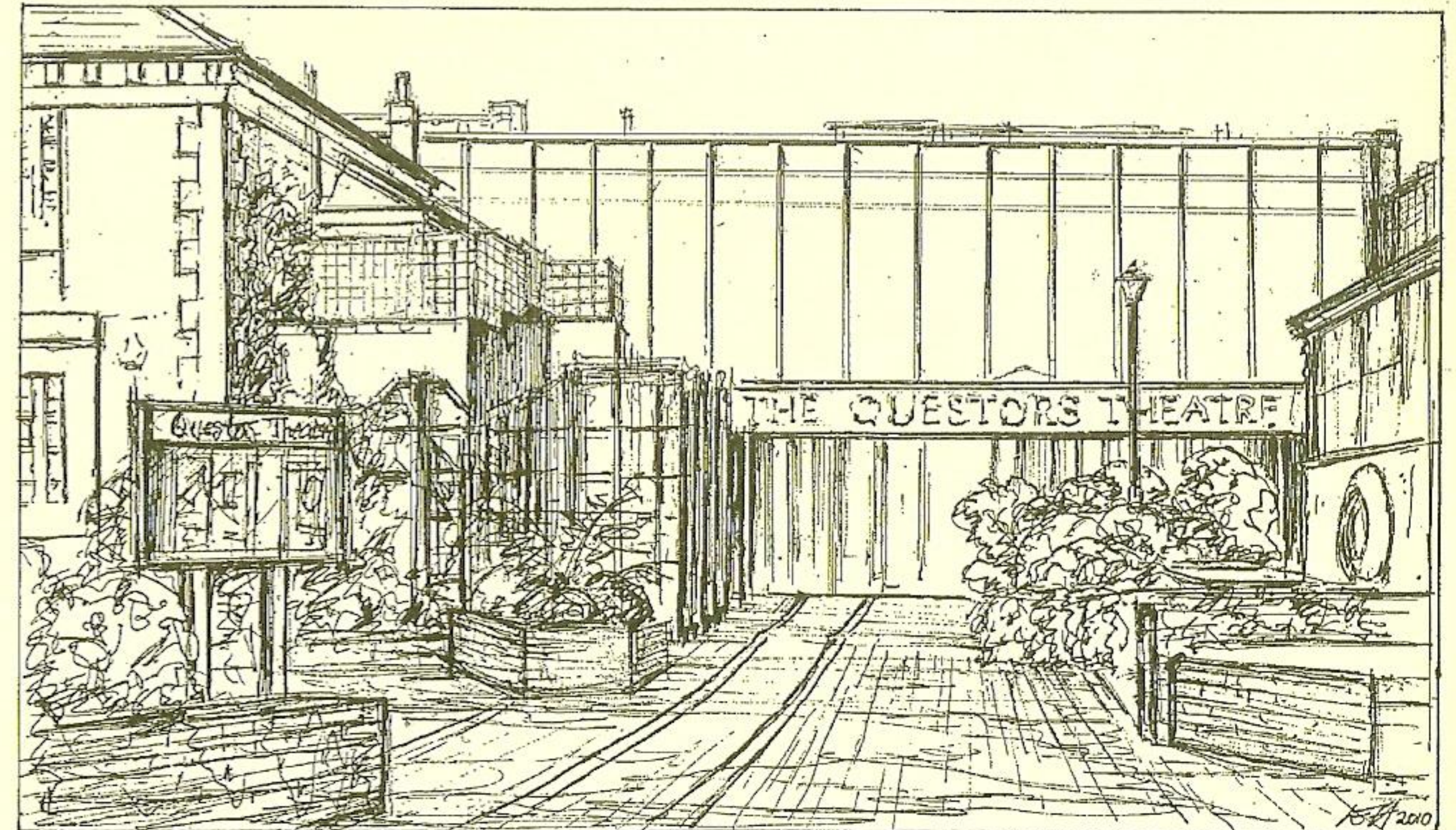




Questors, Ealing's Theatre



THE MISER

by Molière

translated by Ranjit Bolt

The Studio

10 – 18 May 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 were CAMRA West Middlesex 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

