

THE QUESTORS THEATRE

Its easy to join...

- Come to the main office during office hours.
- Join us in the Grapevine Bar at The Questors Theatre on any Wednesday at 8pm for a free guided tour and a drink on us.
- Pick up a membership form from the foyer.
- Call **020 8567 0011** during office hours.
- Find out more at www.questors.org.uk.

Questors membership gives you...

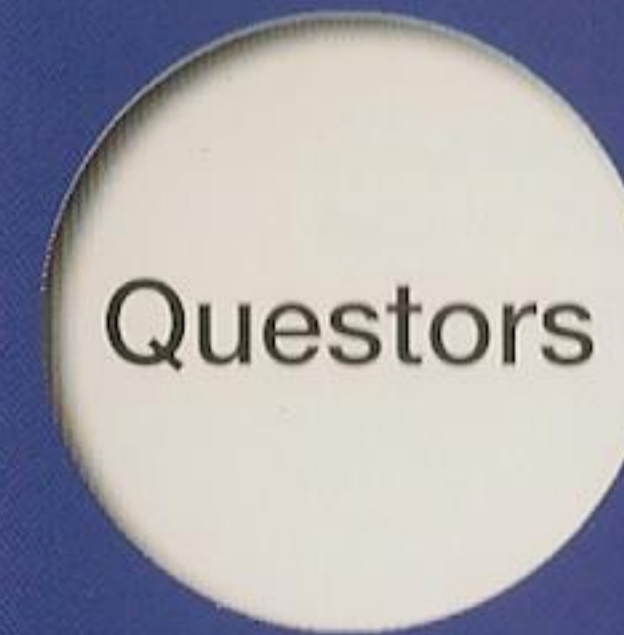
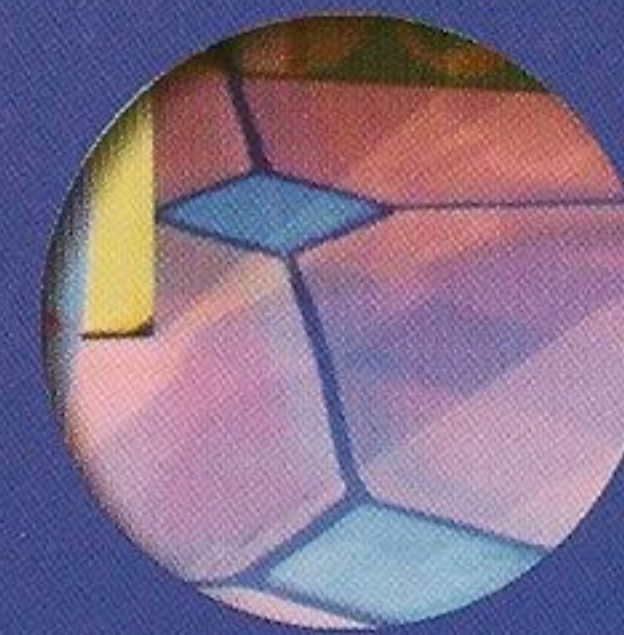
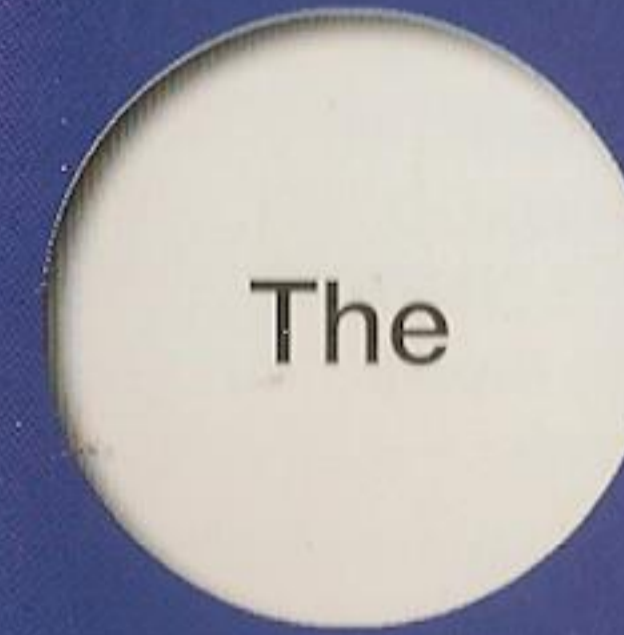
- Free tickets to at least 8 productions a year.
- Access to over 20 productions a year - classic, contemporary, international and new plays, from just £6.50 a ticket.
- Membership of the Grapevine Bar
- Questopics, our club magazine.
- The chance to act, direct, or get involved backstage.
- Discounts at: Holmes Place, Butlers restaurant, Ealing Dance Centre, Monty's Tandoori, Près de Lós exclusive lingerie.

