

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...

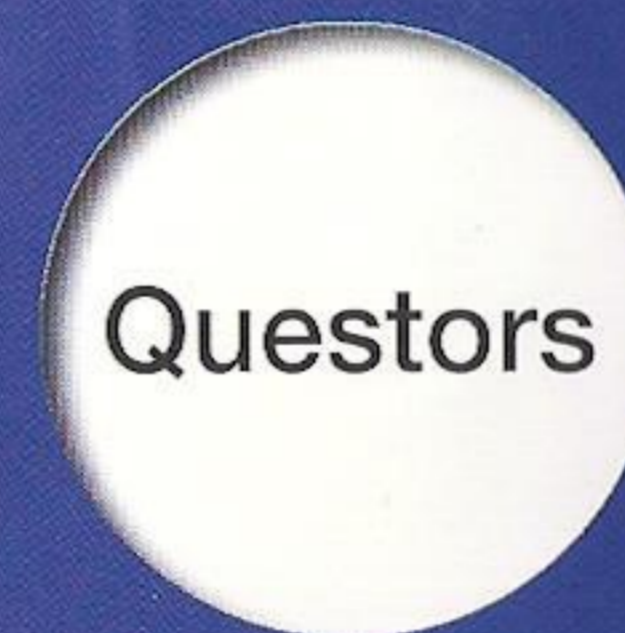
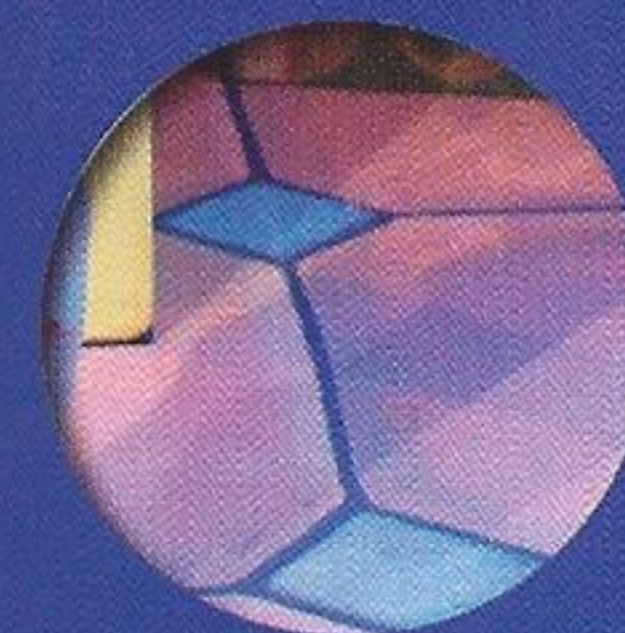
- Free tickets to at least 8 productions a year.
- Access to over 20 productions a year - classic, contemporary, international and new plays, from just £6.50 a ticket.
- Membership of the Grapevine Bar
- Questopics, our club magazine.
- The chance to act, direct, or get involved backstage.
- Discounts 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

