

## 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.

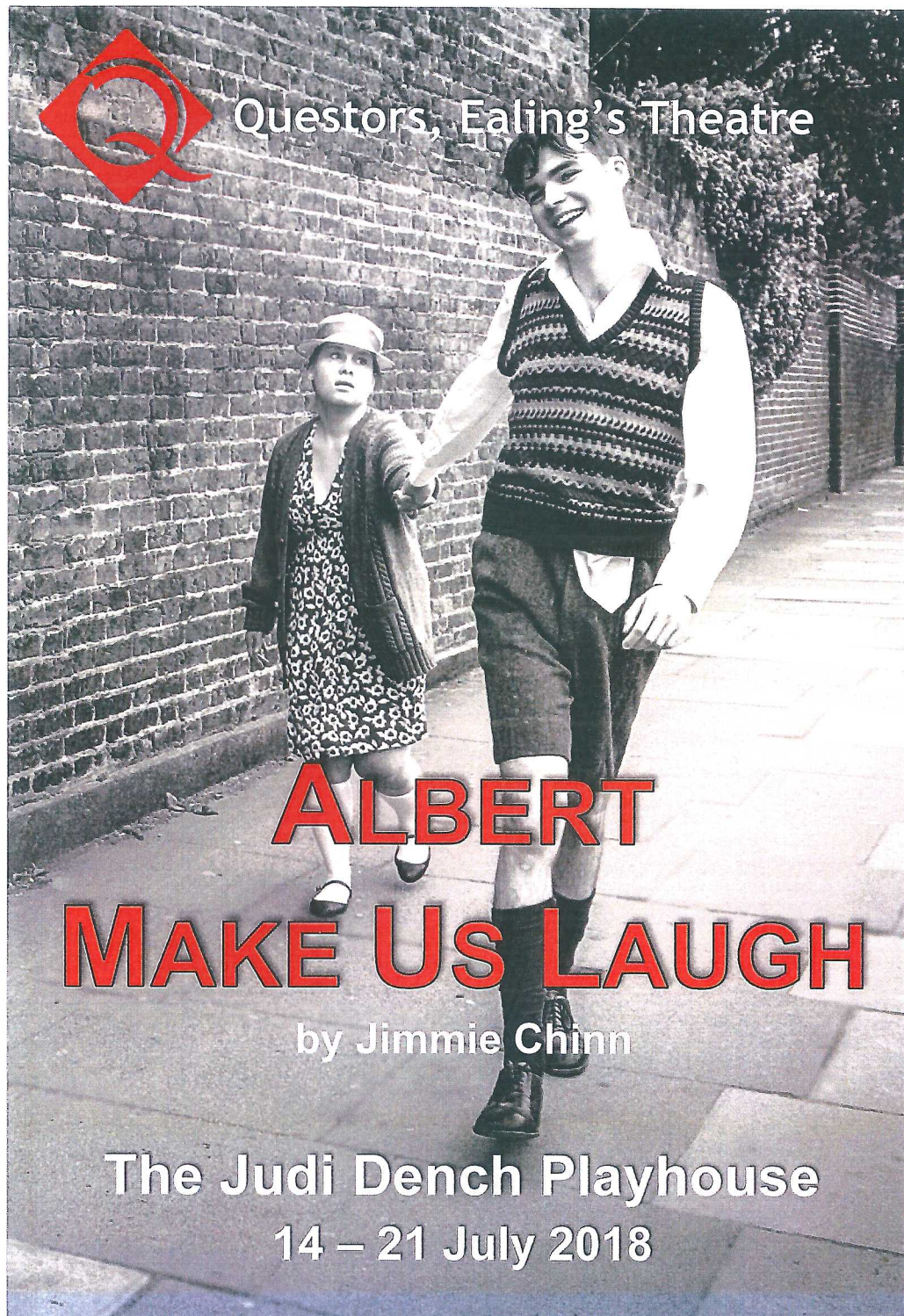
The Questors has a high standard of acting and, to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – call the Theatre Office for details of forthcoming auditions.


