

## 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)
- ✓ 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.

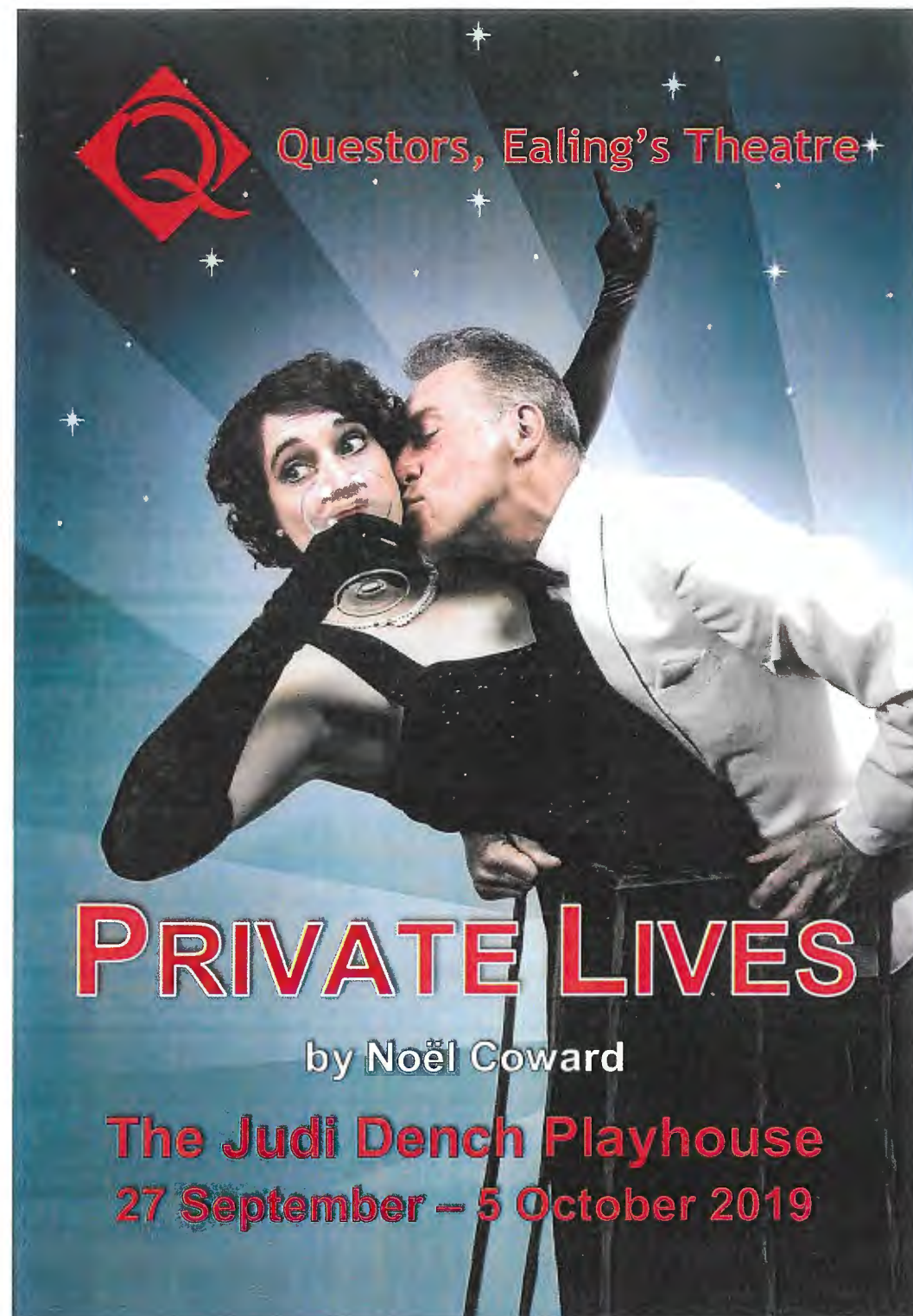
The Questors has a high standard of acting and, to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – call the Theatre Office for details of forthcoming auditions.

