

CHRISTMAS AT THE QUESTORS

Dick Whittington & His Cat

A pantomime written by Ben Crocker
12 December 2015 to 2 January 2016
see questors.org.uk for more details

THE MINACK THEATRE

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In the interest of safety and comfort, members of the audience are requested:

- ❑ not to walk on the stage at any time and to keep to the paths and steps when in the theatre;
- ❑ not to smoke anywhere in the theatre;
- ❑ to place all litter in the bins provided.

minack.com

NEXT WEEK AT THE MINACK THEATRE

Miracle Theatre presents

The Magnificent Three

written and directed by Bill Scott
June 29, 30, July 1, 2, 3 at 8:00pm and June 30, July 2 at 2:00pm
miracletheatre.co.uk

Cover image: Wanda Duszynska
The Questors Theatre
Box Office: 020 8567 5184
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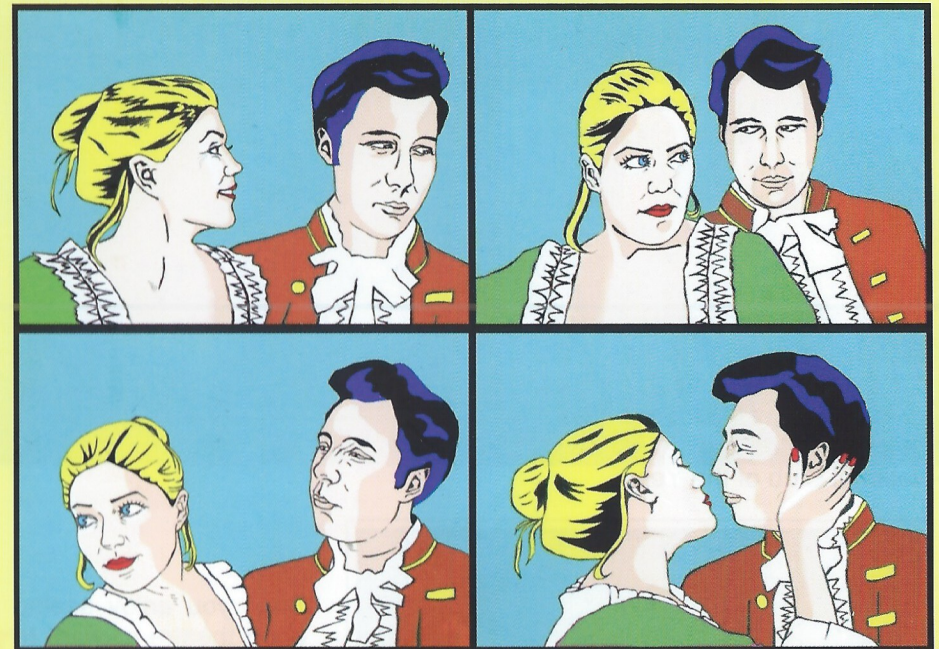
Programme: Nigel Bamford
12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, London, W5 5BQ
Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011
Registered Charity No. 207516



