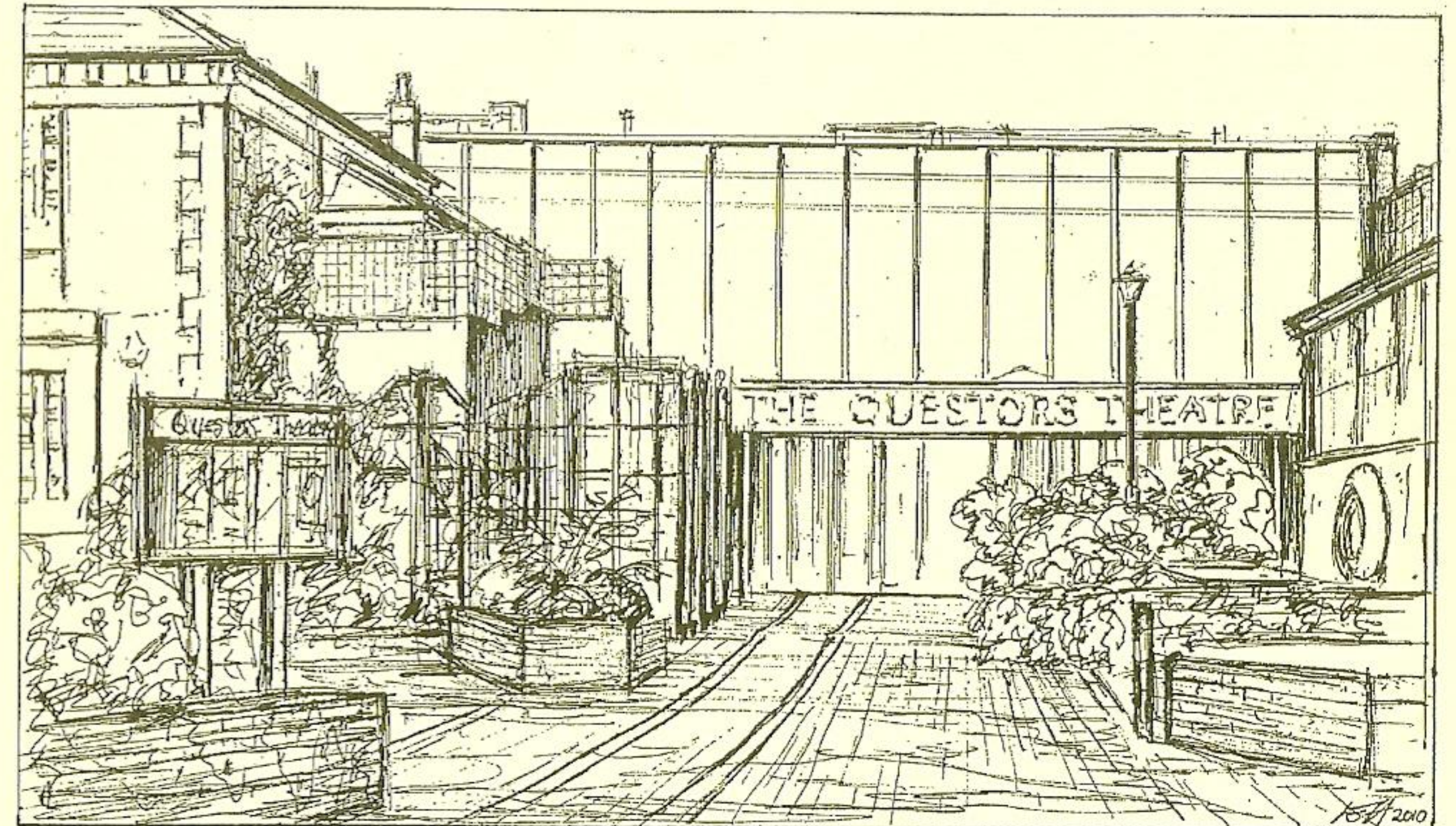




Questors, Ealing's Theatre



BE MY BABY

by Amanda Whittington

The Studio

28 February – 8 March 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.



Image by Rosalind Stoddart

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28 February – 8 March 2014

Be My Baby

Be My Baby is set in 1964 in a Mother and Baby Home. Although originally set in Nottingham, our production is set in Outer London, as it would then have been called. The play follows four young mums-to-be during their last months of pregnancy. Unmarried young women were sent far away from home and against their will to these institutions, sometimes by their own mothers intent on keeping up appearances. They were an embarrassment to their families, and the State made no provision for single parenthood. Whittington's play reminds us that the Sixties did not swing for all.

Steve Orme wrote in the *The British Theatre Guide* (2008):

'The appeal of this play is that it throws light on a decade which in some ways is mistakenly heralded as the swinging Sixties, a time of freedom and choice. But behind this apparent liberty were victims, especially the young girls who "got into trouble", many at the hands of men who discarded the responsibilities of fatherhood faster than a cigarette end...'

The girls not only have to cope with the implicit shame of their situation and the impending birth, about which most were pitifully ill-informed, but also the dawning realisation that there was simply no alternative but to give their babies up for adoption, whether they wished to or not.

In her introduction to the play, Amanda Whittington writes:

'[Be My Baby] started life as the present day story of a mother's reunion with her adopted, grown up child. I was immediately faced with questions about the mother's past. Was she unmarried? Who did she tell about the pregnancy? And where did she go to have the baby? Perhaps she had been packed off to one of the Church-run maternity homes that were active in the 1960s? I set out to look for some background information. Not surprisingly, I found no official history of Mother and Baby Homes. What I did discover were many first person accounts of such places in books and documentaries on adoption.'

'The sixties weren't swinging for these young women. They spoke of being sent away like criminals, to live out their pregnancy in secrecy and shame. The more I learned about these homes, the more I wanted to explore so I took the middle aged mother of my story back to where it all began. She became nineteen year old Mary Adams: pregnant, unmarried and wanting only to keep her baby. The play sets out to discover why she can't.'

