

www.questors.org.uk

Find out a lot about our forthcoming productions – along with a lot of other information about The Questors – on our web site.

Stay in touch

Just send us your details, and we'll keep you informed about our forthcoming productions at The Questors.

You can either write, phone or email us with your details.

Join us

If you enjoy theatre, why not join us and become a member of The Questors?

If you enjoy a regular night out at the theatre with friends, why not become a member of The Questors? As a Playgoer Member, you'll receive a 20 per cent discount on your ticket to most Questors productions, free tickets for your children to most Questors productions, regular information about our productions, and membership of the Grapevine Bar, so you can come and enjoy a quiet evening in the Grapevine throughout the year.

Or you could join as a Company Member and receive a 50 per cent discount on your ticket and opportunities to get involved in our productions, in addition to all the benefits for Playgoer Members.

You can get all of this for just £26.00 for Playgoer membership and £52.50 (£34.00 concessions) for Company membership, with discounts for payment by Direct Debit.

You can find Membership Application forms in the Box Office Foyer, or just phone the Theatre Office.



THE
**QUESTORS
THEATRE**



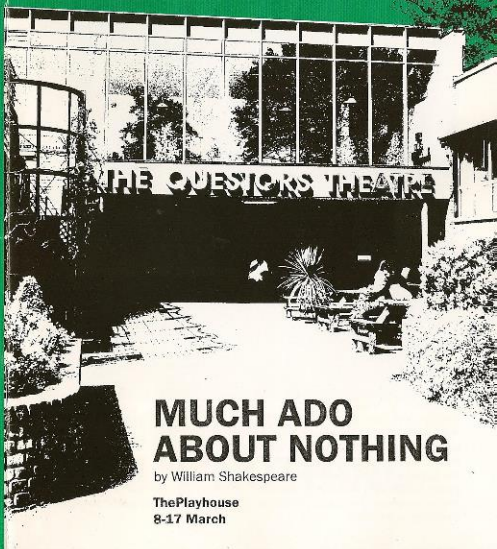
THE QUESTORS THEATRE
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Registered Charity no 207516



MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

by William Shakespeare

ThePlayhouse
8-17 March



THE QUESTORS THEATRE



Welcome to The Questors Theatre, one of London's best kept secrets – except to its 2,000 members.

How do I know about The Questors? I am proud to have been its President for over 20 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 perks of membership) and the many and varied shows in our 370-seat 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 The Questors Youth Theatre. In short, theatre is something for everyone, and with annual membership from £12.00 to £52.50 depending on your chosen level of



commitment, it's great value for money as well.

But don't just take my word for it. The next time you're in Ealing, 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



MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

by William Shakespeare

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Shakespeare wrote *Much ADO About Nothing* in 1598 or 1599. It was first printed in 1600, in a good text that seems to be based on Shakespeare's own manuscript. Judging from contemporary references it appears to have been popular from the start.

The story of the love between Hero and Claudio, and the cruel deception that disrupts it, is based on an old story told by many sixteenth century writers. The more benign deception practised upon Benedick and Beatrice has no known source and may well be Shakespeare's own invention.

But the stroke of genius was to combine two plots so different in tone and mood in the one play, creating two contrasting love-stories, which reflect back and forth upon each other to create one of the most profound and entertaining explorations ever written of what it means to be 'in love', and of the difficult and often painful road towards mutual trust and sincerity.

Hero and Claudio are the more conventional, 'romantic' pair of lovers. Critics never fail to point out that they speak to each other exclusively in verse, whereas Benedick and Beatrice converse in prose. More importantly, unlike Benedick and Beatrice, who are so voluble that they might 'talk themselves mad', Hero and Claudio barely speak to each other at all. In fact, Hero hardly ever opens her mouth in the presence of any man, although when we hear her alone with her women-friends, she is both articulate and witty. And Claudio does not even woo Hero in person; Don Pedro does it for him – something that causes great confusion all round, as Leonato, Antonio and Benedick all assume that Don Pedro wants her for himself, and it needs little persuasion for even Claudio to think the same.

These misunderstandings and confusions, so brilliantly symbolised by the disguised couplings and re-couplings of a masked ball,

are fairly easily resolved, but the lack of trust and mutual understanding that is revealed goes to the heart of the play. It is hardly a surprise when Claudio and Don Pedro are so easily tricked into doubting Hero, for neither of them has taken much trouble to understand or get to know her.