### 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)



## 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 2020 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 – 10:30 pm (Sunday – Wednesday)

7:00 pm – 11:00 pm (Thursday – Saturday)

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: Carla Evans

# PRIVATE LIVES

by Noël Coward

**The Judi Dench Playhouse**

**27 September – 5 October 2019**



# PRIVATE LIVES

***"I think very few people are completely normal really,  
deep down in their private lives."***

*Private Lives* is a 1930 comedy of manners written by Noël Coward, one of the most celebrated and prolific talents of the British theatre. A jack-of-all-trades, Coward established himself not only as a playwright but as an actor, director, novelist and songwriter, as well as being a popular night-club entertainer. In a career spanning over 50 years, he was a show business legend, a friend of the stars and a renowned *raconteur*.

*Private Lives* premiered on the 18th of August 1930, at the King's Theatre in Edinburgh, starring Coward as Elyot, Adrienne Allen as Sibyl, Gertrude Lawrence as Amanda and Laurence Olivier as Victor. It subsequently transferred to London and opened the new Phoenix Theatre.

The play has been adapted several times for television, film and radio. One notable radio production starred a young Orson Welles as Elyot. *Private Lives* was Coward's greatest success, earning him an astonishing £3,200 a week and making him the highest-paid author in the western world.

Over the decades it has attracted the world's greatest performers including Richard Burton, Elizabeth Taylor, Alan Rickman, Lindsay Duncan, Toby Stephens, Anna Chancellor, Maggie Smith, as well as Laurence Olivier and Noël Coward himself.

Amazingly, Coward completed the actual writing of the play in only three days. He contracted influenza in the middle of an extensive Asian tour and wrote it whilst convalescing in his hotel room in Shanghai.

He immediately cabled his childhood friend, Gertrude Lawrence, in New York to ask her to keep autumn 1930 free. After a few more weeks revising the script, he sent the final draft to Lawrence, with instructions to cable him with her reaction.

Coward received no fewer than 30 telegrams from Lawrence about the play, the first stating that she had read the play and there was "nothing wrong with it that can't be fixed". Coward curtly wired back that "the only

thing that was going to be fixed was her performance". Lawrence was indecisive about whether she would star in the show due to a previous commitment made to André Charlot. Coward finally responded that he planned to cast the play with another actress. By the time he returned to London, he found Lawrence not only had cleared her schedule but was staying at Edward Molyneux's villa in Cap-d'Ail in France learning her lines. Coward joined her and the two began rehearsing their scenes together.

Whilst still in rehearsals, the Lord Chamberlain took exception to the love scene in act two, labelling it too risqué. Coward rushed to St James's Palace to overturn the decision; acting out the play himself and assuring the censor that the scene would be presented in a dignified and inoffensive manner.

Coward's masterpiece is a true battle of the sexes; an exquisite comedy laced with cruelty. Amanda and Elyot's toxic relationship is one of dysfunctional dependency. They can't live with each other; they can't live without each other.

***"That was the trouble with Elyot and me, we were like two violent  
acids bubbling about in a nasty little matrimonial bottle."***

What I find most exciting about the play is how fresh, witty and relevant the writing still is, 90 years on. The more that you delve into the complexity of the piece, the more you realise that it is more than a piece of light fluff. Although the dialogue appears superficial, underneath there is a subtle disconnect between what the characters say and what they might really mean.

We want the audience to witness the pain and torment of the characters; their intense neediness, hidden beneath a hedonistic and nonchalant flippancy. There is a dangerous co-dependency and a deep melancholy as we realise that these characters can never be happy. Coward masterfully explores the thin line between true love and sheer ferocity. For all his comic brilliance, Coward may have been one of the greatest tragedians of his time.

