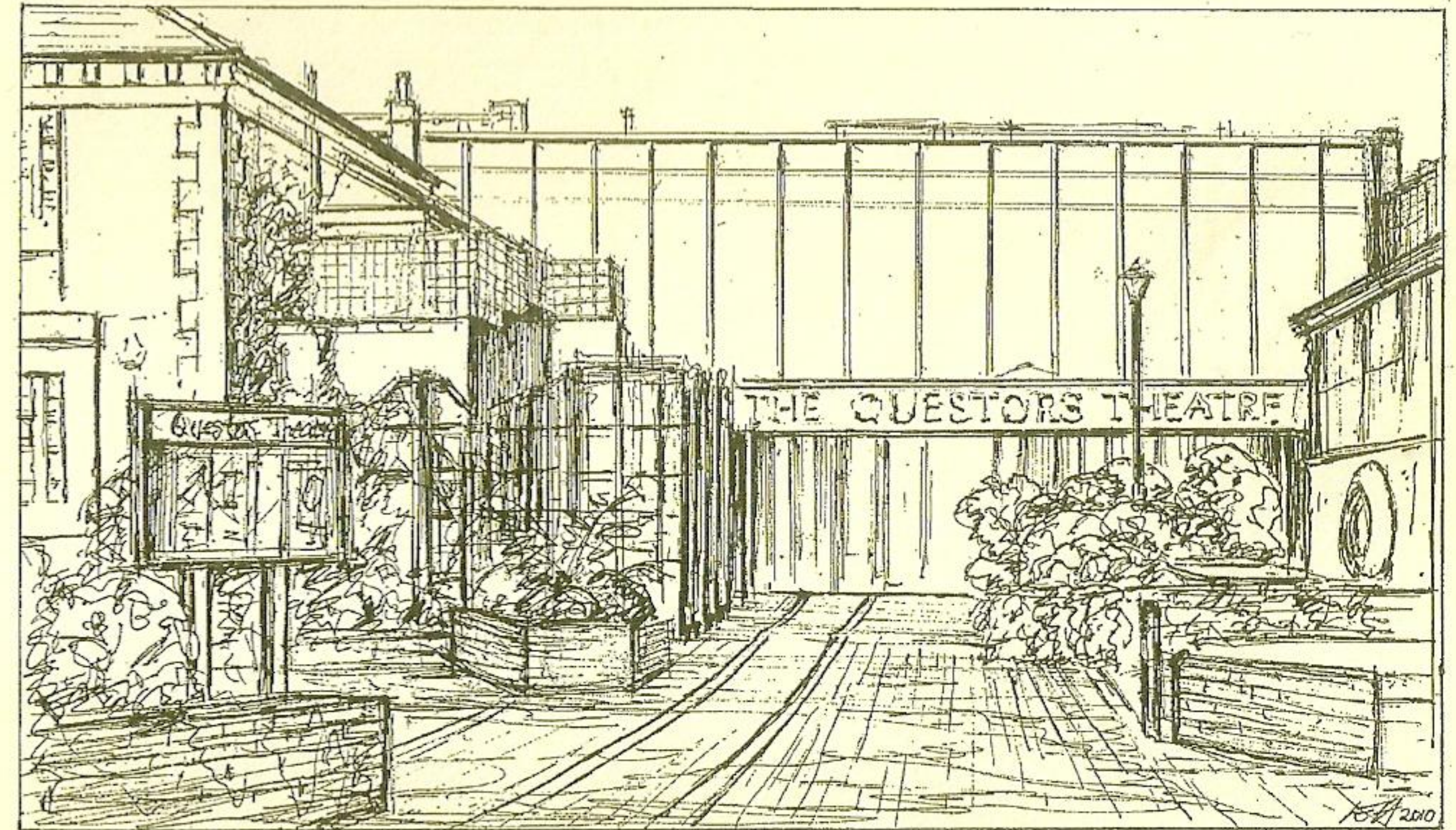




Questors, Ealing's Theatre



# **BLUE REMEMBERED HILLS**

by Dennis Potter

**The Playhouse**

**26 January – 2 February 2013**

## 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 – 7:00 pm\*

Saturday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Sunday 2:30 pm – 5:00 pm