Benedick and Beatrice are mistrustful of each other for a different reason: they know each other only too well, but they do not know themselves. They have a prior history – Beatrice says that once before he won her heart 'with false dice' – and the mistrust and resentment stemming from that experience has poisoned their relationship not only with each other but with the whole opposite sex. Even after they are tricked into realising their true feelings for each other, they remain 'too wise to won peaceably', and the hurt of previous betrayals remains tangible. It is not just Claudio's rejection of Hero that makes Beatrice demand that Benedick prove his love for her in the most extreme way imaginable, but also Benedick's own previous rejection of Beatrice, and the constricted role in life to which her gender condemns her.

But this is a comedy, not a tragedy, and providence is on hand to provide a happy ending. And happy endings don't come much more providential than this one, for it is supplied by the most incompetent policeman in all literature, the bumbling Dogberry and his equally hapless Watch, who foil the plot and unmask the villains without ever quite realising what they have done.

The ending of the play is one of the most joyous in all Shakespeare: there is no Melville or Jacques to cast an acerbic eye on the celebrations, and all the old ones as it began: in that most elemental of mating rituals – a dance.

Steve Fitzpatrick



Above:

The Questors Theatre's 1993 production of *Much ADO About Nothing*.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

by William Shakespeare

First performance of this production: 8rd March 2007

CAST

(cast in order of speaking)

Messenger	Derek Stoddart
Leonato, governor of Messina	Tony Bromham
Beatrice, niece to Leonato	Nikki Squire
Hero, daughter to Leonato	Sarah Beebe
Don Pedro, prince of Aragon	Robert Baker-Glenn
Benedick, a young lord of Padua	Mark Oosterveen
Don John, bastard brother to Don Pedro	David Hovatter
Claudio, a young lord of Florence	Ian Stirling
Antonio, brother to Leonato	Paul Vincent
Conrade } followers of	Halsley Bennett
Borachio } Don John	Julian Casey
Balthasar, attendant on Don Pedro	Russell Fleet
Margaret } gentlewomen attending	Sunita Dugal
Ursula } on Hero	Sarah Morrison
Dogberry, a constable	Howard Benbrook
Verges, a headborough	Derek Stoddart
Watch	James Ellis
	Russell Fleet
	Martin Halvey
Friar Francis	Martin Halvey
A Sexton	Stephanie Boyle
Dancers, Maids	Katy Bagge
	Jemma Edmunds
	Rosalind Storey
	Andrea Gray
	Claudia Kallilch-Omer
	Alexis Wieronley
Girl	Assisi Azzopardi or Matilda Tucker

THERE WILL BE AN INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES

CREW

(cast in order of appearance)

Designed and directed by	Steve Fitzpatrick
Choreography	Frances Whittaker
Lighting Designer	Andy Torble
Original music composed by	Yaron Hollander
Assistant director	Alison Pollard
Stage Manager	Richard Halberstadt
Deputy Stage Manager	Arthur England
Construction	Richard Williams
	Jim Craddock
	Caroline Phelan
Props	Jovanka Litvinenko
Sceno painting	Charlotte Drew
	Francois Langton
Lighting Operator	Alan Smith
Sound Designer	Claire Walker
Sound Operator	
Costume & Design (Men)	Sarah Andrews
Costume & Design (Women)	
Jonnie Yates	
Promot	Michael Hayes
Make-up and hair	Kate Gardiner
	Beth Pitman
	DianeValislaris
Assistant Stage Managers	Sarah Parkinson
	Andrew Davies
	James Bromfield
	Jack Richardson
	Claire Auvache
	Charlotte Drew
THANKS TO	Mike Hagan, Rachel Griffiths, Tina Harris,
	Gerard Kelly, Claire Lack, Alex Lee, Shella
	Lindor, Eric Lister, Alex Marker, Sue
	Millhouse, Andrew Naughton, Ruth Parry,
	Josie Thomas, Nichola Thomas, Sylvia Wall,
	Kingston Collego Technical Students and
	the House Services Team.

Cast Biographies

Robert Baker-Glenn – Don Pedro

Robert has previously appeared in *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Glastonbury Marriage*, *It's a Pity She's a Whore*, *The Albatross Islands*, *After the Dance* and *The London Cuckolds*. This is his second attempt at Don Pedro, in his third *Much Ado*, the first two being "teaser" roles.