'Setting Be My Baby in 1964 also gave me the chance to include some fantastic 'girl-group' music by The Shangri-La's, the Dixie Cups, and the Ronettes. [The music] seemed to perfectly capture the passionate innocence of the play's characters and give an uplifting soundtrack to what becomes a pretty dark tale.'

'I am extremely grateful to the birth mothers and adoptees who spoke to me about their lives. Be My Baby is not the story of one person or place. It draws on the many accounts I have heard and read, over three years of working on the play. During this time, I was surprised by the number of people who told me they, or someone close to them, had been touched by adoption. Many families it seems have their story to tell, and who knows how many more still keep the secret? I hope that in some way Be My Baby speaks for them.'

Our production includes many more 'girl group' songs of the early sixties to evoke that optimistic, hedonistic time: a time that saw huge advances in social and sexual freedom, for some.

Sarah Stoddart, director

The logo for Outlook fostering features the word "Outlook" in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with "fostering" in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font directly below it. A thin, curved line arches under the word "fostering".

Every year, thousands of children between the ages of 0 and 16 years, from all ethnic backgrounds, have to be moved to an alternative foster family, because their birth parents are unable to meet their basic needs.

Unfortunately there is a shortage of foster families across the UK and in particular in the West London Area.

If you have ever thought about fostering and you think that you can make a difference to a child's life, please contact our team on 0333 800 3000 or Anna Giannuzzi on 07940 983 344, for an informal discussion.

You may also find it helpful to visit the Outlook Fostering Agency's website: www.outlookfostering.com.

BE MY BABY

by Amanda Whittington

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 28 February 2014

CAST

Mary Adams	Helen Doughty
Dolores (Doll)	Elizabeth Sexton
Queenie	Jasmin Hinds
Norma	Lisa Varty
Matron	Anne Neville
Mrs Adams	Fiona Partington

The action of the play takes place in a Mother and Baby Home situated somewhere in Outer London during late Spring / early Summer 1964.

