



Questors, Ealing's Theatre

KVETCH
By Steven Berkoff

The Studio

26 February – 6 March 2010

questors.org.uk

Qafé

Have you tried the new Questors café experience yet?

Opening times Monday – Saturday:

Term time 9:00 am – 7:30 pm

Outside term time 11:30 am – 7:30 pm

On show nights, through until the end of the first interval

Serving specialist teas and coffees, hot chocolate and soft drinks, with a selection of sandwiches cut to order.

Pre-theatre hot meal menu available on show nights up to 7:00 pm.

The Grapevine Bar

The Grapevine is our friendly club bar open to Members of The Questors Theatre and their guests, as well as serving audience members on show nights.

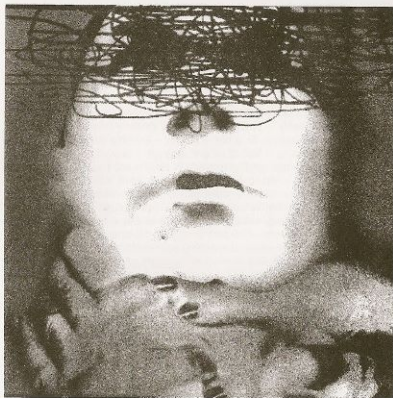
The club is open seven nights a week and Sunday lunchtimes and is managed and staffed entirely by volunteers.

We are the proud holders of a Cask Marque award for the quality of our real ales, we appear in the 2010 edition of The Good Beer Guide and we are 2009 CAMRA West Middlesex Club of the Year. A choice of at least three real ales is usually available, including Fuller's London Pride. We also provide a range of draught lagers and ciders, as well as wines and spirits – all at very reasonable prices.

Opening Hours:

7:00 pm – 11:00 pm (10:30 pm close on Sundays)

Sunday lunchtime midday – 2:30 pm



KVETCH

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KVETCH (Yiddish)

(v) to complain persistently

(n) a chronic complainer, a nagging complaint

"We all live under the shadow of the bomb – cancer – carcinogens – illness – unemployment – impotence – fear of fear – blacks – whites – police – rates – income tax – parking tickets – forgetting our lines – losing money – making too much money – losing hair – getting fat – getting ugly – being stupid – being unwitty – being shy – being foolish – worry about which stereo speakers – how to fix a car – a bike – learning the piano – fear of falling – not impressing – fear of others' strength – fear of weakness – fear of being exposed – not getting to work in time – not having a pension – security – old age – dying – war – injury in road accidents – fear of blindness – deafness – of not understanding the joke – fear of tough people – fear to take risks – fear to swim – to jump – to dive off a board – fear of disease – fear of moving – fear to sell – fear to buy – obsessional fear of spiders – dark cupboards – knives – muggers – fear of people – parties – crowds – clever people – fear of speaking your mind – fear of women – fear of men – fear of police – fear of anxiety – so this play is dedicated to the afraid."

Steven Berkoff

I was very pleased to be asked to direct this play for Questors. Originating from a background in classical ballet before going into acting, I have always been interested in the physical aspect of the theatre. Theatre to me is about illusion, not just an attempt to mimic reality which is so often done far better in the medium of film. No, theatre should be about magic, a reflection of reality but through a stylised mirror of distortion; it should create a world we cannot naturally see and by doing so shows us a far truer picture of life. Steven Berkoff's work offers us all that. The audience only needs the outer suggestion of an image to tap into its own imagination and complete the picture. "A set should be able to melt in an instant and never represent a real heavy piece of pseudo reality. The theatre of the bourgeois, so bereft of anything but the obvious, with its expensive lumbering pieces of dead weight" (Berkoff). While at drama school, I saw Berkoff as an inspirational mentor and, much later, in many ways largely responsible for my setting up *Theatrestorm* in 1993 of which the productions were heavily influenced by this maverick of the theatre. To this day he is still seen as a maverick, yet he first wrote *Metamorphosis* in the 60s, *The Trial* played to over a thousand a night in Germany in the 70s yet ran for a dismal three weeks with minute audiences in London. He has always had his critics because of his sheer bravery and innovation, he has shocked, outraged, seduced and excited audiences. His struggle has successfully changed the face of theatre.

With Berkoff's characteristic blend of sardonic humour and outrageousness, *Kvetch* looks at the tensions and frustrations seething under the surface of domesticity in a marriage that has run out of steam. All the physical style we expect from Berkoff is here; the ultimate aim is to bring the spectator into closer contact with the essential aspect of the theme – so here we are in the delicious position to be witness to what the characters are really thinking, to be party to what is in the *back of their heads*. *Kvetch* is a cathartic play that cannot help but make you feel better about yourself. It is rude, irreverent, sexual, funny and very powerful.

