

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
- ✓ 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.

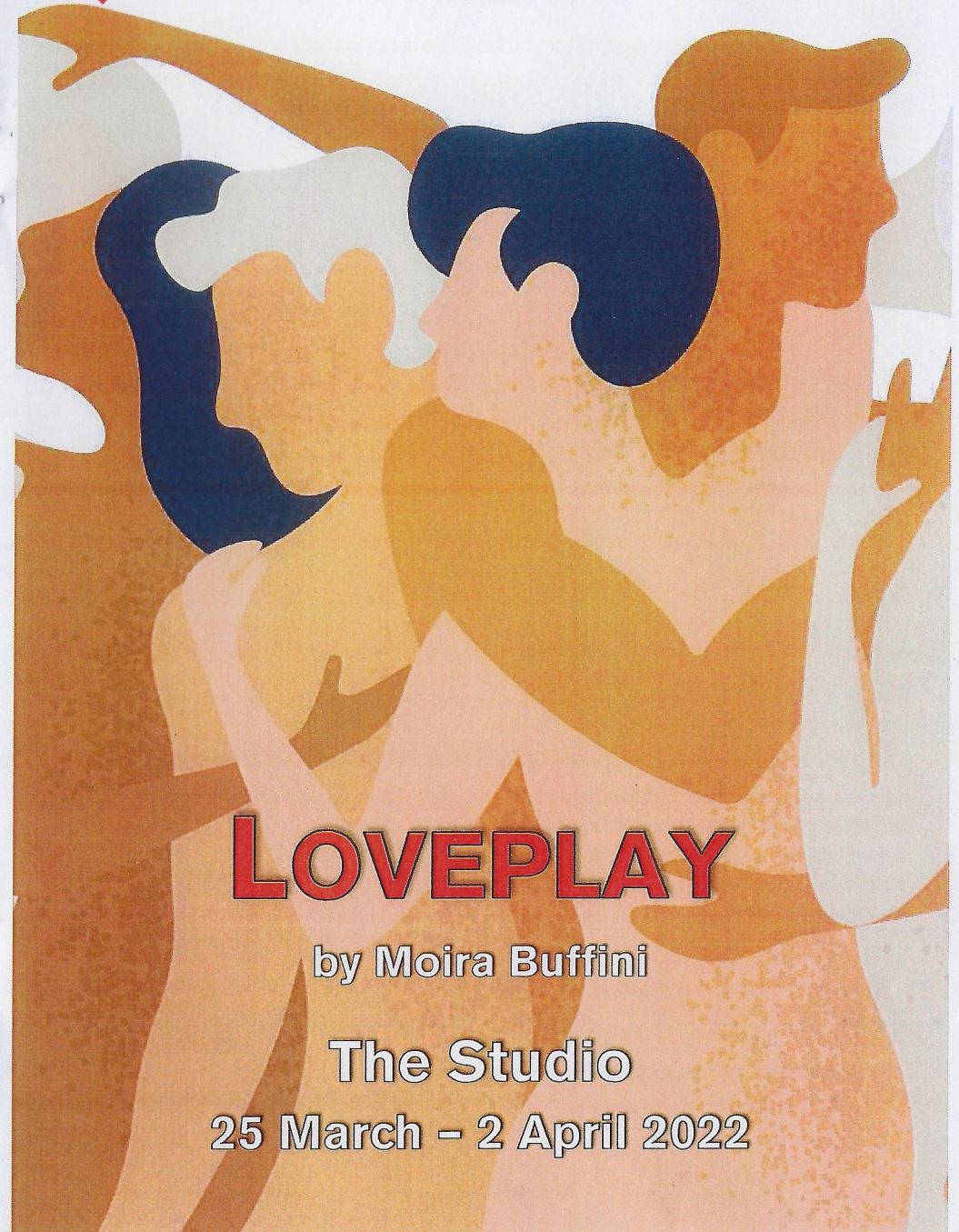
The Questors has a high standard of acting and, to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – call the Theatre Office for details of forthcoming auditions.

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.

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



LOVEPLAY

by Moira Buffini

The Studio

25 March – 2 April 2022

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 six 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 2022 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 (subject to change):

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

Sunday lunchtime: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

See questors.org.uk/grapevine for more details.