Sarah Beebe – Hero

Much Ado marks Sarah's fourth appearance at The Questors, after long experience in her native Los Angeles. Before playing Audrey in *As You Like It*, Petra in *An Enemy of the People*, and *Marsella in The Dog in the Manger*, she appeared in a wide range of both classic and contemporary roles.

Howard Benbrook – Dogberry

Ben has been acting since he was 10 years old, and at The Questors since the late '60s. Recent performances here include *The Recruitment Officer*, *The Madness of George III*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *As You Like It*. Farther back, you may remember *Noises Off*, *Taruffo*, or even *Dickel*, *Ginkel*.

Hainsley Bennett – Corrade

Hainsley joined The Questors Student Group two years ago. After playing Henry, among others, in *Henry V* and *Forodorio in Saturday, Sunday, Monday*, he is now looking forward to returning to Shakespeare in his first acting members' production.

Stephanie Boyle – Sexton

This is Stephanie's first show at The Questors since joining last November. Before then, she lived in New York, where she acted with several drama groups and in independent films.

Tony Bromham – Leonato

Tony joined The Questors in the 1960s. Recent parts include *Capulet (Romeo and Juliet)*, *Melvolio (Twelfth Night)*, *Panuccio (The Venetian Twins)*, *Old Shepherd (The Winter's Tale)*, *Duke (The Merchant of Venice)*, *Wincent Crummies (Nicholas Nickleby)*, and *Wineacros (The London Cuckolds)*. Tony played Leonato in our last production of *Much Ado* in 1993.

Julian Casey – Borachio

Julian joined The Questors in 2006 and played Roger in *Mouth to Mouth* and *God Murray in Comedians*.

Sunita Dugal – Margaret

This is Sunita's third production with The Questors having joined in summer 2005. She has

played Celia in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and The Spanish Lawyer in *Tales Verdes*. Sunita also sings with the Julian Light Co-Operative Society.

James Ellis – Watch

James has been a member of The Questors since February 2006. This is his first major Questors production, however, he previously appeared in *The New Acting Members' Showcase* last November.

Steve Fitzpatrick – Director

Steve has directed at The Questors for 20 years, most recently *The New Members Showcase*, *Dance of Death*, *The Albatross Islands* and *The Dispute*. Previous productions include *Steel Magnolias*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Dr Faustus*, *Aristophanes' Wealth and Turpitude*. He also acts, most recently as Jacques in *As You Like It*.

Russell Floet – Balthazar, Watch

A former professional, Russell joined the Questors after a 10-year absence from acting. He has recently been seen in *Bloody Poetry* as a non-speaking actor. *Much Ado About Nothing* sees him graduate to a speaking (and singing) role.

Martin Halvey – Friar Francis, Watch

Martin joined The Questors in 2006. He is looking forward to this, his first appearance on The Questors stage.

Yaron Hollander – Original music

This is Yaron's second Questors production, after having recently written music for *The Lady in the Iron*. His previous credits include original scores for two by Jim Cartright at the Leeds Carriageworks Theatre, and for *Whose Life is It Anyway?* by Brian Clark at Leeds Civic Theatre. He plays oboe and piano.

David Hovatter – Don John

David joined The Questors in 1982. His first play was *Charley's Aunt* in 1989 and his last play was *Enemy of the People*. Other plays include *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Moids*, *Moby Dick* and both *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*.

Sarah Morrison – Ursula

Sarah has been an acting member since 1980 and this will be her 47th production. Her most recent roles include Ethel (*This Happy Breed*), Grand High Witch (*The Witches*), Truzy (*Steel Magnolias*) – also directed by Steve Fitzpatrick), Lady Pembroke (*The Madness of George III*) and Christine Fossett (*Absolute Hell*).

Mark Oosterveen – Benedick

This is Mark's first fully-fledged production at The Questors. He has recently appeared in productions for the Putney Arts Theatre, Grange Tree Theatre and the Old Vic, as well as performing at the Edinburgh Fringe, the National Student Drama Festival and various outdoor Shakespeare productions.

Nikki Squire – Beatrice

Nikki initially joined the Questors Student Group. She has appeared most recently in *The Cure-All* and *The London Cuckolds* (which played both at Questors and the Minack Theatre, Cornwall).

Iain Stirling – Claudio

Iain joined the Questors in 2002. Previous roles include Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice*, Troilus in *The Cherry Orchard*, Barry in *Now Boy, Peter in After the Dance* and Lovelady in *The London Cuckolds*.