The performance lasts approximately two hours 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	Sarah Stoddart
Set Designer	Bron Blake
Costume Designer	Moonika Leisson
Lighting Designer	Tim Hayward
Sound Designer / Operator	Paul Wilson
Stage Manager	Tina Harris
Deputy Stage Managers	Nigel Lawrence, Penny Seyfert, Chris Waldock
Assistant Stage Managers	Kim Alexander, Charlotte Greer
Properties	Peter Salvietto
Prompter	Jean Masters
Set Constructor	Colin Horne
Construction Crew	Zyg Staniaszek, Alex Asher, Jeff Baynham, Bernard Brady, Henry Broom, Doug King
Lighting Operator	John Green
Lighting Rigger	Terry Mummery
Projection Equip. & Support	Richard Mead
Graphics Design	Geoff Moore, Sue Collins
Hair and Make-Up Design	Lucy Aley-Parker
Hair and Make-Up	Sarah Court
Photographer	Richard Mead
Display Coordinator	Liz Jardine-Smith
Publicity	Alex Cummings, Nina Flitman, Derek Stoddart
Thanks to	Ann Lawrence, Harmon Mcafee, Harriet Parsonage, Steph Pemberton, Pam Redrup, Amelia Staniaszek, Rosalind Stoddart, Tom Stoddart, Elaine Varty, Sylvia Wall, Nicholas Jonne Wilson, The Goodall Family, The Murnaghan Family

Biographies

Lucy Aley-Parker – Hair and Make-Up Design

Lucy graduated from Webber Douglas many years ago. She's been an acting member since 2007 and played a number of enjoyable roles since her Questors debut as Smeraldina in *A Servant to Two Masters* – which also toured to Venice. Most recently she was co-director of Ayckbourn's *House & Garden*. Previously, she has been make-up designer on QYT's *Alice Through the Looking Glass* and make-up advisor on Stoppard's *Rock 'n' Roll*.

Bron Blake – Set Designer

An active member since the early 1970s, Bron has been doing set design and scenic art since 2004. Productions include *Vincent in Brixton*, *The Seagull*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Broken Glass*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Voyager & Lovers*, *The School of Night*, *After October*, *Betrayal* and this season's Directors' Showcase double bill.

Helen Doughty – Mary

Helen trained at the Manchester School of Theatre where she performed as Elizabeth Barry in *The Libertine*, Susan in *Vinegar Tom* and Emily in *Bronte*. Before going to drama school, she was a member of the Introduction to Theatre Group at Questors and went on to play Amelia in *The House of Bernarda Alba*.

Tim Hayward – Lighting Designer

Tim's recent shows at The Questors include: *After October*, *Absurd Person Singular*, our period production of W S Gilbert's *Engaged* and *Around the World in 80 Days*. Next is a delightful musical – *West 5 Story*. Though a local tale, its award-winning playwright has a 35-year portfolio of national TV, theatre and radio.

Jasmin Hinds – Queenie

After graduating from Student Group 66 in July 2013, Jasmin has acted in two productions at The Questors: *Potter's Amazing Fleas & Lightning Under the Waves* (a double bill) by David Hovatter and *Sheltered* by Greg Smith, both pieces of new writing. *Be My Baby* is her first full-blown Questors production.

Moonika Leisson – Costume Designer

Moonika has been part of the Questors wardrobe team for nearly two years and during that time has designed several productions (*After October*, *The Miser*, *Doña Rosita the Spinster & Yerma*) and has lent her dressmaking skills to other costume designers (*Mary Stuart*, *It's a Wonderful Life!*, *Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp*).

Geoff Moore – Graphics Design

Geoff joined in March 1975 starting as an ASM on the New Plays Festival on *The Island*, a set made entirely of PVC. He then did shows almost back-to-back, including designing a few. In the mid '80s life took over, but recently he has made props and graphics for *The Wizard of Oz*, *Educating Rita*, *Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp*, *Box and Cox* and *Shadowlands*.

