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- ✓ Children's FREE tickets[†]
- ✓ Opportunities to be actively involved in our productions
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- ✓ Exclusive or discounted training courses
- ✓ Access to *iQ* – the members-only website: members.questors.org.uk
- ✓ Receive a full-colour members' magazine three times a year
- ✓ Access to exclusive news on *iQ* and email newsletter
- ✓ Receive the regular programme leaflet
- ✓ Membership of The Grapevine Club
- ✓ Special invitations, events and offers not available to the public
- ✓ Ticket reservation facility (conditions apply)
- ✓ Voting rights in the company

**Reduced prices exclude certain events. †Under 18, excludes certain events, maximum four per event. Must be collected at the performance and accompanied by the member.*

Introductory offer – as a welcome for first-time members, **when you pay by Direct Debit**, 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 lighting 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.

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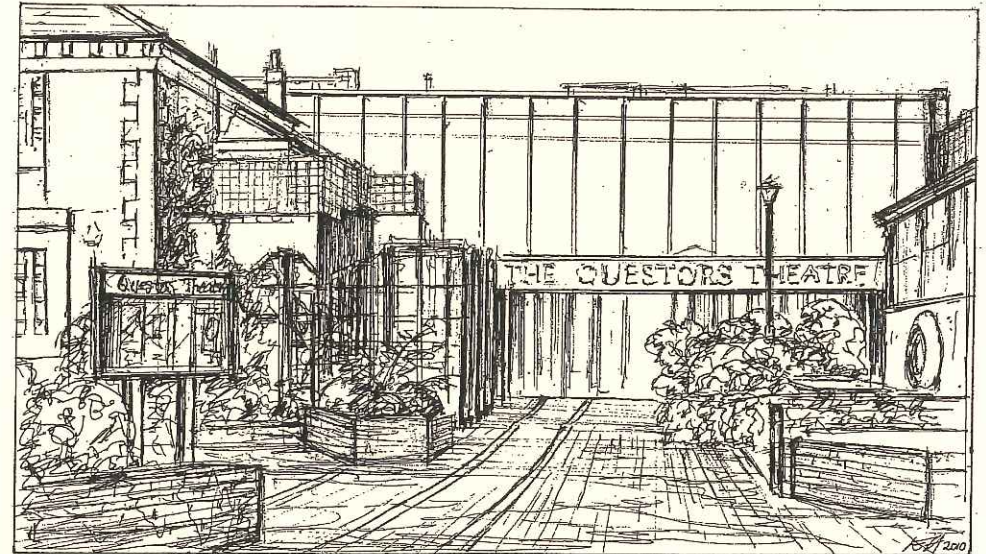
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Questors, Ealing's Theatre



STAGS AND HENS

by Willy Russell

The Judi Dench Playhouse

16 – 23 July 2016

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 midday – 5:00 pm

Saturday (term time) 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

For Judi Dench Playhouse productions:

Hot meal menu up to 6:30 pm (not Sundays) with drinks, ice creams and snacks during the first interval.

Sunday matinees midday to interval.

Sunday Cream Tea Matinees as advertised.

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 2016 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

The Grapevine now accepts payments by card (contactless only).



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Stags and Hens



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STAGS AND HENS

by Willy Russell

The Judi Dench Playhouse

16 – 23 July 2016

Stags and Hens

In 1979, I joined the, then, Manchester Polytechnic School of Theatre (it's now Manchester Met), the year after Willy Russell had written *Stags and Hens* as a television script for that drama school. He never saw the completed project and it was to be some eight years before it was published as a stage play and twelve years before it did finally make it onto the screen as the film *Dancin' thru the Dark*. In 2008, he adapted it again as *Stags and Hens – The Remix* an updated stage version for the Liverpool Royal Court.

Russell is one of a handful of famous Liverpoolian dramatists. Others include Alan Bleasdale, the television writer, Jimmy McGovern and (though, unlike the others, they didn't write about Liverpool), the brothers Anthony and Peter Shaffer.

It's no surprise that Russell's work crackles with ironic black humour: Liverpool was a pretty rundown place in the 1970s. The docks had been in sharp decline since the middle of the twentieth century and unemployment was rife. Despite this, the 'Scousers' (as the city's inhabitants are known), have always retained an upbeat attitude to adversity and their legendary wisecracks are to be heard everywhere you go in Merseyside. The stereotype of the thieving, workshy Scouser may be unfair but it's one they are, often enough, happy to laugh along with.

