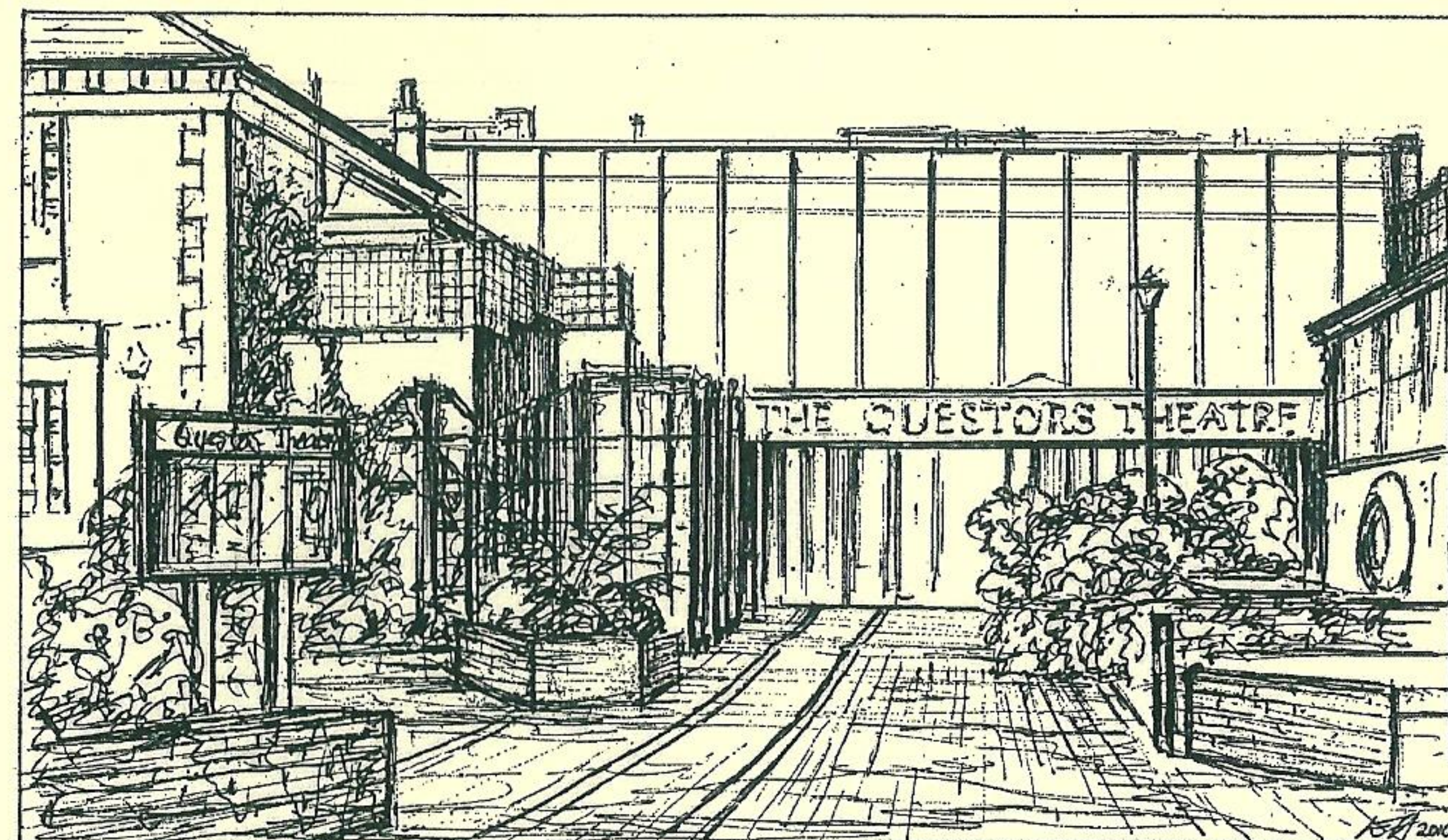




Questors, Ealing's Theatre



TEECHERS

by John Godber

The Studio

23 – 31 March 2012

Qafé

Pop in for lunch or an afternoon snack – serving specialist teas and coffees, hot chocolate and soft drinks, with a selection of sandwiches cut to order.