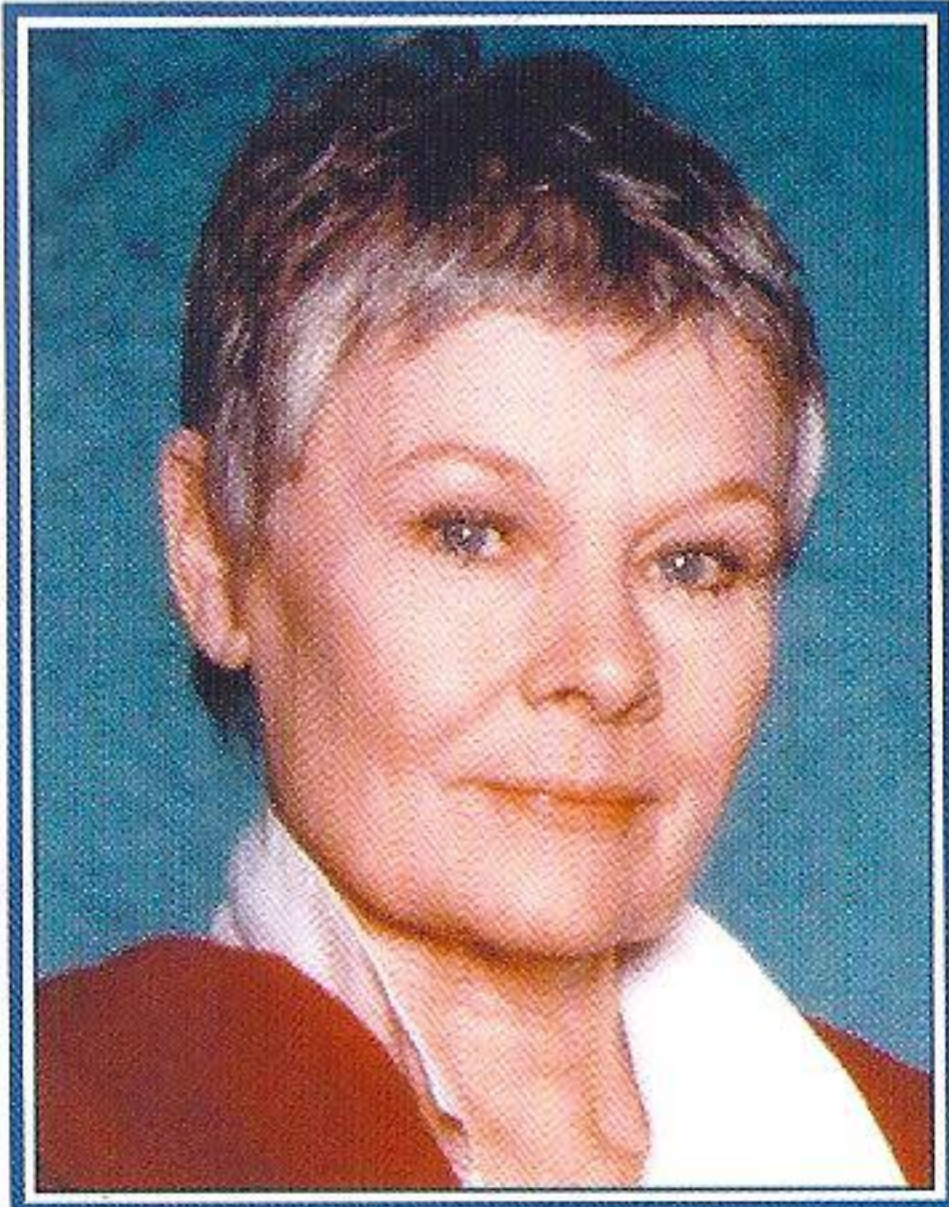
The Questors Theatre
Mattock Lane
Ealing
W5 5BQ



A Streetcar Named Desire

by Tennessee Williams





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!

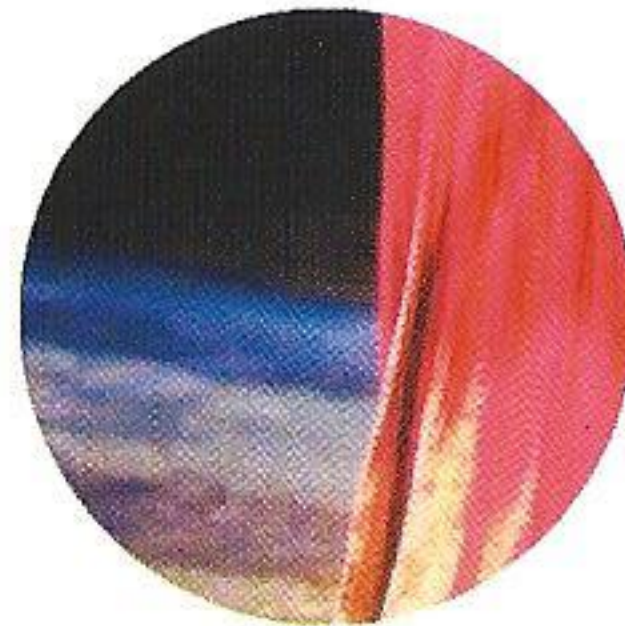
Worth looking into?