Three ways to book tickets:

- Ring our Box Office on 020 8567 5184
Open Mon - Fri, 11.00am-12 noon, Show nights and Wednesdays 6.45pm - 8.30pm, Sunday Matinee 2.00pm - 2.30pm.
- Fill in a booking form (inside Questopics) and return to the Box Office.
- Book online at www.questors.org.uk.

Box Office: 020 8567 5184
Admin: 020 8567 0011
Fax: 020 8567 8736
Email: enquiries@questors.org.uk
Website: www.questors.org.uk

The Questors Theatre
Mattock Lane
Ealing
W5 5BQ



The Cherry Orchard





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 18 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 our more intimate Studio Theatre.

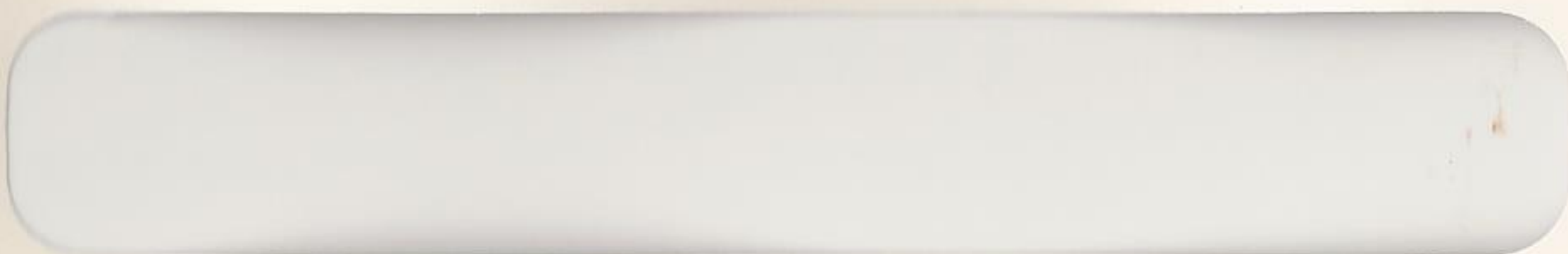
The Questors runs a professionally recognised two-year acting course in conjunction with Kingston College. There are also acting courses for beginners, free backstage training courses, visiting companies from home and abroad, regular art exhibitions, and workshops and clubs for young people. In short, there is something for everyone and with annual membership costing as little as £27.00 (including at least 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!

Dame Judi Dench
President of The Questors Theatre



The Cherry Orchard

by Anton Chekhov

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov

1860 – 1904

Anton Chekhov was one of Russia's most cherished playwrights. He was particularly fond of vaudeville and French farces and perhaps as a result of this he went on to produce some hilarious one-act plays. It is his full-length dramas, however, for which he is most remembered. He began writing short stories whilst studying as a medical student in the University of Moscow. A prolific writer, he regularly submitted stories and essays to a variety of publications.

Anton Chekhov - A Brief Chronology

- 1860 Born in Taganrog, Russia, on the Sea of Azov. He spends his first 19 years here.
- 1875 His father is bankrupted and flees the city hidden in the bottom of a cart.
- 1879 Chekhov follows his father to Moscow and begins his studies in medicine.
- 1880 He writes humorous pieces for minor magazines as Antosha Chekhonte. Graduates with a degree in medicine, Moscow University.
- 1886 Begins to write under his own name.
- 1887 *Ivanov*, Chekhov's first full length play.
- 1888 *The Bear. The Wood Demon* survives for three performances (later used as raw material for *Uncle Vanya*).
- 1889 *The Wedding*.
- 1896 *The Seagull* opens in St. Petersburg, surviving only five performances.
- 1897 He suffers a severe lung haemorrhage, which reveals itself as a symptom of advanced tuberculosis.
- 1898 *The Seagull*, revived (with twelve weeks of rehearsal) at the Moscow Art Theatre, is an immediate success.
- 1899 *Uncle Vanya*, at the Moscow Art Theatre.
- 1901 *Three Sisters*, at the Moscow Art Theatre.
- 1904 *The Cherry Orchard* produced in January. In July (after two heart attacks), Chekhov dies in the spa town of Badenweiler.

