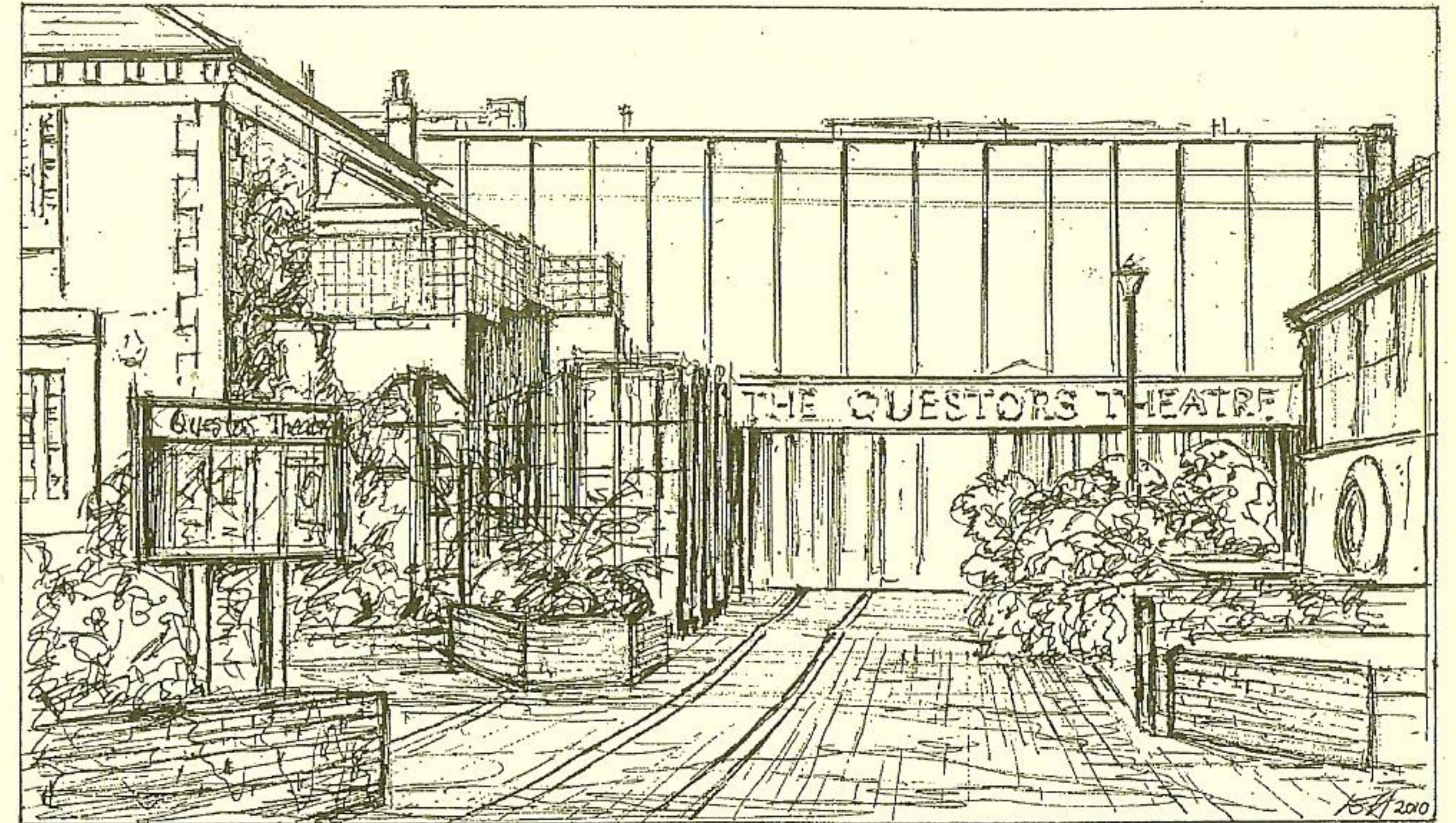




Questors, Ealing's Theatre



THE BALCONY

by Jean Genet

translated by Barbara Wright and Terry Hands

The Studio

4 – 12 April 2014

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

**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 2014 edition of The Good Beer Guide and we are **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

