

## 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

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# The Gut Girls

by Sarah Daniels

The Studio

24 March – 1 April 2023

## Fields at The Questors

Fields at The Questors serves Italian coffee, fine teas, snacks and handmade cakes, and is the perfect spot for a pre-theatre café stop or interval ice-cream.

Place your interval order before the show to beat the crowds.

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 2023 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, spirits and soft drinks – 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](http://questors.org.uk/grapevine) for more details.

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



# The Gut Girls

by Sarah Daniels

**The Studio**

**24 March – 1 April 2023**

# THE GUT GIRLS

This play was first performed in 1988, nine years into Margaret Thatcher's premiership.

Like a lot of what we might call 'political playwrights' of the time, Sarah Daniels uses the divisions that Thatcher's leadership brought into society and, in the case of *The Gut Girls*, uses the metaphor of so-called 'Victorian values'.

Of course, the big difference between then and now is that, in late nineteenth century London, we not only had the huge gulf between male and female (something the play points to), but we also had the class difference, which is clear in the way Lady Helena treats grown women as school children, simply because they are not of her elevated social status. She, as a widow with money, can reject Edwin's advances and devote her life to 'these poor, wretched, miserable girls': 'the girls' are in fact not at all really poor (in the context of their time and the average wage), not wretched (save in her imagination) and certainly not miserable.

Thatcher (who I see as the model for Lady Helena, but I might be wrong) would have claimed she presided over a meritocracy where class was irrelevant. Others might think she created a different 'class system', where the ability or non-ability to make money elevated some and threw others aside.

It was felt that charities should pick up the pieces and, though absolutely well meaning, those charities *sometimes* came with an agenda.

Similarly, the gut girls have to listen to readings from the bible before being indoctrinated into meekly obeying the limited aspirations that their class can aspire to. Polly is almost literally left speechless, daring only to say the robotic answers, 'very good, madam', 'thank you, madam', when Priscilla is trying to have a normal conversation with her.

Thatcher also battled with the trade unions and was successful in closing down whole communities who relied on 'redundant' industry such as coal, steel, cars and shipbuilding. A friend of mine referred to his home town in the North East as 'Thatcher's graveyard'. Harry comments on how the meat that comes into Deptford is slaughtered before it gets there and even kept ice cold, ready to be sold: the gutting shed is no longer needed. The parallels are clear: the march of progress, whilst undoubtedly improving certain aspects of life, inevitably leaves damage in its wake. Ellen's pleas for a trade union and better conditions are derided – even by her colleagues – in much the same way as trade union leaders were scoffed at in the eighties.

But, above all, this play could well be described as 'feminist' (not, in my view, a pejorative word), in that we see the superior role that men thought was their right and the gradual sublimation of women. In the end, Kate takes pride in the fact that she's admired for 'looking nice' and that men don't swear in front of her. She has been turned into a shell of her previous self and, though acceptable to society, has forfeited her personality, seemingly without a qualm.

Yet the play ends with hope. Ellen's last speech is a 'call to arms' (again, there are echoes of the '80s).

At the close of the play (and it's not a spoiler), Ellen seems to challenge us, the audience, to think about how these attitudes towards 'difference' might 'happen again'. She is bridging the gap between the 1880s and 1980s, and beyond to today, saying it's down to us to fight for equality, no matter your sex, gender, colour, sexuality etc. In this way, the play is an inspiring piece of writing.

Though the gut girls are eventually robbed of their essential character, we have seen their potential: Daniels is pointing out that we must not stereotype people for *any* reason.

All this might sound a bit heavy but, in fact, the play is funny, moving and skilful in its depiction of a turning point in British history.

Just over a decade later than *The Gut Girls* is set, women were finally appreciated – because they had to be – and took over 'men's' jobs during the First World War. True, they were 'put back in their box' as soon as the armistice was signed, but the seeds had been sown and the march of equality started. That march has been going on for different people and other minorities ever since. There have been great leaps forward and some brave, sometimes unsung pioneers. Long may it continue.