Questors, Ealing's Theatre
presents at

The Minack Theatre

on the Cliffs at Porthcurno



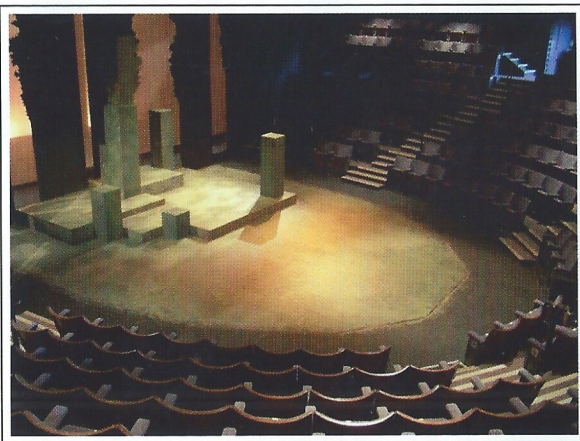
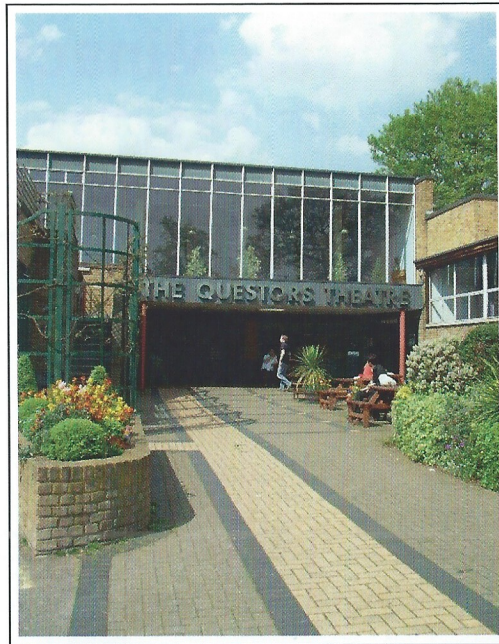
SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

by Oliver Goldsmith

22 – 26 June 2015

THE QUESTORS THEATRE

The Questors Theatre is one of the largest community theatres in Europe, with a membership of around 1500, presenting a season of 15 to 20 productions to professional standards. We stage modern and classic plays and comedies, drawing our audiences from across West London. Our 600 active members, who perform or work behind the scenes, stage our productions in our 350-seat Playhouse or 90-seat Studio. We have high-quality facilities, including a large scenic workshop, wardrobe cutting rooms, and full lighting and sound control equipment – and our theatre bar appears in the 2015 edition of The Good Beer Guide and has been CAMRA's National Club of the Year!



So if you enjoy seeing good theatre or want to get involved, we'd love to meet you. Visit our website to discover more, or come along to one of our Open Evenings, held most Wednesday evenings at 8.00pm.

questors.org.uk



photo: Carla Evans

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

by Oliver Goldsmith

The Minack Theatre on the Cliffs at Porthcurno

22 – 26 June 2015

She Stoops to Conquer

Think of a play from the eighteenth century. Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775) and *The School for Scandal* (1777) come to mind and, yes, of course, *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) by, um, Goldsmith, was it? But, that's it, isn't it?

Well, it *wasn't* but, in truth, these are virtually the only plays routinely revived today from between *The Recruiting Officer* (1706) and *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707) by George Farquhar and the end of the eighteenth century. This would have amazed the theatre-loving public of the day. New plays tumbled into the theatres throughout the century and both playwrights and their star performers were popular, even idolised, public figures. A new play in London or Dublin was a fashionable event. Playwrights such as Arthur Murphy, Hugh Kelly, George Colman, Richard Cumberland and David Garrick himself made fortunes from long-running public successes. So why do we not see these plays, know most of these names, today?

After the collapse of the Puritan regime, which had suppressed the theatre and most public entertainment, and the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, there was a natural reaction. Theatres were reopened, women were allowed to act on stage for the first time, plays became what we call 'comedies of manners' – risqué and bawdy, often portraying the predatory, self-seeking actions of rakes and mistresses – many protagonists with few redeeming features. Journalists, essayists and commentators expressed outrage at this degradation of public morality and its depiction on the public stage but it was the theatre professionals themselves who started the backlash.

In 1696, Poet Laureate, Colley Cibber, wrote a play called *Love's Last Shift*. It tells the tale of the virtuous Amanda whose philandering husband has deserted her. She lets him believe she is dead, seduces him back into her bed by means of disguise and ultimately reforms him. The play is clever and witty and abounds in 'sentiments' – high-flown expressions of moral principles. The audiences of the day, wearied by cynical protagonists and degenerate morals portrayed on stage, were enchanted and 'Sentimental Comedy' became all the rage. 'Comedy' was the term though seldom are these plays comic in any sense we would recognise today. The plays abounded in speeches such as this from William Taverner's *The Artful Wife* (1717):

"How unnecessary is Thought! What Confusion has it occasion'd! What animosities has it rais'd in the World! ... How delightful is the matrimonial State when two Minds have but one Desire! ... Methinks there should be but few bad Women, Virtue is so delightful! ..."