See questors.org.uk/grapevine for more details

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

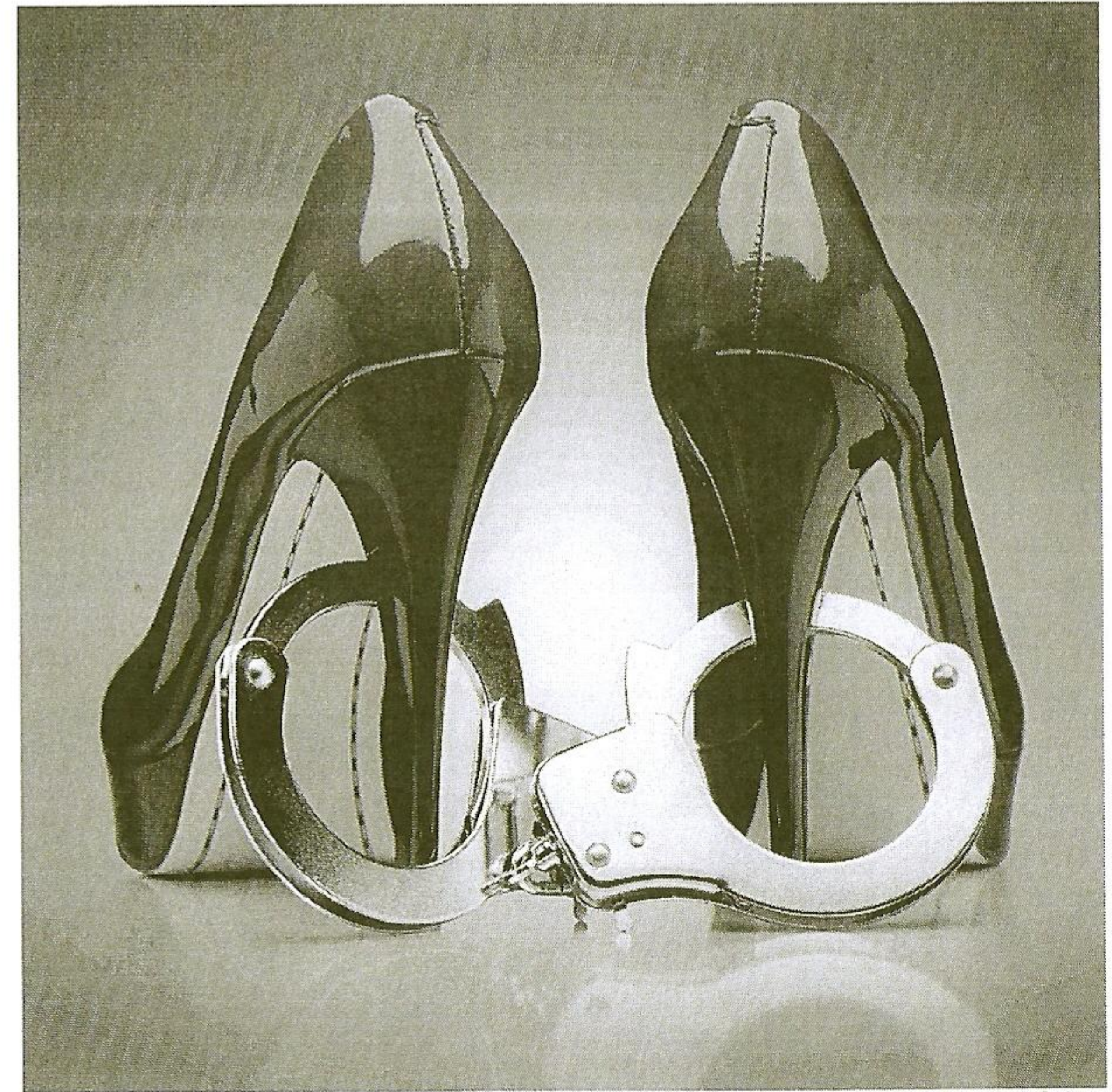


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The Balcony

Jean Genet (1910 – 1986)

Genet, whose mother was a prostitute and whose father was unknown, was adopted. His formative years were financed by the French state and, maybe because of this, he always saw himself as an outsider. Despite a relatively secure home life, he often ran away and became a petty thief. His biographer, Edmund White, claims that he cultivated a fictitious image of a deprived childhood in order to add veracity to his 'outlaw' persona. When his foster mother died, he was placed with an elderly couple from whom he stole money.