## 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).

The Questors Theatre  
12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, W5 5BQ  
Registered Charity No. 207516

Programme: Nigel Bamford  
Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011  
Box Office: 020 8567 5184  
Email: [enquiries@questors.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@questors.org.uk)



 Questors, Ealing's Theatre

**ALBERT**  
**MAKE US LAUGH**  
by Jimmie Chinn

The Judi Dench Playhouse  
14 – 21 July 2018

## Fields at The Questors

Fields at The Questors serves Italian coffee, fine teas, hearty meals and handmade cakes, and is the perfect spot for a pre-theatre meal or intermission ice-cream.

Order interval drinks before the show to beat the crowds.

Regular opening hours:  
Monday to Saturday,  
9:00 am to 7:30 pm

Also open before and during the interval of all Judi Dench Playhouse evening and matinee performances.

Find **Fields** on **Facebook**.



## 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 2018 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.

**Fields and the Grapevine accept payments by card.**



image: Robert Vass

## ALBERT MAKE US LAUGH

by Jimmie Chinn

**The Judi Dench Playhouse**

**14 – 21 July 2018**

# ALBERT MAKE US LAUGH

Jimmie Chinn wrote this play for Student Group 39 in 1986. He, like me, was from Oldham in Lancashire and he was one of my predecessors in the role of second year tutor for the student group at The Questors. Apparently, that year there had been some difficulty choosing a play and he volunteered to write one. He did so in just one week. (According to my sources, he put himself in purdah and just 'got on with it'.) Noël Coward and Oscar Wilde also claimed to be rapid writers. The best I've managed is writing a script in three weeks so I'm rather in awe of this achievement.

One might describe this piece as a fable. It's a basic storyline and one that we've seen many times over: the 'simpleton' whose open approach to life warms the hearts of all those around him. Famous examples include the films *Forrest Gump* and *Being There*. Chinn set it in a time 'ever so long ago' and he is vague about whether we're in the late 1940s or early 1950s. Either way, attitudes to unmarried mothers, schooling, bullying etc. were all very different to those of today. In particular, we better understand autism, which is, possibly, what Enid has. Albert is less easy to identify in this way, 'Is it nature or nurture?' – hence our slightly reworked ending. (No spoilers, but, be assured, the script remains the same.)

As a northerner, Chinn has given all his characters names that we would associate with *Coronation Street*, but the play is clearly set in somewhere like the post-war scrub end of London. Wherever the location, in the late forties/early fifties, Enid and Albert's house/bedsit was not untypical. It's ironically called 'Paradise Mansions' but, despite its name, does not have a bathroom or an inside toilet. It's pretty squalid, yet not that different from the hundreds of others that would have surrounded it before Hitler's bombs took their toll.

Secondary modern schools were introduced in 1944 and gradually gave way to the comprehensive system. Correctly, to my mind, comprehensives were also thought by many people to be a great mistake. The intention was that the higher achievers brought their peers up to their level but the very opposite was frequently the case.

Both ideas catered for pupils between the ages of eleven and fifteen. The 'bright' kids passed their Eleven Plus exam and went to grammar school. Those who were not that academically competent were sidelined into such places as Belmont Fields, where the staff were frequently unable to maintain discipline and where corporal punishment and bullying were the norm. In the play, PT master, Mr Leatherbottle, is a ghost from the past that we would all like to forget, but he *did* exist right up until the early 1990s when Ofsted got rid of him and his like. (Well, they had to get something right!)

People like Albert are, as Mr Tope says, 'Very special'. Mr Tope wishes that Albert was not under his charge but, like a lot of Tope's ilk, he doesn't see the boy's potential.

This play takes place in and around a school but it is not *about* school. Rather, it's a touching 'rites of passage' story about someone who survives bullies, predatory advances – and even the PT instructor – by resolutely being himself.

Looking back, I have to admit that there was the occasional good teacher during my schooling (in our play s/he is represented by Miss Mint). My version of her was a certain Mrs Simmonite, who, one day, 'ever so long ago' – it was back in the 1960s – lowered the schoolroom blinds, lit a candle and – at our early age of seven – introduced us all to Shakespeare with the opening words, 'I'm about to tell you a ghost story ...' *Macbeth* has been my favourite ever since.

Miss Mint has to make do with Thomas Hood but it's practically the same idea.

