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If you enjoy theatre, why not join us and benefit from membership:

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- ✓ Children's FREE tickets<sup>†</sup>
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- ✓ 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. <sup>†</sup>Under 18, excludes certain events, maximum four per event. Must be collected at the performance and accompanied by the member.

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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

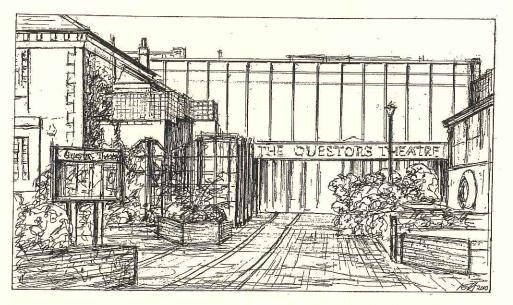
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## Questors, Ealing's Theatre



## **BURNT BY THE SUN**

## by Peter Flannery

from the screenplay by Nikita Mikhalkov and Rustam Ibragimbekov

The Studio
24 June – 2 July 2016

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Sunday matinees midday to interval.

Sunday Cream Tea Matinees as advertised.

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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.

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## **BURNT BY THE SUN**

by Peter Flannery

from the screenplay by Nikita Mikhalkov and Rustam Ibragimbekov

The Studio

24 June - 2 July 2016

## **Burnt by the Sun**

Those who fly too high get burnt by the sun...

I have often wondered why more films aren't adapted for the stage. In fact, these days it is more usual to see successful plays turned into films. Not all these adaptations are successful however, the reason being of course that the mediums are so very different. There can be exceptions both ways but every now and then there comes along a stage adaptation of a film that stands alone in its own right as a brilliant play. Such a play is Burnt by the Sun, written by Peter Flannery and adapted from the screenplay by Nikita Mikhalkov and Rustam Ibragimbekov. It won the Best Foreign Film Oscar in 1994 and the Grand Prix du Jury at Cannes in the same year. It is easy to see why this film attracted those accolades because it is quite unique in its style, dealing as it does with a particularly difficult time for the Soviet people when Stalin was at his most powerful. Although the play deals with some serious political issues, it focuses more on the domestic drama of General Kotov, a hero of the Great Revolution, his wife and her ageing family, at a time when the USSR was going through major changes on the eve of the Great Purges. Flannery creates a madcap claustrophobic atmosphere in which this disparate family, steeped in decaying nostalgia, face up to a new world they didn't want, fight for or invite. We are immersed in a world that feels like a familiar and somewhat cosy Chekhovian comedy. The family tease, bicker, argue and joke with each other as a day unfolds that will leave them never being quite the same again. To say more about what happens would be to say far too much. But what can be said is that Flannery has not just adapted a film for the stage, he has brought to us a play that has all the power and intensity of a classic piece of theatre. The action is always engaging and absorbing, and the constant shifting and twists of the narrative tease our perception of what kind of play we are watching and what it will lead us to next. Having recently been involved in a production of Arthur Miller's All My Sons, I was struck by some interesting similarities. In both plays the action concerns a family unit that undergoes radical change throughout the course of one day. Both playwrights gradually darken the mood as the story and the truths unfold for the protagonists. Also both plays have parallels with classic Greek drama having, as they do, an inevitability of outcome common to both of them.

My own experience watching this play, which I saw before the film, was one of excitement and admiration for a play that was so full of rich and absorbing storytelling. I was so taken with it that I resolved that one day I would try to direct it myself, but with the proviso that it would be on a different scale from that at The National Theatre. In the production at the Lyttleton we had an immense revolving dacha with multiple rooms of lifelike proportions. It was

certainly an awesome set, but at times it masked the action as it flowed from room to room. Something made me want to remove some of the spectacle and present the actors and the drama as intimately and simply as possible. This is why we have placed this production in the Studio with a very simple set designed to focus all the attention on the actors. This is an ensemble piece and so we have an open stage on which to play out this vivid and complex piece of theatre. The rehearsal process has been absorbing and exciting, and we have been on quite a journey to unravel the emotional core of the piece and to find the truth of the situations and characters. This journey has been made somewhat easier by having a terrific cast of actors who have trusted us and gone with us through some intense rehearsals. On the other side of the coin, we have had a chance to laugh a lot at the bizarre comedy streak that runs through the core of the play. We are also lucky to have been joined by an experienced and highly collaboratively creative team, many of whom have worked with us before, for whom I have the greatest respect and who have applied their infinite skill and imagination to how this production looks and sounds.

The title *Burnt by the Sun* is derived from a popular 1930s song composed by Jerzy Petersburski. Originally the Polish tango, *To ostatnia niedziela*, ('This is the Last Sunday'), it became popular in the Soviet Union with some new Russian lyrics and title, *Utomlyonnoye solntse* ('The Weary Sun').