Fields and the Grapevine accept payments by card.



LOVEPLAY

by Moira Buffini

The Studio

25 March – 2 April 2022

LOVEPLAY

*Too many people muddle sex
With mere desire,
And when emotion intervenes
The nets descend.
It should on no account perplex,
Or worse, inspire;
It's but a pleasurable means
To a measurable end.
Why does no one comprehend?
Let us hope this lunacy's just a trend.*

Stephen Sondheim (*A Little Night Music*)

'Sex': such a little – yet charged – word. To some it means fun and 'release'; to some it's vile and dirty; to others it's hurtful, shameful or degrading. And yet it is something that's so important to the human condition that religions – in most cases – still try to make it a taboo subject in order to keep their faithful in line.

Parents try their best. I well remember my 'birds and the bees' chat with my father. (*He* was recruited to do it, rather than my mother, since she insisted it was *his* job.)

He took my elder brother and me into the bathroom. (Why the bathroom?) After much clearing of the throat, he said, 'Keep it clean and never, ever, pay for it'.

That was it. It was years later that I appreciated how excruciatingly embarrassing that mystifying message must have been for him to deliver.

As a gay man, growing up in the sixties/seventies, I have seen attitudes change so much. Nowadays, thankfully, we appreciate that any consensual coupling (or even more than a coupling) is nobody else's business. Back then anybody who happened to have a different liking to a stereotypical 'norm' was thought of as deviant, predatory or worse. Mentions of sex veered between revulsion and 'dirty' humour. People enjoyed the 'naughtiness' of a 'blue joke'. (So called because of the censor's – the Lord Chamberlain's – blue pencil that obliterated anything too controversial for his taste.) The populace still looked askance at private behaviour that they found to be too uncomfortable to imagine.

My dear friend, the late Olive Shapley – who was a BBC pioneer – told me of an incident where two BBC employees had been caught *in flagrante delicto* on the boardroom table. Lord John Reith – the then head of the BBC and a great puritan – told her to sack both of them. She pointed out that they were indispensable and to get rid of them would be unwise.

After thinking about this, Reith said, 'In that case, burn the bloody table'.

Another incident that I recall from another friend's recollections was a wartime-recruited nurse who was called upon to give a man a catheter. She attempted to do this with forceps and proceeded to it rather ineptly. This resulted in an almighty, painful yell from the patient. When Sister hurried alongside to assist and explain the procedure, the young woman said, 'Do you mean I have to *touch* the beastly thing?'

Moira Buffini's play addresses some of this silliness but also looks at the darker side of sex.

In this play, there is knowing humour but there is also abuse and rejection. As the company have progressed through rehearsal we have all seen more and more in a text that is far more profound and wise than we first comprehended. Sex can be violent and manipulative and, through Buffini's use of the 'ghost' – who echoes down the centuries – we feel the pain that this can bring.

Time is an element in this and the playwright refers to its passage and therefore underlines how some things change and – more crucially – how some things don't change.

It's also a play that shows how men have treated women over the ages and how ideals of sexual attractiveness can be damaging. ('Is there a feminist message?' I think so.) Buffini's script shows same-sex coupling – both genders – and also looks at those so-called '*saddos*' who are trying to find a partner in a world where body shaming and the supposed ideal is paramount but not achievable.

And yet it's a hopeful play. No spoilers, but I *can* say it ends on an optimistic note. Love triumphs over carnal desire and that, I think, is what it should do.

That's not to say there's anything wrong with carnal desire.

I recollect a line from *Chicago*: 'We started fooling around; then we started *screwing* around, which is fooling around without dinner'.

And love? I wonder if that's a different subject and for a different production ... but maybe not.

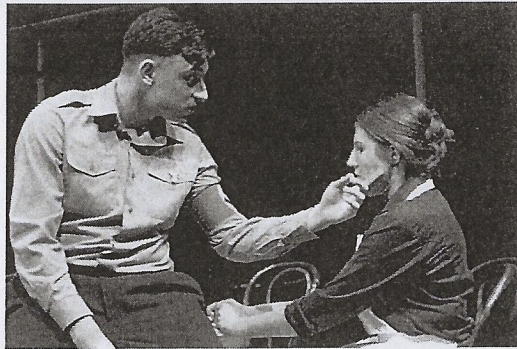
We hope you enjoy the performance.