Derek Stoddart – Messenger, Urges

Derek joined the Questors as an acting member in 1982 and has performed in a number of productions over the years. Most recent appearances include roles in *The Madness of George III*, *Lady Betty and Smilee* in *Nicholas Nickleby*.

Andy Torble – Lighting Design

Prior to joining The Questors in November 2005, Andy's professional lighting career spanned more than 15 years, most of which was spent at The National Theatre. At The Questors he lit *Saturday, Sunday, Monday* and *There'll Always Be A Dandelion*. Later in this season he will be lighting *Trojan Women*.

Paul Vincent – Antonio

Paul has been an acting member since 1983. Recent productions include *Travesties*, *The Cure-All* and *The London Cuckolds*.

Frances Whittaker – Choreography

This is Frances's first production with The Questors, having joined last year. She trained at the First Tower School of Dancing, Jersey and the Royal Academy of Dancing, London before taking up choreography at University. She has performed in numerous shows and danced professionally.

Katy Baggs, Jemma Edmunds, Andrea Gray,

Claudia Kallich-Otney, Rosalind Storey,

Alexis Wieronley – Dancers/maids

Katy, Jemma, Andrea, Claudia, Rosalind and Alexis are all members of the current Questors Student Group and this is their first appearance on The Questors stage.

Questors E-News direct to your Inbox

Get all the latest news and offers for our shows by joining our e-mail lists.

- You can choose to receive short snippets of information every week or so, or longer round ups every month – or both if you wish!
- We'll keep the e-mails as short and simple as possible - because we know you'd prefer it that way.
- And we'll have an unsubscribe facility (which actually works) at the bottom of every message!

It's easy to sign up – just a few clicks is all it takes.

Visit www.questors.org.uk/e-news.html and you'll start getting our E-News in your Inbox.

The Questors Student Group present

The Visit

by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, adapted by Maurice Valency

The wealthiest woman in the world brings her bizarre retinue of assistants back to her hometown, an impoverished little village, promising the residents vast riches... on one outrageous condition. Dürrenmatt's macabre comedy gives us one of the most tantalizing characters in 20th-century drama.

24, 27-31 March at 7.45pm,
25 March at 2.30pm

In the Studio

Tickets: £10.50
(£9.50 concessions, £5.00 students)

The Questors present

French Paste

by Richard Gallagher

1987: storms over England, Thatcher in for a third time and Tom and Stephen are "living in black and white in Brixton". Tom dreams of a place where he can live in glorious Technicolor: a place where there isn't any trouble, a place somewhere over the rainbow..."This play is so funny it's some time before you realise it has something serious to say about human relationships" Manchester Evening News

7, 10-14 April at 7.45pm,
8 April at 2.30pm

In the Studio

Tickets: £10.50
(£9.50 concessions, £5.00 students)

COMING SOON In the Playhouse APRIL 2007

For more information please contact the

Box office: 020 8567 5181

www.questors.org.uk

The Questors Youth Theatre presents

Knocking on the Ceiling (Cagner au Plafond)

by Wanda Dunska

Aftermath

by Rachel Knightley and Samantha Wright

Two plays written, developed and directed by Questors Youth Theatre tutors with the students.



Getting the most from your membership

Many members join just to see shows, but there is so much more on offer to Company Members. So why not get involved?

Front-of-House is a great place to start. No previous experience is needed for selling programmes, stewarding or serving in the Café; and training is provided 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 – and you can volunteer for just one night or several.

Backstage staff – including stage managers, prop makers, set builders, painters and wardrobe staff – are always welcome, and whatever your skills we'll find a place for you. If you have some experience then The Questors is a wonderful space to be a designer. But even without experience, you can help out on shows, and you're sure to get some hands-on experience. The same goes for lighting and sound – the Playhouse and Studio are both well-equipped and excellent places to learn.

You can direct if you have some experience or training, but if not then we offer various learning opportunities. The Questors have a high standard of acting, and to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – so if you have some training or experience of acting, call the Theatre Office for details of the forthcoming auditions.

There are many other activities you can join in to help out. If you're free during daytimes, you can help with our monthly mailing or delivering leaflets, and if you're handy with maintenance then there are always little jobs to be done.

Only Company members can take part in our activities, so please contact the Theatre Office if you would like to get involved or receive further information about Company membership.