

## 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.

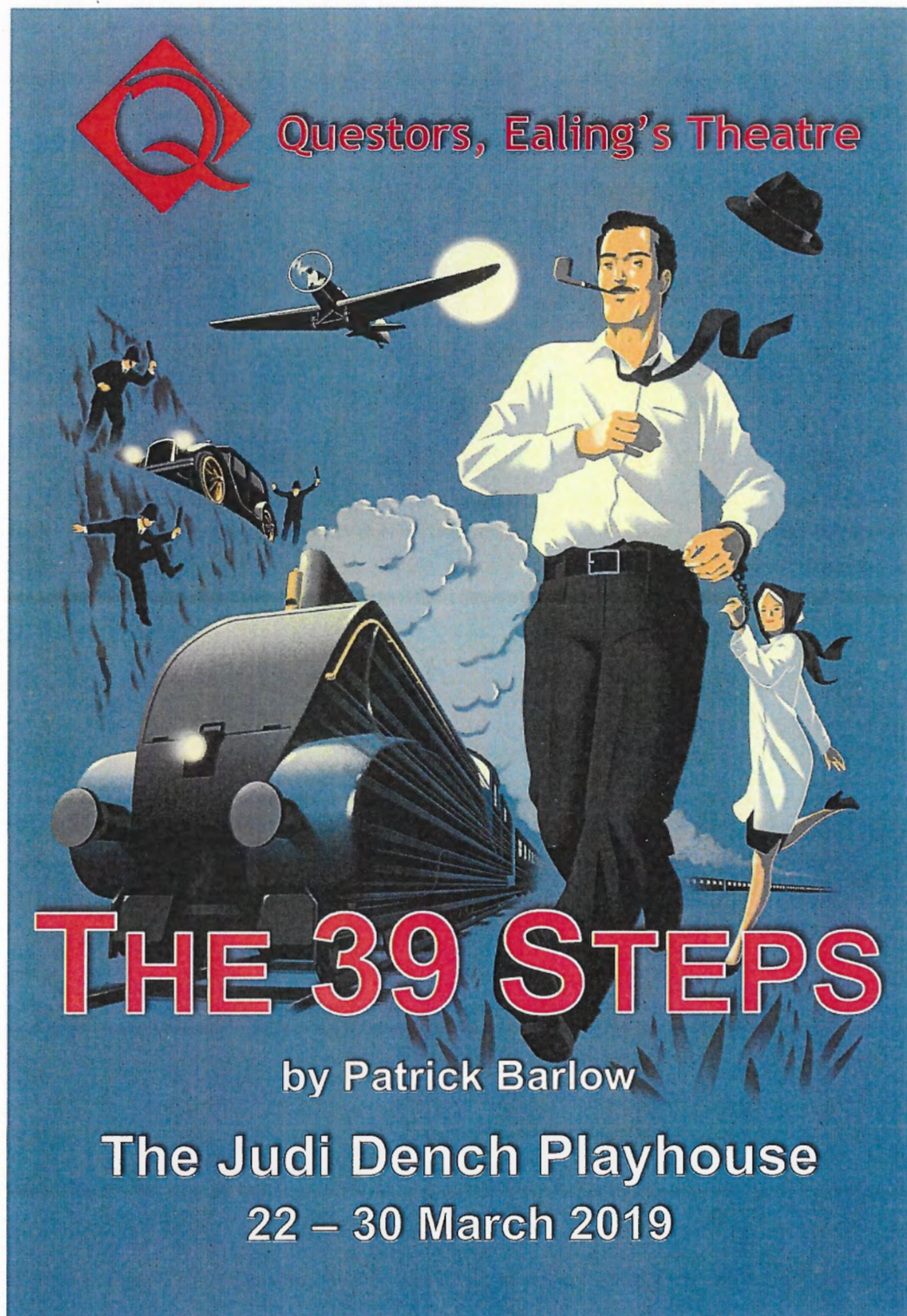
The Questors has a high standard of acting and, to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – call the Theatre Office for details of forthcoming auditions.