Nicholas Jonne Wilson

"*Kvetch* is a study of the effects of anxiety on the nagging kvetch that keeps you awake. It is the demon that wishes to taste your blood and sucks at your confidence. For many who can't live in the now, this is a real and terrible problem. We are beset by an array of problems that don't always sit and wait in the queue to be solved, but are liable at any instant to jump out of line and shout for your attention and kvetch you or kvetch at you until you have paid them some attention, even though in the meantime your present task may be ruined..... How often when we speak we have some background dialogue going on, sometimes to guide us and sometimes to protect us. Sometimes, though, the dialogue in the back of the head is truer than the one in the front. If only we could always speak the thoughts in the back; how much truer our communication would be. We are like icebergs slowly moving through life and seldom, if ever, showing and revealing what is underneath."

Steven Berkoff

Some words to help!

POTATO LATKES	similar to hash browns
MENSCH	mankind, a good bloke
SHLEPPING	moving back and forth
GOY	a non Jew
GOYIM	non Jews
SHTIPP LOX	eating smoked salmon
SHMOCKS	idiots
SHMUTTERS	clothing, material, rags
VSTINKINER MOMSA	smelly bastard
DOLLINK	darling
KVELL	to burst with pride
SHVARTZER	black man
SHIKSA	non Jewish blonde girl
PESACH	Passover
PLOTZ	run around like a headless chicken

KVETCH

By Steven Berkoff

an American play about anxiety

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 26 February 2010.

CAST

Frank	David Hovatter
Donna, Frank's wife	Alexis Wieroniey
Hal, Frank's friend	Nigel Lawrence
Mother-in-Law to Frank	Marta Welnowska
George, clothing manufacturer	Agostino Orsini

The performance lasts approximately 75 minutes with no interval.

Please turn off all mobile phones, pagers and watch alarms. The use of cameras, video cameras and recording equipment is strictly prohibited.
Thank you.

PRODUCTION

Director	Nicholas Jonne Wilson
Set and Costume Designer	Irina Borisova
Lighting Designer	Martin Stoner
Sound Designer	Steve Hames
Stage Manager	Michelle Weaver
Deputy Stage Manager	Wesley Lloyd
Assistant Stage Managers	Francesca McNally, Ellis McNorthey-Gibbs, Gregory Smith
Wardrobe Assistant	Ros Storey
Lighting Operators	Gregory Smith, Martin Stoner
Sound Operator	Paul Robinson
Make Up	Celine Boulhaya
Table constructed by	Colin Horne
Chairs constructed by	Clive Whitcroft
Scenic construction	Mike Hagan, Rafio Golby, Danielle Hurley, Tom Stevenson, Caz Thomson, Jack Watson
Photographer	Richard Mead
Thanks to	Sarah Andrews, Julie Cruttenden, Sylvia Wall, Studio House Services, The Crew and Cast of <i>Abigail's Party</i>
Special Thanks to	Edwin Pennicott

Biographies

David Hovatter – Frank

Has appeared in very many shows at The Questors. He also directs for the company, his more recent shows have been *The Lesson* and *The Chairs* and *The Marvellous Land of Oz*. He has also appeared in many *Theatrestorm* shows for Jonne.

Nigel Lawrence – Hal

Joined the student group in 1985, and his first performance as a fully fledged actor was in Mayakovsky's *The Bed Bug* in 1988. Since then he has appeared in over 30 productions, most recently as Joe Gargery in *Great Expectations* (2007) and Lovewit in *The Alchemist* (2009). He was also one of the founding members of *Theatrestorm* and plays Adam in the film *Gone* for Cruel Garden Films (2009).

Agostino Orsini – George

Born in Italy. At the age nine his family moved to London where he started acting in school shows. Eventually he studied at the Stella Adler Conservatory in Los Angeles. He went on to be in numerous new shows. His credits at The Questors include *Knopped up by Naughty Helen* and *Three Polish Shorts*.

Marta Welnowska – Mother-in-Law

After finishing The Questors Student Group (Group 62) in September 2009, Marta has recently appeared as Mombi/Miss Roseman in *The Marvellous Land of Oz*. *Kvetch* is her second production at The Questors.

Alexis Wieronley – Donna

Joined The Questors as a member of Student Group 61. She has played Hypolita and Mustardseed in *A Midsummer Nights Dream* and Grusha in *Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Since joining the main company she has appeared as General JinJur in last year's *Marvellous Land of Oz* and Lady Macduff in *Macbeth*. She'd like one day to be a poverty stricken professional actor. In the Cruel Garden Films' *Gone* (2009) she plays Claire.

Nicholas Jonne Wilson – Director

Has worked professionally as a director, actor and writer for many years but has also maintained his ties with The Questors where he still teaches the Student Group. He has directed very many plays for The Questors including *The Trial*, *Agamemnon* and *The Fall of the House of Usher* also by Berkoff. He runs *Theatrestorm* which began in 1993 and *Cruel Garden Films* and is also an established acting coach to the profession.