At the age of fifteen, as a result of this and various other transgressions, he was sent to a penal colony where he remained for the best part of three years after which he joined the French Foreign Legion. He was dishonourably discharged when he was discovered to be homosexual.

He wandered around Europe, living on his wits, thieving, and prostituting himself. His early prison experiences are documented in *The Miracle of the Rose* (1946) and his subsequent vagrancy in *The Thief's Journal* (1949). His life continued to include frequent prison terms for various crimes including theft, falsifying papers and homosexual encounters. It was during his incarceration that he wrote his first poem, *Le Condamné à Mort* (*The Man Condemned to Death*) in memory of the twenty-five year-old Maurice Pilorge who was guillotined for murder. Later, commenting on his novel, *Our Lady of the Flowers* (1944), he wrote, 'Without Maurice Pilorge, whose death is still poisoning my life, I would never have written this book'. Genet claimed Pilorge as a friend although White thinks it unlikely they ever knew each other; he points out that, as well as Pilorge's age, Genet had the date and location of the execution wrong. Thus, we learn that Genet was quite happy to alter the facts of other people's lives, just as he was his own. Jean Cocteau was impressed by *Our Lady of the Flowers* and was instrumental in getting it published. When Genet was threatened with a life sentence, it was Cocteau and others – including Jean-Paul Sartre and Pablo Picasso – who successfully petitioned the president for his release. By 1949, Genet had completed five novels, three plays and many poems: his career as a writer was established. His writing was controversial: uncompromising in its depictions of homosexuality and its lauding of the criminal. Aside from the titles mentioned above, his work includes the novels *Querelle of Beste* and *Funeral Rites* (both written between 1947 and 1953). His plays are *Deathwatch* (1944, rewritten in 1949), *The Maids* (1946/7), *The Blacks* (1955/1958/9), *The Screens* (1956 – 1961, rewritten 1964), *The Balcony* (1955/1956/1957). In the late 1960s, he became a political activist, campaigning for various causes including immigrants, particularly against police brutality towards Algerians. In 1970 he visited Palestinian refugee camps over a six-month period and met Yasser Arafat.

After developing throat cancer, Genet was found dead in a hotel room in Paris on the 15th April, 1986. It is possible his death was caused by a fall. He is buried in Morocco.

The Balcony

Simulacrum: 1. an image of something. 2. a shadowy likeness.
3. a deceptive substitute. 4. mere pretence. (Oxford English Dictionary)

In this play, everything is 'mere pretence': Genet was fascinated by it; for him, pretence is frequently more important than reality. As the 'Bishop' says, 'I want to be a bishop in solitude, in appearance only'.

We are in a brothel: The Grand Balcony. It isn't the sort of brothel we might expect. Its clients' fantasies, although they verge on the sexual, have more to do with power and status; Irma, the madame, describes it as a 'house of illusion'. We meet three nonentities who pay good money to play the roles of a bishop, a judge and a general. Outside, a revolution is in progress. Although one of her prostitutes has become a figurehead for the revolutionaries, Irma's Grand Balcony is a place where tactical secrets are let slip and betrayed to the authorities so she is a potential target of the insurrection. However, the play centres on the Chief of Police – George – who dreams of restoring the *status quo* and so becoming a national hero and having a tomb built to his everlasting memory. Above all, he wants a simulacrum of himself in the brothel in order to validate his view of himself as an important person. As a mere policeman, he can't compete with the ancient and dignified offices of the Church, the Magistracy or the Army since his office is not viewed as important enough. When, finally, the man arrives who wants to represent him, it turns out to be his rival, the leader of the revolutionaries, who spoils the whole thing by castrating himself. George's image for posterity is therefore doomed to be an emasculated one. Meanwhile, the real dignitaries of the city have been killed and replaced by Irma's clients and she herself as Queen (since the old one, if she is still alive at all, is probably too disfigured by bomb blasts to be as effective as a physically appealing fake). Mirrors reflect into mirrors and whatever truth was behind the images remains elusive.

