

## 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
- ✓ Opportunity to audition to join our company of actors
- ✓ Exclusive or discounted training courses
- ✓ Access to *iQ* – the members-only website: [members.questors.org.uk](http://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.*

## 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](http://questors.org.uk/qyt).

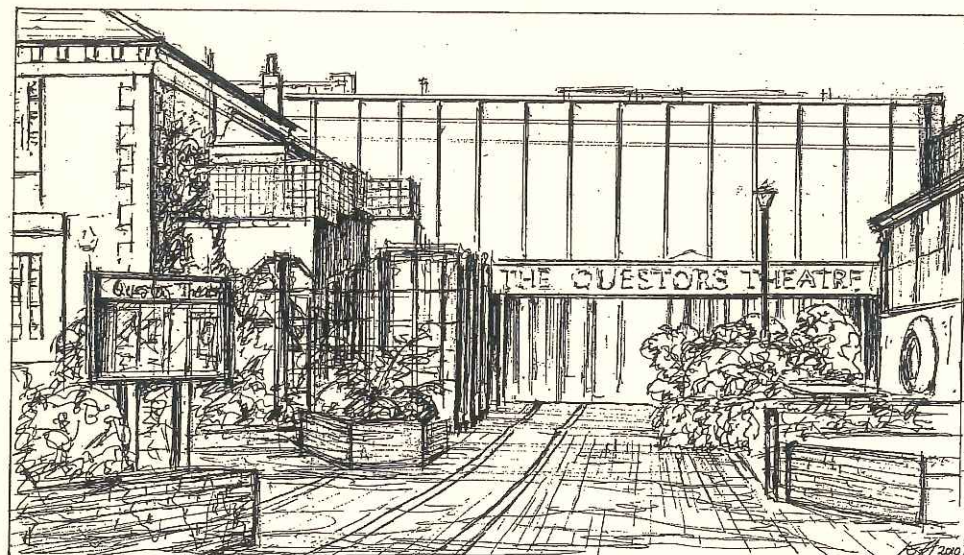
Cover Image: Elaine Hagan

The Questors Theatre  
Box Office: 020 8567 5184  
Email: [enquiries@questors.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@questors.org.uk)

Programme: Nigel Bamford  
12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, W5 5BQ  
Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011  
Registered Charity No. 207516



## Questors, Ealing's Theatre



# LARKIN WITH WOMEN

by Ben Brown

The Studio

27 June – 1 July 2017



## Vintage Tearoom at The Questors

Come and relax in our vintage tearoom during your busy day.

Open Tuesday to Sunday, 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Serving light lunches and delicious cakes with a pot of tea or coffee, all using vintage china.

Also open before and during the interval of Judi Dench Playhouse evening and matinee performances, serving tea and coffee to take away, ice cream and a selection of cold drinks.

See [teadarling.co.uk](http://teadarling.co.uk) for more information about Tea Darling.

## 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 2017 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.

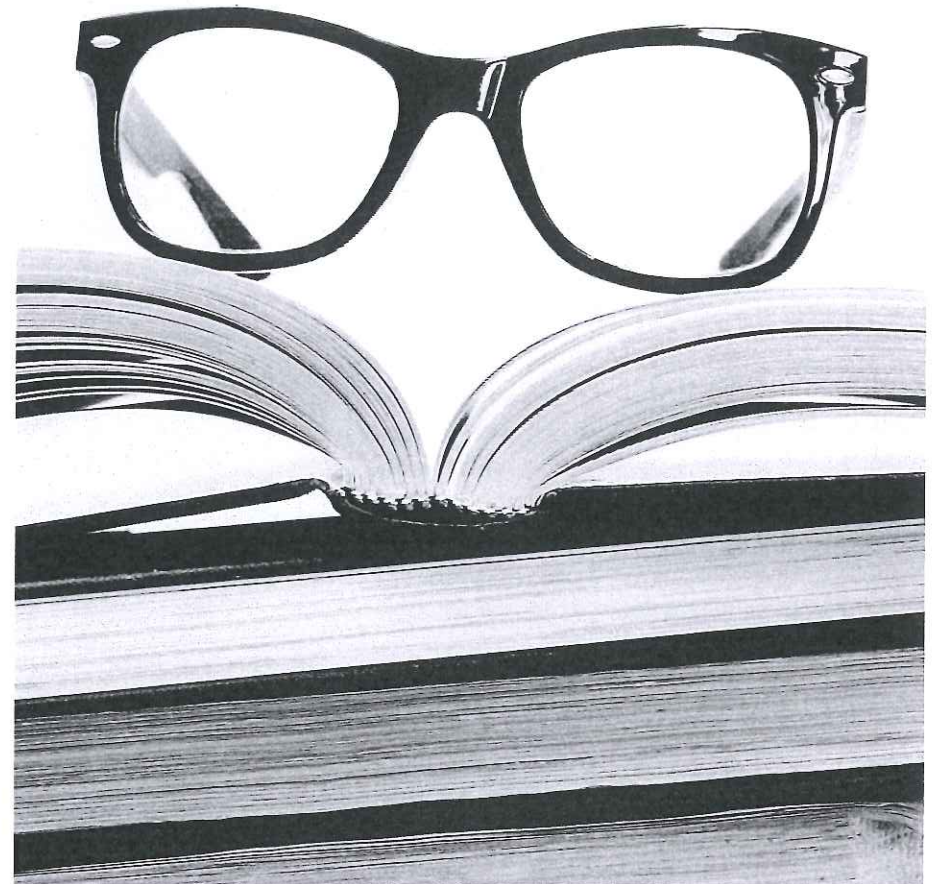
Opening Hours:

