

The Chairs by Eugene Ionesco
The Lesson by Eugene Ionesco
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The Professor	John Dobson
The Pupil	Victoria Butler
The Maid	Jane Badcock

The Chairs by Eugène Ionesco

Old Woman	Mary Davies
Old Man	Robert Baker-Gleinn
Director	David Hovatter
Set Designer	Ben Sandford
Lighting Designer	Ben Sandford
Stage Manager	Martin Choules
Deputy Stage Manager	Pawan Gupta
Wardrobe	Sarah Andrews
Photography	Michael Smith
Lighting Riggers	Tim Edwards, Tim Heywood, Chris Newell, Alan Smith, Andy Torble
Thanks to	Judy Claybourne, Anthony Doran, Paul Fitzsimons, Geoffrey Morgan, Will O'Connell and Grasspaint.

"In thinking how to approach these two Ionesco plays, I drew upon three aspects of Ionesco's way of thinking.

Ionesco claimed to have been strongly influenced by the Jungian concept that every man suffers from the separation between earth and sky. He recalled a rare moment of unity and harmony during a holiday trip with his mother to the village of La Chapelle Acheroise - so blissful that for a short duration he experienced a feeling of total bliss, and so released and free that even gravity seemed no longer to exist. In many of his works he draws on memories of this experience of bliss and also the moment it left him.

One of the most important aspects of Ionesco's thinking was the subject of death. In another memory with his mother he recalls visiting, one winter evening, the crowded Place de Vaugirard, and being haunted by the thought of all the nameless figures he remembers seeing, in all probability no longer existing: "Whenever the picture of this street lives again in my memory, and when I consider that today almost all these people are dead, everything strikes me as shadow and evanescence. There, in effect, goes the world: a desert of dying shadows."

Another memory which strongly influenced him was seeing a puppet show with his mother in the Luxembourg Gardens, where the "spectacle of the guignol held me there, stupefied by the sight of these puppets who spoke, who moved, who bulgeoned each other. It was the spectacle of life itself which, strange, improbable, but truer than truth itself, was being presented to me in an infinitely simplified and caricatured form, as though to underline the grotesque and brutal truth."

Consequently, I've aimed at a more 'physical' approach to these two plays, making the actors move round the stage and mime more than is usual. I wanted to create a physical language that complemented the density and absurdity of Ionesco's language".

David Hovatter



Questors, Ealing's Theatre

Biographies

Jane Backlog - *The Maid*

Jane's first performance with Questors was in *Too Clever By Half* way back in 1982. Her membership may have lapsed a couple of times over the years owing to a short and unproductive period in professional theatre, work commitments and just sheer laziness, but when she comes back, she wishes she'd never gone away. Over the last few years, she will have been seen in *Oh What a Lovely War!*, *There'll Always Be a Brontford* and *Knopped Up By Naughty Helen*.

Robert Baker-Glenn - *Old Man*

Robert's first appeared at Questors in *The Cherry Orchard*, and has since gone on to *After the Dance*, *The Aleutian Islands*, *The Clandestine Marriage*, *Tis Pity She's A Whore*, *The London Cuckolds*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Cinderella*.

Victoria Butler - *The Pup!*

Victoria was in the 5th Student Group and has since performed in many shows at Questors, including *Little Shop of Horrors* (Audrey), *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (Phyllis), *Tejas Vordos* (The Disappeared/Soul in Torment) and most recently, the devised show *Knopped Up By Naughty Helen*.

Martin Choules - *Stage Manager*

Martin has worked with David far too many times already, including managing his acting on *Enemy of the People* and *After Magritte*, and his direction on *Isle of the Departed* and *Knopped Up By Naughty Helen*. He occasionally manages to get away, like on *Time & Time Again* and *The Railway Children*.

Mary Davies - *Old Woman*

Mary has been a member of Questors since 1978, and first appeared in *The Rimers Of Eldritch*. More recently, she has appeared in *A Wedding Story*, *After The Dance*, *Tejas Verdes* and *The Trojan Women*.

John Dobson - *The Professor*

John has been in the Student Group and spent many years editing Questopics. On stage at Questors, he has appeared in over fifty shows, including *The Faith Healer* and *Breaking The Code*. More recently, he has been seen in *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Knopped Up By Naughty Helen*, the latest in a long line of collaborations with David Hovatter.

Pawan Gupts - *Deputy Stage Manager*

Pawan has previously worked on *Three Polish Shorts* and the Youth Theatre Look-ins, working on lighting, sound and backstage. Prior to this, he studied film and video production at university.

David Hovatter - *Director*

David has worked on a number of devised shows, including *Moby Dick*, *Grox*, *Enchanted Knight*, *Knopped Up By Naughty Helen*. He also acts, most recently *Richard III*, *After Magritte* and *Three Polish Shorts*.

Ben Sandford - *Lighting Designer / Set Designer*

Ben has been involved in theatre and television lighting in both Canada and the United Kingdom. He has designed productions for the Alumnae Theatre and the Toronto Irish Players. At Questors, he designed the lighting for *After Magritte / Black Comedy* and *Dinner*. This is his first set design at Questors.



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