

## 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<sup>†</sup>
- ✓ 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. <sup>†</sup>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  
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Registered Charity No. 207516

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 **The Questors**  
THEATRE



# On the Razzle

by Tom Stoppard

adapted from *Einen Jux will er sich machen* by Johann Nestroy

**The Judi Dench Playhouse**

**15 – 22 July 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 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.

Normal Opening Hours:

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

Sunday lunchtime: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

See [questors.org.uk/grapevine](https://questors.org.uk/grapevine) for more details.

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



image: Robert Vass

# On the Razzle

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# ON THE RAZZLE

This is the second Stoppard play in this season but it steers away from the academic brilliance of *Arcadia* and heads more into an intellectual's *Carry On* style.

This is a reworking of Johann Nestroy's 1842 play, *Einen Jux will er sich machen* (literally, according to my translation app, the rather clunky: *He Wants to Make Himself a Joke*, otherwise better translated as *He Will Go on a Spree* or *He Will Have Himself a Good Time*).

Stoppard wrote, 'All the main characters and most of the plot come from Nestroy, but not much of the dialogue attempts to offer a proper translation of what he wrote. My method might be compared to cross-country hiking with map and compass, where one takes a bearing on the next landmark and picks one's own way towards it.'

This is at least the fourth incarnation of the basic plot. Taking John Oxenford's *A Day Well Spent* as his inspiration, Thornton Wilder wrote *The Merchant of Yonkers*, which he later rewrote as *The Matchmaker*. This became the musical, *Hello Dolly!*

Wilder put his scheming matchmaker, Dolly Levi at the centre of his two adaptations but here she is supplanted by the crafty servant, Melchior. In both, we see the curmudgeonly older man, the lovers and the two employees, determined for a good time (a 'razzle'). They are all familiar characters in *commedia dell'arte*, which is, of course, also a big influence on British pantomime.

Nestroy and Stoppard are not too far away from the pantomimic style. This is high farce with all its trappings: mistaken identity, coincidences, puns galore, risqué jokes etc.

The original production of *On the Razzle* featured Felicity Kendal as Christopher. The style of women playing men – the 'breeches' role – was there in the Viennese comedy and nearly a quarter of the plays produced on the London stage between 1660 and 1700 contained one or more roles for actresses in male clothes. It's there in opera – Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* is but one example of many – and we, of course have our own tradition of breeches roles in pantomime. It was originally a sly way of getting ladies' legs on view but that is no longer a novelty.

In this, as in my previous production for Group 66 – just ten years ago – we have gone overboard with the convention as before, mainly, I confess, in order to supply decent parts for each of our students. It also does add to the general daftness of the piece, particularly when we have a woman playing a man,

pretending to be a woman. Shakespeare, of course, was there ahead of Stoppard in *Twelfth Night* (man/woman/man) and it could be argued that the breeches roles of the restoration theatre were probably a reaction to the former prohibition against real women appearing on stage.

Before Nestroy, Viennese comedy was fantastical, including gods, goddesses, magicians and fairies. Nestroy abandoned this and added a good dose of social satire. He wrote, 'I believe the worst of any human being – even myself – and I have seldom been mistaken.' He was, however, working with a public censor looking over his shoulder. (A censor, he said was a 'pencil in human form or a human being in the form of a pencil'.) Still, by using a cunning mixture of innuendos and puns, he could be assured that his audiences would understand his criticism without his having to write anything directly disrespectful of authority. We see this ploy in the works of W.S. Gilbert of Gilbert and Sullivan fame and, indeed, in lots of other British comedy.

Stoppard again: '[The puns in *On the Razzle* have] less to do with Nestroy than with my unregretful capitulation to the possibilities of sexual innuendo as and when they occurred.'

He's in good company. There is a, perhaps apocryphal, story of the censor objecting to the music hall lyric, '*She sits among the cabbages and peas.*' The great Marie Lloyd, who sang this, allegedly changed it to '*She sits among the cabbages and leeks.*' This was, apparently, acceptable. Much later, in the long running radio comedy *Round the Horne*, Kenneth Williams used a character who gloried in the name 'J. Peasemold Gruntfuttock'. When asked if another piece of risqué humour would get through the Lord Chamberlain's 'blue pencil' – incidentally, from where we get the term 'blue joke' – he replied, 'If you can get away with Gruntfuttock, you can get away with anything.'

