

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
- ✓ 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

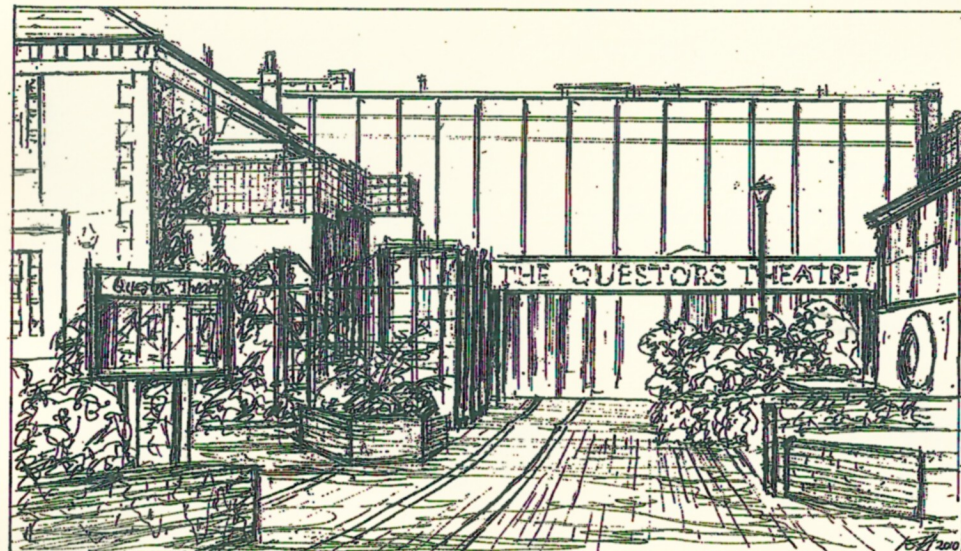
Our Youth Theatre, QYT, runs weekly drama classes for all ages from 6 to 18. Younger groups meet on Saturday mornings and older ages at weekday teatime. There's often a waiting list for membership, so put your name down now! Details are online at questors.org.uk/qyt.

Cover Image: Elaine Hagan
The Questors Theatre
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Email: 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



BIRD ON THE WIRE

by Brian Abbott

The Studio

3 – 11 February 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 4:00 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 takeaway, ice cream and a selection of cold drinks.

See 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 for more details

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



Image by Jane Arnold-Forster

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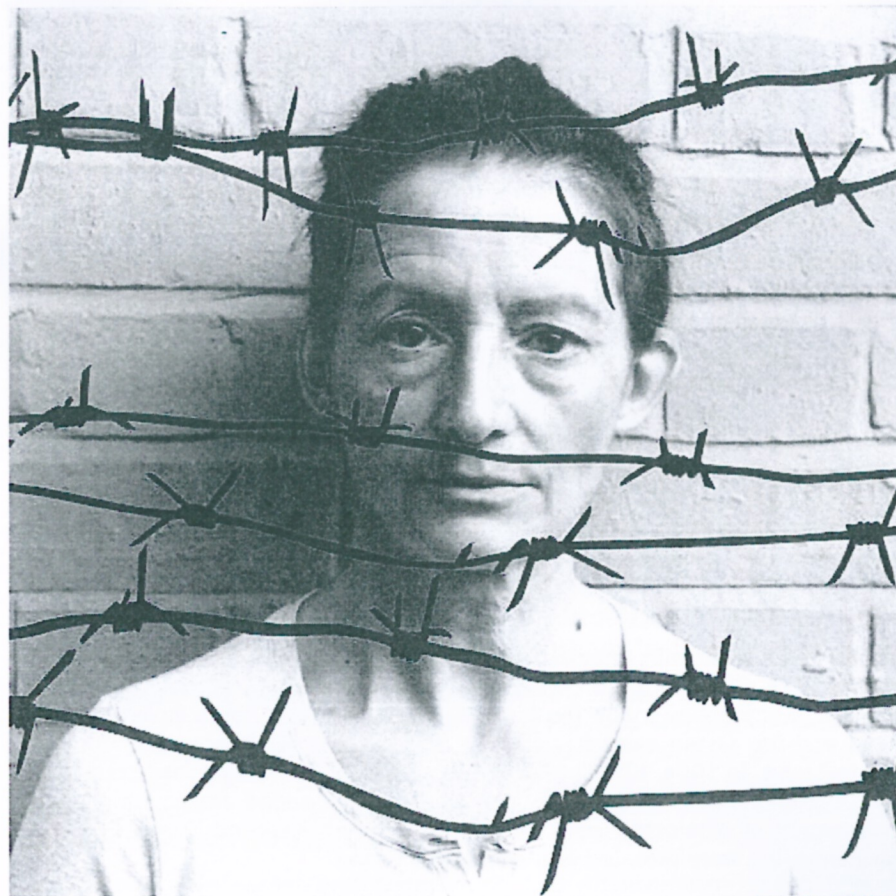