In Genet's most famous play, *The Maids*, three women (often played by men) are essentially three subjective parts of the same person. Claire and Solange switch between being the positive and the negative parts of that person and the interloper – Madame – represents their joint paranoia. In *The Balcony*, practically everyone inhabits at least two roles: the image of the person they would like to be – the objective role; and the person they actually see as themselves – the subjective role. Here, Genet explores one of his favourite themes: reality and illusion. Are we who we are simply because that's the way other people see us? To allude to more contemporary examples, was Princess Diana any less of a royal when she divorced from the Royal Family? The public certainly didn't see her as such. Is a *Big Brother* celebrity any less valid simply because s/he might have no real talent? Again, it is for the public to bestow the title and 'being famous for being famous' is perfectly all right with us. As James Whitcomb Riley once said, 'If it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, then it's a duck'.

Richard Gallagher, Director

THE QUESTORS STUDENT GROUP 67 PRESENTS

THE BALCONY

by Jean Genet, translated by Barbara Wright and Terry Hands

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 4 April 2014

CAST

Bishop	Matheus Guimaraes
Irma (Queen)	Jolene Howorth
Bishop's Girl (Rosine)	Katie Phipps
Thief (Marlyse)	Catherine McCarthy
Judge	James Byrne
Torturer (Arthur)	Aram Armaghanian
General	Matthew Tyrrell
General's Girl (Elyane)	Melissa Reddin
Carmen	Rosa Coduri
Chief of Police (George)	Devesh Patel
Georgette	Melissa Reddin
Chantel (Slave)	Catherine McCarthy
Wounded Man	James Byrne
Roger	Orlando Kilborn
Armand	Matthew Tyrrell
Louis	Matheus Guimaraes
Luke	Katie Phipps
Envoy	Jennifer Joan Brown
Photographers	Katie Phipps, Catherine McCarthy, Melissa Reddin

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 45 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	Richard Gallagher
Set Designer	Kathryn Stonebridge & UWL students
Costume Designer	Jazz Fleming, Gabby Wallace
Lighting Designer	Nigel Lewis
Sound Designer	Christopher Smith
Stage Manager	Michelle Weaver
Deputy Stage Manager	Jessie Batende
Assistant Stage Managers	Josie James, Niall Murray, Verena Prandstaetter, Kathryn Stonebridge, Charlotte Walton
Properties	Annabel Aldridge, Charlotte Walton
Prompter	Charlotte Walton
Lighting Operators	Annabel Aldridge, Daniel Nairn
Sound Operators	Josie James, Ieuan Jones
Wardrobe Supervisor	Jennie Yates
Wardrobe Assistant	Jessie Batende
Hair and Make-Up	Holly McDermot, Cadence Pearson, Marta Wozniak
Constructors	Annabel Aldridge, Josie James, Niall Murray, Daniel Nairn, Kathryn Stonebridge, Charlotte Walton
Photographer	Carla Evans
Thanks to	Lucy Aley-Parker, Alec Atchison, Daniel Cawtheray, John Cooper, Patrick Dawson, Julie Elvin (Pump House Theatre, Watford), Colin Horne, Dorothy Lawson, Geoff Moore, Robert Vass

Biographies

Aram Armaghanian – Torturer (Arthur)

Aram has been offered a place on the MA Acting course at Arts Educational Schools London commencing September 2014. He would like to thank The Questors for helping him get there in addition to his mum and brother for their ongoing love and support.

Jennifer Joan Brown – Envoy

Jennifer is currently studying Travel and Tourism Management at The University of West London. Prior to university, she travelled extensively visiting, amongst other countries, Australia, Romania and Cambodia. Although studying travel, the stage has always pulled her back to an ambition she first realised at the age of thirteen. 'Who knows what the next few years will bring?'