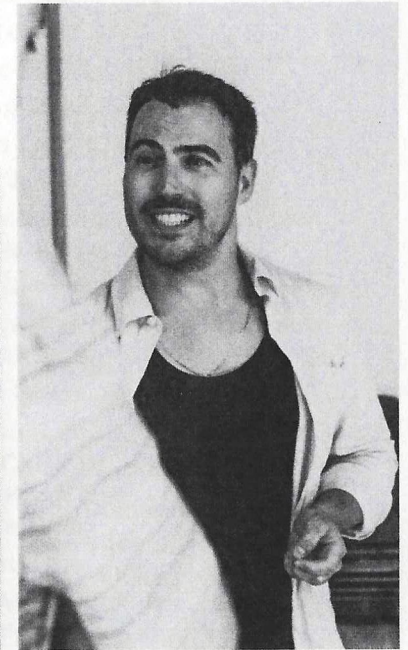
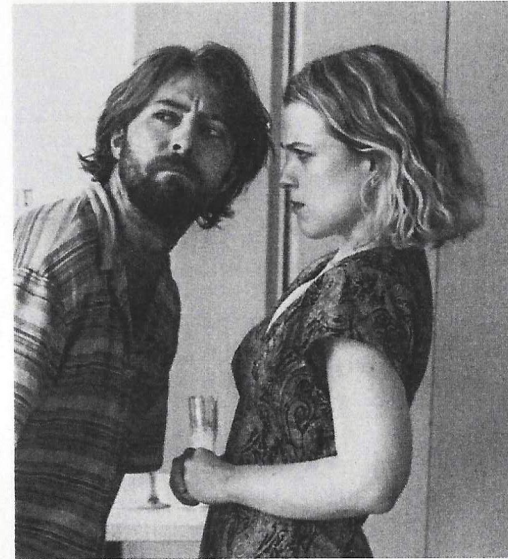
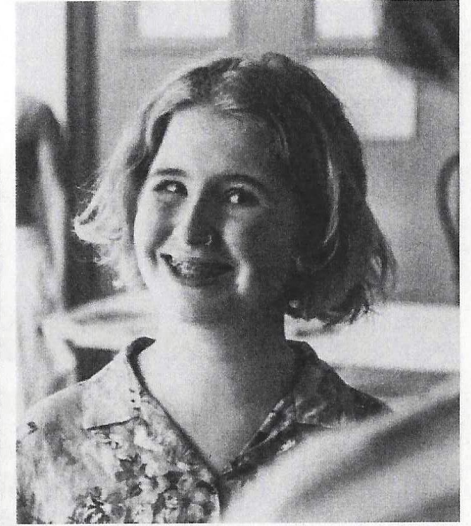
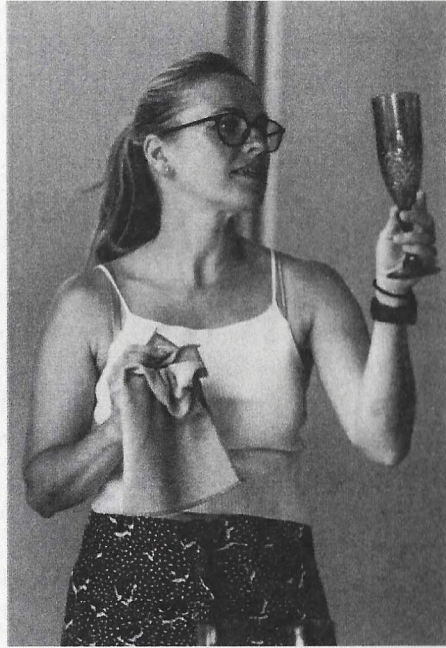
There are many other priceless examples: Max Miller, Williams and Hugh Paddick as 'Julian and Sandy' (again *Round the Horne*) and, of course, the 'kids friendly' puns employed in pantomime.

Sir Tom Stoppard has a long-established connection to The Questors. In 1964, a group of Questors actors travelled to Berlin under the auspices of James Saunders' *Playwrights' Symposium*. Their task was to put on an evening of newly-developed one-act plays, including *Guildestern and Rosencrantz*, written and directed by Stoppard. This production was then presented in our Studio upon their return. The two characters' billing was later switched and the play became the playwright's first big success: *Rosencrantz and Guildestern Are Dead*.

After the splendid *Arcadia*, we are very pleased to be showing you his great versatility of style. As Monty Python would say: '... and now for something completely different.'