Whatever your political views, we do hope you enjoy this production.

## Sarah Daniels

Daniels started writing plays with the Royal Court Theatre and went on to be writer in residence at Sheffield University in their English department. She has been a successful playwright from the beginning of the eighties and, amongst other notable theatres, her play *Neoptide* premiered at the National Theatre in London in 1986. She has also written for TV, in several long-running soap operas and for radio.

**Richard Gallagher, Director**

# THE GUT GIRLS

by Sarah Daniels

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 24 March 2023

## CAST

Maggie, Nora, Edna	<b>Hyssop Benson</b>
Polly	<b>Ania Choroszczynska</b>
Ellen, Priscilla	<b>Layan AlGurashi</b>
Kate	<b>Logan Crouch</b>
Annie, Emily, Edie	<b>Emily Hawley</b>
Lady Helena	<b>Hannah Langan</b>
Harry, Arthur, Len	<b>Marco Boel</b>
Jim, Edwin, MadJacko	<b>Jacob Chancellor</b>

Deptford and other parts of London around 1897

The play lasts approximately 2 hours and 30 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.

## PRODUCTION

Director	<b>Richard Gallagher</b>
Assistant Director	<b>Ant Griffith</b>
Set Designer	<b>Charlie Dixon</b>
Costume Designer assisted by	<b>Sarah Andrews</b> <b>Karen Latimer</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Andrew Whadcoat</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Russell Fleet</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Russell Fleet</b>
Deputy Stage Manager	<b>Robert Eagle</b>
Assistant Stage Managers	<b>Greta Azzopardi, Daniel Thompson</b>
Administrator/Pooh Bah	<b>Dorothy Lawson</b>
Offal Maker	<b>Nigel Worsley</b>
Carcass and Meat Maker	<b>Shaan Latif-Shaikh</b>
Hair	<b>Sarah Andrews</b>
Projections	<b>Terry Mummery</b>
Lighting/Sound Operator	<b>Giorgio Previtera</b>
Lighting Rigger	<b>Terry Mummery</b>
Set Constructors	<b>Roger Brace, Charlie Dixon</b>
Photographers	<b>Maya Jagger, Robert Vass</b>
Videographer	<b>Robert Vass</b>
Thanks to	<b>George and Mary Ann Auckland</b> (for the loan of the magic lantern and slides), <b>John Green, Nicola Maddox,</b> <b>Alex Marker, Harriet Parsonage,</b> <b>The Wednesday Sewing Group</b>

# Biographies



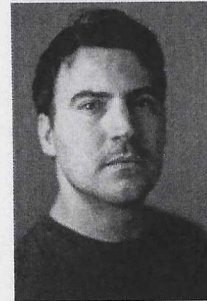
## **Layan AlGurashi** – *Ellen, Priscilla*

Layan is a 27 year old creative, voice actress and marketer, but she has always been involved in the arts, be it fine art, illustration, writing or photography. A couple of years ago, she fell in love with acting and joined the Questors performance course, where her passion for the theatre continues to drive her. *The Gut Girls* will be Lay's first production but certainly not the last. When not in the theatre, you can find her on the mats, indulging in Muay Thai, the martial art of eight limbs.



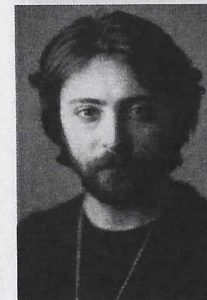
## **Hyssop Benson** – *Maggie, Nora, Edna*

Hyssop, more commonly known as Benson, has had a love of performance for as long as they can remember. They attended HAYA (the Hunt Academy for Young Actors) during primary school and played minor roles in school productions. However, Benson's creativity doesn't stop there: some of their hobbies include jewellery making, sewing and up-cycling clothes. They joined some of the other gut girls in decorating the hats used in this production. Benson specially decorated the hats for Maggie and Kate.