*\*last orders for food at 6:30 pm*

For Playhouse productions:

Hot meal menu up to 6:30 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 2013 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](http://questors.org.uk/grapevine) for more details

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



Image: Jane Salisbury

## BLUE REMEMBERED HILLS

by Dennis Potter

The Playhouse

26 January – 2 February 2013

# Blue Remembered Hills

Dennis Christopher George Potter (17 May 1935 – 7 June 1994) was an English TV dramatist, screenwriter, director and journalist. His BBC career began in 1965 with *The Wednesday Plays* and included his 1986 play *The Singing Detective*, for which he is best known.

He was born in Berry Hill, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Brought up a Protestant, he attended the local Salem chapel and went to Christchurch Junior School where, in 1946, he passed the Eleven Plus. Between 1953 and 1955, Potter did his National Service and learnt Russian, serving with the Intelligence Corps and subsequently at the War Office.

After National Service in 1956, he won a scholarship and went to New College Oxford to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics, and where he edited the student magazine, *Isis*. He graduated in 1958, obtaining a second-class degree. A tall, lean young man with red hair, he was described by his economics tutor as a 'cross between Jimmy Porter and Keir Hardie'.

On 10 January 1959 he married, at the Christchurch parish church, Margaret Amy Morgan (1933-1994), a local girl he met at a dance. They lived a 'surprisingly quiet private life' and had a son, Robert, who was to achieve prominence in the 1980s as an international cricketer, and two daughters, Jane and Sarah.

In 1962 Potter had begun to suffer from an acute form of psoriasis known as psoriatic arthropathy that affected his skin and caused arthritis in his joints. It also made a conventional career path impossible. Potter embarked on a career as a television playwright, largely after being inspired by the Granada version of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1963), based on Erwin Piscator's stage production. He wrote in the *Daily Herald* that it was 'surely the most exciting evening that TV has ever given us'.

*Blue Remembered Hills* was first broadcast on the 30 January 1979 as BBC's *Play for Today*. Set on a sunny summer afternoon in the Forest of Dean during the Second World War, a group of seven-year-olds play and squabble. But events take a darker turn as their childlike games reveal a capacity for brutality beneath their seeming innocence. Potter had used his childhood as an autobiographical device before, in *Stand Up, Nigel Barton*. The play text for *Blue Remembered Hills* was first published in the collection *Waiting for the Boat* in 1984 (with *Joe's Ark* and *Blade on the Feather*) and has since enjoyed several successful stage performances.

*Blue Remembered Hills* returned to the British small screen at Christmas 2004 and in the summer of 2005, showcased as part of the winning decade (the 1970s) voted by BBC 4 viewers as the golden era of British television.

The play might be set in 1943, the location the West Country, but the themes are timeless and universal. When I was given the opportunity to work with this play, I was very excited. I was really interested in Potter's daring device to use adults to play seven-year-old children and I remember thinking of the quote, "Give me the boy at seven and I will show you the man". Potter said he didn't want to lose the impact and the audience to distance themselves 'ooing' and 'aahing' at child actors. By casting the play in this way he was allowing the audience to see how awful, or how wonderful, the text was by using the adult form as a magnifying glass to show how cruel children can be. How often have we looked back at our own childhood and recalled the things that we did or said either with fondness or perhaps slightly appalled, but thinking we were just children doing what children do? In a world where we have, at first hand, witnessed how cruel children can be (we only need to look at our juvenile detention centres to know what children are capable of) Potter was using adults to try to avoid sentimental responses to child actors. By eliminating the 'oh that's just children' or 'harmless kids' reaction, having adults behaving in the same way – using the same words – has an impact that shows how close the action is to what adults do. He just added the fidgets and the constant, unsophisticated movements of children.

The scene when the boys are killing the squirrel shows the potential for cruelty and the way people will round upon the weakest amongst them. The audience will recognise their schooldays in these brutal scenarios – children simply cannot conceal their phenomenal flair for spite. Stresses in childhood exist and reflect the behavioural patterns of the adult. This is amplified most fully by using grown-ups to play children. Dennis Potter uses the past to run along with our present. We say 'oh those were the days', 'boys will be boys', but when we really think about those 'good old days' we can see them for what they really were – hard and ruthless. We all seem to forget the bad times when we are looking back, but it is the good and the bad that has made us who we are today; it is part of us.

