

## 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).

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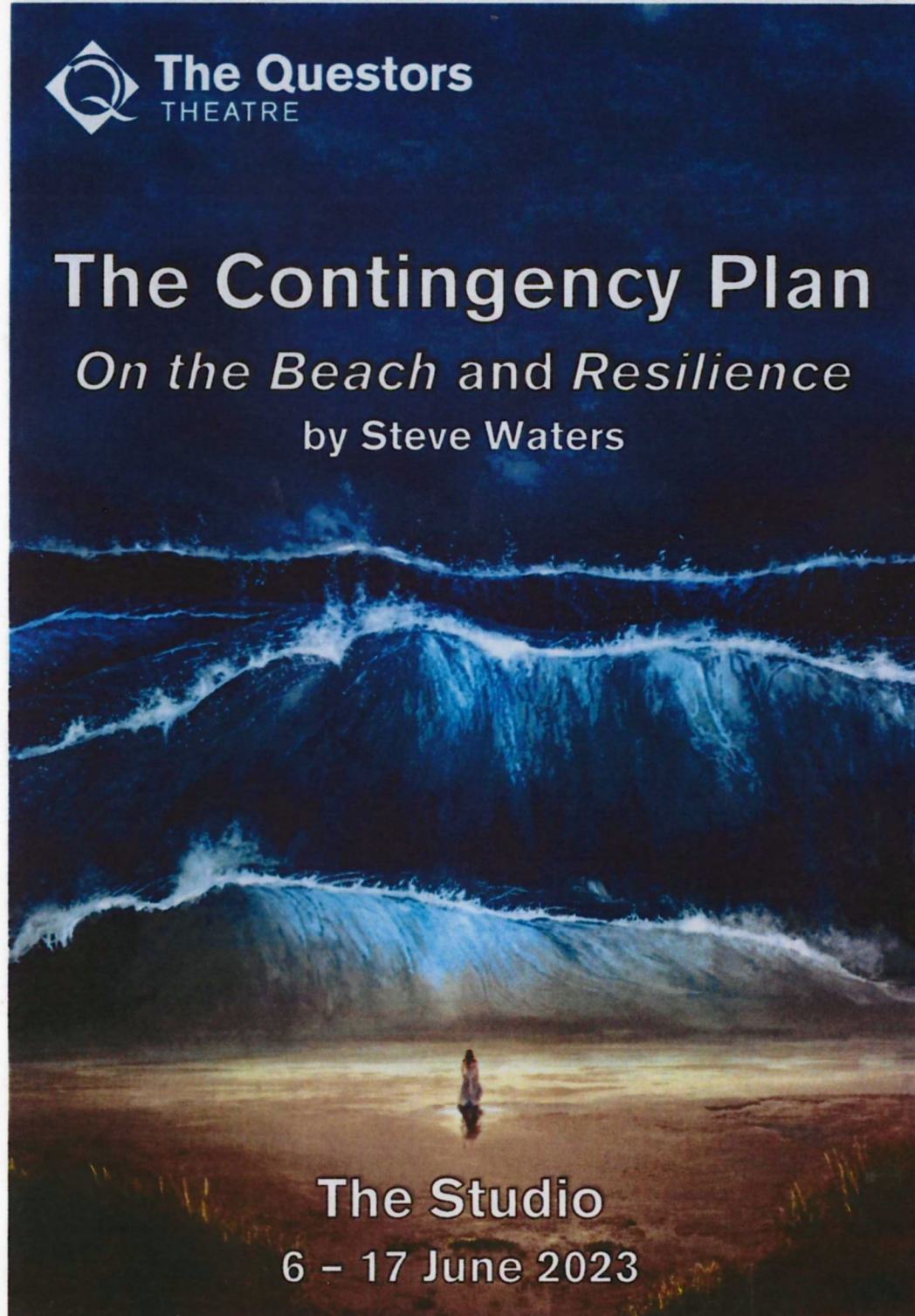


The Questors  
THEATRE

# The Contingency Plan

*On the Beach and Resilience*

by Steve Waters



The Studio

6 – 17 June 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 Contingency Plan *On the Beach and Resilience*

by Steve Waters

**The Studio**

**6 – 17 June 2023**

# THE CONTINGENCY PLAN

*The Contingency Plan* is a pair of linked plays about the possible effects of climate change in the future. These days it is hard to find climate change deniers. After many decades science has generally prevailed in the public debate, and it's probably only conspiracy theorists who still argue that the changes in the climate and weather we see and hear of almost every day are only random accidents.