## **Marco Boel** – *Harry, Arthur, Len*

Born and raised in Italy, Marco first arrived in the UK in 2005 and, while attending the University of Sheffield, he started taking acting lessons as a hobby. His curiosity and love of travelling took him on a world trip that lasted several years, before finally settling in London in 2016. Although he has been involved in school plays in Italy and he trained in part-time screen-acting schools in England and in Australia, *The Gut Girls* will be his first full-length theatrical production. Marco is also a keen singer, writer and guitar player.



## **Jacob Chancellor** – *Jim, Edwin, MadJacko*

Jacob has been attending The Questors since the age of seven, much to the dismay of most of the Questors collective. Growing up in Ealing most of his life, acting has always been a driving passion in everything he does because pretending to be someone else is always a bit of fun. He's appeared in several productions for The Questors including *Mute* and *Around the World in 80 Days* as well as having a guest lead role on *Doctors* for the BBC. He's quite gangly but you get used to it.



## **Ania Choroszczynska** – *Polly*

Ania is a local interior designer, ceramicist and mother of four. She has an MA in landscape architecture from Warsaw University of Life Science. Ania moved to London in 2007 when she started her interior design career in hospitality. Her previous acting experience includes a variety of poetry competitions she did as a child. She loves reading, snowboarding and spending time with her family. Ania currently lives in Ealing with her husband Andre, children Zachary, Miles Ella and Leo as well as dachshund, Mati.



## **Logan Crouch** – *Kate*

Logan is now 19 years old but has had a passion for acting ever since a much younger age, and has ambitions to pursue it as a career. She did a course at LAMDA including *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. *The Gut Girls* is Logan's first public performance.



## **Emily Hawley** – *Annie, Emily, Edie*

*The Gut Girls* is Emily's first time on stage at The Questors. She has been an ASM for three productions including *Dear Brutus* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. She is a skilled barista and likes to write scripts in her free time.



## **Hannah Langan** – *Lady Helena*

This is Hannah's acting debut. She joined Student Group 75 in 2021 and was ASM on *The Water's Edge* at The Questors in November 2021. Hannah has a degree in English Literature from The University of Manchester. She lived in Spain and Colombia for about three years and claims to speak Spanish-ish. Hannah is now back in her native London to pursue a career in acting. Sometimes she makes her own clothes.

**Sarah Andrews – Costume Designer**

Sarah joined The Questors in 1977 as a member of Student Group 32 and has since appeared in many plays. In addition to acting, she has designed and dressed a countless number of productions, most recently *The Country Wife*, *Sleepers in the Field*, *Krapp's Last Tape & Rockaby*, *King Charles III*, *How to Spot an Alien*, *The Water's Edge*, *Consent*, *India Gate* and the Caryl Churchill double bill.

**Charlie Dixon – Set Designer**

Charlie is an aspiring set designer with two shows under his belt already. Working with Richard is always a pleasure and the students have crafted an amazing piece. On a practical level, the design has been his hardest yet because of the number of changes that were needed, but he thinks the results will speak for themselves. Completing his A-levels at the same time means that set building at The Questors is a guilty pleasure and he can't wait to watch *The Gut Girls!*

**Russell Fleet – Sound Designer / Stage Manager**

Russell trained as an actor in the 1990s and joined The Questors in 2006. He has been involved in over 50 productions as actor, sound designer, stage manager and director. Recently onstage as The Dark Lord in *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight*, his last sound design was for the Caryl Churchill double bill in January.

**Richard Gallagher – Director**

Richard trained at Manchester Polytechnic School of Theatre. At The Questors, his last 'full time' acting appearances were as Lady Bracknell in Francis Lloyd's production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* and as Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. More recently, he appeared as Clarence in *All Joy of the Worm* 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*.