## 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)



**Questors, Ealing's Theatre**

**THE 39 STEPS**

by Patrick Barlow

**The Judi Dench Playhouse**

**22 – 30 March 2019**



## 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 2019 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: Rui Ricardo – Folio Art

# THE 39 STEPS

by Patrick Barlow

**The Judi Dench Playhouse**

**22 – 30 March 2019**

# THE 39 STEPS

It's a book ... or is it a film? No, it's a play! In the great tradition of Give Us a Clue, the story of *The 39 Steps* has been all of them over the years. This story first came to light in an adventure novel written by John Buchan which was published in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1915. It was the first of five stories to feature Richard Hannay as an all-action hero with a stiff upper lip and a knack for getting himself out of sticky situations.

It first arrived on film in probably what is its most well-known adaptation – the Alfred Hitchcock version of 1935. Filmed not far away at Lime Grove Studios just off Goldhawk Road in Shepherd's Bush, it is this version our play today is based upon. Whilst this is probably the most famous version, it was by no means the last. Since then, it's been brought back three times (1959, 1978 and finally in 2008). It's even come to life as a radio play back in 1937.

So, when did it arrive on the stage? Given the story was first published just over 100 years ago, you could say relatively recently. The journey to the play began in the mid-1990s when Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon staged a comic adaptation of the 1935 film version specifically, with a Yorkshire Arts Grant of £1,000 and just four actors. It premiered in 1995 in Richmond, North Yorkshire in front of an audience of just 90 and then toured village halls across the North of England.

It was around ten years later that Patrick Barlow rewrote the script into the version we have today. He kept many of the original elements, such as the scene structure and small-scale feel, and premiered it at the West Yorkshire Playhouse. After a good run and positive reception, the play moved to London, opening at the Tricycle Theatre in 2006, before getting a full West End transfer to the Criterion later that year, where it ran for just over nine years, making it the fifth longest running play in West End history. (I know you'll ask: *The Mousetrap*; *The Woman in Black*; *No Sex Please, We're British* and *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*.)

The show was well recognised in 2007, picking up both an Olivier Award and a What's On Stage Award, both for Best Comedy, and it has picked up numerous more awards over subsequent years.

One aspect of the show that I find fascinating are the number of countries in which it's played – Finland, France, South Korea, Spain, China, Germany, Israel..., the list goes on. It's remarkable to think that there's something

about not just the story (which should travel well), but the style of theatre that allows this type of storytelling to move between countries, cultures and languages. We were fortunate enough to talk to someone who'd been in a version of the show in Spain who told us about some of the gags they'd added that went down a storm there, but which we know just wouldn't work in the UK. I guess working out how to tell the story in a way that works for your local audience is part of the rehearsal process; one day it would be fascinating to see how they did this in Tel Aviv, for example.

Given the long run in the West End, and numerous recent amateur productions, one question I had was how to give this show something that made it distinct from other productions our audiences might have seen. Also, how to give it one or two signature moments that hopefully bring something new to The Questors as well; something we've not done before. As the script was an almost blow-by-blow take on the 1935 black and white Hitchcock version, it made sense to me to try and ground our production there and hopefully it won't take long for you to see some of our ideas.

Once you've got some signature moments planned, we moved on to thinking about the overall staging itself. Whilst the show could be done on the thrust, the script reads like it was created on a traditional proscenium stage; my general rule of thumb as a director is don't fight the play, so that's exactly what we've gone for.

The show is also hellishly technical. As I write this, we're still completing the technical aspects of the show, but it seems likely to have over 300 sound and lighting queues. That's complex for a Questors show – particularly one that's only got about 90-100 minutes of stage time. If they were all nicely spread across the show (spoilers: they're not) that would be three or so technical queues a minute. Easy.

In addition to our technical teams, we've four stage crew and two dressers on every show to make everything work behind the scenes. With most of the cast of the film played by just two of the four actors, there are a lot of very fast costume changes with which the actors need help and support.

With all of that said, what you see tonight is something that shouldn't look like hard work. I hope that what we've created for you keeps to the spirit of the script and the West End show, as we use just four actors and a few of the things you'll generally find lying around a theatre to take you all the way through that 1935 black and white film, from London to Scotland and back again.

Enjoy the trip!