But that does not mean that the debate is over. If we follow the news, we know that there are emerging developments reported almost daily. Some news is good, in the sense that we have made some small progress in reducing carbon emissions or lessening the harm to the planet. Some news is superficially encouraging, as governments introduce new laws to try and reduce emissions, or the world comes together at annual COP conferences to make resolutions, which may or may not be legally binding. But such news is at the same time generally disappointing as there is almost never any indication as to how these targets are to be achieved in practice, if indeed they are achievable at all.

But the majority of the news we receive is bad. Climate change is progressing faster than we predict, targets are looking increasingly unachievable or have already failed. No one is moving fast enough. Yet we must manage this emergency without destroying the world economy. Lives will be lost across the planet, especially in poorer countries, if we do too much as well as too little.

So the debate moves on to resilience, a theme highlighted in *The Contingency Plan*. Should we be putting all our efforts into reducing carbon emissions and global temperatures, or should we be planning how to survive their effects? Do we keep on working to keep average temperature rise below 1.5 degrees by 2050, or should we rather be preparing for our failure to do so? Neither Will Paxton nor Colin Jenks thinks we should give up on our mission; but they have different ideas on resilience – what do we need to do now to protect ourselves from the natural (or anthropogenic) disasters that we are already experiencing and can only happen more frequently?

*The Contingency Plan* gives us both frightening fact and credible fiction. Steve Waters has researched the science around melting ice in the Antarctic, and it's all real and up to date. The predictions that Will Paxton makes (and which come true) are not fantasy; the fiction is simply that they are likely to happen any day now rather than at a more comforting distance in the future. No climate scientist will say the event in the second act of these two plays can never happen at all. The only question is when.

And by asking us to believe in it happening “almost now” Steve Waters both raises the dramatic tension and reinforces the message. This requires the plays to be credibly up to date both in terms of the science and the politics. *The Contingency Plan* was first performed at the Bush Theatre in 2009, but that version is now way out of date. As luck would have it, a revised version was performed at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield in the autumn of 2022, and we have been able to take that version. But even so, with Steve's permission, we have had to update it further for 2023. If, as I hope, these plays will continue to be performed in coming years, constant revision will be required.

You will be reading this on the occasion of your visit to see your first of the two plays that make up *The Contingency Plan*. I very much hope that you will be coming to see the other play as well. They are both contrasting and complementary. While each play stands alone in itself, they are designed to be seen in conjunction with each other, and only by seeing both will you get the whole story, and appreciate the whole impact. So to whet your appetite, or fill in the gaps if you are unable to return, here is a brief résumé.

Robin Paxton was once an eminent glaciologist. In 1979 he and Colin Jenks led a scientific survey to Antarctica and produced a report setting out a hypothesis that although there were signs of melting ice, the Antarctic ice sheet was stable overall. Soon afterwards, Robin had a something of a breakdown, and retired, now living with his wife Jenny on the shore of the Wash, and devoting his life to the study of the local landscape, flora and fauna.

40 years later, his son Will is also a glaciologist, and has been studying ice in Antarctica for the last two and a half years. He has noticed exponential ice melt, and believes that this will lead almost imminently to rising sea levels and catastrophic flooding, years sooner than other scientists have predicted. He has recently met Sarika, who as a senior civil servant in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNEZ) went on a government fact-finding mission to the Antarctic.

They have started a relationship, and she has persuaded him to return early to the UK to reveal his findings to the government and become her department's official adviser. Together they visit his parents in Norfolk, where Robin reveals to Will for the first time the story behind his sudden retirement and professional isolation. But the emotionally fragile Robin is vehemently anti-government and appalled at Will's intended career move. This leads to a massive argument and fight.

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# THE CONTINGENCY PLAN

## ON THE BEACH AND RESILIENCE

by Steve Waters

First performances at The Questors Theatre: *On the Beach* 6 June 2023 – *Resilience* 7 June 2023

### CAST

Robin Paxton  
Jenny Paxton  
Will Paxton  
Sarika Chatterjee  
Colin Jenks  
Tessa Fortnum  
Christopher Casson

**Simon Taylor**  
**Fiona Partington**  
**Jake Burman**  
**Priya Patel**  
**David Sellar**  
**Despina Sellar**  
**Julian Casey**

### Setting

The time is almost now.