**Ant Griffith – Assistant Director**

Ant graduated with Questors Student Group 46, Foundations of Acting at Mountview and Directing at the City Lit. He's studied improvisation at The Free Association, Hoopla and The Maydays with Suki Webster, Josie Lawrence, Maria Peters and Graham Dickson. Ant is the founder and tutor of the Questors home improv team The Slack Captains. He has several songs in the movie *The Girl with a Clock for a Heart* in pre-production directed by Daniel Barber.

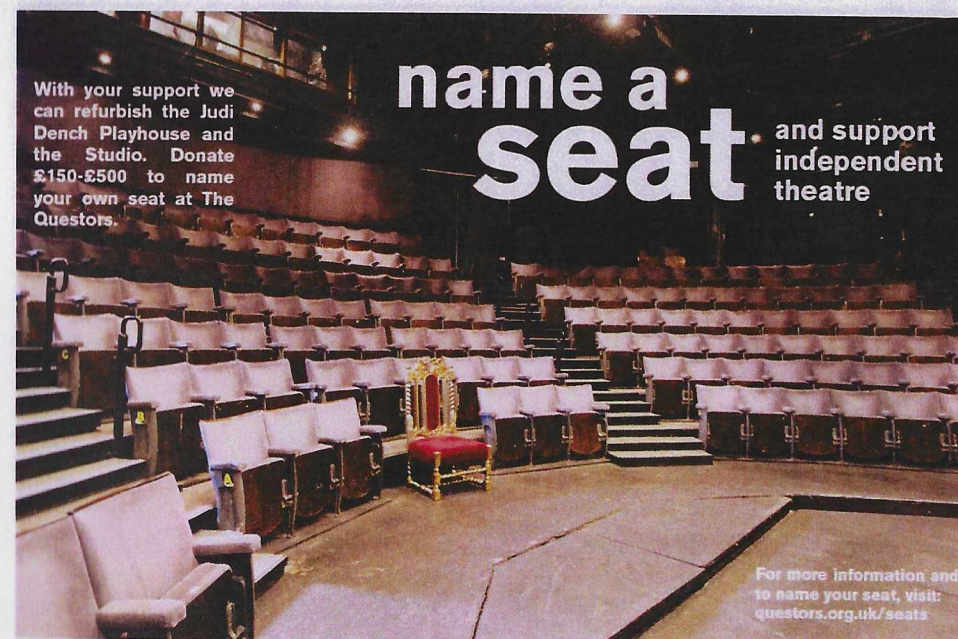
**Andrew Whadcoat – Lighting Designer**

Recent lighting designs include *Not About Heroes*, *The Dog & the Scarf*, *The Ghost Train*, *Haunting Julia*, *Peregrine Proteus*, *Little Dorrit*, the Caryl Churchill double bill and *Murder on the Nile*. He has also designed for AppEaling Theatre, Idle Discourse, Orange Moon and PlayGCTheatre at The Questors and other venues.

## 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**  
**Adam Ganne**  
**Duncan Aldridge**



## Next at The Questors

**MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**

by William Shakespeare

28 April – 6 May 2023

The Judi Dench Playhouse

Sicily, 1920: the war is over, and the soldiers return home to let their hair down and fall in love. Young Claudio is smitten with virginal and beautiful Hero, while clever Benedick and Beatrice ignite an old flame, with a little help from meddling friends. Add a villain of the piece and a group of home guard worthies who lack every qualification for the job, and the fun is complete. Shakespeare's greatest romantic comedy is the perfect post-pandemic treat. Don't miss the party!

**LOW LEVEL PANIC**

by Clare McIntyre

5 – 13 May 2023

The Studio

Three flatmates. A stash of porn. A single bathroom. And a whole world of men. This unapologetically hysterical play probes the effects of society's objectification of women, as friends Mary, Celia and Jo figure out how they really feel about sex, their bodies and each other. Winning the Samuel Beckett Award, this powerful and timely tale opened at the Royal Court in 1988 to critical acclaim. 'McIntyre has a deadly accurate ear, a subtle sense of humour and a deep fund of compassion: she writes with thrilling understanding' – *The Sunday Times*