Opening Hours:

Tuesday to Friday	11:30 am – 7:30 pm
Saturday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Sunday	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

For Playhouse productions:

Hot meal menu up to 7:00 pm followed by drinks, ice creams and snacks through the first interval.

The Grapevine Bar

The Grapevine is our friendly club bar open to Members and Friends of The Questors Theatre and their guests, as well as 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 2012 edition of The Good Beer Guide and we are **CAMRA National Club of the Year 2012**. 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

See questors.org.uk/grapevine for more details

Neither the Qafé nor the Grapevine
is able to accept credit or debit cards.

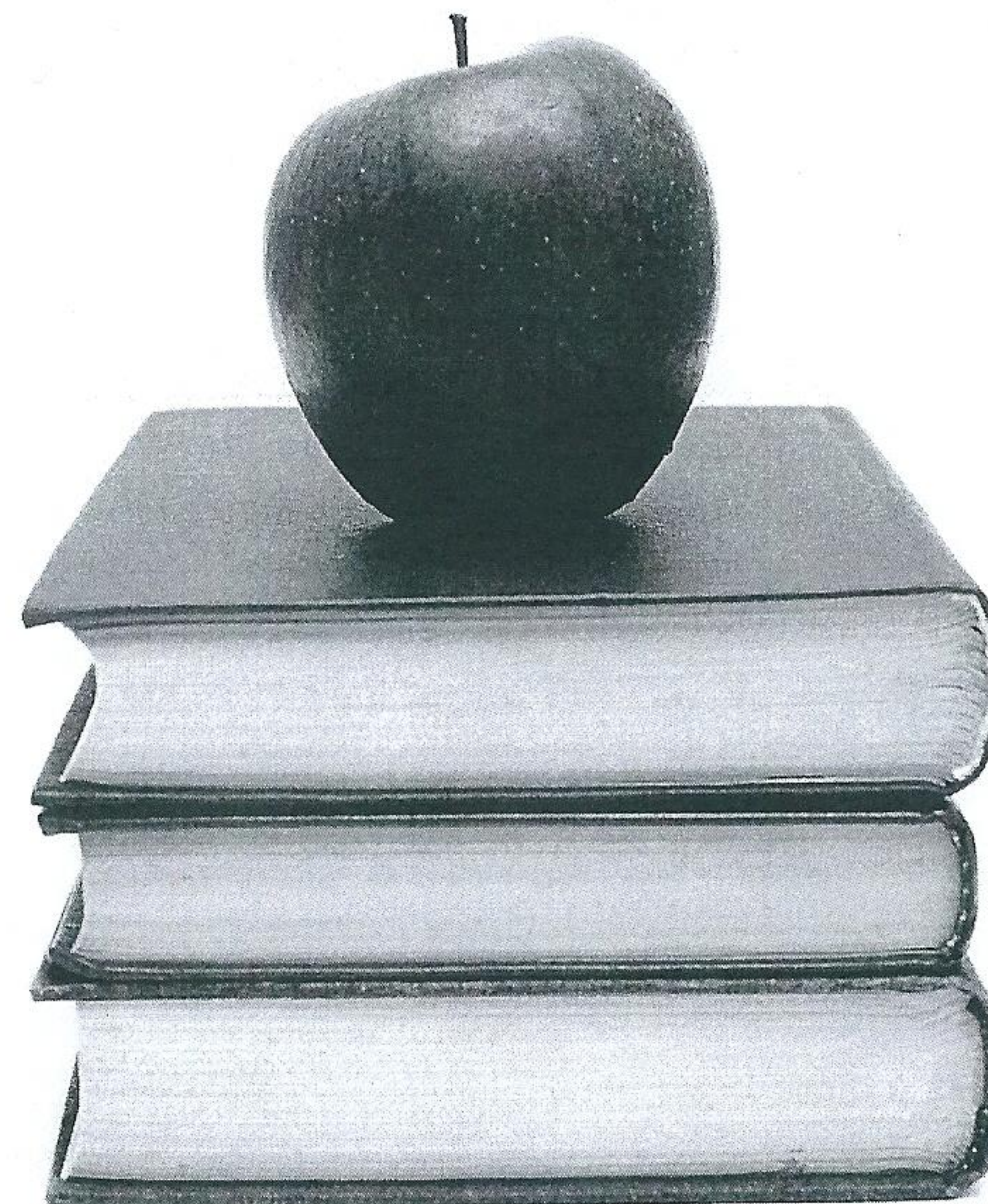


image © Diana Taliun / Shutterstock.com

TEACHERS

by John Godber

The Studio

23 – 31 March 2012

Teechers

In 1989 I was sitting in the Ramada Hotel in Manchester at *The Manchester Evening News Theatre Awards* at the 'writers' table' with – among other far worthier people than me – John Godber. I had seen his play, *Bouncers*, but knew very little about him other than that. As I recall, we got on quite well. After an amusing encounter between the two of us and Dora Bryan – which I frequently relate for the price of a pint – we were able to shake hands amicably enough. I felt I was more or less equal to this man: a colleague who just happened to have been in the business a lot longer than I had. I was, of course, wrong. Mr Godber is Britain's third most performed playwright (only Shakespeare and Ayckbourn go before him): I had written one reasonably successful play and a couple of not-so-successful ones. I had been told I wasn't likely to win against such illustrious company but, although I didn't bother to prepare a tearful speech of thanks, it was nice to be nominated.

Why is Godber so successful? Well, maybe it's because he writes about real people that we recognise; maybe because we love to laugh and his plays are genuinely very funny. I suspect it's also because his plays are very adaptable. This student group has an 'interesting' demographic: eight women and one man. Finding a suitable piece was going to be something of a struggle. When one of my students at Kingston chose *Teechers* for his final directorial assessment, a light went on. The original script was written for one man and two women but, after a quick rereading, I was entirely persuaded it would work for Group 65; after all, Godber has said it could be done by a cast of twenty and it frequently is done with many more than three.