Anne Neville – Matron

Anne has acted at The Questors since 1983. Parts include Rhoda in *After October*, Grace Winslow in *The Winslow Boy*, Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations*, Miss Shepherd in *The Lady in The Van*, Winnie in *Happy Days*, Maggie in *Dancing at Lughnasa*, Ranevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard*, Mrs Alving in *Ghosts* and *Mother Courage*

Fiona Partington – Mrs Adams

Fiona has been a member of The Questors since 1983, and been in 21 productions including *Benefactors* (Frayn), *La Ronde* (Schnitzler) and *Absent Friends* (Ayckbourn). She has toured to Edinburgh, Minack and Japan. This is her first play at The Questors for a long time but she has been performing with The Spredaegle Players at the Bridewell Theatre in Blackfriars including *Autobahn* (Labute) and *Daisy Pulls It Off* (Deegan). Very happy (and nervous) to be back.

Elizabeth Sexton – Dolores ('Doll')

Elizabeth says that *Be My Baby* has been a very exciting piece to work on and great fun with lots of giggles – so far no one's waters have broken...yet! Her previous Questors' credits include *Entertaining Strangers*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *Doña Rosita the Spinster & Yerma*.

Sarah Stoddart – Director

An active acting member since 1980, Sarah (perhaps better known as Sarah Morrison) has acted in over 50 Questors productions – most recently as Pearl in both *Ladies' Day* and *Ladies Down Under*, Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, Marigold Ivens in *After October*, and Izzy in *House & Garden*. Last season she directed the stage premiere of *The Railway Siding*.

Lisa Varty – Norma

Lisa studied theatre at the University of Glasgow, where she was an active member of the renowned STaG (Student Theatre at Glasgow), performing in many of their productions. She joined The Questors in 2011 to train in Student Group 66, playing Lotte in *Trojan Barbie* and Frau Fischer in *On the Razzle*. Most recently, she played Sally Platt in *House & Garden*.

Paul Wilson – Sound Designer

This will be Paul's 44th production for The Questors as a sound designer. He has worked on many other productions as a sound operator, as a constructor, or behind the scenes as an ASM. Building the washing machines for *Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp* was his most recent contribution.

Meet the Company – Wednesday 5 March

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

Human Rights and *Be My Baby*

Human Rights are often controversial, political, sometimes uncomfortable. They can be taken for granted by any of us. Women's rights, and in particular reproductive rights, excite enormous debate worldwide in legislatures, courts, on the street, and in the minds of individuals. An opinion held in youth may not stand the test of time or circumstance. There is nothing more sensitive or personal.

Huge strides have been made in the last sixty years in all areas of human rights law and practice. And yet, in the United Arab Emirates, parental and spousal consent is required before an abortion can be legal, and still the woman's life must be in danger. The contraceptive pill is illegal in Honduras. And reproductive rights are only one facet of wider women's rights issues. Child marriage, sex slavery, trafficking, forced prostitution, rape used as a weapon of war, domestic violence. According to the Council of Europe, one in four women will experience domestic violence during their lifetimes.

The UK is no better than many other countries. But we have free, well-informed access to the contraceptive pill, to abortion. Adoption processes are extremely rigorous and social attitudes are broadly liberal. This was not the case in 1964, as many audience members will recall. *Be My Baby* tackles these human rights issues in a context close to home with great humour and humanity, and lots of great music!

You may have seen the information board on your way into the Studio this evening. The director and others thought the staging of this play provided an opportunity to draw attention to the wider world of reproductive rights; to the distance still left to travel. We hope you find it interesting, enraging and inspiring.

Liz Jardine-Smith

Next Questors Productions

THE BALCONY

by Jean Genet

4 – 12 April 2014

The Studio

Questors Student Group 67 presents a provocative twentieth century classic, set in Madame Irma's brothel at a time of bloody revolution, by one of the leading French playwrights of the last century.

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.

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

The Questors Theatre

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Programme: Nigel Bamford

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