

### Productions for early 2023

#### Little Dorrit

adapted from Charles Dickens,  
Opens 20 January in The Playhouse

#### Escaped Alone / What If If Only

by Caryl Churchill  
Opens 27 January in The Studio

#### Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

by Tennessee Williams  
Opens 11 February in The Playhouse

#### A Doll's House

by Henrik Ibsen  
adapted by Tanika Gupta  
Opens 24 February in The Studio

Questors Youth Theatre presents

#### The Light Burns Blue

by Silva Semerciyan  
Opens 25 February in The Playhouse

#### Murder on the Nile

by Agatha Christie  
Opens 18 March in The Playhouse

Student Group 75 presents

#### The Gut Girls

by Sarah Daniels  
Opens 24 March in The Studio

#### Much Ado About Nothing

by William Shakespeare  
Opens 28 April in The Playhouse

### Join Us as a Member

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 your 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)
- ✓ Exclusive online news and email newsletter
- ✓ Receive a regular programme leaflet
- ✓ Special invitations, events and offers not available to the public
- ✓ Voting rights in the company

\* Reduced prices exclude certain events.

\*\* Under 18; excludes certain events; maximum 4 per event; must be collected at the performance and accompanied by the adult member.

For more details, news and to join our e-mail list, go to

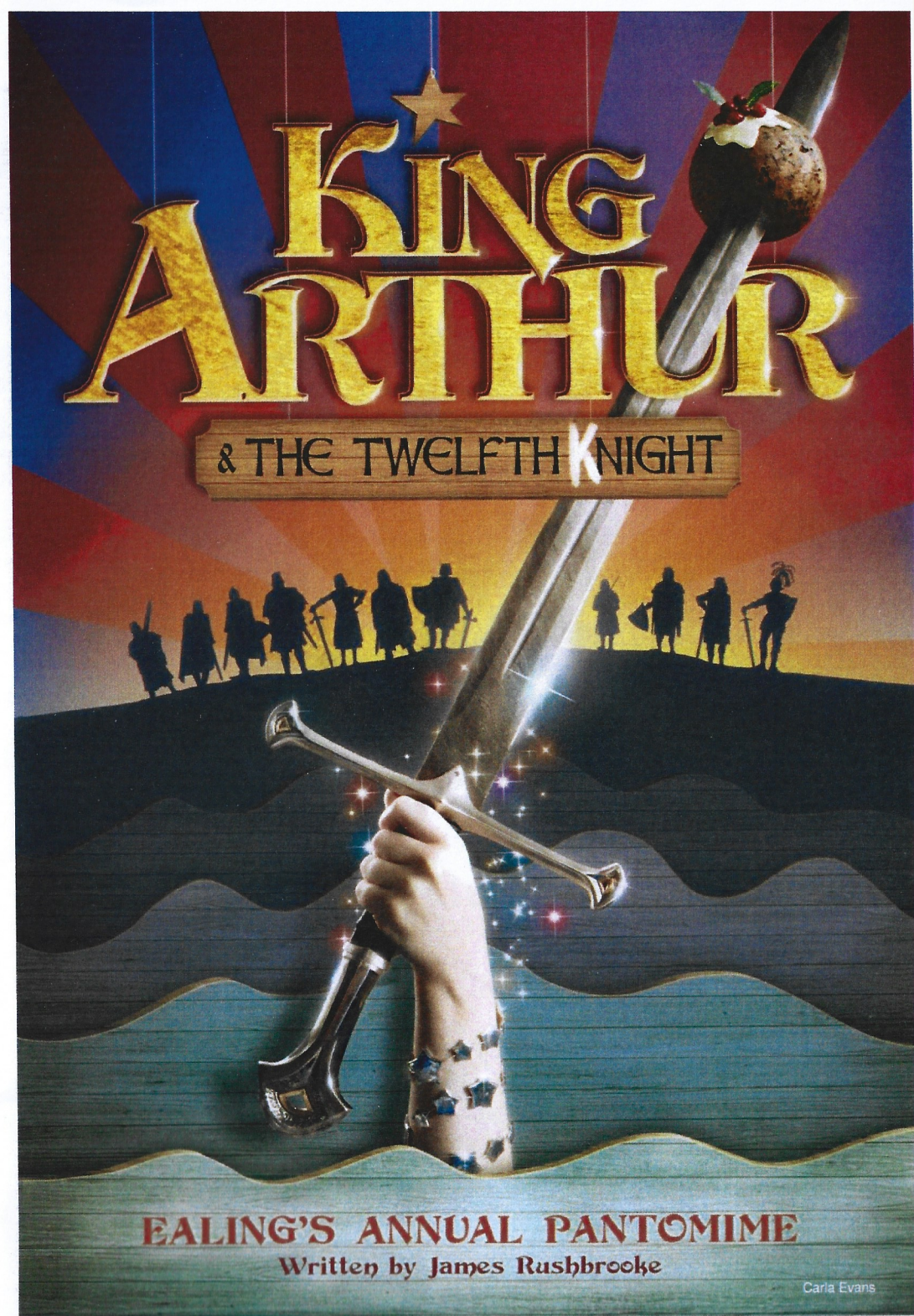
[questors.org.uk](http://questors.org.uk)