We've set the play in 1987, the year in which it was written. Given the period, it's tempting to search for a metaphor. Margaret Thatcher and her Conservatives would very rarely give the time of day to Neil Kinnock's Labour followers and vice versa. In the play, it would be easy to see the 'posh' and privileged St George's School as representative of the affluent right and the under-achieving, rough Whitewall Comprehensive as representative of the under-privileged. This might be intentional, or could simply be a reflection of what Godber saw around him; it doesn't really matter. *Teechers* is, first and foremost, a look at school life that would find resonances with practically everybody, regardless of whether their favourite memory of school is embodied by a Mr Chips or a Jeff Nixon, by a Miss Brodie or a Jackie Prime. The frustrations and high spirits of the pupils, the staff room rivalry and the grudging support of some very recognisable 'jobsworth' ancillary staff are all painted in broad strokes. There are only occasional flashes of 'message' which, in any case, are

probably still relevant today: there are still plentiful examples of Whitewall around and it's doubtful if having one in a particular catchment area would increase the house prices. Our main *Teecher*, Nixon, believes in 'a fair chance for all kids, regardless of whether their parents are wealthy or not'. Although this might well have been an intention of comprehensive education, the reality is that the lowest common denominator often dictates the standard. A school's place in the league tables has replaced a genuine desire to inspire pupils and this is reflected in the jobs market where a qualification, however little it might reflect genuine ability, is almost always trusted above demonstrable professional aptitude. I'm not claiming to have the answer to this; others have tried, and failed, to find one. But *Teechers* seems to me to be demonstrating how the problem arises. As Salty says in the play, he is not ready for the outside world and his path in life is already mapped out for him. Even today, it will still frequently be a map drawn from a starting point of background and parentage.