Definitely!

Dame Judi Dench
President of The Questors Theatre

A Streetcar Named Desire

by Tennessee Williams



Tennessee Williams - A Brief Chronology

- 1911** Born Thomas Lanier Williams, son of a shoe salesman and a doting mother, along with his mentally unstable sister he suffered a difficult and troubling childhood.
- 1929** Compelled to drop out of school and work for his father's employer, whilst writing late into the night, all set against a background of family dispute and his sisters eventual lobotomisation caused nervous collapse.
- 1938** A new town: New Orleans and a new name: Tennessee, together with a new sexual orientation, deciding to lead a gay lifestyle. He won a prize for American Blues, a collection of one-act plays.
- 1940** Battle of Angels, his first full-length professionally produced play, failed miserably.
- 1944-45** The Glass Menagerie, produced in Chicago, was a success and then a hit on Broadway. Moving to Mexico to work on The Poker Night, later renamed A Streetcar Named Desire
- 1947** A Streetcar Named Desire won Williams a Pulitzer Prize. He bought a home in Key West and fell in love with Frank Merlo who became a long term partner and emotional anchor. Merlo's stabilising influence facilitated a very productive and creative period for Williams. His plays were a great success, both in the USA and abroad popular with critics and audiences alike.
- 1950** The Rose Tattoo
- 1955** Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, this won Williams his second Pulitzer Prize. Night of the Iguana.
He gave audiences unforgettable characters, an incredible vision of life in the South, and a series of powerful portraits of the human condition. He was deeply interested in what he called 'poetic realism,' the use of everyday objects, which, seen repeatedly and in the right contexts, become imbued with symbolic meaning. His plays, for their time, also seemed preoccupied with the extremes of human brutality and sexual behaviour: madness, rape, incest, nymphomania, as well as violent and fantastic deaths. Critics who attacked the 'excesses' of Williams' work often were making thinly veiled attacks on his sexuality. Homosexuality was not discussed openly at that time, but in Williams' plays the themes of desire and isolation show, among other things, the influence of having grown up gay in a homophobic world.
- 1983** On February 23, Williams choked to death on the lid of one of his pill boxes. He left behind an impressive body of work. His plays continue to be performed the world over. At his best Tennessee Williams is a haunting, lyrical and powerful voice, one of the most important forces in twentieth-century American drama.

About A Streetcar Named Desire

First staged in New York on December 3rd 1947, directed by Elia Kazan. Streetcar is often mentioned as one of the great American plays. It's direct portrayal of sexual and violent emotional content, almost unheard of at the time, caused near scandal and attracted the attentions of public figures and bodies regulating public morality. Peter Hall's British premiere of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof could only proceed by turning the Comedy Theatre into a private club to circumvent censorship.

To bring this all into perspective, perhaps Williams himself should illuminate in his briefing letter to Elia Kazan, where he summarises the characters as not being truly good or bad, rather that much of the tragedy is caused to a large extent by misunderstanding, rather than the malice of individuals. In the end you should feel - 'If only they all had known about each other.'