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# WELCOME TO KING ARTHUR AND THE TWELFTH KNIGHT



We are delighted to be able to present *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight* to you this Christmas, following the enforced postponement of *Snow White* until March this year due to Covid.

We love presenting Ealing with a traditional pantomime each year. We know that it is a great motivation not only to the King Arthur company but also for our volunteers who run the Box Office, Front of House and the Grapevine that you are here tonight. We hope the show, which includes members of our Questors Youth Theatre, will be a magical part of your Christmas celebrations.

Last year we announced that we were going to replace the ageing roof of the Dame Judi Dench Playhouse because of significant water leaks. We are pleased to say that you are sitting under a re-covered roof. Many people generously contributed to the fund-raising to meet the costs of the new roof. We would like to renew our thanks to all those who donated, including through the Crowdfunder this year.

Please keep in touch with what we are doing and, if you do not already see our newsletter, please sign up at [www.questors.org.uk](http://www.questors.org.uk) to receive a copy.

Meanwhile, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2023.

**Doug King**  
Chair  
of the Board

**Alex Marker**  
Artistic  
Director



## KING ARTHUR AND THE TWELFTH KNIGHT

by James Rushbrooke

The Judi Dench Playhouse

8 – 31 December 2022

# KING ARTHUR AND THE TWELFTH KNIGHT

*King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight* began, as most pantomimes often do, on a hot summer evening in early July. Before that inauspicious July evening in the Questors Courtyard we'd never met. We'd never worked together; we didn't know each other's background and to be absolutely frank we weren't overly impressed with each other's choice of beverage.

Rory had been identified as an upcoming young director with the talent and skill not to go utterly insane by Christmas whilst James had offered to write the script after one too many apple juices in the Grapevine. Together we decided we'd put together something '*vaguely Arthurian*'. One week later we were auditioning cast members with some hastily thrown together proto-scripts and an entirely false promise everything was in hand.

Everyone who auditioned was invited to join us on what Rory termed a '*creative adventure*' and James called a '*logistical creative nightmare*', seventeen principal actors had accepted Rory's insane offer, enough to fill a small minibus and more than enough to fill the average pantomime three times over. The poster announcing the show came out four seconds later, James went to a hermetically-sealed attic for a nervous breakdown and to write the script, whilst Rory went to Edinburgh to drink and ponce about as actors are wont to do from time to time.

Most writers won't talk about their first draft of the script and that's most certainly the case here. Suffice it to say there was a Zoom meeting and some intense dramaturgical input. James was sent back to his laptop to scrape every clean joke (and plenty of dirty ones) he could find off the internet and throw them into the script. It was the second draft that was taken into the rehearsal room and given to the cast. There were plenty of questions, some tears and a few escape attempts, but on the whole the actors seemed pleased there was a story to be told and it wasn't all a hoax or elaborate pyramid scheme. The tech team were less pleased with the line '*the action on stage reaches a huge crescendo*' but James insisted this was Rory's problem and Rory refused to read any stage directions until at least mid-November.

Then the tickets went on sale. Eeek.