**Richard Gallagher, Director**

# Rehearsal Photographs



QUESTORS STUDENT GROUP 75 PRESENTS

# ON THE RAZZLE

by Tom Stoppard

adapted from *Einen Jux will er sich machen* by Johann Nestroy

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 15 July 2023

## CAST

in order of appearance

Zangler	<b>Jacob Chancellor</b>
Gertrud	<b>Ania Choroszczynska</b>
Marie	<b>Arabella Jacobson</b>
Sonders	<b>Joshua Perry</b>
Foreigner	<b>Nicola Littlewood</b>
Melchior	<b>Marco Boel</b>
Hupfer	<b>Hannah Langan</b>
Christopher	<b>Logan Crouch</b>
Weinberl	<b>Hyssop Benson</b>
Philippine	<b>Ania Choroszczynska</b>
Frau Fischer	<b>Emily Hawley</b>
Madame Knorr	<b>Layan AlGurashi</b>
Waiter One	<b>Nicola Littlewood</b>
Scottish Man	<b>Iain Reid</b>
Scottish Woman	<b>Dorothy Lawson or Sarah Morrison</b>
Waiter Two	<b>Hannah Langan</b>
Waiter Three	<b>Joe Booth</b>
Coachman	<b>Ania Choroszczynska</b>
Constable	<b>Charlie Dixon</b>
Miss Blumenblatt	<b>Hannah Langan</b>
Lisette	<b>Nicola Littlewood</b>
Ragamuffin	<b>Hannah Langan</b>

Vienna and outskirts, mid-nineteenth century

The production lasts for approximately two and a quarter hours,  
including one interval of fifteen minutes.

## PRODUCTION

Director	<b>Richard Gallagher</b>
Associate Director	<b>Dorothy Lawson</b>
Set Designer	<b>Charlie Dixon</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Sarah Andrews</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Carole Swan</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Martin Choules</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Harriet Parsonage</b>
Deputy Stage Manager	<b>Christopher Benson</b>
Assistant Stage Managers	<b>Joe Booth, Rosefinch Carr</b>
Properties	<b>Joanna Mludzinska</b>
Puppetry Advisor	<b>Shaan Latif-Shaikh</b>
Hair and Make-Up	<b>Peter Wang</b>
Lighting Assistants	<b>Alasdair Graebner, John Green, Andrew Whadcoat</b>
Lighting / Sound Operators	<b>Erika Griffiths, Emmanuel Hardy</b>
Lighting Riggers	<b>Martyn Bird, Carroll Konopacki, Terry Mummery, Robert Walker</b>
Set Realisation	<b>Roger Brace, Charlie Dixon</b>
Get-In Assistance	<b>Ian Black, Bron Blake, Bernie Brady, Mike Chislett, Simon Higginson, Doug King, Derek Stoddart, Jon Webster</b>
Photographer / Videographer	<b>Robert Vass</b>
Thanks to	<b>Jane Arnold-Forster, Sunita Dugal, Polly Fry, Jenny Richardson</b>

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



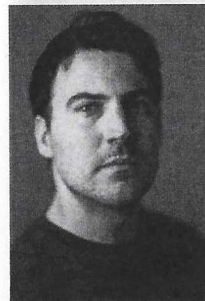
## **Layan AlGurashi** – *Madame Knorr*

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 the art of acting, and joined the Questors performance course where her passion for the theatre continues to drive her. *The Gut Girls* was Lay's first production, playing Ellen and Priscilla. When not in the theatre, you can find her on the mats, indulging in a whole other kind of art: Muay Thai, the martial art of eight limbs.



## **Hyssop Benson** – *Weinberl*

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 includes jewellery making, sewing and up-cycling clothes. They played Maggie, Edna and Nora in *The Gut Girls* as well as decorating several hats!



## **Marco Boel** – *Melchior*

Born and raised in Italy, Marco first arrived in the UK in 2005 and, while attending the University of Sheffield, started taking acting lessons as a hobby. After university, his curiosity and love of travelling took him on a world trip, before finally settling in London in 2016. Marco has been involved in schools plays in Italy and he trained in part time screen-acting schools in England and in Australia. He is also a keen singer, writer and guitar player. Marco played Harry, Arthur and Len in *The Gut Girls*, which was his first full-length production.



## **Jacob Chancellor** – *Zangler*

Jacob has been attending The Questors from the age of seven, much to the dismay of most of the Questors collective. Growing up in Ealing, 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 BBC. He's quite gangly but you get used to it. Most recently, Jacob played Jim, Edwin and MadJacko in *The Gut Girls*.