Synopsis

Stanley and Stella Kowalski live in a poor neighbourhood in the French Quarter of New Orleans. Stanley is a blue-collar worker and Stella is pregnant with their first child. Blanche Dubois, Stella's older sister arrives unexpectedly needing somewhere to stay, she has left her job as schoolteacher and Belle Reve their old family home has been lost. Blanche is appalled at the conditions she finds Stella living in and shocked when she meets Stanley. Stanley is deeply suspicious of Blanche and her efforts to impose herself between him and Stella. He investigates her past. Blanche has nowhere to go but cannot possibly stay. She is haunted by the violent death of her young husband many years before. When Mitch - an old friend of Stanley's - arrives on the scene, Blanche begins to see a way out of her predicament. Mitch, himself alone in the world, reveres Blanche as a beautiful and refined woman. Yet, as rumours of Blanche's past in Laurel begin to catch up to her, her circumstances become unbearable.

The Action Takes Place

1947. The Kowalski residence, 632 Elysian Fields, a street in a poor sector of New Orleans.

Scene 1. An evening in early May.

Scene 2. The following evening.

Scene 3. Later that evening.

Scene 4. The next morning.

Scene 5. Some weeks later.

Scene 6. About 2.00am the same night.

INTERVAL 15 minutes.

Scene 7. Late afternoon on September 15th . Blanche's birthday.

Scene 8. Three-quarters of an hour later.

Scene 9. Later that evening.

Scene 10. A few hours later that night.

Scene 11. Some weeks later.

A Streetcar Named Desire

by Tennessee Williams

First performance of this production 17 September 2004

Cast

Blanche Dubois	Lisa Day
Stella Kowalski	Chloë Lewis
Stanley Kowalski	Tony Steele
Harold Mitchell (Mitch)	Andy Ashford
Eunice Hubbel	Nina Lubicz-Nawrocka
Steve Hubbel	Zach Measures
Pablo Gonzales	Marc Golland
Clarisse	Sheri Desbaux
Doctor	John Hines
Nurse	Marie Brusa
A Young Collector	Paul Wesoly
A Mexican Woman	Marie Brusa
A Sailor	Paul Wesoly

Production Team

Director	Roger Beaumont
Set Design	John Horwood
Lighting and Sound Design	Alan N Smith
Stage Management	Katy Gallantry, Brin Parsonage Catherine Collinson
Properties	Harriet Parsonage
Lighting Assistants	Perri Blakelock, Andrew Fletcher
Sound Assistant	Sue Crowson
Costume and Wardrobe	Nichola Thomas, Jennie Yates Sarah Andrews, Bernie Hardiman
Construction and Get In Team	Mike Hagan, Tina Harris Louis Tonna, Mike Caddy Gordon Miller, Richard Williams Karen Tolliday, Chris Tomlins Kate Barber, Phil Driver Ed Walls, Jovanka Litvineko Duncan Waldock
Set Painting	Dennis Dracup, Elaine Hagan
Set Dressing	Jenny Richardson
Rehearsal Prompts	Pam Smith, Sue Oliver
Dialect Coaching	Eldi Dundee, Susan Gerlach
Make up and Hair	Claire Williams
Wardrobe Assistant	Carole Mann
Thanks to	Adrienne Talbot, Nigel Bamford Nigel Worsley, The Tower Theatre Audrey Thomas, Anstey Thomas Colin Guthrie, Ian Cole Martin Sapsed, Martin Stoner

COMING SOON

Bye Bye Blues and Who Was Hilary Maconochie

In the **Studio**, 25 September - 2 October

A double bill by James Saunders

Bye Bye Blues has been performed twice before at The Questors, most recently in 1987. The catalyst is a road accident, around which a series of reverberations spin from three apparently unconnected couples. United by a disquieting conclusion. The message is essentially about relationships.

Who Was Hilary Maconochie? Debuted 40 years ago on our own Questors stage. A little gem of absurdist theatre with a very English flavour: the action unfolds around a middle class widow, her maid and the arrival of a friend for afternoon tea.

In this charming piece intimacy, class and identity (both national and personal) are investigated in a world where all is definitely not what it seems.

Shirley Valentine

In the **Playhouse**, 8 October - 16 October

Join Shirley Bradshaw, 42 years old (or young?), on her laughter-and-tear-filled epic journey to find her true self. She is a classic bored housewife of the '80s, whose husband and children believe is a part of the furniture.