When a script comes off the shelf, everyone knows what they're doing from day one. Set design, wardrobe, lighting and sound can get on being efficient and organised without much help. When a script inconveniently falls out of someone's head and is then subsequently patched together by cast and creatives alike, things are 'different' (by which we mean infinitely more stressful). Various members of the creative team have exhibited zen-like control of their emotions and a quiet fortitude as the storyline and script has morphed and changed from week to week.

For this we are both eternally apologetic and thankful.

It was half way through the first month that James realised he'd accidentally written a musical with pantomime elements rather than a straight pantomime but it was too late to change. Helen (lyricist), Dave (musical director) and Sara (choreographer) were already deep into vibratos with Bob Fosse jazz hands and neither of us had the heart to stop them. And so we ploughed on, still pretending we knew what we were doing.

It was in the rehearsal room where the real magic began and where the storyline-blueprint became a realised medieval nonsense universe. One big enough for the cast to play in, and play they did. Every rehearsal has been full of laughter and silliness, so much so Rory didn't call the chorus children as often as he should've done because it brought the total amount of maturity in the room up too much (and forced everyone to be sensible).

We, and the cast, redrafted the script as we went along, making each other laugh and finding ways to incorporate those moments into the script and make them part of the world. Our characters moved from two-dimensional, semi-artificial plot devices, into living breathing beings without either of us having to do all that much. Rory directed the playfulness and James wrote down the resultant magic and pretended it was all his idea in the first place.

Costumes arrived and puppets came to life. Sword fights broke out. Tickets were selling well. We filmed a comedy trailer, which (surprise surprise) we also made up as we went along.

Then began the pointing of lights and difficult questions like '*what props do you want?*' and there was much in the way of wailing and gnashing of teeth from us both. It's one thing to have fun on the page and in the rehearsal room, it's quite another to have to answer questions about HOW things are going to happen on the night. Plot holes were filled. Plot cracks were cemented. Some of the plot was rebuilt from scratch and still we soldiered on, buoyed by an excellent tech and stage-management team all of whom have better ideas and more transferable skills than we do.

And the call came for the programme show blurb with a week left to go.

And here we still are ... making it up as we go along and benefiting from the generosity and creativity of people with a myriad of talents neither of us share. Pantomime really is a team effort and we have one of the best teams assembled since the real King Arthur got a bunch of lads together and opted for something circular in the IKEA catalogue.

*King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight* isn't a traditional pantomime. It's something similar to a pantomime but with twists and subversions. We both believe the stories we tell are important and particularly those stories we tell our children. This pantomime is undoubtedly silly and we hope it makes you laugh when you should (and when you shouldn't). We also hope that you spot inside the silliness an important message for youngsters and teenagers about who they can be if they want and whether they see themselves represented on stage. Stories matter.

We hope you enjoy ours in all its chaotic glory. Thanks for coming.

**Rory Hobson (Director) and James Rushbrooke (Writer)**

## Production Photographs



## Young People's Ensemble



**Team A**



**Team B**

# KING ARTHUR AND THE TWELFTH KNIGHT

by James Rushbrooke

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 8 December 2022

## THE PLAYERS

### Principal Cast

Lord Drayton	<b>Mike Hadjipateras</b>
Eileen Sideways	<b>James Goodden</b>
Esme Drayton	<b>Emily Turner</b>
Ivor Sideways	<b>Rosefinch Carr</b>
King Arthur	<b>Mark Redrup</b>
Queen Guinevere	<b>Caroline Ash</b>
Sir Lancelot	<b>Dumitru Stratulat</b>
Morgana	<b>Kerri Logan</b>
Mordred	<b>Sally Parker</b>
Merlin	<b>Alex Marker</b>
Lady Drayton	<b>Frances Sherwin</b>
Royal Squire	<b>Mia Lepper</b>
Martha	<b>Grace Connett</b>
Marshall Speakers	<b>Lizzie Turner</b>
The Dark Lord	<b>Russell Fleet</b>
Phoenix	<b>Haidee Elise</b>
Nigel	<b>Ella Jackson / Shaan Latif-Shaikh</b>
Puppeteers	<b>Haidee Elise, Ella Jackson, Shaan Latif-Shaikh, Lizzie Turner</b>
Understudy	<b>Marija Velkova</b>