The Grapevine Spring Mini Beer Festival – Thu 6 to Sat 8 June 2013

See questors.org.uk/grapevine for more details

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

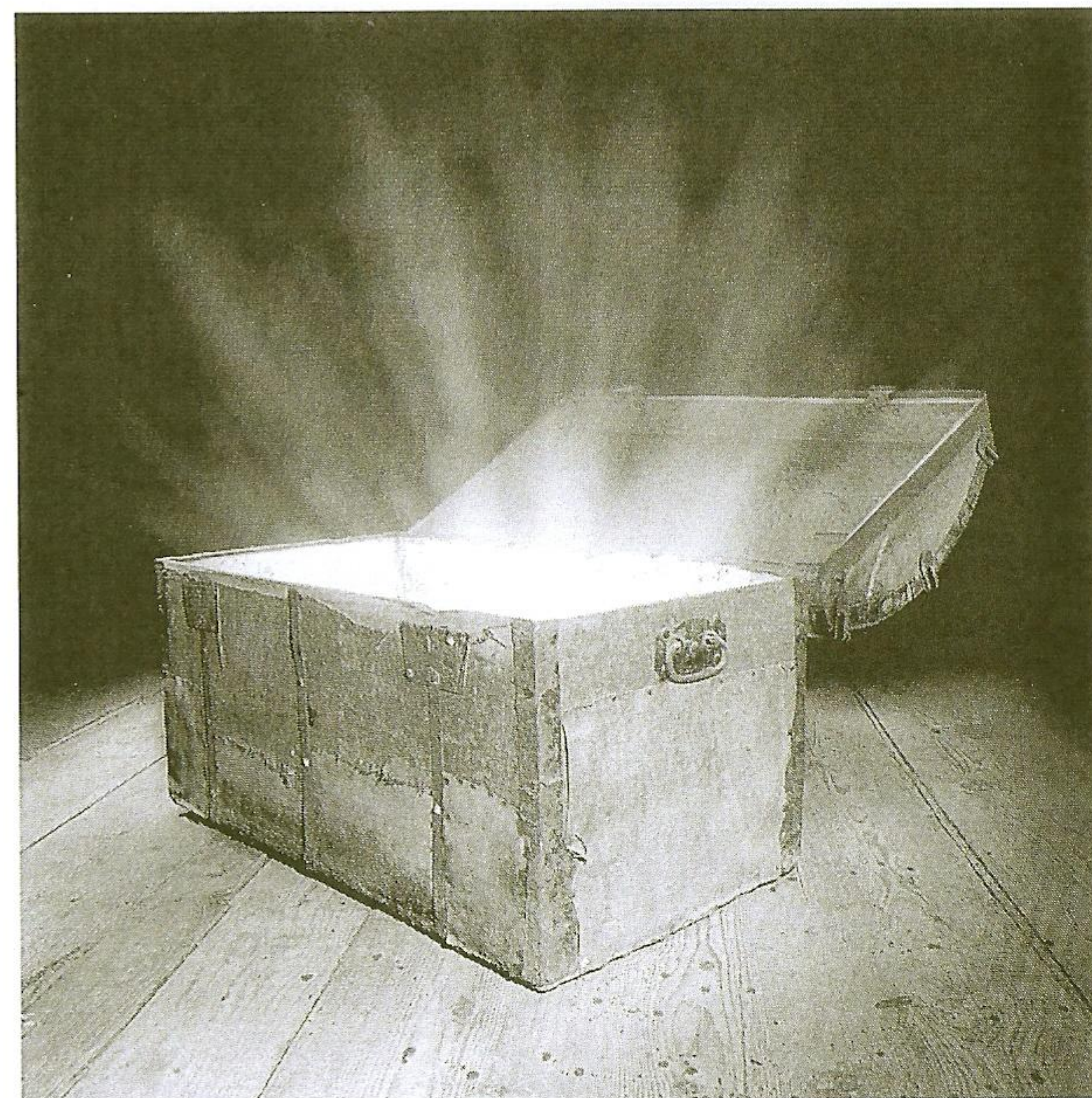


Image © Sinisa Botas / Fotolia.com

THE MISER

by Molière

translated by Ranjit Bolt

The Studio

10 – 18 May 2013

The Miser

2,200 Years of Avarice

Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (1622 – 1673), better known by his stage-name of Molière, wrote his satirical comedy *L'Avare* in 1668, but its origins go back much earlier. It is loosely based on a Latin farce, written around 200 BCE by the great Roman dramatist Titus Maccius Plautus, called *Aulularia* or *The Pot of Gold*. The version we are presenting today was adapted and updated by Ranjit Bolt to London in 2001, with a few further contemporary references to bring us right up-to-date in 2013.

You'll gather from all those dates that this play has seemed relevant in many different times and places. The love of money is after all one of the most perennial of human traits, and Molière's anti-hero has become the ultimate archetype of the skinflint in European literature. Indeed, his name, Harpagon, has entered the French language to signify 'miser' in much the same way that 'Scrooge' has in English.

So Harper (as he becomes in Bolt's anglicised version) is no less contemporary today than he has been for the last 2,200 years. With his suspicion of banks and his own dodgy lending practices, he is thoroughly at home in an age of debt and austerity such as our own, and would undoubtedly know how to turn a profit from it.

Of all the dramatic genres, it is satire that most needs to be continually updated. Unlike, say, tragedy or romance, it has to feel contemporary, because there is very little point in satirising vices that have long since been eliminated or outgrown. Fortunately for our drama tonight (though no doubt unfortunately for the good of society as a whole) Harper's vices are very much still with us.

Misers and Misery

The usual English translation of the title of this play is in one way more apt than the original French title *L'Avare*. For although Molière's anti-hero is of course thoroughly avaricious, it is the misery he creates for both himself and his family that is Molière's real theme. Corruption spreads out from him in a miasma of selfishness and mistrust infecting everyone it touches: his own children are forced into deceit and trickery