7:00 pm – 11:00 pm (10:30 pm close on Sundays)

Sunday lunchtime: midday – 2:30 pm

See [questors.org.uk/grapevine](http://questors.org.uk/grapevine) for more details

The Tearoom and the Grapevine now accept payments by card  
(contactless only).



# LARKIN WITH WOMEN

by Ben Brown

The Studio

27 June – 1 July 2017

# Larkin with Women

Ben Brown could hardly be called a prolific playwright having written only four plays in twenty years. However, when he does, it's worth waiting for. He won the TMA New Plays Award for *Larkin with Women* and the Best New Play Award for *Three Days in May*. *The Promise*, which is about the Balfour Declaration promising the Jews their own homeland, was given four stars by most critics when it came out in 2011.

This play, with its somewhat suggestive title, was first performed in 1999 at the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough. Questors Vice President Oliver Ford Davies played Larkin to great acclaim. Later it transferred to The Orange Tree in Richmond. The play covers the thirty years that Larkin spent as the chief librarian of Hull University Library. Based largely on Andrew Motion's biography of one of the most famous post-war poets, the play does not follow the known facts of his life to the letter. Brown allows himself some licence in order to condense events into two hours.

We do get the lugubrious, death obsessed, jazz-loving poet, together with the three women who had relationships with him during his time at Hull. Each of the women fulfils a different need in Larkin, who was famously unfaithful to all of them. Ben Brown gives us a tender, often funny portrait of Larkin who struggled to fit his relationships around his need to write. Brown uses Yeats' lines at the front of the play script:

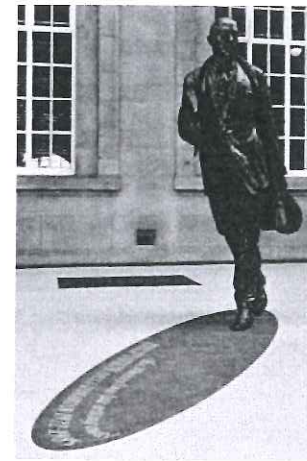
*The intellect of man is forced to choose  
Perfection of the life or of the work.*

Larkin was constantly torn between the need for solitude to write and his sensual need for the love and support of women. Horrified as he was at the thought of marriage, he managed to avoid it all his life despite the wishes of the women in his life, whom he often treated with casual cruelty.

Monica was the most important woman in Larkin's life. A bluestocking, she lectured in English Literature and believed passionately in his poetic genius. Betty, his secretary, worked for him for eighteen years before they started their affair. Finally Maeve, a Roman Catholic, found herself caught between her love for Larkin and her religious principles. It has been said that with the

focus of the play so strongly on Larkin, the women are somewhat in his shadow, but you must be the judge of that. The women are only seen in relation to Larkin but the actresses feel they have plenty to work on.

What Brown chooses to omit from the play is the enduring friendship between Larkin and Kingsley Amis. They met at Oxford and had much in common such as a hatred of the family, a low opinion of women and of the literature that preceded them. They exchanged letters constantly which were full of profanity and acid comments on others.



Statue of Philip Larkin in Hull Station  
— with thanks to Tigereyes

Another aspect of Brown's play is Larkin's relationship with Hull. He got the librarianship at the University but hated the city. When it was proposed that a statue of him be erected in Hull station, there was a local outcry at first. He was a posh Southerner, they said, though he was born in Coventry. The statue was eventually erected at the station in 2010 by the Larkin Society.