And, most oddly to us today, laughter itself was seen as distasteful and not fit for those who aspired to polite society. As Lord Chesterfield wrote in a letter to his nephew in 1748:

"I would heartily wish that you may often be seen to smile, but never heard to laugh, while you live. Frequent and loud laughter is the characteristic of folly and ill-manners; it is the manner in which the mob express their silly joy at silly things; and

they call it 'being merry'. In my mind, there is nothing so illiberal, and so ill-bred, as audible laughter. I am neither of a melancholy nor a cynical disposition, and am as willing and as apt to be pleased as anybody; but I am sure that since I have had the full use of my reason nobody has ever heard me laugh."

Sentimental Comedy ruled the stage throughout the first 70 years of the eighteenth century with very little relief. Even Shakespeare's plays were re-written to make them less 'barbarous' and suited to the modern, more genteel tastes of the age.

But, again, there was a natural reaction to this dumbing-down of the very human enjoyment of a good laugh. Prominent among the protesters was a young man – the always broke, prolific, multi-talented but perennially chip-on-the-shoulder writer from Ireland – Oliver Goldsmith. Goldsmith arrived in London in 1756 in his mid-twenties, determined to make it as a writer. He did anything for money in the writing line, turning out a mass of journalism, essays and all kinds of hack work merely to survive. He wrote huge histories of England, The Roman Empire, and of 'Animated Nature and The Earth'. When he could write from choice, his style is always lively, with a characteristic wit, sensitivity and independence of mind.

His principal success in his first ten years in London was, though, in his friendships. Dr Johnson became his mentor and champion, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Edmund Burke, David Garrick were his friends and supporters. He ventured into poetry in which medium he achieved real success with *The Traveller* (1765) and *The Deserted Village* (1770) and into the novel with *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) – all read and treasured still today.

But he became increasingly frustrated by what he saw as the impoverishment of the drama and, in particular, of comedy. He deplored every aspect of Sentimental Comedy and determined to write something to make people laugh. His first venture was *The Good Natur'd Man* (1768) which had some success but didn't make the break from the prevailing fashion as decidedly as he hoped. In 1771 he began again. After many struggles, obstacles, violent opposition from the managers of the only two licensed theatres in London and attacks from the press who saw him as a delicate poet and not a dramatist and who took great exception to his writing plays, *She Stoops to Conquer* was accepted – under pressure from Dr Johnson – by George Colman for his theatre at Covent Garden. There were to be no new costumes, only one well-known actor would appear and the play was put on at the end of the season when few who mattered would be in town.

The first performance was in March 1773. It was a stunning success. The audience roared. Goldsmith was feted and Colman had to go into hiding after his mean-spirited attitude to the production became public knowledge. The play was a long-running popular success, but one from which Goldsmith ultimately gained little. A year later, still broke, he was dead.

Susan Hamlyn

Susan Hamlyn is a teacher, academic and director of *The Good Schools Guide Advice Service*. She has, for 21 years, led the Questors Theatre literature classes. Her MA thesis was entitled *She Stoops to Conquer: The Making of A Popular Success*.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