### Young People's Ensemble

#### Team A<sup>†</sup>

Amelie Vowles-Copley  
Anushka Vyavaharkar  
Ariya Jolly  
Arya Twydell  
Cerys Sandford  
Charlotte Green  
Georgia De Vitis  
Hanna Richmond  
Isobel Spurling  
Laszlo Keech  
Lilia Folson  
Lyla Wintle  
Sara Pavicevic  
Sylvie Memess  
Zoe Lock

#### Team B<sup>\*</sup>

Aoife Hughes  
Benjamin Roddy  
Bethan Hunter  
Cecily McGinnity  
Desirae West  
Felix McGinnity  
Kaylin Hewawickrama  
Lottie Brown  
Lottie McManus  
Mark Sweeney  
Ming Faan Leung  
Oceane Levry  
Ruby Whittingham  
Stella Gourgaud-Jacobi  
Tenaya Hewawickrama

#### Chorus

### Woodland Creatures

Adarsh Wall  
Archie Delasalle  
Valentina Sefain

Hadiyah Ibrahim  
Hugh Graver  
Rafi Coburn-Kutay  
Simran Wilson-Mawer

The performance lasts about 2 hours and 30 minutes including a 20-minute interval.

Please turn off all mobile phones and similar electronic devices. Photography and recording are not permitted during any of our performances, due to the rules associated with performing rights and the safeguarding of minors. Thank you.

<sup>†</sup> appearing Dec 8, 10 (2:30), 11 (12:00), 15, 17 (2:30), 18 (12:00), 21, 23, 29, 31 (12:00)  
<sup>\*</sup> appearing Dec 9, 10, 11 (5:00), 16, 17, 18 (5:00), 22, 28, 30, 31 (5:00)

## CREATIVE TEAM

Director	<b>Rory Hobson</b>
Writer	<b>James Rushbrooke</b>
Assistant Director	<b>Quinn Goodliffe</b>
Musical Director	<b>Dave Roberts</b>
Set Designer	<b>Alex Marker</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Carla Evans</b>
Choreographer	<b>Sara Page</b>
Puppet Designers and Makers	<b>Ella Jackson, Shaan Latif-Shaikh</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Robert Walker</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Dan Tigg</b>
Lyricist	<b>Helen Cooper</b>

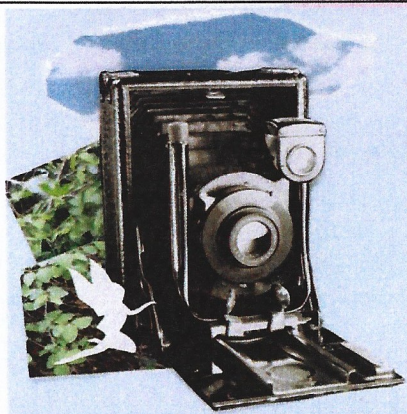
## QYT 2023 SHOW

### THE LIGHT BURNS BLUE

by **Silva Semerciyan**

25 February – 4 March 2023

The Judi Dench Playhouse



When seventeen-year-old Elsie Wright borrows her father's camera, little does she know the public frenzy that would ensue, when the community around her believe she has captured concrete proof that fairies exist.

Inspired by the true story of the Cottingley Fairies, this spellbinding contemporary play is performed by Questors Youth Theatre.