Ashley, Tom & John Rolfe are supporting this production in loving memory of their father John Rolfe.

Chekhov and *The Cherry Orchard*

In the last year of his life, Chekhov wrote and revised what was to become the supreme achievement of the naturalistic movement in the modern theatre of the 19th century. *The Cherry Orchard* was first performed at the Moscow Art Theatre on January 17, 1904, on the author's 44th birthday, six months before he succumbed to tuberculosis.

The director, Constantin Stanislavsky, described the night as 'only a mediocre success and we reproached ourselves that we had not managed to demonstrate to the highest degree the importance, beauty and worth of the play'. Chekhov too was unhappy with the outcome, having conceived *The Cherry Orchard* as a comedy, even a farce at times.

The son of a grocer and grandson of a serf, Chekhov grew up in Taganrog, a small port city on the Sea of Azov. At the age of 15, his father went bankrupt and was forced to flee the city. The rest of the family was then cast out of the estate after a former tenant purchased it. Chekhov enrolled in university and trained as a doctor, but earned his living through his life chiefly as a writer of hundreds of essays, short stories and humorous sketches. He also devoted his time to unceasing humanitarian work, including planning, financing, building and supervising new country schools.

What is not surprising is that Chekhov's approach to drama reflected his wider sense of the world. As a doctor and keen observer of human behaviour, he held on tightly to an objective quality while still managing to fully inhabit the sensibilities of his characters. In early 20th century Russia, Chekhov was misunderstood and frequently seen by critics as merely an irreverent recorder of an obsolete way of life; and outside the country described as a quaint memorialist of a peculiarly Russian state of mind. It seems only in subsequent productions that directors have delved more deeply and discovered the play's greatness and its universal relevance.

When Chekhov wrote *The Cherry Orchard* he was drawing from a picture of a disappearing way of life, as well as from the effects of his own father's financial ruin. In fact, an estate in the Russian countryside in 1904 was quite lavish. Although, after the emancipation of the serfs, many wealthy families reduced their style of living, most estates, even in the most compromised circumstances, required as many as 12 servants. In the winter, dancing was a common pastime - sometimes evenings of furious waltzes on highly polished floors. The backdrop to this rather languid view of an aristocratic lifestyle was the seething civil unrest (and subsequent revolution) seen through the character of the young student Trofimov. One English diplomat who attended the first production wrote that it was 'the most symbolic play ever written. It summed up the whole of pre-Revolutionary Russia...all of them dancing on top of a volcano which is heaving and already rumbling with the faint noise of the coming convulsion.'

Why has *The Cherry Orchard* withstood the test of time? The drama is often hinged on the characters' inner reality and the comedy frequently drawn from moments on the edge of defeat or pain. The fate of a magnificent orchard, a dilapidated estate, a threadbare aristocratic family and their loyal servants has fascinated audiences for over 100 years. What the play does is tenderly and dangerously walk a tightrope of tragedy and farce. It is often a harsh atmosphere loaded with unspoken action.

The Cherry Orchard also offers a persistent belief that the stage can hold a mirror up to life and clarify the forms and pressures of present-day existence. As Chekhov wrote of his play before his death, 'There is not five minutes space anywhere in the dialogue, which would not, like a drop beneath on a microscope, be found swarming with life.'

Catherine Hopkins
Assistant Director

The Cherry Orchard

by Anton Chekhov

Translated by Michael Frayn

First performance November 5th 2004

Cast (in order of appearance)

Lopakhin, <i>a businessman</i>	Simon Roberts
Dunyasha, <i>the chambermaid</i>	Rachel Branton
Yepikhodov, <i>the estate clerk</i>	Christopher Cullen
Firs, <i>the footman</i>	Vincent McQueen
Ranyevskaya, <i>a landowner</i>	Anne Neville
Anya, <i>her daughter</i>	Sophie Rudkin
Varya, <i>her adopted daughter</i>	Izabella Urbanowicz
Gayev, <i>Ranyevskaya's brother</i>	Norman Wilkinson
Simeonov-Pishchik, <i>a landowner</i>	Robert Baker-Glenn
Charlotta, <i>the governess</i>	Mari King
Yasha, <i>a young footman</i>	John Barron
Trofimov, <i>a student</i>	Iain Stirling
Passer-by/Stationmaster	Ken Ratcliffe
Other parts played by	Rob Clothier
	Paula Diaz
	Tara Dowd
	Jason Francis
	Rebecca Gooden
	Anthony Curran

The action takes place on Madame Ranyevskaya's estate around 1900.