## **Ania Choroszczynska** – *Gertrud / Philippine / Coachman*

Ania is a local interior designer, ceramicist and mother of four. She has an MA in landscape architecture from Warsaw University of Life Science, and moved to London in 2007. Previous to *The Gut Girls*, where she played Polly, she didn't have any previous acting experience apart from a variety of poetry competitions she did as a child under the scrutinising eye of her mother. She loves reading, snowboarding and spending time with her family. Ania currently lives in Ealing with her husband Andre and children Zachary, Miles Ella and Leo.



## **Logan Crouch** – *Christopher*

Logan is 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* was Logan's first public performance, playing Kate.



## **Emily Hawley** – *Frau Fischer*

Student Group 75's production of *The Gut Girls* was Emily's first time on stage at The Questors so this makes *On the Razzle* her second. 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. In *The Gut Girls*, she played Annie, Emily and Eady.



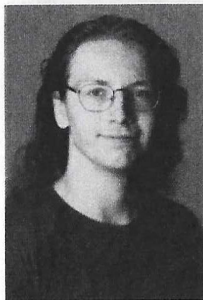
## **Hannah Langan** – *Hupfer / Waiter Two / Miss Blumenblatt / Ragamuffin*

Hannah joined Student Group 75 in 2021 and was ASM on *The Water's Edge* in November 2021. She played Lady Helena in *The Gut Girls*. 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.



**Joe Booth** – *Waiter Three*

Joe has been a Questors member since 2011. He did both the Youth Theatre and Young Studio: the latter twice! A few highlights over the years include ASMin on *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*, *Dick Whittington*, *Animal Farm* and *Hairspray*. Joe last guested for the student group as a member of the cast of *Albert Make Us Laugh* in 2018. He has also been seen a few times in the Box Office, selling tickets. He is delighted to be joining another student production.



**Charlie Dixon** – *Constable / Set Designer*

Charlie is an aspiring set designer with three shows – following his last one, *The Gut Girls* – under his belt. On a practical level, the design has been even more difficult than the last because of the number of changes that were (again) needed. He hopes 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 is looking forward to playing on a set he has designed and largely built.



**Arabella Jacobson** – *Marie*

After graduating from Cambridge with a degree in psychology, Arabella became a member of the National Youth Theatre, completing the Epic Stages course in 2017. She has since completed training in acting and writing at the Arcola before joining Student Group 73 in 2018. At The Questors, Arabella has taken part in the Overnight Plays, *George Orwell's 1984*, *Bard in the Yard*, *Quietus*, *Strange Orchestra* and *Dear Brutus*.



**Dorothy Lawson** – *Scottish Woman / Associate Director*

Dotti – as she is known – became a Questors member in the mid-1980s but not as an acting member until 2013. This year, she has appeared in *Peregrine Proteus* and *Much Ado About Nothing* as well as her brief appearance in *On the Razzle*, which she has also co-directed. Dotti has worked backstage as DSM, ASM and Props and is a member of the Reminiscence Roadshow team. She also appears, more visibly, as FOH (front-of-house) and behind the bar in *The Grapevine*.



**Nicola Littlewood** – *Foreigner, Waiter One, Lisette*

Nicola became a Questors acting member and appeared in *Twelfth Night* in 2016. *Galatea* followed in 2017, she played Lady Caroline in *Dear Brutus* in 2021/22 and performed in *Four Stars* in the Questors Power Plays and in *False Widow* as part of *Welcome to Stepford*. Her latest appearances were as Miss Prism in *The Importance of Being Ernest* in 2022, Margaret in *Much Ado About Nothing* and a bead seller in *Murder On The Nile* in 2023.



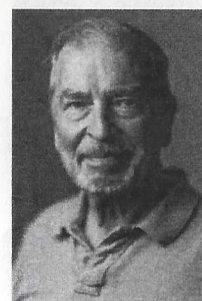
**Sarah Morrison** – *Scottish Woman*

An active acting member since 1980, Sarah has appeared in over 75 productions, most recently as Big Mama in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.



**Joshua Perry** – *Sonders*

Josh has been a member of The Questors since 2017 and went on to graduate with Student Group 72, with which he appeared in *Future Conditional* and *Charley's Aunt*. Other Questors credits include *Days of Significance*, *Bull*, *Dear Brutus*, *Loveplay*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Welcome to Stepford*.