by Oliver Goldsmith

First performance of this production at The Minack Theatre: 22 June 2015

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 30 May 2015

CAST

in order of speaking

Mrs Hardcastle

Lucy Aley-Parker

Mr Hardcastle

Julian Casey

Tony Lumpkin

Tom Cantwell

Kate Hardcastle

Claudia Carroll

Constance Neville

Jasmin Hinds

Ensemble

Francesca McInally

Nina Flitman

Christian Search

Mark Redrup

Marlow

Dan Dawes

Hastings

Jolyon Houghton

Sir Charles

Mark Redrup

PRODUCTION

Director

Stuart Watson

Set Designer

Wanda Duszynska

Costume Designer

Claire Malyon

Original Music by

Daniel Beilby

Lighting Designer / Operator

Andrew Dixon

Sound Designer / Operator

Christopher Smith

Production / Tour Manager

Jane Arnold-Forster

Stage Manager

Liz Prior

Deputy Stage Manager

Jane Dwyer

Properties

Harriet Parsonage

Assistant Stage Managers

**Henry Broom,
Tom Clifford, Rich Keeble**

Choreographers

**Wanda Duszynska,
Jane Dwyer**

Hair and Make-Up

Matylda Smolikova

Front of House

Pip Egan, Nigel Worsley

Thanks to: **John Fryer, Mike Hagan, Richard Halberstadt,
Sarah Hannah, Shaan Latif-Shaikh, Alex Marker,
Pam Redrup, Nicola Percy, Gary Reid,
Manjinder Toor and all at The Minack Theatre**

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes including a 20-minute interval.

Biographies

Lucy Aley-Parker – Mrs Hardcastle

Lucy graduated from Webber Douglas and worked in repertory, TV and pantomime. Her first appearance at The Questors was as Smeraldina in *A Servant to Two Masters*, which toured to Venice. Having been directing and coaching more recently, she is happy to be performing again.

Daniel Beilby – Original Music Composer

Daniel was involved in theatre from a young age, first acting in youth theatre, then writing songs and comedy sketches for productions at Oxford University, where he studied English. Since then he has composed original music for plays, short films and the concert hall. At The Questors he has worked as a sound designer, and has written scores for *Antigone* and *Macbeth*. He also works as a pianist.

Tom Cantwell – Tony Lumpkin

This is Tom's eighth play at The Questors having graduated from Student Group 61. Previous roles have included Antonio in *The Rover* (in which he performed at the Minack in 2010), George in *Luca's Spoon*, Tom Stone in *The School of Night*, Eric Cross in *No Fairy Tale* and, most recently, Richard in *Futures*.

Claudia Carroll – Kate Hardcastle

Claudia has been acting at The Questors for five years and has enjoyed some great roles, including the eponymous heroine in *The Duchess of Malfi* and, most recently, one of the Weird Sisters in *Macbeth*. She loves the costumes that come with any production pre-twentieth century and hopes this one does not get drenched.

Julian Casey – Mr Hardcastle

Julian joined The Questors in 2006 and has appeared in *Comedians*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Knives in Hens*, *Two*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Three Sisters*, *The Winterling*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Dracula: Fangs of Destiny* and *West 5 Story*. He played the Giant in the recent production of *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

Dan Dawes – Marlow

Dan joined The Questors in 2009 and has since acted in many productions. He also directed *Woyzeck* last season and co-directed this year's production of *Macbeth*. Dan also sits on the Board of Trustees and is a Director of Studies. Dan has worked on plenty of open-air stages over the years, but is pleased to be performing on the best of them all: Minack.

Wanda Duszynska – Set Designer

Wanda trained at Central St Martin's School of Art and Design, and Central School of Speech and Drama. At The Questors, she completed Student Group 52, and has since acted in and designed many shows. In the last two seasons she acted in Ayckbourn's *House & Garden* and designed the *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*.

Andrew Dixon – Lighting Designer

Andrew has been lighting productions at The Questors since he joined the BBC in 1968. He lit many television programmes but has cherished the opportunities to add his contribution to some excellent plays produced at The Questors. This is the first show that he has lit at the Minack.

Nina Flitman – Ensemble

Nina has been a member of The Questors for almost four years, with her most recent roles including Lady Macbeth, Sylvia in *The Pride* and Vivie in *Mrs Warren's Profession*. She is on the theatre's social media team, and is part of the editorial team that puts together *QLife* magazine.

Jasmin Hinds – Constance Neville

Previous roles at The Questors include Queenie in *Be My Baby*, Olivia in *Twelfth Night* and, most recently, Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis*. Professional credits include Dmitri Krymov's *A Midsummer Night's Dream (As You Like It)* at the Barbican. Jasmin graduated from Student Group 66 in 2013 and has just accepted her place on the BA (Hons) Acting course at RADA.