Richard Gallagher, Director

Past Student Group Productions



Blue Stockings – Group 67, 2015



Fear and Misery of the Third Reich – Group 68, 2016



Stags and Hens – Group 69, 2017



Love's Labour's Lost – Group 70, 2018



Albert, Make Us Laugh –
Group 71, 2018



Charley's Aunt – Group 72, 2019



Group 73 with the ill-fated, pandemic-affected, never officially performed
Strange Orchestra

Questors Student Group Tutors

Director of Studies and First Year Tutor

David Emmet

Second Year Tutor

Richard Gallagher

Voice Teacher

David Brown

Movement and Physical Theatre Teacher

Nicholas Jonne Wilson

University of West London Tutors

Mark Owen and Ben Dunning

Students from the third year of the BA (Hons) Graphic Design (Visual Communication & Illustration) course at the University of West London (in Ealing) have taken on the job of designing the projections for this production. Both staff and students at the university have, over the years, had a close collaboration with The Questors. If you'd like to find out more, visit the website at www.uwl.ac.uk.

QUESTORS STUDENT GROUP 74 PRESENTS

LOVEPLAY

by Moirà Buffini

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 25 March 2022

CAST

1. The Classical Age. AD 79

Dorcas *a businesswoman*

Marcus *a Roman*

Katherine Armstrong

Brendan Conlan

2. The Dark Age. AD 544

Eric

Herek

Deric

Woman

River Apparicio

Joshua Perry

Brendan Conlan

Lily Baker

3. The New Millennium. 1099

Gilda

Hilda

Matilda

Marie Maillot

Aleksandra Cedro

Katherine Armstrong

4. The Renaissance. 1584

Trevelyn

Helen

Llewellyn

Brendan Conlan

Marie Maillot

River Apparicio

5. The Enlightenment. 1735

Roxanne

Marianne

Man

Lily Baker

Aleksandra Cedro

Brendan Conlan

6. The Romantic Age. 1823

Miss Tilly

Mr Quilley

Millie

Marie Maillot

River Apparicio

Katherine Armstrong

7. The Age of Empire. 1898

De Vere

Buttermere

Brendan Conlan

Joshua Perry

8. The Age of Austerity. 1932

Joy

Boy

Aleksandra Cedro

River Apparicio

9. The Age of Innocence. 1969

Quinn

Flynn

Lynne

Gwyn

Brendan Conlan

Lily Baker

Katherine Armstrong

Joshua Perry

10. The Age of Excess. 2001

Brigitta

Rita

Anita

Dieter

Peter

Marie Maillot

Lily Baker

Aleksandra Cedro

River Apparicio

Joshua Perry

INTERVAL

PRODUCTION

Director	Richard Gallagher
Associate Director	Ant Griffith
Set Designer	Yifei Ma
Lighting Designer / Operator	John Green
Sound Designer / Operator	Martin Choules
Graphic Designers	Amani Alshaya, Kornelija Kelpsaite
Stage Manager	Bernie Brady
Deputy Stage Manager	Hasti Rezvan
Assistant Stage Managers / Properties	Emily Hawley, Carole Swan, Laurie Swan
Administrator / Pooh-Bah	Dorothy Lawson
Wardrobe	Anne Gilmour, Shaan Latif-Shaikh, Jenny Richardson
Lighting Riggers	Erika Griffiths, Terry Mummery, Andrew Whadcoat
Video Engineer	Terry Mummery
Photographer / Videographer	Jamie Gould
Thanks to	Jane Arnold-Forster, Jan Auvache, Daniel Carter, Helen Cooper, John Davey, Rebecca Elsey, Nigel Glasgow, Rory Hobson, Helen Karasiewicz, Dee Keyte (Cassio Productions), Nicola Maddox, Alex Marker, Vicky Saumarez
Special Thanks to	Ben Dunning and Mark Owen of the University of West London

The performance will last approximately 2 hours 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.