Melvyn Bragg asked Potter, "There is a sense in which nostalgia, and a belief in certain values which you wish to believe are still there, are very much part of what you write about." Potter replied, "I don't know 'nostalgia'... I dislike nostalgia, you see. Nostalgia is a very second-order emotion. It's not a real emotion..." (*Seeing the Blossom*, introduction by Melvyn Bragg.)

Welcome to the first Dennis Potter play to have been performed at The Questors Theatre. I hope you feel 'real emotion' towards it.

**Pam Redrup, Director**

# BLUE REMEMBERED HILLS

by Dennis Potter

*First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre 26 January 2013*

## CAST

in order of speaking

Willie	<b>Mark Redrup</b>
Peter	<b>Simon Roberts</b>
Angela	<b>Juliette Bartelds</b>
Audrey	<b>Kerri Logan</b>
Donald	<b>Wesley Lloyd</b>
John	<b>Tim Pemberton</b>
Raymond	<b>Robert Vass</b>

The play is set in the West Country during the long, hot summer of 1943.

The performance lasts approximately one hour 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	<b>Pamela Redrup</b>
Set Designer	<b>Philip Lindley</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Nichola Thomas</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Nigel Lewis</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Paul Comerford</b>
Stage Managers	<b>Sarah Clopet, Sylvia Wall</b>
Properties	<b>Liz Cooper</b>
Prompter	<b>Debbie Abel</b>
Voice Coach	<b>Lucy Aley-Parker</b>
Movement Director	<b>Nicholas Jonne Wilson</b>
Lighting Operators	<b>Kieran Kesby, James Lee-Cross</b>
Sound Operator	<b>Orlando Kilborn</b>
Lighting Riggers	<b>Joe Monks, Josh Trayling</b>
Construction Manager	<b>Philip Lindley</b>
Constructors	<b>Jeff Baynham, Mike Hagan, Gordon Miller, Geoffrey Morgan, Paul Wilson</b>
Get-In Team	<b>Jeff Baynham, Mike Hagan, Tina Harris, Orlando Kilborn, Doug King, Gordon Miller, Paul Wilson</b>
Make-Up	<b>Beth Chinn, Sophia Dutt, Julie Wong</b>
Photographer	<b>Jane Salisbury</b>
Thanks to	<b>Toby Burbidge, Liz Prior</b>

## Biographies

### **Juliette Bartelds – Angela**

Juliette joined Student Group 64 appearing in *Entertaining Strangers* (Sarah Eldridge) and *The Man Who Came To Dinner* (eccentric characters). She is looking forward to playing Angela and has dedicated this performance to her beautiful friend and fellow Questors student Efthymia Kalyvides who sadly passed away last year.

### **Paul Comerford – Sound Designer**

Paul Comerford is the Technical Manager of the Arthur Cotterell Theatre in Kingston where his most recent designs include lighting and sound for *Dracula* and *Daisy Pulls It Off*. He made his debut at The Questors designing sound for *After October*.

### **Nigel Lewis – Lighting Designer**

Nigel is Head of the Lighting Department and responsible for training the lighting staff. He has lit many Questors productions including *Annie*, *Ladies Down Under* and *The Pierglass*. Nigel works as a professional lighting designer and teacher of lighting design.

### **Philip Lindley – Set Designer**

Philip trained as an architect but began his theatre career as a set and lighting designer before joining the BBC TV Design Department. He became a freelance theatre consultant, and designed sets and lighting for Portuguese theatre. He recently returned to the UK and designed *Ladies' Day*, *The Winterling*, *Rent*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Present Laughter*, *Greek* and *Annie*. Philip is Associate Designer at the Finborough Theatre.

### **Wesley Lloyd – Donald**

Wesley graduated from Student Group 62 in 2009. Last season, he appeared in *Present Laughter* (Roland Maule, also directed by Pam Redrup), *Dealers Choice* (Mugsy) and, for The Questors offshoot Crucial Image, *Macbeth* (Malcolm) and *Martin Chuzzlewit* (Tom Pinch). He was last seen in *Calendar Girls* (Liam).

