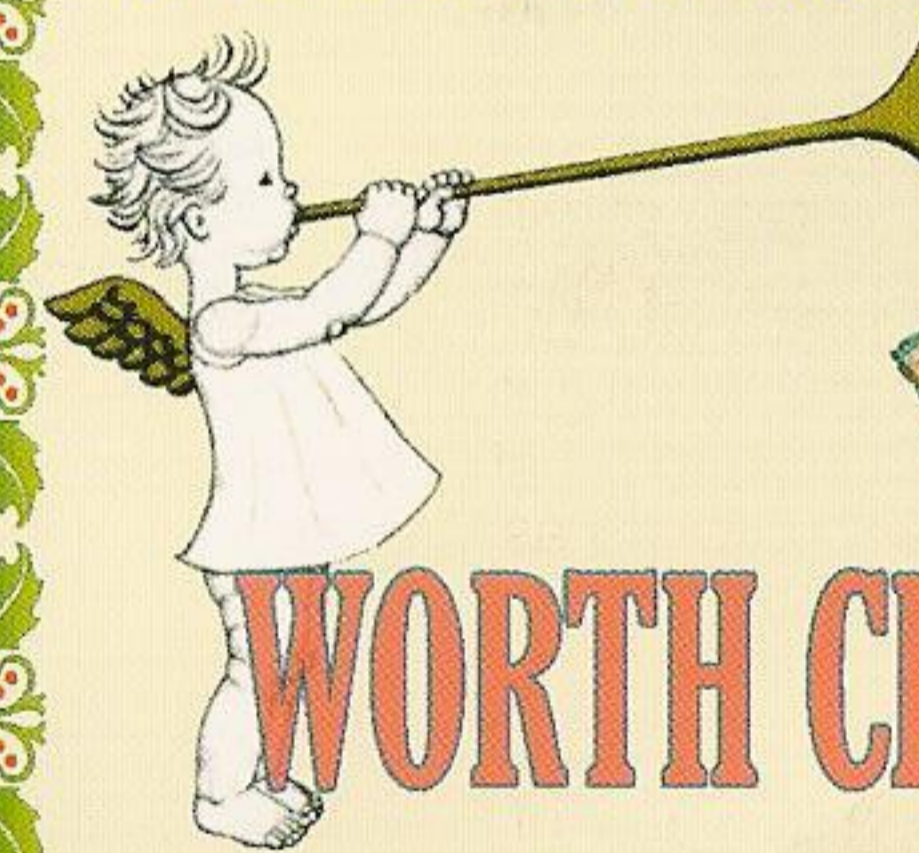
The Witches

And we would like to extend a warm welcome
to all friends and associates.

We hope that you have an enjoyable evening
to complete the Christmas festivities!

 **Merchant & Co.**
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
AND REGISTERED AUDITORS

Tel: 020 8579 7933 • Fax 020 8579 7935
email: info@merchantco.co.uk



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