Image by Jane Arnold-Forster

BIRD ON THE WIRE

by Brian Abbott

The Studio

3 – 11 February 2017

Bird on the Wire

Bird on the Wire is a thriller, a love story, a reflection on the Gulags of the Soviet Union. The thread throughout is betrayal. Almost every character betrays something or someone, even if only themselves.

The play is set in England in 1989-90, during the Gorbachev era in the USSR. Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985 and introduced unprecedented policies of reform, openness (glasnost) and restructuring (perestroika). The relaxation of censorship led to growing unrest and calls for independence in the Soviet Republics and Eastern Europe. In 1988 Hungary started permitting its people to travel to the west and in May 1989 it removed the barbed wire border with Austria. Effectively, any Soviet or East European citizen who could get to Hungary could escape communism. The pressures grew. After weeks of civil unrest, the East German government announced on 9 November 1989 that all its citizens could visit West Germany. Crowds of East Germans crossed through and over the Berlin Wall on that historic night. The fall of the Berlin Wall paved the way for German reunification in October 1990. The Soviet Union itself collapsed in 1991 following a failed hard-liners' coup against Gorbachev.

The play also deals with another era in Soviet history, 1964-65. Following his death in 1953, Stalin was succeeded by Nikita Khrushchev. At the 1956 Party Congress, Khrushchev made his famous 'Secret Speech' denouncing Stalin's purges and the Gulag system, ushering in a thaw in Soviet repression. This didn't last long. In 1964, Khrushchev too was subject to a hard-liners' coup, this time successful. Although never as bad as the Stalin period, political trials and imprisonment of dissidents went on. This was when Katerina Turenkova and Olga Zamyatina were arrested and sent to the Gulag.

The Gulag refers to the system of corrective labour camps which existed throughout the Soviet Union until the late 1980s. They had two purposes: to incarcerate criminals, political opponents and class enemies; and to use their labour to carry out (often insanely) ambitious mining and infrastructure projects in remote regions. Unlike the Nazi death camps, the objective was not to kill the inmates, but millions died as a result of punishment, disease, camp violence and the severe living conditions. They were places of extreme brutality and deprivation. Here is one quotation from Tamara Petkevich in gulaghistory.org/exhibits/days-and-lives:

"All of those years, we were hungry, cold and loaded down with impossible physical labour – forestry, digging, breaking rock. In other words, we returned to the barracks so weakened, knowing that at 5:00 in the morning, they would bang on the rails again, which meant that we would have to wake up for roll call, line up, put on our wet clothes that hadn't dried out from the previous day, and go back out to the woods."

The practice described in the play, of memorising rather than writing down subversive works, was well established in Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union. The poet Anna Akhmatova composed Requiem – a monument to the victims of Stalin's terror – in secrecy, under constant threat of search and arrest. It was whispered line by line to her closest friends, who quickly committed to memory what they had heard. For the dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, writing in captivity was key to survival. He taught himself to 'write' by committing his work to memory, so Gulag authorities would be unable to seize it from him.

Pamela Major

Brian Abbott – Playwright

Brian has followed twin careers as playwright and actor for many years. For the production company, Parrabbola, he has specialised in writing large-scale, site-specific community plays and musicals based on local, national and international history and events. His most recent piece, *Half a Cod a Day*, was performed at the Brighton Fringe Festival and toured the South-West and the Hebrides. His work has been performed in Gdansk and Ostrava, as well as at the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, the New Theatre Royal in Portsmouth, Tilbury Fort on the Wirral, Rickmansworth, Rotherham, South Holderness and at the Millennium Dome. His most recent works for Parrabbola are two audio projects written to commemorate the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings. These can be visited on haroldthelastelectedking.co.uk and iwitnesshistory.co.uk.