(Q: 'What do you call a Scouser in a suit?' A: 'The accused.')

Liverpool has been revamped since the seventies and is no longer the bleak place it was, but even back then, despite what might have been a depressing home turf, the Scousers retained great pride in their city.

(Q: 'Why does the River Mersey run through Liverpool?'

A: 'Because, if it walked, it would get mugged.')

It's odd that one of the main themes of Russell's work is the desire to escape: in *Educating Rita*, we see a Scouse hairdresser desperate to get education and 'better herself'; in *Blood Brothers*, one of Mrs Johnson's twins is given away to her 'posh' employer, leaving the other one to be brought up in relative penury; in *Shirley Valentine*, Shirley goes on holiday to Greece and stays there; and, of course, in *Stags and Hens*, Linda spends the play debating whether to run away to London instead of marrying the drunken Dave.

(A camel can work for ten days without drinking;
a Scouser can drink for ten days without working.)

The dichotomy between loyalty to home and friends and the desire to abandon everything in search of a better life is at the heart of the play. A Liverpoolian might have acknowledged that they live in a dump, but they would never say so without a hint of affection.

Things have changed drastically since. In 2008, Liverpool became the European Capital of Culture. It's true that the city has always rivalled its neighbour, Manchester, for orchestras, art galleries, theatre and, of course, pop music. This might be seen as another contradiction.

(Q: 'What do you say to a Scouser with a classy woman on his arm?'

A: 'Nice tattoo.')

In *Stags and Hens*, we meet the testosterone fuelled 'stags', all of whom are desperate to parade their masculinity and terrified of anything that might be seen to threaten it. For instance, though Kav sees himself as an artist, he isn't going to display his talents on anything more 'poncy' than a toilet wall. Peter's 'tart's boots' are, at first, an object of derision until those other Liverpool badges of honour, his fame and his music, elevate him in the eyes of the lads. Robbie is equally threatened when Billy reveals he has been drinking Pernod (then regarded as a female's drink). In contrast, amongst the 'hens', bride-to-be Linda threatens to drink a pint of bitter and is told off for doing so. Conformity was all: anybody who rocked the boat was to be ridiculed or worse. Russell uses the traditions surrounding a wedding day – particularly the idea that the bride must not see the groom the night before – and gleefully treads on them to great comic effect. Only Maureen actually believes the superstitions, but the others play along because it's 'what you do'. Linda is the rebel; Kav could be but his talent is something that separates him from the group so he can't; Eddy pretends to be content with his lot but is clearly threatened when he has to think about it. Married Bernadette professes to be a man-eater but balks at the prospect of actually doing something about it. In fact, Linda's supposed betrayal takes all the characters on a journey of discovery and, maybe, at the end of the evening, they all see the benefits of 'seizing the moment'. Linda sees her life mapped out for her and, prompted by her ex, the musician Peter – the one person in the play who actually did manage to 'escape' Liverpool – she contemplates the alternative possibility that she had rejected when he first offered it to her. The themes are, of course, universal: as Peter says, 'I did what I wanted to do. I did the worst thing possible, you know: what I wanted to'.

As always with Russell, this supposedly 'light comedy' has hidden depths. *The Guardian* said of the original production: 'A bleakly funny and perceptive study of working-class misogyny, puritanism and waste'.

When you next visit a seaside resort – often littered with raucous stags and hens – avoid them in a more kindly fashion and remember that the prospect of a lifetime of drudgery could well lie behind the shrieks of laughter and empty bottles of vino.

(A woman in Liverpool went to the doctor's.

He told her she must avoid anything alcoholic ... so she's getting a divorce.)

Richard Gallagher, Director

THE QUESTORS STUDENT GROUP 69 PRESENTS
STAGS AND HENS

by Willy Russell

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 16 July 2016

CAST

in order of appearance

Linda (Bride)	Premi Tamang
Maureen (Cry-baby)	Nikolett Koncz
Bernadette (Dictator)	Justyna Wnęk
Carol (Colleague)	Natasha Vasandani
Frances (Best friend)	Sherralyn Lee
Dave (Drunk groom)	Angus Duke or Maik Seitz
Robbie (Charmer)	Tom O'Dea
Billy (Oddball)	Christian Di Fonso
Kav (Piss artist)	Roberto De Domenici Cohen
Eddy (Violent best man)	Jason Welch
Peter (Musician)	Puranjay Samson
Roadie (Technician)	Daniel Cawtheray

*The action takes place in the ladies' and gents' toilets
in a Liverpool dance hall in 1979.*

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes including a 15-minute interval.