Nothing very much happens in the play; it is not a plot-driven piece. The characters grow older, the dynamic of the relationships shifts a little, but it is a funny and moving mood play which includes some of his beloved jazz as well as the poetry.

Working on *Larkin with Women* has been a joy. Brown uses pauses in an almost Pinteresque way and the writing is impressively precise and nuanced. It is also beautifully structured with its echoes and repetitions.

**Anne Neville, Director**

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## Meet the Company – Saturday afternoon 1 July

Come and meet author Ben Brown, the Director, Cast and Crew for an informal discussion in the Studio as soon as possible after the Saturday **matinee** performance.

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# LARKIN WITH WOMEN

by Ben Brown

*First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 27 June 2017*

## CAST

in order of appearance

Philip Larkin	<b>Paul Collins</b>
Monica	<b>Samantha Moran</b>
Betty	<b>Lucy Aley-Parker</b>
Maeve	<b>Pamela Major</b>

The play takes place over 30 years from 1955 to 1985.

The settings are:

Larkin's flat in Hull

Larkin's office in Hull University library

Monica's cottage in Northumberland

Larkin's house in Hull

A hospital

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 10 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	<b>Anne Neville</b>
Assistant Director	<b>Sukhi Kainth</b>
Set Designer	<b>Bron Blake</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Jenny Richardson</b>
Lighting Designers	<b>Andrew Dixon, Terry Mummery</b>
Sound Designer / Operator	<b>Paul Wilson</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Tina Harris</b>
Deputy Stage Manager	<b>Sally Milton</b>
Assistant Stage Managers	<b>Steve Cowan, Maria Gerhardt, Nigel Lawrence, Paul Souchon</b>
Properties	<b>Sue Collins</b>
Prompter	<b>Bridgett Strevens</b>
Wardrobe Assistants	<b>Anthony Curran, Sue Peckitt, Sylvia Wall</b>
Lighting Assistants	<b>Cecily Johnson, Halle Stevens, Roisin Tierney</b>
Set Realisation Lead	<b>Doug King</b>
Set Realisation	<b>Geoff Moore, Rob Willin</b>
Hair and Make-Up	<b>Karolina Bartnick, Jessica Bryson, Isabella Meek, Rachel Shepherd, Esmeralda Sjöstedt</b>
Photographer	<b>Peter Collins</b>
Videographer	<b>Peter Gould</b>
Thanks to	<b>Alec Atchison, Benji, Toby Lloyd, Steve Souchon, Kall Kwik Chiswick</b>

# Biographies

## Lucy Aley-Parker – Betty

Lucy graduated from drama school some years ago and worked in theatre, TV and radio. Her first appearance at The Questors was as Smeraldina in *A Servant to Two Masters*, which also toured to Venice. This is her fourth performance in a Yorkshire accent – previously aired at the glorious Minack Theatre as Mrs Hardcastle in *She Stoops to Conquer*. She recently returned to the profession and is also a director and voice and acting coach, both here and elsewhere. She's also exploring writing and has had two pieces performed on the fringe.

## Bron Blake – Set Designer

An active member of The Questors since the early 1970s, Bron has been designing sets since 2004. Productions include *Vincent in Brixton*, *The Seagull*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Broken Glass*, *Doctor Faustus*, *The School of Night*, *Betrayal*, *Be My Baby*, *Rope*, *The Village Bike*, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure* and *Sweet Charity*.

## Paul Collins – Philip Larkin

Paul has been a member of The Questors since 1975. He has recently directed *Measure for Measure* and *An Ideal Husband*. His most recent appearances on the Questors stage were as Danforth in *The Crucible* and Sartre in *Sartre*.

## Andrew Dixon – Lighting Designer

In 2017, Andrew will have been lighting for 60 years ... from amateur dramas to BBC epics. He finds them all equally exciting. Andrew hopes that lighting five venues in the space of the Studio will not prove a room to far.

## Sukhi Kainth – Assistant Director

Sukhi has been with The Questors for just over a year and has been busy as a DSM on productions including *Burnt by the Sun*, *Bird on the Wire* and *Measure for Measure*. Sukhi has recently completed a Directing Course and is now taking her first steps towards becoming a director.

## Doug King – Set Realisation

Doug has been actively involved at The Questors since 1983 and his roles have included Vice Chairman, Stage Director, Production Manager, Stage Manager, Tour Manager and Set Constructor. Recent credits include *The Master Builder*, *The Village Bike*, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, *Cinderella*, *The Ladykillers* and *Sweet Charity*.