A surprise ticket for a holiday in Greece opens her eyes and re-awakens her appetite for life and love, leaving neighbour, spouse and daughter astounded by her bravery, stupidity and depravity.

Live a little with Shirley as she shrugs off the label 'St Joan of the Fitted Units' : travel back and forward to uncover the old, yet brand new, Shirley Valentine - and you.

Blasted

In the **Studio**, 21 October - 30 October

Quite possibly the most controversial and shocking play Questors has ever - or will ever - produce. Blasted opened at the Royal Court in 1995 to become the most talked about play of that decade. From its naturalistic beginnings tracing physical, mental and sexual abuse in the relationship between Ian and Cate to its surreal, nightmarish conclusions Blasted is violent, explosive and explicit in every sense. Curiously, it is also about hope and as such provides a testament to our own troubled times.

Suitable for adults and the non-squeamish only!

Unseen Voices A festival of Radio Drama

In the **Studio**, 4 November - 6 November

Sebastian Baczkiewicz will be represented with two short plays on Thursday 4th November, The Publicist's Tale and Any Other Wednesday.

Friday 5th is Tom Stoppard's Artist Descending a Staircase. The piece demonstrates the conflicting interpretations of an ambiguous sound effect and the plot moves and forward in time. Random Moments in a May Garden is the second play of the evening, our second chance to honour the late James Saunders.

Saturday 6th November we will present Peter Whelan's The Accrington Pals which evokes the streets of a Lancashire town and the battle of the Somme.

A Streetcar Named Desire is proudly supported by: Robert Gordon Clark

I first visited Questors in late 1983 with Lisa (my then girl-friend, now wife who is playing Blanche in this show) and I saw Alfred Emmet's production of Hamlet. In 1984 I passed my audition (David Emmet was feeling lenient that night), became a member and made my debut in the Studio in Geoff Webb's wonderful improvised play *Long Way Away*. I went on to do about 15 more plays over the next 8 years, work on three tours to the Edinburgh Fringe, coordinate the PR for the 60th anniversary celebrations in 1989, serve on the CoM and chair the Actors' Committee. Since 1992 - sadly - I have had to sit in the stalls and the bar, watching and enjoying.

This year celebrates 20 years as a member of the Questors and to mark it I am supporting this production. I chose Streetcar not just because Lisa is in it; Tennessee Williams is my favourite playwright and I remember the profound impact the play had on me when I studied it for A level.

But back to Questors and what it means to us. When moving to a city as big as London, putting down roots is vital. And for Lisa and I The Questors is a very big and central root in our lives. We have made many friends, some very close indeed. Our two daughters - Anya and Imogen - have already notched up performances in *The Twits*, *Granville the Ugly Duckling* and *The Snow Queen* and love the theatre.

So, in this 75th year of The Questors, congratulations from one member who has only done 20 years. It is a remarkable organisation providing a vital creative outlet for many people. Long may it continue. And enjoy the show!

Robert Gordon Clark

ART EXHIBITIONS

Our art exhibitions continue with the welcome return of one of our local artists:-

John Stacey

In

The Grapevine Bar

September 18 - October 2 2004

If anyone is interested in holding an exhibition at Questors and would like further details, please contact Jane Mason on 020 8567 0011 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays.

75th ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

*The Questors Theatre is 75 years old this year,
and we have many more events planned to help celebrate the event.
Here's just a selection of what's in store:*

75
years
1929 - 2004

LANDMARK PRODUCTIONS

During the autumn, we will have a series of significant plays from the 75 years of The Questors existence.

These will be:

Blasted

by Sarah Kane - 1995
In the **Studio**, 23 - 30 October

Early Morning

by Edward Bond - 1968
In the **Studio**, 20 - 27 November

The Cherry Orchard

by Anton Chekov
translated by Michael Frayn.
In the **Playhouse**, 5 - 13 November

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.