PRODUCTION

Director	Richard Gallagher
Assistant Director	Dorothy Lawson
Set Designer	Peter Collins
Costume Designer	Claire Malyon
Lighting Designer	Tim Haywood
Sound Designer & Operator	Paul Wilson
Stage Manager	Michelle Weaver
Deputy Stage Managers	Russell Fleet, Aeron Sylvester
Assistant Stage Manager	Amanda Blake
Accent Advisor	Pamela Redrup
Lighting Operators	John Green, Roisin Tierney
Lighting Riggers	Terry Mummery, Chris Newall, Carole Swan, Andrew Whadcoat
Set Construction & Painting	Ian Black, Peter Collins
Plumbing Installation	Mark Fitzgerald
Get-In Team	Alex Asher, Jeff Baynham, Victoria Bell, Steve Cowan, Jesselyn Ng, Louis Tonna
Make-Up	Beth Fothergill
Photographer	Robert Vass
Marketing Assistant	Natasha Vasandani
Thanks to	The Questors' Jermyn Street tour team (<i>The Letter of Last Resort</i> and <i>Kyoto</i>: 2 – 13 August)

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

Biographies



Daniel Cawtheray – Roadie

This is Daniel's eighth involvement in a Questors Student Group show, beyond 'audience member', although it is the first time as performer. It is also his third time performing in *Stags and Hens*, having previously played Eddy at fellow LTG member theatre, The Apollo, and Peter with The Players from Auntie at the BBC.



Roberto De Domenici Cohen – Kav

Roberto has been in previous Questors productions, including *Macbeth* (playing various parts), *The Haunted Kimono* with Crucial Image and as Grant Swain in *Dead White Males*. He has also acted in a number of short films. Previously Roberto trained at The Sylvia Young Theatre School and The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama Youth Theatre.



Christian Di Fonso – Billy

Christian is from Benevento, a small city in the south of Italy. He took his first steps in acting with the local community theatre, after which, at the age of twenty-one, he moved to London to pursue his acting ambitions. Meditation and relaxation techniques are a routine. His last appearance was as William Shakespeare in *Dead White Males*.



Nikolett Koncz – Maureen

Nikolett has been involved in theatre since the age of nine when she played the widow in *The Taming of the Shrew* in her native Hungary. She studied at an amateur art school before coming to London where she took her Human Resources Management BA degree. This is Nikolett's second English play following her role as Grace Judd in *Dead White Males*.



Sherralyn Lee – Francis

Sherralyn was in Student Group 63 and has since appeared here in fifteen productions, most recently *The Young Idea*, *The Wonderful World of Dissocia* and *Beautiful Thing*. Elsewhere, Sherralyn has appeared in *Brontë* (Putney Arts Theatre), *The Beggar's Opera* (Union Theatre) and in Frantic Assembly's *Service Charge* at the Lyric. She will soon be starring in a professional production of Yasir Senna's *She Wears a Scented Rose* at Teatro Technis, Camden.



Tom O'Dea – Robbie

Tom's theatre work includes *Never Judge a Book* (The Young Company) at Richmond Theatre, *Good Will Unwilling* (Erratic Dramatics) at the Take Courage Theatre, London, and *Café Mila*, Godalming. He has created, filmed and starred in comedic videos for YouTube channels, Neeky Productions and Ass-Guardians. He was Martin Judd in *Dead White Males*.



Puranjay Samson – Peter

Puranjay is a fitness and martial arts enthusiast, interested in stage combat and fight choreography. He is also an accomplished guitar player, specialising in lead guitar. His last appearance was as Steve in *Dead White Males*.



Premi Tamang – Linda

Premi is not from a theatrical background but developed an interest in acting after taking drama classes. This is her second performance on stage, although she hopes to extend her list of credits fairly rapidly, after she has graduated from the Questors Academy. Her last appearance was as Melissa in *Dead White Males*.



Natasha Vasandani – Carol

Natasha joined The Questors in 2014 as part of QYT. Her recent credits include *The Mobile Phone Show* by Jim Cartwright (Olivier Theatre), *The Accordion Shop* (Soho Theatre and Catford Theatre), *How to be a Desi* (short film) and *The Life Saver That Is Sarcasm* (short film). Her last appearance here was as Angela Judd in *Dead White Males*.