***"It is discouraging how many people are shocked by honesty  
and how few by deceit."* – Noël Coward**

**Francesca McNally, Director**

# PRIVATE LIVES:

an intimate comedy in three acts

by Noël Coward

*First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 27 September 2019*

## CAST

in order of appearance

Sybil Chase

**Nell Rose**

Elyot Chase

**Robert Seatter**

Victor Prynne

**Francis Lloyd**

Amanda Prynne

**Kate Langston**

Louise, a maid

**Yvonne Monyer**

**Act I:** The terrace of a hotel, Deauville, France

*15-minute interval*

**Act II:** Amanda's Paris flat a few days later, around 10:00 in the evening

*15-minute interval*

**Act III:** The same, about 8.30 the next morning

The performance will last approximately 2 hours and 10 minutes,  
including two 15-minute intervals.

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

**Francesca McInally**

Set Designer

**Jake Smart**

Costume Designer

**Carla Evans**

Lighting Designer

**Chris Newall**

Sound Designer

**Azaldean Mohamed**

Stage Manager

**Steven Cowan**

Deputy Stage Manager

**Paula Robinson**

Assistant Stage Managers

**Ian Black, Gina Cherubini, Monica Gilardi,  
Mel Periera, Revati Rao, Jakub Repisky,  
Paul Souchon**

Properties Manager

**Harriet Parsonage**

Music Director

**Graham Reid**

Fight Director

**Nicholas Jonne Wilson**

Dance Director

**Sara Page**

Costume Makers

**Adina Elmasry, Moonika Leisson**

Wardrobe Assistants

**Claire Malyon, Jenny Richardson**

Hair and Make-Up

**Kristel Kruusmaegi**

Lighting / Sound Operator

**Tim Pemberton**

Lighting Rigger

**John Green**

Set Dresser

**Ian Black**

Set Constructors

**Toby Burbage, Alex Marker,  
Marta Muszyńska, Jakub Repisky,  
Rob Willin, Piotr Zurakowski**

Set Painters

**Bron Blake, Gina Cherubini,  
Kate Dawson Paul, Monica Gilardi,  
Kat Mason, Catherine Philips**

Production Photographer

**Carla Evans**

Rehearsal Photographer

**Jane Arnold-Forster**

Videographers

**Gavin Jones, Peter Gould**

Thanks to

**David Emmet, Dylan Fryer, Richard Lewis,  
Jane Mason, Stephen Souchon,  
Michelle Weaver, Jon Webster**

# Biographies

## **Kate Langston – Amanda Prynne**

Past productions include *Henry V*, *Antigone*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Talking Heads*, *Trojan Women*, *Into the Woods*, *Wyrld Sisters*, *Our Song*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Big Book for Girls*, *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, *Snow White* and *Twelfth Night*. At The Questors she has appeared as Nerissa in *Merchant of Venice*, Gwendolen in *Travesties*, Connie in *Habeas Corpus* (complete with inflatables), Helen in *After the Dance* and Mrs Darling in *Peter Pan*. After eleven years of motherhood in deepest Somerset she is delighted to be back and can only thank her adorable offspring for teaching her everything she could possibly need to know about fighting dirty.

## **Francis Lloyd – Victor Prynne**

Francis has acted and directed at The Questors for 25 years. He first appeared as Bohun in *You Never Can Tell* and parts since then include Dr Wicksteed in *Habeas Corpus*, John in *Oleanna*, Henry Carr in *Travesties* and the title role in *Uncle Vanya*. Most recently he was James Rees in *King Charles III*. Plays directed include *After the Dance*, *Charley's Aunt*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Engaged*, *Season's Greetings* and *For Services Rendered*. He has also directed new work by Richard Gallagher (*French Paste*), Brian Abbott (*No Fairy Tale* and *Bird on the Wire*) and Christopher Reid, whose *Six Bad Poets* was premiered at the Playground Theatre in July.

## **Yvonne Monyer – Louise**

Yvonne joined Student Group 68 in 2013. After playing an Italian maid in the student production of Coward's *The Young Idea*, she now adds the French language to her maid repertoire at The Questors. Enjoying multilingual projects, her work includes hosting the Hindi song chart show *Bolly.Music.Show* on the German TV channel Zee.One in 2017. She also works as a teaching assistant for Questors Youth Theatre. Yvonne appeared in *Diana of Dobson's* at The Questors in 2017.