I *did* go to Mrs Simmonite's house (as does Albert to Miss Partington's). Possibly, unlike the instance in our play, neither I nor my teacher was interested in anything other than inspiration and a shared love of music, theatre and art. Mrs Simmonite shared her Victorian abode with thirteen cats – a pungency that I still remember rather fondly – and her walls were crammed with classical paintings, all of which she vividly explained, leaving none of the X material bits out.

She *might* have 'held me close' – I don't remember – I don't think so but it doesn't matter. Unlike Miss Hemsley, I don't blame the well-meaning, but slightly bewildered, Miss Partington for doing this to Albert. There used to be a case for innocence about those relationships and it's sad, though quite right, that we eventually – and horrifically – found out that it must happen no more.

Since Chinn's 'ever so long ago', there are also good things that have changed. Those of us who are of a certain age will always remember the 'strange one' at school: Chinn has – presumably – drawn Albert from experience but I'm sure a lot of us recognise him. Albert is the one who the (rather woeful) adults he comes into contact with deride – before they realise his value and insight. They are forced to reconsider their lives when faced with someone who gives far more than he gets:

*Albert is the one*

*If you want a bit of fun*

*But you will all feel sorry that you laughed.*

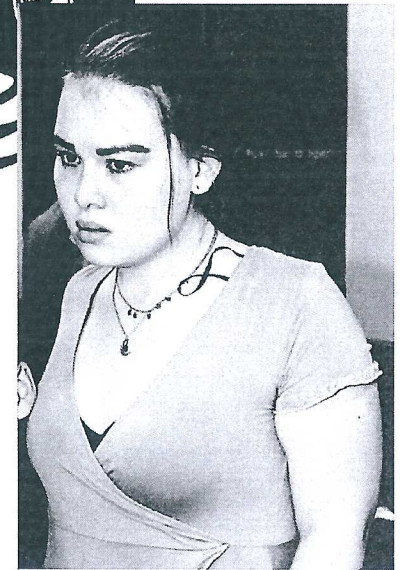
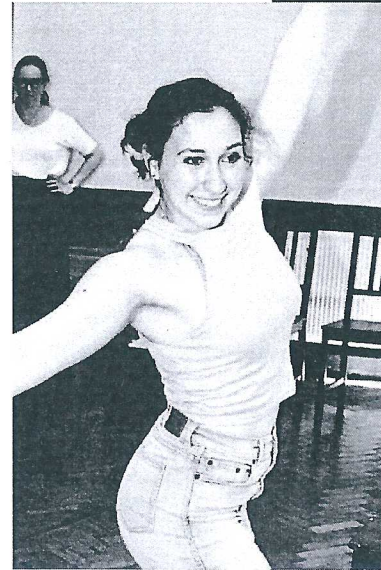
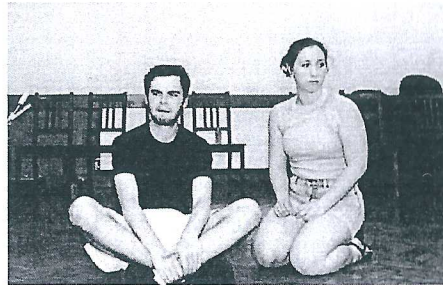
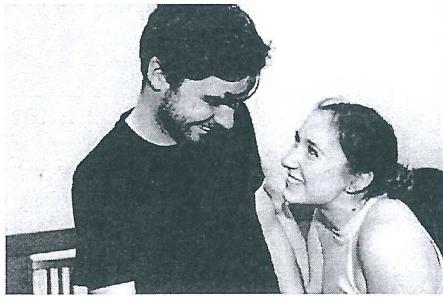
Children can be cruel and – far away from 'the happiest days of your life' – school can be a life-long nightmare. This is the story of a survivor and an inspirer.

'Albert Nuttall is a paragon.' Welcome to his world.