to escape his baleful influence; the virtuous Victor must hide his love in hypocritical sycophancy; while Jack, already split in two by his dual professional responsibilities, is morally split too by his discovery that he gets punished when he lies and punished when he tells the truth. Perhaps the clearest case is that of Fletcher who is turned from a relatively honest man to a thief by the sheer pressure of Harper's suspicion: no prophecy could ever be more self-fulfilling.

But however miserable Harper makes everyone else, it's nothing to the misery he creates for himself. Even his greed brings him no pleasure, for his terror of loss is much stronger than his lust for acquisition, and his selfishness brings him nothing but paranoia. In truth it is more of a disease than a vice, consuming his being like a cancer, and turning his emotional links to his family, like his larger relations to society as a whole, to nothing more than items on a balance sheet.

Obsession and Power

Nearly all of Molière's principal characters are obsessives and monomaniacs, though their obsessions naturally vary. But whether their fixation be religion (*Tartuffe*), hypochondria (*The Imaginary Invalid*), social climbing (*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*), intellectual snobbery (*The Learned Ladies*), jealousy (at least half a dozen of them) or money, as in this play, the obsession is indulged not just for its own sake, but for the opportunities it gives to exert power over others, particularly over their own families.

Harper is no exception in this respect, and his avarice is inextricably entwined with his domestic tyranny. The link between his greed and his need for power and control is particularly clear in his relations with his children – nothing could reveal his unnatural egocentricity more than his desire to outlive them. He sees his daughter primarily as a cash cow to be married off at a profit, and yet in his desire to mate her with a near-clone of himself he reveals a deep and disturbing need to keep her within his grasping clutch.

Equally, his pursuit of Marianne is not so much geriatric lechery as sexual competition with his son. Yet he seems genuinely disappointed to discover that Charlie is enough of an idiot to try to borrow money from such an unscrupulous usurer as himself, even though it was his refusal to trust Charlie in the first place that turned him into the sort of feckless sap that Harper routinely exploits.