Outside Parrabbola, Brian's plays include *Milkwood Blues*, a play about the last days of Dylan Thomas, which was produced at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith with Allan Corduner as Dylan Thomas, and *Follow the Man from Cook's*, a play about Thomas Cook, the originator of Cook's Tours. This is the third of his plays to be performed at The Questors, following *The Gospel According to Judas* and, most recently, *No Fairy Tale*.

He was also chief writer and compiler on 200 programmes for the original *Fifteen to One* for Channel 4.

As an actor he worked with the RSC for three seasons, appearing in Peter Brook's *Anthony and Cleopatra*, John Barton's *Love's Labour's Lost* and in *Once in a Lifetime*. He performed in *The Iceman Cometh* with Kevin Spacey at the Old Vic, and has appeared in repertory and touring theatres all over the UK. Television work has included *Doc Martin*, *Casualty*, *Merseybeat*, *Banged Up Abroad in Nepal*, and the BAFTA nominated *Kid in the Corner*. He has also appeared in the films *Lucky Break*, *Take Three Girls* and *Hatrick*.

Meet the Company – Wednesday 8 February

Come and meet the playwright, director and company for a discussion in the Studio as soon as possible after the Wednesday performance.

BIRD ON THE WIRE

by Brian Abbott

World Premiere performance at The Questors Theatre: 3 February 2017

CAST

in order of appearance

Alan	Freddy Gaffney
Sara	Sofia Brolì
Julia	Hannah Webster
Katerina Turenkova	Lisa Day
Vikki	Samantha Moran
Olga	Pamela Major
Workman / Andrei	Robert Gordon Clark

The play is set in Katerina Turenkova's house in the Peak District.

Act 1 and Act 2 Scene 1 take place in 1989.

Act 2 Scene 2 is set a year later, in 1990.

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 5 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	Francis Lloyd
Set Designer	Phillip Harrison
Costume Designer	Anne Gilmour
Lighting Designer	James Rosen
Assistant Lighting Designer	Olly Potter
Sound Designer	Kayti Wiita
Production Manager	Jane Arnold-Forster
Stage Manager	Tilly Benson-Reid
Deputy Stage Managers	Sukhjìt Kainth, Rebecca Maynard
Assistant Stage Managers	Isobel Adedeji, Dan Cawtheray, Maya Markelle
Properties	Harriet Parsonage
Prompter	Bridgett Strevens
Voice Coach	Paul Vincent
Fight Arranger	John Fryer
Projections	Terry Mummery
Wardrobe Assistant	Sue Peckitt
Set Constructor	John Owen
Get-In Crew	Steve Souchon, Rob Willin
Photographers	Jane Arnold-Forster, Michael Smith
Videographer	Peter Gould
Marketing Assistant	Liz Mead

Thanks to: **Sarah Andrews, Imogen Brown, Carla Evans,
Richard Gallagher, Dorothy Lawson, Richard Mead,
Mark Pattinson, Steve Pryke, Peter Salvietto,
Charles Sidwa, Pia Weston, Andrew Whadcoat,
Paul Wilson, Nigel Worsley, Drama Studio London**

Biographies

Sofia Broll – Sara

Originally from Italy, Sofia has trained as an actor at both Regent's University London and Drama Centre. This is her first play as a Questors acting member.

Lisa Day – Katerina Turenkova

After three decades at The Questors, Lisa thought she'd done it all: novice nun (*Measure for Measure*); alcoholic / needy southern belles (*A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Rose Tattoo*); evil royalty (*The Snow Queen*); repugnant caricature (*The Twits*); mischievous ghost (*Blithe Spirit*); assorted ditzy, troubled middle-aged women (*Abigail's Party*, *Humble Boy*, *Equus*); American 'trailer trash' (*Suburban Motel*); uptight WI chairwoman (*Calendar Girls*) and a sprinkling of classical roles. She'd even added the Prime Minister (*The Letter of Last Resort* at the Jermyn Street Theatre). But no, it turns out she'd never played a Nobel prize-winning lesbian Russian dissident. Tick.