James Byrne – Judge / Wounded Man

James is nineteen years old and joined The Questors Youth Theatre Group in 2008. He has been in several productions including *The Pierglass* and *It's a Wonderful Life!* Before joining Student Group 67, he was a member of Young Studio.

Rosa Coduri – Carmen

Rosa started at The Questors on the Foundation Course and has since performed at the Phoenix Artist Club alongside fellow Questors students. She has been involved in youth drama in south London from an early age and is currently working at Chelsea Football Club and for Laura Mercier Gurwitch products. She wishes to continue acting.

Matheus Guimaraes – Bishop / Louis

Matheus Guimaraes was born in Brazil and lived there till the age of eighteen when he moved to California, USA, before moving to England twelve years ago. He has been in various films, television and theatre productions. He is also an aspiring writer and producer and the lead man and writer for the pop/rock band *Moonlighter*.

Jolene Howorth – Irma (Queen)

Originally from Lancashire, Jo moved to London to join The Questors Academy. She has performed with the National Youth Theatre and hopes to train at drama school and go on to a career as an actress and writer. Playing the part of Madam Irma is the scariest thing she's ever done but she's relishing the challenge!

Orlando Kilborn – Roger

Orlando's mother was in Student Group 39 and loved it. Prior to joining Group 67, Orlando did the Acting for All course at The Questors. He worked behind the scenes on sound, sets and as an ASM. He acted in short sketches and scenes in the Studio. He is loving the course and would recommend it to anyone.

Catherine McCarthy – Thief (Marlyse) / Chantel (Slave) / Photographer

Catherine joined The Questors in 2012. She recently appeared in a new writing piece, *The Very Thought of You* at the Phoenix Artist Club. The highlight of the year was working with the Belarus Free Theatre company at the Young Vic. Catherine is keen to continue working on stage in the future.

Devesh Patel – Chief of Police (George)

Devesh joined the foundation course at The Questors in 2011 before taking a year out and then rejoining Student Group 67 in 2013. His credits include Zakir in *Tales of the Harrow Road* at the Soho Theatre, Bruce in *Popcorn* at City Academy, The Soldier in Sarah Kane's *Blasted* at The Old Fire Station and Socrates in Plato's *Symposium* at Keble College, University of Oxford.

Katie Phipps – Bishop's Girl (Rosine) / Luke / Photographer

Katie studied Creative and Performing Arts at University in Liverpool. She has performed in many devised pieces, pantomime, workshops and with the Leicester Gilbert and Sullivan Operatic Society. Her character, Rosine, loves roses: please form an orderly queue outside her dressing room.

Melissa Reddin – General's Girl (Elyane) / Georgette / Photographer

Melissa has been involved with performing arts from an early age. Her background was mainly in dance but, after getting all she could out of 'jazz hands', she decided to step into the world of acting. Melissa joined Acting for All in 2010, appearing in *Ghost From a Perfect Place*. During that time, an audition appeared on the notice board for a TV advert in which Melissa got the part as a 'Macleans Girl' in the campaign which sponsored ITV's *Dancing on Ice*. Melissa was part of the ensemble in *Annie*.

Matthew Tyrrell – General / Armand

Matthew has been a member of The Questors for five years and has appeared in productions such as *Brave New World* (2009), *The Pierglass* (2010) and more. Before joining the Foundation Course, he studied for a BTEC in Performing Arts at Hammersmith College. Acting has always been a passion of Matthew's.

For The Questors Theatre:

Richard Gallagher – Director

Richard trained at the Manchester Polytechnic School of Theatre. At The Questors, favourite roles include *Twelfth Night*, (Sir Toby), *Privates on Parade* (Terri), *Duet for One* (Feldman). He directed *Habeas Corpus* and *Misery* and co-directed his own play, *French Paste*. More recently he played Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. He has been tutor/director for the second year student group since Group 64. He wrote last year's pantomime, *Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp*.