## **Nell Rose – Sybil Chase**

Nell trained at East 15 Acting School, this is her second year with The Questors and her third production here. She has previously worked with Putney Arts Theatre as well as Oxford Theatre Guild. Recent credits include *Love's Labour's Lost* (Rosaline), *The Thrill of Love* (Vicki Martin), and, at The Questors, *The Heiress* (Marian) and *Nell Gwynn* (Nell).

## **Robert Seatter – Elyot Chase**

Robert has been a Questors member for 25 years, with leading roles in *Engaged*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Translations*, *The Recruiting Officer*, *Plenty*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* and, most recently,

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *For Services Rendered*. After learning all of Elyot Chase's lines, he is retiring into a dark room for several years... Outside The Questors, he's also a founder member of the fringe companies Bridewell Theatre and Theatre Agog, as well as having a couple of alternative 'public' lives as a published poet and as Head of History at the BBC.

## **Carla Evans – Costume Designer**

Carla joined The Questors in 2013 with an interest in all kinds of backstage craft. She instantly fell in love with the workshop and wardrobe, and has since worked on over 40 productions as a costume-maker, set designer, photographer and poster illustrator. Her most recent designs include the set for *Taking Sides* and costumes for *Nell Gwynn*.

## **Francesca McNally – Director**

Francesca trained at East 15 Acting School, The Questors and in the Meisner Technique with Scott Williams at The Impulse Company. She has worked professionally as an actress and director at a number of theatres including Richmond Theatre, Tristan Bates, The Minack, The Tabard, The White Bear, Baron's Court, The Lion and Unicorn and Landor Space. For The Questors she has directed *Rabbit Hole* by David Lindsay-Abaire, *Love and Money* by Dennis Kelly, *Burning Bird* by John Donnelly and *Find Me* by Olwen Wymark. She works for the Guildford Shakespeare Company and has directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Macbeth* for their schools' tour.

## **Azaldean Mohamed – Sound Designer**

Azaldean joined The Questors in 2018 as a member of Young Studio, and acted recently in *Find Me*. As well as training in acting, he is involved in the sound department. He operated on *Absent Friends* and *The 39 Steps*; this is his second production as a sound designer following *Nell Gwynn*.

## **Chris Newall – Lighting Designer**

Chris has designed the lighting for more than 50 Questors productions, half a dozen Musical Theatre Summer Schools and a couple of RSC Showcases. Most recently he lit *For Services Rendered* and *Rutherford & Son* in the Playhouse, and *Peer Gynt* and *Absent Friends* in the Studio.

## **Jake Smart – Set Designer**

Graduating in 2018 from Wimbledon College of Arts (UAL) in Theatre Design, Jake has since worked on both new writing and classical plays at fringe venues across London and Edinburgh. With a passion for combining both theatre theory and fine art practice at the core of his design process, he always strives to push the boundaries of what a design can achieve. Most recent design credits include *As You Like It* at the Cockpit Theatre and *Macbeth* at the Pendley Shakespeare Festival.





Jane Arnold-Forster



## Next at The Questors

**THE DOG AND THE SCARF**  
**ARIADNE AND THE MONSTERS**  
 by David Hovatter,  
 Sara Page and Tim Fletcher  
 11 – 19 October 2019  
 The Studio

Two one-act pieces: the first a tale of how nothing can stop a dog bringing his master the scarf his wife lovingly knitted for him; the second an adaptation of the Greek myth Theseus and the Minotaur, using physical theatre, dance, text and songs, and exploring themes of blame, fate, responsibility and power.

**GEORGE ORWELL'S 1984**  
 adapted by Matthew Dunster  
 7 – 16 November 2019  
 The Judi Dench Playhouse

The Questors' 90th anniversary  
 celebratory production

The year is 1984, and Winston Smith is a government employee in this terrifying dystopian world of a crumbling London. His job is to rewrite history for the Ministry of Truth. He tries to rebel against the repressive regime, but in this closely monitored society, is there any escape from Big Brother?