Since the eighties, education has gone through changes, some positive, some questionable. One of the positive ideas that resonated with me came earlier, in 1983. This was Howard Gardner's theory of the 'Multiple Intelligences': different areas of skill that include several that most teachers used to dismiss as irrelevant. For instance, in the play, Barry Wobshall is enthused by colouring maps but is seen as stupid because he isn't academically bright. The theory was best explained to me when a colleague brought up the example of David Beckham's perceived lack of intelligence. Could one say he wasn't very bright because he came over badly in interviews when his undoubted prowess at kinaesthetic (physical) 'intelligence' far outshone most people's basic ability to frame a pithy sentence?

Shakespeare, Churchill, Shaw, Newton and Einstein all disliked their schooling. I once heard of a man whose father ran a tripe shop. He was illiterate but had acumen for business and worked like a Trojan, always keen to hide his supposed lack of intelligence. He founded an extremely successful chain of grocery stores in the North West and became a millionaire. At the age of sixty – still illiterate – an interviewer asked him what might have become of him had he been able to read and write; he replied, 'I would have owned a tripe shop in Rochdale'.

I must close here: the bell's gone. Enjoy the class.

Richard Gallagher, Director

Meet The Company – Wednesday 28 March

Come and meet the director, cast and crew for an informal discussion in the Studio as soon as possible after the performance.

THE QUESTORS STUDENT GROUP 65 PRESENTS

TEECHERS

by John Godber

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 23 March 2012

CAST

in order of speaking

Annie – (Jackie Prime/Salty)	Hannah Webster
Elaine – (Mrs Parry/Peter Saxon)	Tamara Laryea
Hobby – (Doug/Rachael Steele)	Oré Sanderson
Gail – (Mrs Clifton/French Assistant)	Jessy Moat
JJ – (Ms Jones/Barry Wobschall/ Ms Coates)	Meena Toor
Sandra – (Mrs Whitham/ Mr Dean/Simon Patterson)	Claire Durrant
Ursula – (Oggy Moxon)	Claudia Bernard
Donna – (Mr Basford/Madge)	Chloe Purchase
Mr Harrison – (Jeff Nixon)	Richard Soulsby

The play is set in the late eighties.

The performance lasts about 1 hour and 45 minutes
including a 15-minute interval.

PRODUCTION

Director	Richard Gallagher
Associate Director	Daniel Cawtheray
Lighting Designer	Francois Langton
Sound Designer	Martin Choules
Stage Manager	Libbie Khabaza
Deputy Stage Manager	Michelle Weaver
Assistant Stage Managers	Jemima Cardenas Meijers, Emily Newns
Properties	Libbie Khabaza, Emily Newns, Oliver Partington
Wardrobe Supervisor	Lucy Aley-Parker
Wardrobe Assistant	Kate Townsend
Prompter	Jean Masters
Lighting & Sound Operator	Lucy Flach
Set Design Consultants	David Emmet, Alex Marker
Set Construction	Adrian Asher, Henry Broom, Daniel Cawtheray, Martin Choules, Mike Hagan, Francois Langton, John MacCarrick, Ellis McNorthey-Gibbs, Jon Webster, Paul Whiting, The Kingston Student Team
Photographer	Robert Vass

The Questors wishes to thank:

**Amy & Dan Burns, Lucy Hilton-Jones, Cecily Johnson, Nigel Lewis,
Geoffrey Morgan, Sarah Morrison, James Rooza and the cast of
Teechers at Kingston, Alan N Smith, Alan Soper, Liorah Tchiprout,
Jaye Webster, Tracey Wilkinson, Katharine Williams,
Julian Light Operatic Society, The Questors Office Staff**

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

Biographies

Claudia Bernard: *Ursula – (Oggy Moxon)*

Claudia currently works in *The Miniature Nut and Screw* industry. Previously, she was an extreme ironing enthusiast and spent her time on a quest for the perfect kind of steam. Forced to retire, she now uses the Questors student course as a way to relieve suppressed rage whilst awaiting the charges being pressed against her (luckily, the badger involved was not hurt). Whilst at school, she was known for an unhealthy obsession with other people's necks and went to several educational establishments in various countries, three of which she is now banned from for life.