**Richard Gallagher, Director.**

# Rehearsal Photographs

by Eleonora C. Collini



THE QUESTORS STUDENT GROUP 71 PRESENTS  
**ALBERT MAKE US LAUGH**

by Jimmie Chinn

*First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 14 July 2018*

## CAST

### *Adults*

|                  |                               |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Headmaster Tope  | <b>Chris Waldock</b>          |
| Enid Nuttall     | <b>Maria Gebhardt</b>         |
| Miss Mint        | <b>Maya Markelle</b>          |
| Miss Hemsley     | <b>Rachel Griffiths</b>       |
| Miss Partington  | <b>Georgina Keck</b>          |
| Mr Leatherbottle | <b>Joe Sharp</b>              |
| Eric Smallshaw   | <b>Charlie Sloboda-Bolton</b> |

### *Children*

|                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Albert Nuttall    | <b>Rory Hobson</b>            |
| Primrose Macaveny | <b>Gaia Cicolani</b>          |
| Barbara Batch     | <b>Georgina Keck</b>          |
| Nora Tooley       | <b>Maya Markelle</b>          |
| Lobelia Bottomley | <b>Rachel Griffiths</b>       |
| Shane Butterworth | <b>Joe Sharp</b>              |
| Charlie Shorrocks | <b>Charlie Sloboda-Bolton</b> |
| Tommy Gawshaw     | <b>Joe Booth</b>              |

Time: 'ever so long ago'. The action of the play takes place in and around Belmont Fields secondary modern school and in the home of Albert Nuttall.

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours 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>Richard Gallagher</b>                                                                                                         |
| Assistant Director         | <b>Dorothy Lawson</b>                                                                                                            |
| Costume Designer           | <b>Claire Malyon</b>                                                                                                             |
| Set Design Facilitator     | <b>Alex Marker</b>                                                                                                               |
| Set Design Associate       | <b>Angus Duke (UWL)</b>                                                                                                          |
| Lighting Designer          | <b>Tim Hayward</b>                                                                                                               |
| Sound Designers/Operators  | <b>Fengfan Zhou (UWL), Paul Wilson</b>                                                                                           |
| Stage Managers             | <b>Michelle Weaver,<br/>Andrew J. Quick (UWL)</b>                                                                                |
| Deputy Stage Manager       | <b>Robert Eagle</b>                                                                                                              |
| Assistant Stage Managers   | <b>Nia Enokkaran, Ciara Foote,<br/>Oilly Potter (UWL), Paul Souchon</b>                                                          |
| Wardrobe Assistant         | <b>Marietta Neubauer (UWL)</b>                                                                                                   |
| Lighting Operators         | <b>Shaan Latif-Shaikh, Oilly Potter (UWL)</b>                                                                                    |
| Set Constructors           | <b>Doug King, Steve Souchon,<br/>Rob Willin and UWL students</b>                                                                 |
| Hair and Make-Up Assistant | <b>Sunaina McCarthy</b>                                                                                                          |
| Scenic Painters            | <b>Tessa Colgan Haugh<br/>and UWL students</b>                                                                                   |
| Photographers              | <b>Robert Vass (Publicity and<br/>Production),<br/>Eleonora C. Collini (Rehearsal)</b>                                           |
| Thanks to                  | <b>Alec Atchison, Glen Barnham,<br/>Daniel Cawtheray, John Dobson,<br/>Harriet Parsonage,<br/>Rickmansworth Players Wardrobe</b> |

# Biographies



## **Joe Booth** – *Tommy Gawshaw*

Joe was once a member of both the Youth Theatre and Young Studio (twice, in the latter case!) Since then, he has been ASM on two youth productions: *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* and *Animal Farm*. He also ASM'd on the 2015 pantomime, *Dick Whittington & His Cat*, where he operated the jellyfish puppet. As a film buff, he would like to tell people his character is definitely inspired by James Dean.



## **Gaia Cicolani** – *Primrose Macaveny*

Gaia was born in Torino, Italy. Strongly rooted in contemporary and ballet dance, she is passionate about the interaction between different kinds of art and artists. Gaia trained at Trinity Laban Conservatory of Music and Dance. At The Questors, she performed in *Galatea*, directed by Claudia Carroll, and collaborated with the productions of *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Emil and the Detectives* and *Trelawny of the 'Wells'*. She played Claire

in *The Maids* in the last student group production.