**Simon Rudkin, Director**

# THE 39 STEPS

by Patrick Barlow

*First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 22 March 2019*

## CAST

in order of appearance

Richard Hannay      **Richard Graylin**

Clown 1      **Freddy Sledge**

Clown 2      **Nicholas Thomas**

Annabella/Pamela/Margaret      **Claire Durrant**

## VOICE OVERS

Radio Announcer      **Robin Ingram**

Pilot      **James Burgess**

Pilot      **Simon Rudkin**

The performance will last approximately 1 hour and 55 minutes,  
including a 20-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      **Simon Rudkin**

Set Designer      **Peter Collins**

Costume Designers      **Shaan Latif-Shaikh, Jenny Richardson**

Lighting Designer      **Tim Hayward**

Sound Designer      **Christopher Smith**

Stage Manager      **Tilly Benson-Reid**

Deputy Stage Manager      **Sarah Vass**

Assistant Stage Managers      **Nizar Almesri, Maggie Anderson,  
Dani Beckett**

Properties      **Sally Darwin**

Puppets & Miniatures      **Shaan Latif-Shaikh.**

**Ian Black, Carla Evans,**

**Ian Black, Michelle Weaver**

**Iain McIntosh, Terry Mummery**

**Roisin Tierney**

**Andrew Dixon, John Green,**

**Iain McIntosh, Chris Newall,**

**Robert Walker, Andrew Whadcoat**

**Azaldean Mohamed**

**Toby Burbidge, Matthew House,**

**Doug King, Rob Willin**

**Alex Shore**

**Robert Vass**

**Peter Gould, Gavin Jones, Robert Vass**

**Alex Atchison, Adina el Masry,**

**Mike Langridge, Alex Marker,**

**Richard Mead, Geoff Moore,**

**Alice Robinson, Lisa Varty**



# Biographies



**Claire Durrant – Annabella/Pamela/Margaret**  
Since graduating from Student Group 65 in 2012, Claire has performed at The Questors in a variety of roles and genres including a Voice in *4.48 Psychosis*, Yerma in *Yerma*, Mina Harker (and others) in *Dracula: Fangs of Destiny*, Raina Petkoff in *Arms and the Man* and principal girl Alice in panto favourite, *Dick Whittington and His Cat*. Other acting roles include zombie scare acting (notably harassing the Spurs football team in a haunted mansion last year), corporate voiceover for a number of tech agencies, a performance in

the 2012 Olympic Closing Ceremony, plus some music videos and TV commercials. Having had a bit of a break from the theatre, Claire is thrilled to work with an amazing cast, crew and creative team, and hopes you'll enjoy *The 39 Steps* as much as she has. Outside of acting, Claire is a digital designer who likes to illustrate, sing, tap dance, travel to far-off lands and show people photos of her cat, Mitsuko.



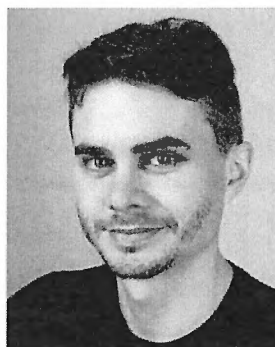
**Richard Graylin – Richard Hannay**  
*The 39 Steps* is Richard's eighth appearance on a Questors stage after playing Henry Higgins in *Pygmalion*, Bernard in *Don't Dress for Dinner*, Frank Gardner in *Mrs Warren's Profession*, Philip in *The Pride*, Lord Goring in *An Ideal Husband*, Macbeth in *Macbeth* and Reverend Hale in *The Crucible*. As an undergraduate at Oxford, Richard appeared in numerous productions at the Oxford Playhouse (*The Miser*, *Henry V*), the Burton Taylor (*The Lion in Winter*) and the Old Fire Station Theatre (*Roberto Zucco*, *Edward II*,

*The Blue Room*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Antigone*), as well as Shakespeare tours of the USA (*Twelfth Night*) and Japan (*The Taming of the Shrew*). After graduating from the Arts Educational Schools in Chiswick, he went on to appear in touring productions of *Much Ado About Nothing* (Claudio) and *The Tempest* (Stephano/Antonio) for the Young Shakespeare Company and *Around the World in 80 Days* for Vienna's English Theatre. He has also appeared in three seasons of pantomime around the country. His professional voiceover work ranges from being the resident voice of Harrods (2009-2013) to once providing the voice of a talking aspidistra plant for a Channel 4 documentary.