A Happy Ending?

Comedies often have rather unlikely and coincidence-strewn endings, but the ending to this play is absurdly providential even by Molière's standards, and is clearly intended to be taken with a pinch or two of salt. Apart from anything else, the *deus ex machina*, Sir Arthur, is by no means uncompromised by the same materialistic vices that afflict the rest of the characters.

But however improbably happily it turns out for everyone else, there is no redemption or regeneration for Harper. There may be harmony and reconciliation for some, but the only thing Harper is reconciled with is his money.

Steve Fitzpatrick, Director

THE MISER

by Molière, translated by Ranjit Bolt

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 10 May 2013

CAST

in order of appearance

Harper	Phillip Sheahan
Fletcher	Mark Hill
Charlie	Daniel Vernan
Victor	Daniel Carroll-Cawley
Eleanor	Freddy Henry
Ms Simone/Claudia/WPC	Christine Fox
Fay	Wendy Megeney
Jack	David Hovatter
Marianne	Bryony Twydle
Sir Arthur Edgerton	Robert Baker-Glenn

The performance lasts approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes
including a 15-minute interval.

Please turn off all mobile phones and similar electronic devices.
The use of cameras, video cameras and recording equipment is strictly prohibited.
Thank you.

PRODUCTION

Director	Steve Fitzpatrick
Set Designer	Wanda Duszynska
Costume Designer	Moonika Leisson
Lighting Designer	Nigel Lewis
Sound Designer	Daniel Beilby
Stage Manager	Clare Watson
Deputy Stage Manager	Elizabeth Sexton
Properties	Liz Cooper
Prompter	Debbie Abel
Lighting Operator	Jessie Batende
Sound Operator	Ellie Hopkins
Wardrobe Assistants	Jenny Richardson, Sylvia Wall, Jennie Yates
Constructors	Barry Jones, Eric Logan
Get-In Team	Jeff Baynham
Photographer	Peter Collins
Thanks to	Sarah Clopet, Paul Wilson, The Questors Office Staff, Blink (Chiswick), East (Chiswick), Marks & Spencer (Ealing), Phase Eight (Chiswick)

Biographies

Robert Baker-Glenn – Sir Arthur Edgerton

As well as acting, Robert has worked as a radio presenter, a director and a choreographer. His most recent appearances have been in *It's a Wonderful Life!*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Heaven's Waiting Room*, *Ladies Down Under*, *Ladies' Day* and *A Christmas Carol* (which he also choreographed).

Daniel Carroll-Cawley – Victor

Daniel graduated from the MPhil(B) Playwriting Course at the University of Birmingham. His first performance with The Questors was Nicholas Skeres in *School of Night* and he has since played George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life!* Daniel also has long experience performing at The Old Joint Stock, The Crescent and the MAC theatres in Birmingham. He was invited to the National Student Drama Festival in 2009 for his performance as Creon from a Ted Hughes adaptation of *Oedipus*. He has performed at the Edinburgh Fringe for three years running, with theatre productions and improv troupes.

Christine Fox – Ms Simone/Claudia/WPC

Christine trained at Central. Prior to joining The Questors, her most recent theatrical venture was as part of a devising company performing on the London Fringe. Her most recent roles in established theatre were as Miss Prism in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and Xenia in *Summer* by Edward Bond. For The Questors, she played the Mother in *Night of the Soul*.

Freddy Henry – Eleanor

Freddy was in Questors Student Group 49, then went on to *A Taste of Honey*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *New Boy*, *Dogs Barking* and *The House of Bernarda Alba*. She is currently hoping to find a production involving her new passion of Lindy Hop... any ideas?

Mark Hill – Fletcher

Mark has been acting at The Questors since 2008 and been involved in a wide variety of different plays, including comedy, family shows, musicals, kitchen sink dramas, French farce and Elizabethan tragedy. Specific roles have included Splodge/Ray in *Dogs Barking*, Rodorigo in *Othello*, Ass in *The Flint Street Nativity*, Uncle Henry/Gatekeeper in *The Wizard of Oz* and Herr Mann in *A Flea in Her Ear*. He has also appeared in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Rock 'n' Roll*, *Doctor Faustus*, the Polish short *Widows*, and his first production, *The Railway Children*. Mark's most recent appearance was as Ned in Jez Butterworth's excellent *Parlour Song*.