Biographies



River Apparicio – *Eric, Llewellyn, Mr Quillie, Boy, Dieter*
River studied film at De Montfort University in Leicester. Prior to joining The Questors, he appeared in various plays for the Beaufort Players in Ealing and Argosy Players in Ruislip; his last appearance before joining Group 74 was with them playing Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, directed by Group 71's Maria Gebhardt. He also appeared with them in Martin Choules' *Being for the Benefit of Mr Kite*, playing the title role. Apart from acting, River's hobbies include writing and *Dungeons & Dragons*.



Katherine Armstrong – *Dorcas, Matilda, Millie, Lynne*
Katherine trained at The Ravenscourt Theatre School, AKA Corona, for two years from 2000-2001. She then completed the beginners and intermediate part-time courses at Drama Studio London. She has done several workshops, including a one week clown comedy workshop at The Monobox, a one week Foundation Course with London Meisner and a short on-screen camera acting course with director Aurora Fearnley at AMAW (Anthony Meindl), London. As well as acting, Katherine writes songs and has had one she has co-written recently released.



Lily Baker – *Woman, Roxanne, Flynn, Rita*
Lily is twenty-four. She grew up in Birmingham where she did youth theatre for six years. She appeared in the premiere of Claire Dowie's *Arsehammers*. She studied English literature at Queen Mary University, London. Her skills include playing the trumpet, ice skating, and close-up magic. Lily will soon be living aboard a narrowboat.



Aleksandra Cedro – *Hilda, Marianne, Joy, Anita*
 Before moving to London in 2017, Aleksandra was studying and living in Poland. At the age of thirteen, she took her first professional theatre steps in her local city theatre. While living in the Polish capital of Warsaw, she took parts in various TV drama series over several episodes. As an acting student at The Questors, she took part in *George Orwell's 1984* in 2019 as ASM and a Party Member.



Brendan Conlan – *Marcus, Deric, Trevelyn, Man, De Vere, Quinn*
 Brendan has acted in school plays, including *Dad's Army*, as well as writing sketch comedy. He read philosophy at Leeds University and is a keen guitar player.



Marie Maillot – *Gilda, Helen, Miss Tilly, Brigitta*
 Born and raised in Brittany, France, since the age of fourteen, Marie has been taking part in a multitude of shows with styles ranging from puppeteering and improv to panto. She moved to London in 2017 in order to become an actress. Marie joined The Questors Academy in 2019 and is looking forward to her first performance with Group 74.



Joshua Perry – *Herek, Buttermere, Gwyn, Peter*
 Josh has been a member of The Questors since 2017 and went on to graduate with Student Group 72, with which he starred in *Future Conditional* and *Charley's Aunt*. Other Questors credits include *Days of Significance*, *Bull*, most recently *Dear Brutus* and he has appeared in the Questival. He is thrilled to be jumping straight back in with a fantastic cast in *Love/lay* and is hoping to take part in many future productions at The Questors.

Richard Gallagher – *Director*

Richard trained at Manchester Polytechnic School of Theatre. At The Questors, his last 'full time' acting appearances, now some time ago, 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 in the Errors of Comedy production of Martin Choules' *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*.

Ant Griffith – *Associate Director*

Ant graduated Student Group 46 with *Entertaining Strangers* and *You Can't Take It With You*, followed by *The Mother* and *Julius Caesar*. After a directing foundation course at the City Lit, Ant returned to The Questors in *Who's On First?* Four years ago, Ant discovered improvisational comedy and later recruited and trained nine other Questors members. The Slack Captains have now endured a hundred and twenty-two workshops together, and three Questors performances.

Amani Alshaya – *Graphic Designer*

Amani is a final year student on the BA (Hons) Graphic Design (Communication & Illustration) course at UWL. She is a multidisciplinary graphic designer who is particularly keen on creating things that move! Amani also enjoys traditional creative work, such as painting, illustrating, cross-stitching and clay making.

Martin Choules – *Sound Designer*

Martin has recently designed the sound for *Dear Brutus*, *Strange Orchestra*, *Fault Lines*, *Future Conditional*, *Absent Friends*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Animal Farm*, *Improbable Fiction*, *The Exonerated*, *Rhinoceros*, *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* and *NSF*.