Claire Durrant: *Sandra – (Mrs Whitham/Mr Dean/Simon Patterson)*

Born in 1742, Claire was raised as a bear cub until the age of six. At this time, she was discovered by a local travelling circus, which was run by a rich French duke. Making her mark on the tightrope, she quickly gained the duke's favour and was adopted as his daughter. After her starring role as The Iceberg in the 1997 blockbuster *Titanic*, Claire turned her hand to theatre acting. Her school yearbook did not contain her picture, as she did not grow a nose until the age of twenty.

Tamara Laryea: *Elaine – (Mrs Parry/Peter Saxon)*

Tamara was the teachers' pet, adored by all and the number one speller. At the tender age of nine, she was lead singer in a pop group called Candy (she's not joking). Her hits included *Wannabe* and *Say You'll Be There*. Her breakthrough role was in *Through the Dragon's Eye* as 'sulky girl in playground'. Luckily, as teachers' pet, she received rave reviews. Her teenage years included a long run as a perfect school prefect. After being introduced to the Atkins Diet in grade three, Tamara led the first campaign to eradicate carbolicious school meals; Mrs Parry could learn from this but probably won't.

Jessy Moat: *Gail – (Mrs Clifton/French Assistant)*

Jessy is a fiercely intelligent academic who is at a loss to know why she has to do her final year at Whitewall yet again. Although she admits her Greek and Latin are somewhat lacking, she has excelled in the dramatic arts, so much so that she is now tutoring the Questors Youth Theatre. (She suggested they do *Marat/Sade* but was overruled in favour of *The Tempest*.) She enjoys working with young people and, some day, intends to become one.

Chloe Purchase: *Donna – (Mr Basford/Madge)*

Chloe was born in Zimbabwe and raised on a South African farm. In 2004, she came to London by herself. A 'Goody Two Shoes' at school, her nicknames were 'Micro-chip' and 'Short Sh*t!'. Her tomboy pursuits include motorbikes, shooting, cliff diving, fishing etc. She was a competitive

gymnast in 2006 and married David in Las Vegas. She is mother to two beautiful dogs, Roy and Eva. She decided to pursue acting after playing the star in a nativity play at infant school; this led to a particular interest in method acting. Credits include Meg Bestwood in *Deliver us from Evil* and Kim, 'the geek turned pop star', in *For Better or for Worse*.

Oré Sanderson: *Hobby – (Doug/Rachael Steele)*

Raised by descendants of C3PO, R2D2, Yoda and the Ewoks, Oré found it hard to decipher cyborg logic despite it being mixed with the more understandable teachings of Yoda and the Jedi ways. From an early age, she found it easier to apply herself in creative surroundings during performance. She began her acting training at amateur level with Young Blood Theatre, but still failed in cyborg-related equations. After her fourth attempt, Oré achieved her mathematical GCSE in 2011, seven years after finishing her English degree. Well, she does do things back to front! What did you expect?

Richard Soulsby: *Mr Harrison – (Jeff Nixon)*

Primarily educated at the School of Hard Knocks, Richard was selected to take part in a co-ed experiment at Mallory Towers, being expelled for leading Mary of the fourth form astray. This inspired a study in Magical Realism at the Unseen University and a debut at the Opera House, Ankh-Morpork.