## **Maria Gebhardt** – *Enid Nuttall*

Maria joined The Questors in September 2016 to become part of Student Group 71. She played Sophie Scholl in *We Will Not Be Silent*. In addition to that, she worked backstage on several productions including *The Ladykillers*, *The Diamond Ring*, *Larkin With Women*, *Trelawny of the 'Wells'* and, most recently, *The Country Wife* at the Minack Theatre. Her last appearance was as Madame in *The Maids* and she also assistant directed the recent production of *Eventide*.



## **Rachel Griffiths** – *Miss Hemsley / Lobelia Bottomley*

Rachel joined The Questors in 2003 after graduating from Nottingham University with a degree in History and American Studies. She completed Student Group 61 in 2008 and has appeared in several productions since, most recently *Season's Greetings* and *Jumpers for Goalposts*. She is delighted to have been invited back to appear in *Albert* on the 10th anniversary of her student group graduation. She is also a member of the Questors new

writing team who work to discover and develop new writing talent.



## **Rory Hobson** – *Albert Nuttall*

Rory joined the Questors Youth Theatre at the age of seven. Acting credits at The Questors include Fleance in *Macbeth*, John Tate in *DNA*, Alan in *Blood Sports*, Angel Clare in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* as well as appearances in Questival II, the Giant Coarse Acting Festival and the Overnight Plays. Rory has recently become a member of the National Youth Theatre.



## **Georgina Keck** – *Miss Partington / Barbara Batch*

After seven years in the youth theatre, this is Georgina's debut as an adult on The Questors Playhouse stage. She has also performed in comedy skits and assisted in photo shoots and comedy videos at events in London and Glasgow. In her free time she makes costumes, learns sign language and plays the ukulele. Most recently, she played Nicola in *Blood Sports*.



## **Maya Markelle** – *Miss Mint / Nora Tooley*

Maya featured as Wendy in the award-winning short film, *Happy Thoughts* and as Sarah the Maid in *Trelawny of the 'Wells'*. Raised in India, Maya is an ambassador for The Monobox, a charity which empowers and trains actors in a daunting industry. She graduated from the Met Film School in 2017. Her hobbies include extreme prop building for plays without a budget and events such as the Notting Hill Carnival. Maya's last appearance for The Questors

was as Susan in *Blood Sports*.



## **Joe Sharp** – *Mr Leatherbottle / Shane Butterworth*

Joe lives in Shepherd's Bush. He enjoys sports, particularly football and boxing. He has a wide taste in music, film and art but is specifically interested in science fiction. He is a qualified sound engineer and all round stand-up guy. He was the King of Navarre in Student Group 70's *Love's Labour's Lost* and later played Augustus Colpoys in *Trelawny of the 'Wells'*.



**Charlie Sloboda-Bolton** – *Eric Smallshaw /*

*Charlie Shorrocks*

Charlie has been a member of The Questors since a very young age. Productions in which he has appeared include *Mojo, Too Fast, Annie* and *The Monster Under the Bed*, as well as *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Trelawny of the 'Wells'* as part of Student Group 70. He has studied at the Fontainebleau School of Acting and next year will be studying at the Fourth Monkey Actor Training Company.

He is signed with Martha Philbey Management.



**Chris Waldock** – *Headmaster Tope*

Chris first performed at The Questors in *Forty Years On* back in 1981 and, after graduating from Student Group 38 in 1985, appeared in a wide range of shows, most recently being seen in *The Village Bike, Improbable Fiction, The Ladykillers* and *Jumpers for Goalposts*.

**Angus Duke (UWL)** – *Set Design Associate*

Angus has been a member of The Questors since 2012. He has taken part in numerous productions in various capacities, including roles on and off the stage. He has been a student of the University of West London since September 2017 as part of the Theatre Production and Design course. The set model for *Albert Makes Us Laugh* is his first staged set design.

**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 Shakespeare's 400th anniversary and *Being for the Benefit of Mr Kite*. 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 shows at The Questors include Ibsen's *The Master Builder* and Peter Shaffer's *Equus*. More recently, he lit our contemporary take on *Measure for Measure*, the revival of the Ealing comedy *The Ladykillers* and *The Effect*.

**Dorothy Lawson** – *Assistant Director*

Dorothy has been Assistant Director for the student productions of *Blood Sports* and *The Maids, Dead White Males* and *Stags and Hens* and DSM for six other student productions. She has been an accent coach for three recent productions, is a member of the Reminiscence Roadshow team and serves in the Grapevine Bar. Her most recent appearances on stage were in *The Ladykillers* and *Dick Whittington & His Cat*.