John Green – *Lighting Designer*

John has had a lifelong interest in the use of light to sculpt a space, set a mood and direct the eye, but only got involved in stage lighting comparatively recently. In his seven years as a member of The Questors he has been involved with the lighting of numerous shows. Previous shows as Lighting Designer include *Trelawny of the 'Wells'*, *Animal Farm*, *Daisy Pulls It Off* and *Bugsy Malone*.

Kornelija Kelpsaite – *Graphic Designer*

Kornelija is a UWL student currently in her third and final year of studies in BA (Hons) Graphic Design (Communication & Illustration). Passionate about the world of design, Kornelija not only focuses on creative digital work but also on painting and drawing.

Yifei Ma – *Set Designer*

Yifei is a second-year student on the Design for Performance course at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Besides design, she also has some brief experience of marketing and is interested in charity/volunteer work, aiming to make theatre more accessible to others.

Moira Buffini

Moira Buffini hailed from Cheshire to Irish parents, and attended St Mary's College at Rhos-on-Sea. She studied English and Drama at Goldsmiths College, London University (1983 – '86). Subsequently, she trained as an actor at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Jordan – co-written with Anna Reynolds in 1992 – won a *Time Out* award for her performance and Writers' Guild award for Best Fringe play. Her 1997 play *Gabriel* was performed at Soho Theatre, winning the LWT Plays on Stage award and the Meyer-Whitworth award. Her 1999 play *Silence* earned Buffini the Susan Smith Blackburn prize for best English-language play by a woman. *Loveplay* followed at the RSC in 2001, then *Dinner* at the National Theatre in 2003, which transferred to the West End and was nominated for an Olivier Award for Best Comedy. Buffini wrote *Dying For It*, a free adaptation of Nikolai Erdman's classic, *The Suicide*, for the Almeida in 2007. She followed it with *Marianne Dreams*, a dance play with choreographer Will Tuckett, based on Catherine Storr's book. Her play for young people, *A Vampire Story*, was performed as part of NT Connections in 2008. She did a writers' attachment at the Royal National Theatre Studio in 1996.

Buffini is a founder member of the Monsterists, a group of playwrights who promote new writing of large-scale work in the British theatre.

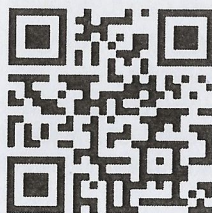
In 2010 her film adaptation of Posy Simmon's *Tamara Drewe* was released, directed by Stephen Frears, followed by her adaptation of *Jane Eyre* for BBC Films and Ruby Films in 2011. Buffini adapted her play *A Vampire Story* for the screenplay of Neil Jordan's film *Byzantium*, released in 2013.

She took part in the Bush Theatre's 2011 project *Sixty Six Books* for which she wrote a piece based on the King James Bible.

Manchester International Festival premiered *wonder.land*, a new musical with music by Damon Albarn, book and lyrics by Moira Buffini and direction by Rufus Norris. *wonder.land* is inspired by *Alice In Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll and is a co-production with The National Theatre.

Show Feedback Form

Your thoughts and opinions are important to us. Please scan the QR code with your camera phone to fill out our anonymous show feedback form. This is so we can continually improve our audience experience and our productions. Thank you so much for coming to visit The Questors Theatre. We hope that you enjoyed the show.



Next at The Questors

INDIA GATE

by Howard Shepherdson
with Tajinder Sindra
30 April – 7 May 2022

The Judi Dench Playhouse

Produced in association with the Punjabi Theatre Academy. Follow Edwin and Emily Lutyens' story of their connection with the Indian community in London and Delhi during the construction of the All India War Memorial (India Gate), set in the context of Sikh Martyr Udham Singh's fight for India's freedom and independence from the British Raj. This production is a development of the workshop performance seen last year.

DEAD BOY CAFE

by Grant Corr
17 – 21 May 2022
The Studio

Winner of our 2019

National Student Playwriting Competition. Janet and Ruby run a chippie on the border of Northern Ireland. Ruby is blind and Janet hasn't stepped outside the door in 15 years. One desperately stormy night a strange young man arrives at the café, drenched to the bone. Just who is he, and what will his presence mean for Janet? Is she really seeing him for who he is? And can the blind Ruby see more than them all?