David Hovatter – Jack

This is David's fourth time working with Steve Fitzpatrick, after two Shakespeares (*Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Taming of the Shrew*) and a Feydeau farce. Last year David adapted and directed *Macbeth* and *Martin Chuzzlewit* in the Studio, and acted in *The School of Night*. He will next be devising a new show in the Studio in July.

Wendy Megeney – Fay

Wendy started in *Tom Jones* as Mucky Molly, which went to the Minack in 1985, followed by *Black Comedy*, which was the British entry in an international festival in Japan. A number of serious roles followed, including *Trojan Women*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* and *Lovers* in 2011 before this show.

Phillip Sheahan – Harper

Phillip has been an acting member of The Questors for almost forty years. He has also filled the roles of playwright (notably *Soapsud Island* for PlayBack) and director. He was last on stage playing Dad in Steven Berkoff's *Greek* and Pantaloon in Goldoni's *A Servant to Two Masters* performed at The Questors and on tour in Venice.

Bryony Twytle – Marianne

This is Bryony's first production at The Questors. She recently graduated from the University of Exeter where she studied Drama. In her spare time she is a member of a comedy sketch group called *Simply the Jest* and will be going to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival for the third time this year.

Daniel Vernan – Charlie

This is Daniel's first production at The Questors. He first started acting aged 14 when he took up Drama and Theatre Studies at school in Oxford, and his passion for acting has continued. Daniel has been working as an actor and fight performer in the film industry for the past few years.

Daniel Beilby – Sound Designer

Daniel is a freelance composer, based in London, who provides background music for a range of productions from poetry performances to short films. This is his second sound design for The Questors after the recent *Antigone* (for which he also composed the accompanying music), having worked previously as sound operator on *It's A Wonderful Life!*

Meet The Company – Wednesday 15 May

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

Wanda Duszynska – Set Designer

Wanda completed The Questors student group in 1999. Since then she has designed eleven stage sets and acted in nine productions, the latest being *Clybourne Park*. She has written and directed shows for Questors Youth Theatre including the award-winning *Cogner au Plafond* that was later performed by members of QYT to an international audience in a disused swimming pool in the Vienna woods.

Steve Fitzpatrick – Director

Steve has directed over 20 productions at The Questors. Recent shows include *Annie*, *The Winterling* (Jez Butterworth), *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Alchemist*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. He also acts, most recently in the title role of *Jeffrey Bernard is Unwell*.

Moonika Leisson – Costume Designer

Moonika has been a member of the Questors Wardrobe Department for a year now, but during this brief time has managed to dabble in all sorts of productions starting with *Night of the Soul* to the Lorca double bill of *Doña Rosita the Spinster* & *Yerma* to making both of Mary Stuart's outfits. Although she prefers working on period productions, designing for the modern adaptation of Molière's *The Miser* is adding well-earned notches to her belt.

Nigel Lewis – Lighting Designer

Nigel is Head of the Lighting Department. He has been lighting the stage for over 30 years and has experience in lots of different genres of performance lighting, but his heart is firmly in the lighting of opera. Having said that, give him a space or a face and he will illuminate it. He also lectures in lighting design to BTEC level students at Kingston College and lecture on the BA (Hons) course for University of West London.

Next Questors Productions

ENGAGED

by W S Gilbert

18 – 25 May 2013

The Playhouse

Engaged is a marvellous farcical comedy written by one half of the Gilbert and Sullivan duo.

DRACULA – FANGS OF DESTINY

by Andrew Whelan and
Mark Fitzgerald

7 – 15 June 2013

The Studio

A brand new comedy staging of the classic horror story.

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 computerised 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 & Anne Gilmour

12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, W5 5BQ

Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011

Registered Charity No. 207516