**Freddy Sledge – Clown 1**

Freddy has been a Questors member since 1993 and Student Group 49. Productions include *Here Comes the Chopper*, *The Suicide*, *A Taste of Honey*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Playhouse Creatures*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Oliver*, *New Boy*, *Dogs Barking*, *La Ronde*, *Bedroom Farce*, *Hayfever* and *The Miser*. Freddy is very happy to be back, murdering assorted Scottish accents, after a few years away. She would like to add how much she appreciates the crew – the technical requirements on the show are unbelievably complicated and she is very thankful.



**Nicholas Thomas – Clown 2**

Nicholas attended Questors Youth Theatre before going on to study classical acting at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, appearing in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Devils*. Nicholas has appeared in two previous productions by Simon Rudkin, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *Equus*. This is his first play at The Questors for several years.

**Peter Collins – Set Designer**

Peter has been an active member of The Questors for more than twenty years. He began designing sets in 2003; notable designs have included *Henry V*, *Richard III*, *The Trojan Women* and *Further than the Furthest Thing*. Recent designs have been *Antigone*, *London Assurance*, *Stags and Hens* and *Trelawny of the Wells*. He is also active in production photography.

**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*, *The Effect* and last season's Student production of *Albert Make Us Laugh*.

**Shaan Latif-Shaikh – Costume Designer**

At The Questors, Shaan has made puppets and costumes for many productions with favourites including *Dick Whittington and His Cat*, *Mother Goose*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Animal Farm*. Outside of The Questors, he works as a costume maker for Rainbow Productions, a company specialising in mascots and children's characters.

### 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 *Rabbit Hole*, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, *Measure for Measure*, *Scarborough*, *Sweet Charity*, *Larkin with Women*, *Mojo* and *Daisy Pulls It Off*. Jenny can also be found working in Box Office, and is frequently in demand as an upholsterer.

### Simon Rudkin – Director

Simon joined The Questors in 2006 as a member of Student Group 61. He acted in a number of shows over the following few years, including playing Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Gaston in *Beauty and the Beast*. In 2009, Simon started the Questors sketch group, The Errors of Comedy which has run on and off, performing at The Questors, the Camden Fringe and several other London Fringe venues. In 2011, Simon decided directing looked a lot easier than learning a lot of lines (yeah – that's not quite panned out as he thought) and directed several plays in quick succession – *Dealer's Choice* (2012), *Absurd Person Singular* (2012), *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (2013) and *Equus* (2014). This is his fifth full-length play at The Questors and his first in five years.

### Christopher Smith – Sound Designer

Chris became interested in sound design at school and university, and his first show with The Questors was in 2013 when he worked with Simon Rudkin on *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. He also does stage work with Amanda Redman's ATS, and in TV he works for the BBC, Sky and ITV.

## The Questors – The Future

Help to make The Questors an even better place! Donations and bequests are continuing to contribute to the life of this unique theatre. For instance, a generous donation made possible a recent training programme for young ESOL students (English for Speakers of Other Languages), and ambitious work on the fabric of the site is ongoing. This is your theatre and the theatre of future generations of playgoers and participants. Donate now or in your will, anonymously if you prefer. Andrea Bath, our Executive Director (020 8567 0011), will answer any enquiries in confidence. Or go to [questors.org.uk/giving](http://questors.org.uk/giving) to see ways in which you can support The Questors.



## Next at The Questors

### FUTURE CONDITIONAL

by Tamsin Oglesby

29 March – 6 April 2019

#### The Studio

Questors Student Group 72 presents this thought-provoking and funny play that tackles the conundrum of the British education system through a myriad of characters, including parents, teachers and Alia, a prodigiously bright young Pakistani refugee and the newest member of the Education Committee. There are big questions to answer, not least is anyone ready to take lessons from a schoolgirl?

### KING CHARLES III

by Mike Bartlett

26 April – 30 May 2019

#### The Judi Dench Playhouse

Set in a 'near future', the Queen is dead, and Charles is at last King. Determined to assert his power, he vetoes a bill in disagreement with the Prime Minister. As protests erupt across the country and the social fabric begins to fray, William and Kate try desperately to restore stability, but at a considerable cost. Meanwhile Camilla frets, politicians plot, and Harry seeks a life and love beyond the confines of his royal role.