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Managers	<b>Bernie Brady, Lloyd Wallis</b>
Deputy Stage Manager	<b>Robert Eagle</b>
Assistant Stage Managers	<b>Greta Azzopardi, Kat Cooper, Anthony Curran, Vimbai Dzimwasha, Kasia Krynska, Anne Neville, Amar Patel, Michael Smith, Laurie Swan</b>
Costume Makers	<b>Jane Arnold-Forster, Helen Cooper, Kat Cooper, Adina Elmasry, Russell Fleet, Anne Gilmour, Karen Latimer, Sue Peckitt, Alison Simmons, Elinor Turner</b>
Wardrobe Assistant	<b>Jenny Richardson</b>
Mr Goodden's Dresser	<b>Ian Black</b>
Children's Costume Coordinator	<b>Becky Hartnup</b>
Technical Advisor	<b>Mike Chislett</b>
Lighting Assistant	<b>Maddy MacConnol</b>
Lighting Operators	<b>Jane Arnold-Forster, Evelina Plonytè, Derek Stoddart, Carole Swan</b>
Follow-Spot Operators	<b>Jane Arnold-Forster, Sam Boffin, Colette Green, Callum Hartnup, Gavin Jones, Will Metcalf, Terry Mummery, Derek Stoddart, Robert Vass</b>
Lighting Riggers	<b>Terry Mummery, Tim Pemberton</b>
Sound Operators	<b>Dan Tigg, Benjamin Greenwood</b>
Set Constructors	<b>Toby Burbidge, Adam Smith</b>
Set Painters	<b>Stephen Aitken, Kasia Krynska, Sabrina Stoecklin, Amy Sullivan, Elinor Turner</b>
Get-In Assistance	<b>Roger Brace, Doug King, Stephen Souchon, Derek Stoddart</b>
Hair and Make-Up	<b>Leah Austen, Macie Dell, Pauline Hudson, Alexandra Lavende, Caitlin McDonald, Claire Stokes, Peter Wang</b>
Production Photographer	<b>Carla Evans</b>
Rehearsal Photographer	<b>Radostina Peykova</b>
Videographer	<b>Robert Vass</b>
Thanks to	<b>Kritika Agarwal, Sue Collins, Tim Edwards, Effie French, CJ, Monica Lomas, Gary Reid, Paula Robinson, Amy Sullivan, Martin Walton, Gareth Williams, and all the chaperones</b>

## Biographies

### **Caroline Ash** – *Queen Guinevere*

Caroline's roles at The Questors include Elsie in *The Ghost Train*, Millie in *The Browning Version* and Ethel in *For Services Rendered*. Caroline has also performed at The Bridewell as Merteuille in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, Mona in *Trivial Pursuits* and Joanne in *Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*.

### **Rosefinch Carr** – *Ivor Sideways*

Rosefinch has been at The Questors for seven years, acting, singing, dancing and being a semi-professional nuisance in previous shows like *Robin Hood*, *Hairspray* and *Snow White*. Rosefinch agreed to stop poking holes in the Playhouse roof if they secured a leading role this year. Blackmail: an underused audition technique!

### **Grace Connett** – *Martha*

Grace joined QYT when she was six and, along with the laughs, it has given her confidence, friendships and community. She was thrilled to be part of the youth ensemble for *Mother Goose* and is delighted to be joining the cast of this year's panto.

### **Haidee Elise** – *Phoenix / Puppeteer*

This is Haidee's first production with The Questors. Past credits include playing Cinderella in 2001 and, at The Tower Theatre, Lady Macbeth, Ariel (*The Tempest*), Ophelia (*Hamlet*), Regan (*King Lear*), Margery Pinchwife (*The Country Wife*), Tourvel (*Les Liaisons Dangereuses*) and many more. She is also a keen harpist.

### **Russell Fleet** – *The Dark Lord*

Russell trained as an actor in the 1990s and joined The Questors in 2006. Since then he has worked on 50 productions as actor, stage manager, sound designer or director, most recently directing *Dear Brutus* in the Studio last January. *King Arthur* is his second panto at The Questors.

### **James Goodden** – *Eileen Sideways*

A member since 1987, this is the fourth time that James has donned the frocks in a Questors panto, following on from *Jack and the Beanstalk* (2014), *Mother Goose* (2017) and *Robin Hood* (2019). By contrast, he was most recently seen as a straight-laced Victorian Colonial Civil Servant in *India Gate*.

### **Mike Hadjipateras** – *Lord Drayton*

Mike has been in two pantos: as Abanazaar in *Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp* and Friar Tuck in *Robin Hood*. Other roles include Trigorin in *The Seagull*, Faustus in *Doctor Faustus*, Proctor in *The Crucible*, General Kotov in *Burnt by the Sun* and Charles II in *Nell Gwynn*. He teaches history.