Freddy Gaffney – Alan

Freddy became a Questors member in 2014 and has since graduated from Student Group 68. Previous theatre includes Almeida Youth Project (Almeida Theatre), Almeida Young Storytellers *The Illiad*, and, for The Questors, *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* and *Hands Across the Sea & The Young Idea*.

Anne Gilmour – Costume Designer

Anne joined The Questors in 1983 when she worked on the costumes for *Bodies*. She has recently designed or helped with the costumes on *Rhinoceros*, the 4D Directors' Showcase and *London Assurance*. Anne was formerly Chairman of The Questors and Little Theatre Guild, and is currently active in the International Amateur Theatre Association.

Robert Gordon Clark – Workman / Andrei

33 years ago Robert made his Questors Studio debut in another new play called *Long Way Away*. More recent roles at The Questors have included Rod (*Calendar Girls*) and Harry Dalton (*Equus*) as well as John (*The Letter of Last Resort*) at the off West End's Jermyn Street Theatre.

Phillip Harrison – Set Designer

Phillip has been designing sets for The Questors for the past few years as a way to counterbalance his working life of 0's and 1's and to put on some level of pretence that he's mildly creative.

Francis Lloyd – Director

Francis Lloyd trained at the Central School of Speech and Drama, where a fellow student was Brian Abbott. This is the third play by Brian that he has directed at The Questors, following *The Gospel According to Judas* (2002) and *No Fairy Tale* (2014). He has also directed *After the Dance*, *French Paste*, *Charley's Aunt*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Otherwise Engaged*, *Hobson's Choice* and *Engaged*. As an actor, his recent performances include Vanya in *Uncle Vanya* and Sir Robert Morton in *The Winslow Boy*.


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

 john.davey@uwl.ac.uk



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Pamela Major – Olga

Pamela trained in Student Group 43 and appeared in *Lear*, *Two Planks and a Passion*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *John Gabriel Borkman* and *Iphigenia*. She is now back at The Questors after a long gap living overseas. She played Aline Solness in *The Master Builder* and has since appeared in the 24-Hour Plays and the Questival.

Samantha Moran – Vikki

Sam was most recently seen at The Questors in *Measure for Measure* (*Mistress Overdone*) and *The Red Peppers* (*Lily Pepper*) as well as performing in last year's Questival, the Shakespeare celebration *All Joy of the Worm*, a comedy sketch show and various poetry, story and Dark Monday readings. Before joining The Questors she did lots of other stuff, in other places – as well as a drama degree, the NYT, various productions at the Edinburgh Fringe and far too many pantomimes.

James Rosen – Lighting Designer

James is about to finish his studies in Theatre Production at UWL. He has worked on many shows at The Questors and other venues. This is his first time lighting a big show here.

Hannah Webster – Julia

Hannah joined The Questors in 2002 and went on to graduate from Student Group 65. Appearances at The Questors include *The Master Builder*, *Macbeth*, *Absurd Person Singular*, *Doña Rosita the Spinster & Yerma* and *Teechers*, as well as *Date Night* (Etcetera Theatre) and *Unaligned* (London Theatre).

Kayti Wiita – Sound Designer

Having worked on over 30 productions back in the United States, this is Kayti's second production in England and with The Questors. After acting as a sound operator for the Questors production of *Measure for Measure*, she's happy to be back and sound designing her first show.

Next at The Questors

EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES

by Erich Kästner,
adapted by Carl Miller

1 – 4 March 2017

The Judi Dench Playhouse

Someone has stolen Emil's money. There are no grown-ups to help, so Emil sets about tracking down the thief by himself. Come and join Emil and his gang of detectives in an exciting chase through 1920s Berlin.

SCARBOROUGH

by Fiona Evans
3 – 11 March 2017

The Studio

A drama of forbidden love unfolds in a shabby B&B when two people arrive for an illicit weekend. But one is a 15-year-old child and the other their teacher. Does it matter which is male and which female? See the argument presented both ways round.

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.

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.

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.

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