Mike Langridge, Director

Peter Flannery is an English playwright and screenwriter. He was educated at the University of Manchester and is best known for his work while a resident playwright at the Royal Shakespeare Company in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Notable plays during his tenure include: Savage Amusement (1978), Awful Knawful (1978) and Our Friends in the North (1982). Other theatre work has included Singer (1989). He is perhaps best known to a wider audience for his highly acclaimed television adaptation of Our Friends in the North, produced by the BBC and screened on BBC Two in 1996. The epic nine-part serial, charting the course of the lives of four friends from Newcastle from 1964 to 1995, was in 2000 voted by the British Film Institute as one of the 100 Greatest British Television Programmes of the 20th century. Flannery's other television work has included Blind Justice (1988), a series about the work of radical lawyers. At the 1997 British Academy Television Awards, Flannery was given the honorary Dennis Potter Award for outstanding achievement in television writing. He has scripted adaptations of Alan Hunter's Inspector Gently novels, entitled George Gently, for BBC One. In 2008 Channel 4 transmitted Flannery's mini-series about the English Civil War, The Devil's Whore, on which he had worked for more than a decade.

# **BURNT BY THE SUN**

### by Peter Flannery

from the screenplay by Nikita Mik alkov and Rustam Ibragimbekov First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 24 June 2016

### CAST

#### in order of appearance

Nadia Maroussia, Nadia's mother Kotov, Maroussia's husband Lidia, Maroussia's grandmother Elena, Lidia's friend

Mokhova, the maid Vsevolod, Lidia's son

Olga, Maroussia's mother,

Vsevolod's sister-in-law

Farm Girl

Kolya, a tank officer Andrushya, a tank officer

Kirik, Elena's son

Truck Driver Mitia

Pioneer

Blokhin, an NKVD officer Aronin, an NKVD officer Hannah Safi / Emily Page

Claudia Carroll

Mike Hadjipateras

Gillian Jacyna

Anne Neville

Sarah Morrison

**Tim Pemberton** 

Alex McDevitt

Nicole Williamson

Freddie Kyle

Nigel Lawrence

**Derek Stoddart** 

**David Hoyatter** 

lain Stirling

Nicole Williamson

Freddie Kyle

The Weary Sun sung by Josh Lewis

The action takes place in Nikolina Gora, a village twenty-two miles west of Moscow. A summer's day, 1936.

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

## **PRODUCTION**

Director and Set Designer

Assistant Director

Costume Designer

Lighting Designers

Sound Designer & Operator

Projection Designers

Stage Manager

Deputy Stage Managers

Assistant Stage Manager

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Lighting Riggers

Photographers

Marketing Assistants

Set Constructors

Get-In Crew

Nigel Lawrence

Mike Langridge

Caroline Bleakley

Nichola Thomas

Andrew Dixon, Andrew Whadcoat

Paul Wilson

Richard Mead, Terry Mummery

Bernard Brady

Sukhjit Kainth, Laurie Swan

Jerome Kennedy

Teri Quappe

**Geoff Moore** 

Anna Araujo

Nicholas Jonne Wilson

Robert Walker, Andrew Whadcoat

Terry Mummery, Robert Walker,

**Matthew Whadcoat** 

Doug King, Geoff Moore, Rob Willin

Amanda Blake, Martin Choules,

Sue Collins, Colin Horne, Will O'Connell

Richard Mead, Liz Mead

Claudia Carroll, Tim Pemberton

**QYT Tutor** Claudia Carroll

Thanks to Hannah Dignam, Sarah Stoddart,

Action Replicas, Kall Kwik Chiswick

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**

#### Caroline Bleakley - Assistant Director

Caroline has been Assistant Director on many shows including *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Great Expectations*, *Lady Betty*, *Sweeney Todd* and *Mrs Warren's Profession*. She also co-directed *Shadowlands*. She has been a Questors actor since 1984 and recent parts include Kate in *All My Sons*, Eileen in *The Cripple of Inishmaan* and Desiree in *A Little Night Music*.

#### Claudia Carroll - Maroussia

Claudia has been at The Questors for six years. She was in Student Group 65 and has been in productions ever since, most recently playing Hilde Wangel in *The Master Builder*.

#### Mike Hadjipateras - Kotov

Mike's favourite roles include Trigorin in *The Seagull*, Faustus in *Doctor Faustus*, Aaronow in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Gary Essendine in *Present Laughter*, Dr Jim Bayliss in *All My Sons*, and John Proctor in *The Crucible*. He also has written a play about the Greenham Common Women, *Rain on Water*. Mike teaches History and Drama at the Rudolf Steiner School in Hertfordshire.

#### David Hovatter - Truck Driver

David most recently directed *The Overcoat* for this year's Questival, and earlier this year was involved in the event commemorating Shakespeare's death. He last appeared in *The Village Bike*. David is a lover of devised theatre, doing a devised play last year (*The Haunted Kimono*) and taking another (*Potter's Amazing Fleas*) to a festival in Slovenia, two years ago.

#### Gillian Jacyna - Lidia

Gillian was a member of the Student Group 53. Since completing the group, she has appeared in several Questors shows including *Conversations After a Burial*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *French Paste*, *Calendar Girls* and *West 5 Story*. She has also worked with Theatre West 4. She is very happy to be involved in *Burnt by the Sun* playing someone of a more 'aristocratic' background, but would like it known that she is not a grandmother – yet!