Jolyon Houghton – Hastings

Jolyon started at The Questors in the Youth Theatre, before moving on to Student Group 62, and then studying at Central School of Speech and Drama. His notable roles include Brandon in *Rope*, Sidney in *Absurd Person Singular*, Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and Gabriel Oak in *Far From the Madding Crowd*.

Claire Malyon – Costume Designer

She Stoops to Conquer is Claire's fourth production as costume designer for The Questors. It has been great fun to work on a different historical era and, once again, she thanks everyone in the wardrobe department who has stitched away madly on her behalf.

Francesca McNally – Ensemble

For The Questors, Francesca has appeared as Joanna in *Night of the Soul*, Daphne in *Present Laughter*, Angina in *Coarse Shakespeare – The Final Folio*, Frances in *After October* and Maggie in *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. She trained at East 15 and teaches Questors Youth Theatre and the Young Studio class.

Mark Redrup – Sir Charles / Ensemble

This is the second time Mark has been in an eighteenth century English comedy, after *A Clandestine Marriage*, although he did play Sheridan in *The Madness of George III*. This is his fourth appearance at the Minack, after *Little Women* (1997), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1999) and *The Learned Ladies* (2003).

Christian Search – Ensemble

This is Christian's third performance in his inaugural season with The Questors, having performed with various companies throughout Essex and East London. His productions with The Questors have been *Macbeth* and the Tennessee Williams one-act play *Talk to Me Like the Rain and Let Me Listen*.

Christopher Smith – Sound Designer

Christopher became interested in sound design at school. After university he joined The Questors, starting as sound operator before moving on to design. He is also involved in sound recording for television, working on several Sky and BBC shows including *The One Show*. This is his sixth sound design for The Questors.

Stuart Watson – Director

Stuart has directed three previous productions at The Questors: *Knives in Hens*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *Rock 'n' Roll*. He has appeared as an actor in *Bouncers* and *Comedians*. Directing credits elsewhere include *Sheltered* (The Tabard), *The Woodsman* (Old Red Lion) and many productions at Putney Arts Theatre where he was Artistic Director from 2010-13.

Original Production Photographs

by Carla Evans and Rich Evans

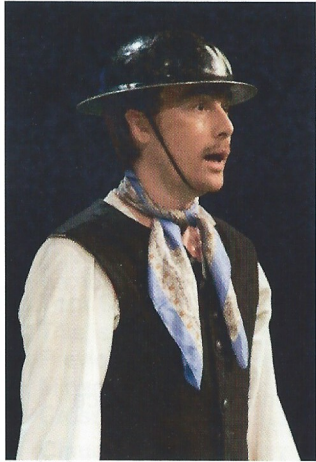


photo: Carla Evans

Christian Search



photo: Rich Evans

Claudia Carroll



photo: Rich Evans

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Francesca McInally

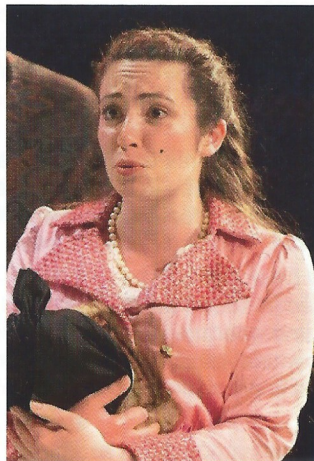


photo: Carla Evans

Jasmin Hinds

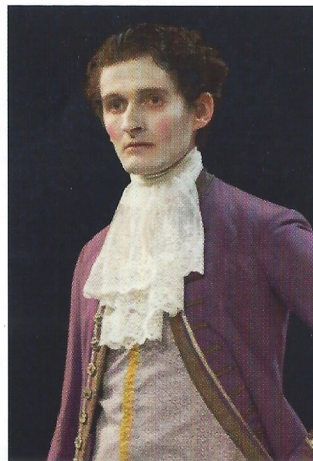


photo: Carla Evans

Jolyon Houghton



photo: Rich Evans

Nina Flitman



photo: Rich Evans

Tom Cantwell



photo: Rich Evans

Claudia and Dan