Nigel Lewis – Lighting Designer

Nigel is Head of Lighting at The Questors Theatre and a professional lighting designer and lecturer. He has worked on many productions at The Questors and recently designed the lighting for our Christmas pantomime. He is delighted to be working on *The Balcony* with such a talented and artistic team of people.

Christopher Smith – Sound Designer

Christopher is currently training as a sound recordist for television after which he will look for a job in media and, hopefully, theatre. He immediately fell in love with theatre, particularly sound, and has worked behind the scenes on several productions. He looks for every opportunity to work on a show.

For The University of West London:

Annabel Aldridge – Lighting Operator / Properties / Constructor

Annabel's recent credits include ASM and set constructor for The University of West London's production of *Salad Days*. She was follow-spot operator for the same company on *Into The Woods* at The Watermans Theatre.

Jessie Batende – Deputy Stage Manager / Wardrobe Assistant

Jessie has a keen interest in technical theatre. She has worked in various aspects of lighting – including operating follow-spot – and has enjoyed the experience of being a lighting operator for two studio productions: *Antigone* and *The Miser* at The Questors. She has enjoyed working as a DSM.

Jazz Fleming – Costume Designer

Previously at The Questors, Jazz worked on *Around the World in 80 Days* and *It's a Wonderful Life!* as a set constructor and scenic painter; she also has experience of these roles with University of West London productions. Recently she worked on costume for the latter's productions of *Biograph Girl* and *Salad Days* at The Waterman's Theatre, Brentford.

Josie James – Sound Operator / Assistant Stage Manager / Constructor

Josie is originally from Wales and it was there that she first expressed an interest in theatre. She has studied drama at GCSE and A Level and is continuing her education at the University of West London as a theatre production undergraduate.

Niall Murray – Assistant Stage Manager / Constructor

Niall first came to The Questors in 2012. Since then he has worked on a number of shows. His main interest is theatre construction and he hopes to make a career of this using the skills he is learning at UWL.

Daniel Nairn – Lighting Operator / Constructor

Daniel is delighted to be assisting the lighting designer and also operating the lighting for *The Balcony*. He has also appreciated constructing and assisting in the design of the set.

Kathryn Stonebridge – Set Designer / Assistant Stage Manager / Constructor

Kathryn has worked on a number of Questors productions in the last year-and-a-half, including *Calendar Girls*, *It's a Wonderful Life!*, *Engaged* and *Around the World in 80 Days*. She would like to get more involved in Questors life and is particularly interested in set dressing and design.

Gabby Wallace – Costume Designer

Gabby has worked on various shows including productions by Foxed-Up Theatre at Camden Roundhouse as part of the 2010 Camden Fringe Festival and later at the Courtyard Theatre. As well as various other UWL and Questors Theatre Productions – including *Calendar Girls*, *Around the World In 80 Days* and *It's A Wonderful Life!* – she has also worked on *Those Three Girls*: the first ever production at the Tristan Bates Theatre.

Charlotte Walton – Assistant Stage Manager / Properties / Prompter / Constructor

Charlotte worked at The Questors as an ASM on *Engaged* last May. She has been a stage management member of the National Youth Theatre since 2011 and last summer worked on their West End Repertory Company season at The Ambassadors Theatre.

Meet the Company – Wednesday 9 April

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

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
Holly Holman
Nicholas Jonne Wilson

The University of West London Tutors

Course Leader
Design Tutor
Lighting Design Tutor

Ray Stanley
Alex Marker
Nigel Lewis

Next Questors Productions

THE RISE AND FALL OF LITTLE VOICE

by Jim Cartwright
19 – 26 April 2014

The Playhouse

A modern theatre classic which follows a shy young woman taking care of her boozy, vulgar mother. But LV hides a talent for imitating the great singers from her late father's record collection.

THE PRIDE

by Alexi Kaye Campbell
2 – 10 May 2014

The Studio

Alternating between 1958 and 2008, *The Pride* examines changing attitudes to sexuality, looking at intimacy, identity and the courage it takes to be who you really are. A powerful debut play and winner of an Olivier Award.

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 18. 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

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Email: enquiries@questors.org.uk

Programme: Nigel Bamford

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