Approximate running time: 2 hours 30mins including 15 minutes interval.

Production Team

Director	Peter Field
Assistant Director	Catherine Hopkins
Designer	Alex Marker
Costume Designer	Raymond Childe
Lighting Designer	Tim Edwards
Original Music	Mark Rose
Sound Designer	Mike Caddy
Construction	Mike Hagan Richard Williams
Stage Manager	Sylvia Wall
Deputy Stage Manager	Tom McGuire
Crew	Tina Harris Bron Beckford Jenny Richardson Michelle Weaver Taki Togashi
Lighting Operator	Sally Milton
Sound Operator	Anthony Enrione
Prompters	Jean Masters Bridgett Strevens
Wardrobe Supervisor	Nichola Thomas
Wardrobe	Sue Millhouse Jenny Yates Bernie Hardiman Sue Peckitt Kevin McGovern Jean Derby Susie Kelsall Janni Taudal
Hair and Makeup	Jenny Hulse Sukhjit Mann Corrina McCann Cheryl Niver
Thanks to	Klaus Stubner Roger Brace Doug King Colin Horne Sue Collins Jo Perse Gordon Miller House Services Team Cathy Kelleher David Walls Helen Wrigglesworth

The Cast of The Cherry Orchard

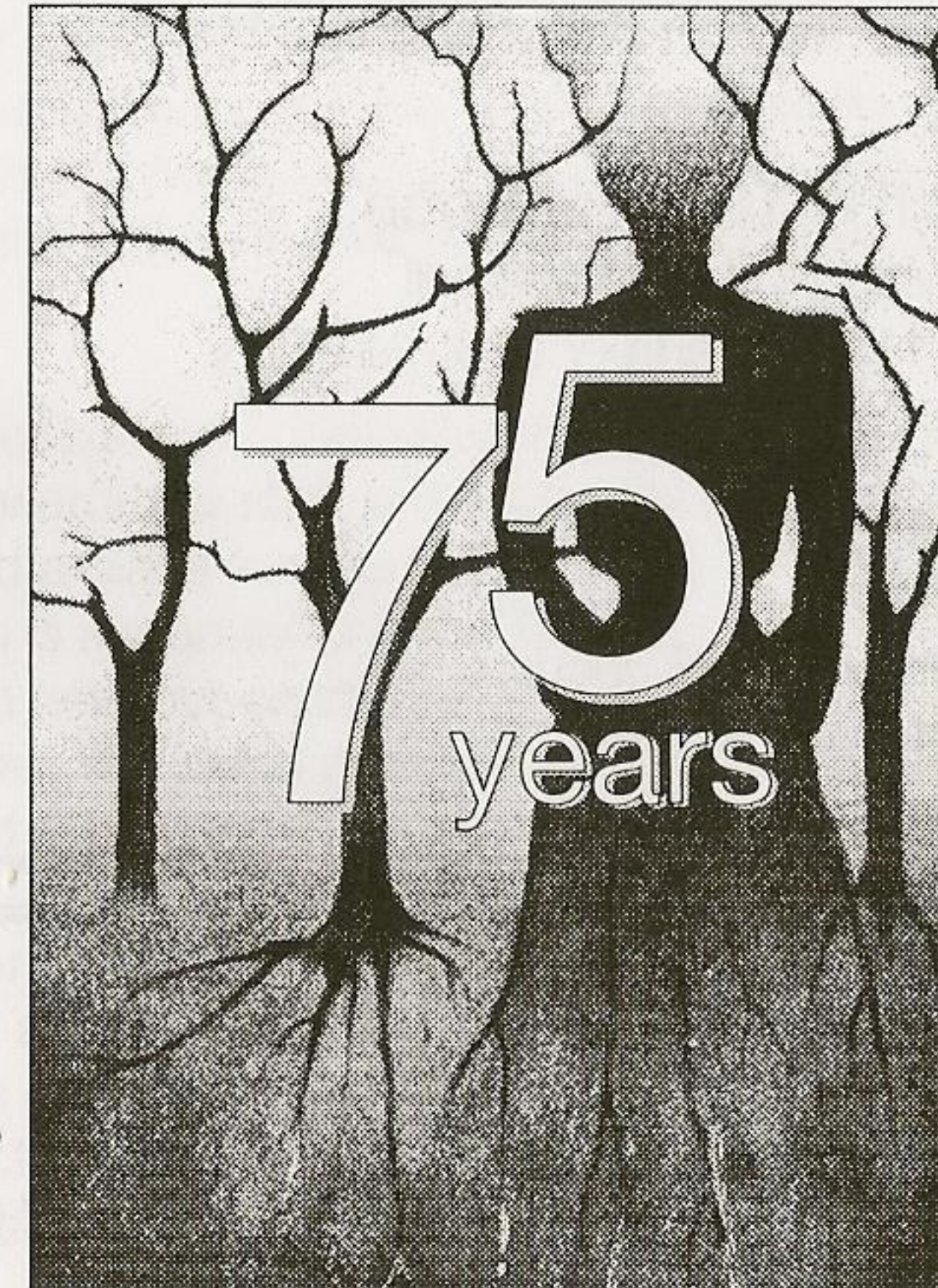


From left to right:
Vincent McQueen, Norman Wilkinson, Sophie Rudkin,
Simon Roberts, Anne Neville, Robert Baker-Glenn,
Iain Stirling, Izabella Urbanowicz, Christopher Cullen,
Rachel Branton, Mari King.

This production of *The Cherry Orchard* marks a very special occasion in our history

THE QUESTORS IS 75!

Our very first production (*The Best People* by David Grey and Avery Hopwood) took place in November 1929.



Since then:

- We have presented 75 continuous seasons of plays
- We have put on well over a thousand productions
- We have enrolled nearly 40,000 members
- Several thousand actors have trodden our boards
- We have acquired our own site and built our own theatre
- We have gained an international reputation for the quality and adventurousness of our work
- We have introduced new plays and playwrights to the British theatre
- We have invited companies from abroad to Mattock Lane
- We have created and developed a unique training course for actors, now in its 59th year
- Thousands of young people have passed through our Youth Theatre
- We have never ceased striving to serve the Art of the Theatre
- And there are many, many, many other things of which we can rightly be proud.

And our work continues...

So Let's Celebrate!

COMING SOON

Early Morning

by Edward Bond

In the Studio, 20 - 27 November

The content of this play may be disturbing to some.

The Lion The Witch & The Wardrobe

by C.S. Lewis, dramatised by Adrian Mitchell

In the Playhouse from 11th December to 8th January

The Enchanted Knight

by David Hovatter