### **Ella Jackson** – *Nigel / Puppet Designer and Maker / Puppeteer*

When Ella hasn't got her hand up the rear end of a puppet, she can be found behind the Grapevine bar. She therefore feels more than qualified to play Nigel the barkeep, but recommends having a drink first before listening to her attempt at being punny ... it'll help you gin and beer it!

### **Shaan Latif-Shaikh** – *Nigel / Puppet Designer and Maker / Puppeteer*

Shaan has made puppets and costumes for many previous Questors productions, including the past seven pantomimes. Outside of The Questors, he is the puppet assistant for *Frozen the Musical* at Theatre Royal Drury Lane.

### **Mia Lepper** – *Royal Squire*

Mia has been involved with The Questors for six years and appeared in *Animal Farm*, *Bugsy Malone*, *Robin Hood*, *Mother Goose* and recently *Dear Brutus*. She is currently studying at the Brit School doing musical theatre and wanted some hands on experience. She has loved immersing herself in the land of panto.

### **Kerri Logan** – *Morgana*

This is Kerri's third Questors pantomime after *Jack and the Beanstalk* (2014) and *Robin Hood* (2019) – always the bad guy (well, they do have more fun!) Away from panto, other Questors productions include *Hobson's Choice*, *Two, Misery, Present Laughter*, *Six Bad Poets* and, most recently, Lady Emily Lutyens in *India Gate*.

### **Alex Marker** – *Merlin / Set Designer*

Alex first appeared at The Questors playing a Georgian 'urchin' in *The Penny Showman* in 1989 and has since appeared here in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Mort* and *The Twits*. He has designed scores of productions and is the Artistic Director of The Questors Theatre and Director of Questors Youth Theatre.

### **Sally Parker** – *Mordred*

This is Sally's second production with The Questors, after last year's Studio Christmas show *Dear Brutus*. She also appeared in the Overnight Plays and New Writers' Festival. She is excited to be involved again in panto, has found it a wonderful and wild experience with an amazing cast and crew.

### **Mark Redrup** – *King Arthur*

Mark has been acting for The Questors since 1990, appearing in over sixty shows and last seen in March playing Bogwort in *Snow White*. He is having lots of fun being in his second panto of the year.

### **Frances Sherwin** – *Lady Drayton*

Frances' previous Questors appearance was as the Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella*, but she had to give up fairying following shoulder injuries caused by the continual arm flapping plus some aeronautical near-misses. She is delighted to now be playing a real Lady and is hoping the experience will follow her into everyday life.

### **Dumitru Stratulat** – *Sir Lancelot*

Dumitru has been a part of the Questors family for three years – first in Student Group 73 and now as an acting member. He appeared in *Quietus*, *An Invitation to Three Murders* and the Student Look-In. Dumitru has wanted to perform in panto for a long time – to feel the energy, the music, and the choreography! He is now living his dream.

### **Emily Turner** – *Esme Drayton*

Emily is new to panto but not new to leading roles at The Questors – she played Tracy Turnblad in the 2019 QYT production of *Hairspray*. She loves to sing and has a particular passion for performing arts which she currently studies at Westminster College and with the UK National Youth Theatre.

### **Lizzie Turner** – *Marshall Speakers / Puppeteer*

Previously Technical Coordinator in the Questors Office and currently Teaching Assistant with QYT, Lizzie is taking to the panto stage again after her first Questors acting appearance as Fairy Peaceful in *Sleeping Beauty* (2018). She loves singing and dancing, and has a distinction in broadsword stage combat.

**Helen Cooper – Lyricist**

Helen is most often found in The Questors wardrobe department. This year she traded stitching costumes for stitching up the cast, creating devilishly silly songs that were a pain to master. She has a background in Shakespeare, so the cast were lucky to avoid the full iambic pentameter.

**Carla Evans – Costume Designer**

Carla joined The Questors in 2013 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 *How to Spot an Alien* and costumes for *Death and the Maiden*.

**Quinn Goodliffe – Assistant Director**

Quinn is in his last year of QYT and has worked on many Questors plays, including a leading role in our last pantomime *Snow White*. This is his second directorial role at The Questors after *Disintegration* earlier this year. And if you wish to give him thanks, his preferred drink is London Pride.