#### Freddie Kyle – Kolya / Aronin

Freddie joined The Questors recently, having not done any acting since A levels, 13 years ago. A long overdue exploration of his creative tendencies has brought him to *Burnt by the Sun*, his first production. To say he's excited would be an understatement.

#### The Pamela Howard School of Dance

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#### Mike Langridge - Director and Set Designer

Mike has directed and designed many productions at The Questors including The Hired Man, Pack of Lies, Noises Off, Privates on Parade, The Crucible, Lady Betty, Nicholas Nickleby, Great Expectations, Sweeney Todd, Mrs Warren's Profession and most recently Shadowlands. He has appeared in over 100 plays at The Questors including Hamlet, Othello, Treats, The Front Page, Good, All My Sons, Faith Healer, Heartbreak House, A View from the Bridge, Festen, The Seagull, Broken Glass, Shadowlands, All My Sons (again) and most recently The Cripple of Inishmaan.

#### Nigel Lawrence - Andrushya / Blokhin

A graduate from the 1987 Student Group 40, Nigel has appeared in over 30 productions, including *The Devils* (Grandier), *Death of a Salesman* (Biff), *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (Johnny Dowd), *Julius Caesar* (Brutus), *The Changeling* (Alsemero), *Nicholas Nickleby* (Squeers), *The Art of Success* (Hogarth), *Great Expectations* (Joe Gargery), *Kvetch* (Hal) and *Course Shakespeare – The Final Folio*.

#### Alex McDevitt - Olga

Alex has played a variety of roles at The Questors, and has been lucky enough to explore many different styles of theatre, such as The Sphinx in Berkoff's *Greek*, Clara in Durrenmatt's *The Visit* and Ruth in Pinter's *The Homecoming*. The challenge in *Burnt by the Sun* is to make a fairly crazy family believable and to ensure their contrasting high comedy works alongside the darker aspects of the story.

#### Sarah Morrison - Mokhova

Since 1980, Sarah has appeared in over 60 productions, with the parts played encompassing many genres: comedy, musical, pantomime, Greek Tragedy, Shakespeare, (you might have seen her recently as Maria in *Twelfth Night*) all of which she hopes will stand her in good stead for this production which has elements of all the above. Sarah also served on the Artistic Directorate under Gary Reid, and is a current member of the Auditioning Panel.

#### Anne Neville - Elena

Anne has acted at The Questors since 1983. Parts include Rebecca Nurse in *The Crucible*, 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*, Ranyevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard*, Mrs Alving in *Ghosts*, Mother Courage, and Amanda Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie*.

#### Emily Page – Nadia

Emily has been a member of The Questors since she was nine, making this her fourth year here. She has been seen in *Jack and the Beanstalk* and this year's youth production *Grimm Tales*. She is looking forward to performing again, hoping one day to fulfil her dream of being a well-known actress.

#### Tim Pemberton - Vsevolod

Tim Pemberton was last seen at The Questors playing Judge Hathorne in The Crucible. He now switches from practising law to teaching it. Tim has also played parts unconnected with the legal profession, including Seyton in Macbeth, Emil in The Duck Variations and John in Blue Remembered Hills. Behind the scenes, he is one of The Questors' social media team (so please follow, like us etc).

#### Hannah Safi - Nadia

Having joined Questors Youth Theatre in January this year, Hannah is thrilled to have been picked to play Nadia as her first big part. She has been keen to act since very young and is loving the whole Questors experience of lessons, rehearsals, shows and making great friends.

#### lain Stirling - Mitia

lain's recent appearances include Sir Robert Chiltern in An Ideal Husband and Chris Keller in All My Sons. He studied for BA (Hons) Drama, University of Wales, Aberystwyth (2000) and recently acquired BA (Hons) Person Centred Approach Counselling and Psychotherapy, Metanoia Institute. He enjoys working in a SEND school as a Teaching Assistant.

#### Derek Stoddart - Kirik

Derek has acted in a wide range of productions over the last 30 years with The Questors. Most recently he appeared in *Twelfth Night* and, prior to that, Uncle Vanya, Jack and the Beanstalk, Shadowlands, House & Garden and Mary Stuart. Other notable productions include Sweeney Todd, Great Expectations and Nicholas Nickleby.

#### Nicole Williamson - Farm Girl / Pioneer

Nicole joined The Questors last year. She has played a variety of roles including Daisy in Rhinoceros, Grandma in The American Dream, Philomele in The Love of the Nightingale. Rose in After Easter and Scaramouche in Scaramouche Jones. She was a member of the National Youth Theatre and has also competed in numerous drama festivals and showcases.

## **Next Questors Production**

### STAGS AND HENS by Willy Russell

The Judi Dench Playhouse 16 - 23 July 2016

The final Questors production of the season features Questors Student Group 69 presenting this classic modern drama that unfolds in the ladies' and gents' toilets of a disco in the 70s. This is a raucous, vulgar and hilariously funny portrayal of working class values.

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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

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