**Iain Reid** – *Scottish Man*

Iain is delighted to be part of another student production, being the first since his guest appearance with Group 30 as Willie Carson in *The Sea* in 1977 (proof in picture above the fireplace in *The Grapevine*!). This followed his appearance, as Mr Bingley in *Pride and Prejudice*, when graduating from Group 29, in 1976. Many productions followed, including a previous *On the Razzle* in 1989, when he played... the Scotsman! He had to take a twenty-year break from 1992, but returned after retirement to regular involvement ever since.

**Richard Gallagher – Director**

Richard trained at Manchester Polytechnic School of Theatre. At The Questors, his last 'full time' acting appearances, some years ago now, were as Lady Bracknell in Francis Lloyd's production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 2009 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*.

**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*, the Caryl Churchill double bill and *The Gut Girls*. Sarah also enjoys being a Front of House Manager and being part of the Reminiscence Roadshow team.

**Martin Choules – Sound Designer**

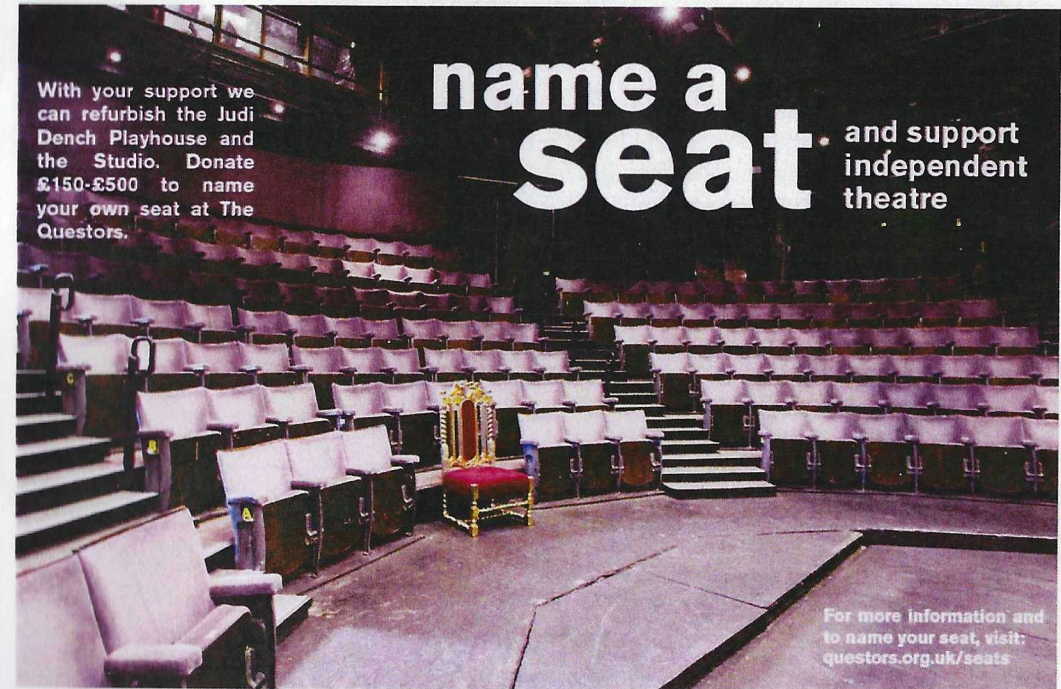
Martin has recently designed the sound for *The Contingency Plan*, *Murder on the Nile*, *Haunting Julia*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Loveplay*, *Dear Brutus*, *Strange Orchestra*, *Fault Lines*, *Future Conditional*, *Absent Friends*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Animal Farm*, *Improbable Fiction*, *The Exonerated*, *Rhinoceros*, *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* and *NSFW*.

**Carole Swan – Lighting Designer**

Carole joined the lighting team at The Questors in 2014, and subsequently designed for *The Lying Kind* and for a Questors production of a David Greig double bill of *Kyoto* and *The Letter of Last Resort* at the Jermyn Street Theatre. Since then she's focused on pulling pints in the Grapevine Bar but was recently persuaded back to design for *On the Razzle*.

## Questors Student Group Tutors

Director of Studies and First Year Tutor	<b>David Emmet</b>
Second Year Tutor	<b>Richard Gallagher</b>
Voice Teacher	<b>Adam Ganne</b>
Movement and Physical Theatre Teacher	<b>Duncan Aldridge</b>



## Show Feedback Form

Your thoughts and opinions are important to us. Please scan the QR code with your phone camera 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