Meena Toor: *JJ – (Ms Jones/Barry Wobschall/Ms Coates)*

It was during a perfectly performed, innocent lie involving an orange crayon that Meena came to realise her passion for acting. Spurred by an absence of adequate state policing, she joined the Justice League and King's Alumni Theatrical Society, before joining forces with The Questors. There she attempted to keep the peace but, as Social Secretary, she disturbed it beyond repair and so turned her attention to teaching the youth group. Her love of English language and literature *wuz 2b ha insparashun 4 da yrs2cum #imsocoolithurts*. Her dream is to perform in Shakespeare and do the 'Einhorn is a man' speech from Ace Ventura.

Hannah Webster: *Annie – (Jackie Prime/Salty)*

Hannah was average. For her outstanding performance as Bill Sykes in *Oliver!* at the Back Wellington Street Junior School she received a rave review that described her as 'average' (her dog, Bullseye, got a first). She joined The Questors in the hope of raising her grade to 'satisfactory' and, after lubricating her tutor's brain with affordable lager, she is now rated as 'excellent'. Apart from playing her own brother, Hannah's experience of the Questors student group has included being DSM on last year's *Entertaining Strangers*, for which she was awarded a book token. She has not yet exchanged it.

Richard Gallagher: Director

Richard spent a happy two years as the headmaster of the Victorian school at Wigan Pier where he broke several canes. At The Questors, he regressed from this lofty position when he attended Dotheboys Hall, where he was taught by a certain Mr Nicholas Nickleby. Whitewall Comprehensive's Mrs Parry once said of him, 'We treat Richard as a young adult and we expect him to behave accordingly'.

Daniel Cawtheray: Associate Director

Born in 1564, Daniel started theatre as a dogsbody, a grunt, and, so good was he, that he was quickly developed to become an eminent director until a falling out with one William Shakespeare – whose love of a drama led him to believe Daniel to be turning casts against him – saw Daniel exiled from theatrical circles. Now he returns and, even at 447 years old, he's still as sharp as he ever was!

Libbie Khabaza: Stage Manager

Libbie was plunged into the world of schooling young ladies when she was bribed and cajoled into being DSM on *Annie*. She has felt an affinity with Mr Godber since working on *Ladies' Day* (where certain young ladies from Godber country, Hull, were set loose at the races). She has earned her spurs during school productions and so is completely at home being in charge of this charming group from St-Trinian's Whitewall Comprehensive.

The Questors Student Group Tutors

Director of Studies and First Year tutor

Second Year tutor

Voice teacher

Movement and physical theatre teacher

David Emmet

Richard Gallagher

Maeve Diamond

Nicholas Jonne Wilson

Next Questors Productions

DEALER'S CHOICE

by Patrick Marber

13 – 28 April 2012

The Studio

The first of Marber's loose trilogy of plays in and about contemporary London. Set in an Italian restaurant, the drama unfolds, leading to a climactic poker game.

BRASSED OFF

by Paul Allen

12 – 19 May 2012

The Playhouse

Adapted from the massively successful film, *Brassed Off* portrays the difficulties of musical and personal survival for the Grimley Colliery Band in a Yorkshire mining town threatened with pit closure.

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 tickets†
- ✓ Opportunities to be actively involved in our productions
- ✓ Allowed to audition to join our company of actors
- ✓ Exclusive or discounted training courses
- ✓ Access to *iQ* – the members-only website members.questors.org.uk
- ✓ A full-colour members' magazine three times a year
- ✓ Access to exclusive news on *iQ* and email newsletter
- ✓ Monthly programme card
- ✓ Membership of The Grapevine Club
- ✓ Voting rights in the company

*Reduced prices exclude certain events. †Under 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, get your first 12 months' membership for the price of six.

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.

The 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.

Cover Image: Elaine Hagan

The Questors Theatre

Box Office: 020 8567 5184

Email: enquiries@questors.org.uk

Programme: Nigel Bamford

12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, W5 5BQ

Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011

Registered Charity No. 207516