## Pamela Major – Maeve

Pamela trained in Student Group 43, following which she acted in *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *John Gabriel Borkman* and other productions. A long spell living overseas interrupted her Questors career but she is delighted to be plugged back in to this wonderful place, appearing most recently in *The Master Builder* and *Bird on the Wire*. As that pesky thing called work starts to recede in her life, she hopes to do much more.

# Learning through plays?

## BA (Hons) Theatre Production (Design and Management)

Gain theoretical and practical experience whilst working backstage on shows at both **The Questors** and in the **London College of Music**.

This two-year accelerated course covers a wide range of theatre-related skills, including stage management, stage technology (lighting and sound) and design.

Apply now to start **September 2017**

 [uwl.ac.uk/questors](http://uwl.ac.uk/questors)

 [john.davey@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:john.davey@uwl.ac.uk)



The Volunteer Link Scheme  
befriending housebound people



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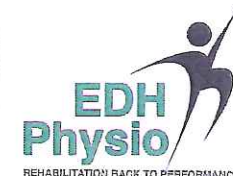
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Physiotherapy  
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Massage

### **Samantha Moran – Monica**

Sam has had a great past year at The Questors – most recently as Vikki in *Bird on the Wire*, Mistress Overdone in *Measure for Measure*, Karen in *Past Imperfect* (Questival II) and any number of roles, including a Wall, in our 2016 celebration of Shakespeare. She's also taken every opportunity to read ghost stories and poetry to anyone who'll listen! This summer she's off to Monaco with The Questors – on tour as Lily Pepper in Noel Coward's *The Red Peppers*.

### **Terry Mummery – Lighting Designer**

Terry has been lighting productions at The Questors since the mid-1990s. After a gap of several years he has returned to lighting design. Recent shows include *Rhinoceros*, *Questival II* and *The Exonerated*, and assisting with the design of *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*. He has also devised and assisted with the projections for several productions.

### **Anne Neville – Director**

Anne has been directing at The Questors since 1991, including *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Macbeth*, *London Assurance*, *ENRON*, *A Servant to Two Masters*, *The Weir*, *Trojan Women*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Faith Healer*, *Translations*, *The Venetian Twins*, *Les Liasons Dangereuses*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *The Beaux' Strategem*, *The Recruiting Officer*, *The Secret Rapture* and *She Stoops to Conquer*.

### **Jenny Richardson – Costume Designer**

After many years working in stage management, props and set design, Jenny enjoyed a change of direction to costume design, recently for *Equus*, *All My Sons*, *The Lying Kind*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, *Measure for Measure*, *Scarborough* and *Sweet Charity*. Jenny can also be found working in Box Office, and is frequently in demand as an upholsterer.

### **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*, *Burnt by the Sun*, *Stags and Hens*, and *The Last of the Haussmans*.

## Next at The Questors

**TRELAWNEY OF THE 'WELLS' by Arthur Wing Pinero**

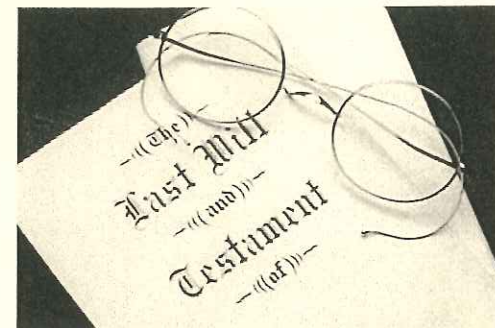
**The Judi Dench Playhouse**

**15 – 22 July 2017**

Questors Student Group 70 closes the season with this timeless comic love story, set in the extravagant and colourful world of 19th century theatre. The talented students who gave you *Love's Labour's Lost* now reach the climax of their two-year training journey.

## Become a BEQUESTOR

This season, The Questors, Ealing's theatre, is presenting 18 productions – old and modern classics, challenging recent drama, comedies and our great annual Panto. 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. You're reading this because live theatre means a great deal to you too.



Ealing and West London 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. But we receive no public funding.

Please consider making a donation to help us continue to make our huge contribution to the cultural life of the capital. 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).

No gift is too small to help and any gift, either while you are alive or in your will, attracts tax relief. You can find a Gift Aid form and an example of simple forms of legacy on our website at [questors.org.uk/giving](http://questors.org.uk/giving).

Your donation or legacy may be anonymous if you wish, or The Questors may acknowledge your generosity publicly – every gift of £1000 or more will be commemorated on the donor board in the foyer.

*giftaid it*



The Trustees of The Questors, which is a charity, will ensure that your gift is put to the best possible use. But if you wish to allocate it to a particular purpose, or would like any further information, please feel free to speak in confidence to Andrea Bath, our Executive Director, on 020 8567 0011.