**Rory Hobson – Director**

A former member of Questors Youth Theatre and a graduate of Student Group 71, Rory's pantomime journey with The Questors began as an ASM on *Dick Whittington & His Cat* before appearing as Billy in *Sleeping Beauty*. Predominantly seen on stage as an actor, this is Rory's directorial debut, so please be nice. Rory is a member of the National Youth Theatre and Artists Theatre School.

**Sara Page – Choreographer**

Sara is a choreographer, pianist, singer-songwriter and teacher. She has choreographed many shows at The Questors, directed once and was previously famed for being cast as a child in productions such as *How to Spot an Alien* and *The Crucible* despite being 24+ years old at the time.

**Dave Roberts – Musical Director**

Dave is founder of Starlight Theatre Company and has directed, choreographed and musically directed over 100 productions including two in London's West End. After *Rent*, *Aladdin*, *Bugsy Malone* and *Hairspray* at The Questors, Dave is delighted to return for this original panto.

**James Rushbrooke – Writer**

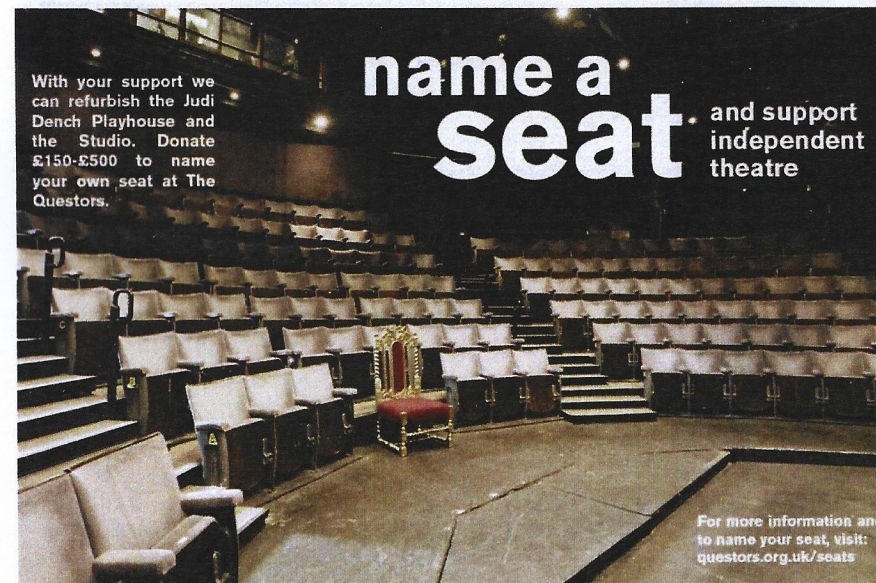
James is new to The Questors but not new to writing. A drama teacher for fifteen years, he considers seventeen to be the ideal number of principal characters for any production. James has written extensively for children but does also write 'proper plays' for adults. Panto is a creative compromise.

**Dan Tigg – Sound Designer**

Dan is a sound engineer and bass player who has been working in theatre for over 15 years. He has worked on shows in the West End, on UK tours and in local theatre. He is very excited to be designing the sound for his third Questors panto.

**Robert Walker – Lighting Designer**

Since first operating the lights for a Questors production of *Twelfth Night* in 2016, Robert has been involved in many productions, including designing the lighting for the 2019 panto *Robin Hood*. Robert is pleased to be going full circle back to his first Questors production, but not too sure about the creative addition of The Dark Lord...



## Alternative Christmas Entertainment

	
<p><b>THE REMARKABLE THEATRICAL ADVENTURES OF PEREGRINE PROTEUS</b> by Jane Dewey 16 – 31 December 2022 <b>The Studio</b> Set in early 19th century England, this rip-roaring new play tracks one man's life, from humble birth to his time in the theatre spotlight.</p>	<p><b>CHRISTMAS GHOST STORIES</b> 19 December 2022 <b>The Studio</b> The maritime world is rich in folklore and superstition, from ships abandoned with no living crew aboard, derelict vessels left to drift aimlessly, or phantom ships which presage disaster. Throw in smuggling, pirates and a haunted liner, and you have a recipe for a chilling evening of ghost stories on a nautical theme.</p>