In the Studio, 29 December to 15 January

An adult play for the festive season.

Art Exhibition

Ron Parker

An exhibition of waterscapes and flowers showing the effects of light and shade.

The Grapevine Bar at The Questors Theatre

October 30th - November 13th

If anyone is interested in holding an art exhibition or would like further information please call

Jane Mason in The Questors' Office on 020 8567 0011.

BECOME A CRITIC!

Did you like the Questors show you have just seen?
Did you hate it, or did it raise some interesting issues?
Did you think the acting was brilliant or the set surprising?
Did you enjoy the play or did you find it hard to follow?

**You can share your thoughts with us, or read what others have said,
at www.questors.org.uk Just log on - type your comments -
and click the SEND button.
It couldn't be easier**

Get the most from your membership

Many members join just to see shows, but there is so much else you can do, why not get involved?

Front of house is a great place to start. For programme selling, stewarding or serving in the Café you don't need any experience, and training can be given for anyone who fancies working in Box Office. If you want to meet people and have a good time, then the best place to be is behind the Grapevine Bar - you can volunteer for just one night or many.

Backstage staff, including stage managers, prop makers painters and wardrobe staff, are always welcomed and whatever your skills we'll find a place for you. If you have some experience then The Questors is a wonderful place to be a designer, but even if you don't you can help out on shows and you're sure to get some hands-on experience. The same goes for lighting and sound - the theatre is well equipped and a good place to learn.

You can direct if you have some experience or training, but if not then you can always look out for our training opportunities. The Questors has a high standard of acting and to maintain this anyone wanting to act will need to take an audition. These are held every month - please call the main office for details.

There are numerous other things you can do to help out. If you're free in the daytimes you can help out with envelope stuffing or delivering leaflets, and if you're a bit of a handy man or woman then there are always little jobs to be done.

If you'd like more information about active membership, you can ring the office on 020 8567 0011, Mon - Fri, 9.30 - 5.30, email us on active@questors.org.uk, or come along to the lower foyer at 8.00pm on the first Thursday of every month for an active members get together.