Jason Welch – Eddy

Jason finished a B.A. Hons in Film and Moving Image production at The Northern Film School, Leeds in 2007 and has since mainly worked as a freelancer. His ultimate goal is directing and he hopes to improve his skill by experiencing acting first-hand. His last appearance was as Col Judd in *Dead White Males*.



Justyna Wnęk – Bernadette

Justyna is a bilingual actress from Poland. She graduated in 2012 with an acting diploma from SPOT Acting Academy in Krakow and is currently a member of Polish Theatre in London. Something of an adventurer, Justyna travels in order to experience different cultures and people. She was Sarah Judd in *Dead White Males*.

Peter Collins – Set Designer

Peter has been an active member of The Questors for more than 20 years. He began designing sets in 2003; recent designs include *Dealer's Choice*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Antigone*, *West 5 Story*, *London Assurance* and *Equus*. He is also active in production photography.

Richard Gallagher – Director

Richard trained at the Manchester Polytechnic School of Theatre. At The Questors, his last acting appearances were as Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and as Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. More recently, he appeared as Clarence in *All Joy of the Worm* in honour of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. He has been tutor/director for the second year student group since Group 64. Also for The Questors, he wrote the 2013 pantomime, *Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp*.

Tim Hayward – Lighting Designer

Tim's recent shows at The Questors include: *Around the World in Eighty Days*, *Engaged*, *Be My Baby*, *West 5 Story*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Equus* and *The Master Builder*. He will be lighting the St Albans International Organ Festival in July.

Dorothy Lawson – Assistant Director

This is the second time Dorothy has been an assistant director, following *Dead White Males*. She was involved in the previous five student productions as either ASM or DSM. Her most recent appearances on the Questors stage were in *Uncle Vanya* (Marina) and in this year's pantomime *Dick Whittington & His Cat* (Queen Rat). She has since been a DSM for *The Cripple of Inishmaan*.

Claire Malyon – Costume Designer

Claire joined The Questors after graduating from Kensington and Chelsea College. She has spent many happy hours buried in costumes and fabric. This is her third time costuming the Student Group and it has been an interesting adventure into the best and worst of 1970s fashion.

Paul Wilson – Sound Designer

Paul has worked on over 70 Questors shows, designing sound most recently for *On the Razzle*, *Betrayal*, *Be My Baby*, *Rope*, *Uncle Vanya*, *All My Sons*, *The Young Idea & Hands Across the Sea*, *The Master Builder* and *Burnt by the Sun*.

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

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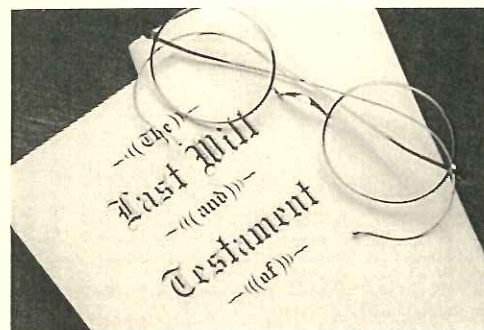
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This season, The Questors, Ealing's theatre, is presenting 17 plays. This is a tremendous undertaking for our members, many of whom have demanding full time jobs. Everyone appearing on stage, and working unseen in our creative and technical teams, gives their hard work and dedication out of love of theatre. Even with modern media,

a live play can give us an experience which rewards us like no other – as theatre has been doing for thousands of years.

We receive no help from public funding for The Questors, although Ealing and London are hugely enriched by our work. Ealing would be a lesser place without The Questors at its heart. And local children and young people would be deprived of opportunities without the Questors Academy, which provides classes for over five hundred children and teenagers every week.

Please consider making a donation to help us continue to make our huge contribution to Ealing's cultural life. You may prefer to do this while you are alive. Or you may prefer to leave a legacy in your will (or in a codicil if you have already made a will). Our splendid new donor board in the upper foyer will record every gift or legacy of £1000 or more (anonymously if you prefer). But no gift is too small to help – they all mount up – and any gift, either while you are alive or in your will, attracts tax relief. We will acknowledge these gifts on the iQ website unless you prefer us not to. You can find a Gift Aid form and an example of simple forms of legacy on our website at questors.org.uk/giving.

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