Irina Borisova – Set and Costume Designer

Graduated from the National Academy of Arts in Bulgaria and gained a Master degree in Scenography from Central St.Martin's College of Art and Design, London. Irina works as a freelance theatre designer, her previous work includes design assistant for the productions of *The Psychic Detective* for BenchTours Theatre Company and *Cobbo* (Theatre Alibi). As a resident designer at the Space in East London she has designed costumes and set for *The B.F.G.* and *Saving of Santa*. She has also participated in a number of theatre design exhibitions like *The Golden Dolphin International Puppetry Festival* in Bulgaria and the *Prague Quadrennial International Exhibition of Scenography and Theatre Architecture*.

Steve Hames – Sound Designer

A long standing member of The Questors and has designed the sound and lighting for many productions, such as *coda4maKbet*, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. He has also often designed sound for Jonne on *Theatrestorm* productions.

Martin Stoner – Lighting Designer

Has designed the lighting for many Questors productions over the years. In recent years, he designed the lighting for *Charley's Aunt*, *coda4maKbet* and *Arsenic and Old Lace*. He has been a member for more years than he cares to admit. He has also done lighting design for Jonne's *Theatrestorm* productions.

Wesley Lloyd – Deputy Stage Manager

After making back to back appearances in *The Marvellous Land of Oz* (as various characters) and *A Christmas Carol* (as Young Scrooge), Wesley has taken a 'behind the scenes' role in *Kvetch* to learn more about the backstage workings of the theatre and it has proved an invaluable experience.

The Next Questors Productions

The Pierglass

by Tim Norton

11 – 13 March 2010

The Playhouse

The Questors Youth Theatre presents a wonderfully witty melodrama with a love story to swoon over.

The Accrington Pals

by Peter Whelan

20 – 27 March 2010

The Studio

The Questors Student Group 63 presents a warm and moving drama of the Great War and the women left behind.

Steven Berkoff

Steven Berkoff was born in Stepney, London in 1937. He studied Drama in London and Paris. He performed with repertory companies before forming the London Theatre Group (L.T.G.) in 1968. Their first professional production was *In the Penal Colony*, an adaptation of a short story by Kafka. Berkoff's first original stage play, *East*, was presented at the Edinburgh Festival in 1975.

Other original plays include *West*, *Decadence*, *Greek*, *Kvetch*, *Acapulco*, *Harry's Christmas*, *Lunch*, *Sink the Belgrano*, *Massage*, *Sturm und Drang*, *Brighton Beach Scumbags*, *The Secret Love Life of Ophelia*, *Bow of Ulysses*, *Ritual in Blood* and *Messiah*.

Among the many adaptations Steven Berkoff has created for the stage are Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and *The Trial*, *Agamemnon* (after Aeschylus) and Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*. His plays and adaptations have been performed in many countries and many languages. He has also directed and toured productions of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and Oscar Wilde's *Salome*.

Steven Berkoff has acted in films as diverse as *A Clockwork Orange*, *Barry Lyndon*, *The Passenger*, *Octopussy*, *Beverly Hills Cop*, *Rambo*, *Under the Cherry Moon*, *Absolute Beginners* and *The Krays*. He directed and co-starred with Joan Collins in the film version of *Decadence*.

He has published collections of short stories, production journals, travel writings, poetry and his autobiography *Free Association*.

www.stevenberkoff.com

TALKBACK

Come meet the Director and Cast for an informal discussion in The Studio as soon as possible after the performance on **Tuesday 2nd March**.



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Get all the latest news and offers for our shows by joining our e-mail lists. It's easy to sign up – just a few clicks are all that it takes.

Visit questors.org.uk

Join Us

If you enjoy theatre, why not join us and benefit from membership:

- ✓ Half price personal tickets for Questors productions*
- ✓ Discounted Guest tickets when you bring friends to Questors productions*
- ✓ Children's FREE tickets¹
- ✓ Opportunities to be actively involved in our productions
- ✓ Allowed to audition to join our company of actors
- ✓ Exclusive or discounted training courses
- ✓ Colour magazine three times a year
- ✓ Regular Members' Newsletter
- ✓ Regular programme card
- ✓ Vote at general meetings
- ✓ Membership of The Grapevine Club

*Reduced prices exclude certain events. ¹Under 18 only, maximum four per event. Must be collected at the performance and accompanied by an adult member.

Introductory offer – as a welcome for first time members, either try us out for six months at half price, or get your first 15 months' membership for the price of 12.

Getting the most from your membership

We have a wide range of opportunities for you to become actively involved front-of-house or backstage. Volunteer help is always needed for selling programmes or stewarding, and training is provided if you'd like to work in Box Office with our computerized system. To meet members in a social setting, volunteer to help behind the Grapevine bar. Backstage staff including stage managers, prop makers, set builders, sound and light designers and operators, painters, wardrobe and costume and set designers are always welcomed: whatever your skills, we'll find a place for you. We also have courses for those wishing to direct.

The Questors has a high standard of acting and, to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – call the Theatre Office for details of forthcoming auditions.

Questors Youth Theatre – QYT

Our Youth Theatre, QYT, runs weekly drama classes for all ages from 6 to 16. Younger groups meet on Saturday mornings and older ages at weekday teatime. There's often a waiting list for membership, so put your name down now! Details are online at questors.org.uk/qyt.

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