### **Kerri Logan – Audrey**

Kerri joined The Questors in 2002 from her native Northern Ireland, where she performed regularly at the Lyric and Courtyard Theatres and the Grand Opera House. She has appeared in many Questors productions, including *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Company*, *Two*, *Misery*, *Ladies' Day*, *Hobson's Choice*, and last season's *Present Laughter*. *Blue Remembered Hills* is a welcome opportunity to unleash her inner thug.

### **Tim Pemberton – John**

This is Tim's third show at The Questors, and his first without tights, following *Night of the Soul* and *Coarse Shakespeare: The Final Folio*. Previous appearances closer to home in Chesham include *Season's Greetings* (Bernard), *Out of Order* (the Hotel Manager), *Uncle Vanya* (Sebriakov) and *Twelfth Night* (Aguecheek).

### **Mark Redrup – Willie**

Mark first acted at The Questors in 1990 and has been in over 50 shows. Most recent productions are *Rock 'n' Roll* (Ferdinand), *A Flea In Her Ear* (Etienne), *Present Laughter* (Henry) and *Brassed Off* (Jim).

### **Pamela Redrup – Director**

This is the second show that Pam has directed at The Questors, her first being Noël Coward's *Present Laughter* last season. She was looking forward to her next one and was very happy to have been given *Blue Remembered Hills*. How much fun we have had rehearsing this play – she hopes you enjoy it as much.

### **Simon Roberts – Peter**

Simon joined The Questors in 1989. Most recent appearances include *Humble Boy* (Felix Humble), *Festen* (Christian), *Great Expectations* (Pip), and *Waiting for Godot* (Vladimir). He has directed *Doctor Faustus*, *Abigail's Party* and *Two*. He is also a member of The Questors Artistic Team.

### **Nichola Thomas – Costume Designer**

Nichola has worked on numerous shows at The Questors over the past ten years, including *This Happy Breed*, *Dance of Death*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Separate Tables*, *Two*, *The Seagull*, *Hay Fever*, *Broken Glass*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *Humble Boy*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Present Laughter* and *The Railway Siding*.

### **Robert Vass – Raymond**

Robert was most recently seen in *The Railway Siding* as the Station Master. Other recent roles were in *The Flint Street Nativity* (the Innkeeper), *Suburban Motel* (Phillie) and *Night of the Soul* (night watchman Terry). He was also in *Sweeney Todd* (Beadle Bamford), *Into the Woods* (the Baker), *Company* (Harry) and *Beauty and the Beast* (Cogsworth the clock).

---

## Meet The Company – Wednesday 30 January

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

---

## A. E. Housman and Blue Remembered Hills

The title of the play comes from the 40th poem (XL in Roman numerals), *Into my heart an air that kills*, in A.E. Housman's poetry collection, *A Shropshire Lad* (1896). The poem is featured at the end of the play and was read by Dennis Potter himself at the end of the BBC production.

### XL: Into my heart an air that kills

Into my heart an air that kills  
From yon far country blows:  
What are those blue remembered hills,  
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,  
I see it shining plain,  
The happy highways where I went  
And cannot come again.

## Next Questors Productions

**MARY STUART**  
by Friedrich Schiller  
8 – 16 February 2013  
**The Studio**

The premier of a new translation of Schiller's masterpiece, plunging into the dark world of religious fundamentalism and byzantine political intrigue.

**AROUND THE WORLD  
IN EIGHTY DAYS**  
Freely adapted by Phil Willmott  
from the novel by Jules Verne  
13 – 16 March 2013

**The Playhouse**  
The Questors Youth Theatre presents an exciting and charming musical – the perfect choice for family entertainment.

## 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<sup>†</sup>
- ✓ 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](http://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. <sup>†</sup>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](http://questors.org.uk/qyt).

Cover Image: Elaine Hagan  
The Questors Theatre  
Box Office: 020 8567 5184  
Email: [enquiries@questors.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@questors.org.uk)

Programme: Nigel Bamford & Anne Gilmour  
12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, W5 5BQ  
Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011  
Registered Charity No. 207516