**Claire Malyon** – *Costume Designer*

Claire has costumed five student shows during her time at The Questors and is delighted to be working with such a lovely bunch once again! Extra thanks go to Alison Simmons (Drama Studio London) and Dotti Lawson for extra costume sourcing.

**Marietta Neubauer (UWL)** – *Wardrobe Assistant*

This is Marietta's second production at The Questors, following The Great Coarse Acting Festival. Back home in Cumbria, Marietta is a production member of Stage Coach, including lighting and sound design, as well as stage management. Marietta is also a student at UWL on the Theatre Production course.

**Olly Potter (UWL)** – *Assistant Stage Manager*

Olly is currently studying for a BA Hons in Theatre Production at UWL. Olly normally does Sound Design, having done three for The Questors, including *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Season's Greetings*, but has worked in various capacities on different productions both at The Questors and elsewhere, most recently *Blood Sports* and *The Maids* for Student Group 71.

**Andrew J. Quick (UWL)** – *Stage Manager*

This is Andrew's second Questors production. Previously, he was a performer, starring as Billy in a UK tour of *Billy Elliot the Musical*. He later decided to turn to the dark side and become a backstage technician at the National Theatre, where he continues to work as well as at The Questors.

**Paul Wilson** – *Sound Designer*

Paul has been involved in many productions at The Questors over the years. His contributions this season include *Endgame, Sleepers in the Field* and *Taking Sides*.

**Fengfan Zhou (UWL)** – *Sound Designer*

Fengfan is currently a BA student on the Theatre Production course at the University of West London. She has worked on almost twenty Questors productions since 2016 in a variety of backstage capacities, including being part of the team for *The Country Wife* at the Minack Theatre, and working on lighting for *Diana of Dobson's* and *Taking Sides*.

## 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  
Gemma Drummond  
Nicholas Jonne Wilson

## University of West London Tutors

John Davey, Nigel A. Lewis, Alex Marker

Students from the second year of the BA (Hons) Theatre Production course at the University of West London (in Ealing) have contributed significantly to the design and management of this production. The course, which starts again in September, is run in close collaboration with The Questors. If you'd like to find out more, visit the website at [www.uwl.ac.uk](http://www.uwl.ac.uk) or email the course leader, John Davey ([john.davey@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:john.davey@uwl.ac.uk)).



## Learning through plays?

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

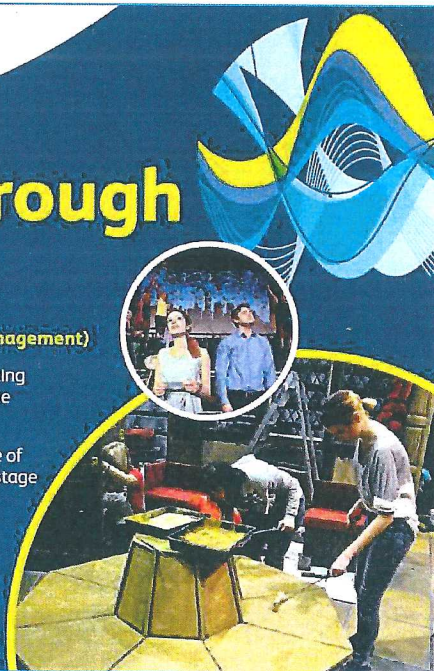
Gain theoretical and practical experience whilst working backstage on shows at both **The Questors** and in the **London College of Music**.

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 2018**

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

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



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Auditions for the *Foundation Course in Acting* opening soon.

See our website for details.

## Next at The Questors

### KRAPP'S LAST TAPE / ROCKABY

by Samuel Beckett

26 – 28 July 2018

The Studio

Two one-act, one-actor plays offer diverse spins on the early incorporation of recording tape technology into live theatre. In *Krapp's Last Tape*, the younger Krapp (on tape) is in effect a distinct, and contrasting, character. In *Rockaby* the disembodied voice of the old woman reiterates a narrative of alienation and the unrewarded search for 'another like herself', as the time of the onstage character winds down.