#### On the Beach

*Outside the Paxtons' home, North Norfolk*

**Act 1 scene 1:** A Saturday in April, early afternoon

**Act 1 scene 2:** Evening, the same day

**Act 2:** September the same year, Saturday evening

*The action in Act 2 of each play is simultaneous.*

Running time about 1 hour 45 minutes  
including an interval of 15 minutes

#### Resilience

*A COBRA meeting room, Whitehall*

**Act 1 scene 1:** Sunday, the next day, 7am

**Act 1 scene 2:** An hour later, 8am

**Act 2:** September the same year, Saturday evening

Running time about 2 hours 25 minutes  
including an interval of 15 minutes

### PRODUCTION

Director	<b>David Emmet</b>
Set Designer	<b>Katarzyna Kryńsk</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Jenny Richardson</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Andrew Whadcoat</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Martin Choules</b>
Special Effects	<b>John Green</b>
Children's Voices	<b>Darcy Adams, Rufus Peaty, Alfred Warren</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Lloyd Wallis</b>
Deputy Stage Manager	<b>Chris Benson, Robert Eagle</b>
Properties	<b>David Emmet, Katarzyna Kryńsk, Lloyd Wallis</b>
Prompter	<b>Sue Kendrick</b>
Rehearsal Stand In	<b>Arabella Jacobson</b>
Lighting Rigger	<b>Terry Mummery</b>
Set Constructors	<b>Bernard Brady, Toby Burbidge, Simon Higginson</b>
Set Painters	<b>Becky Hartnup, Riana Howarth</b>
Photographer	<b>Jane Arnold-Forster</b>
Thanks to	<b>Jane Casey, Mike Chislett, Ines Daventry, Anne Gilmour, Jamie Gould, Cecily Johnson, Helen Karasiewicz, Sue Peckitt, Bridgett Strevens, Elinor Turner, Gareth Williams, Portland Sculpture and Quarry Trust</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.

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At the same time, Sarika receives news of a major flood event in Bristol, which has left over 58 people dead, and she and Will hurry back to London. The next morning we find that the prime minister has overnight turned DESNEZ into the Department for Resilience, and appointed Christopher Casson as the Secretary of State for Resilience, but also moved Tessa Fortnum from the Home Office to be its Minister of State, without properly defining their respective roles, leaving them in competition with each other.

At 8.00 am that Sunday morning, an emergency meeting is held, involving the two ministers, Sarika and Colin Jenks who has for the last fourteen years been the department's chief scientific adviser on climate change. He has produced a report, setting out a proposed course of action, but argues that there needs to be no overall change of policy as a result of the Bristol event. However Sarika introduces Will, who gives a much more alarmist message and urges radical action. Will has also learned from his father that the 1979 report was seriously flawed and misleading and blames Jenks for putting government action back by 40 years. By the end of the meeting, Chris has fired Jenks and appointed Will in his place.

Five months later, in September of the same year, government action has stalled – Chris has effectively procrastinated on all the advice Will has given. But a massive storm is now heading down the east coast of Britain, threatening to cause flooding to coastal areas on a scale never seen before. As Robin and Jenny sit over their dinner in Norfolk, waiting for it to arrive, Tessa, Chris, Will and Sarika are boxed up in London, hopelessly fighting over whether to initiate evacuation procedures. Meanwhile Will is desperately trying to contact his parents...

Here comes the flood.

**David Emmet, Director**

## 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.



## Biographies

### **Jake Burman – Will Paxton**

Jake is graduated from Questors Student Group 72, where he was seen as Rob in *Future Conditional* and Brassett in *Charley's Aunt*. Since then he has appeared as Ben Price in *Things I Know to be True* and Simon in *Apologia*. Acting from an early age, Jake first discovered his adoration for the stage in primary school plays before attending theatre school. He has an MA in Newspaper Journalism and currently works in the Home Office.

### **Julian Casey – Christopher Casson**

Julian became a Questors acting member in 2006, and has played a wide variety of parts since then, including: *India Gate* (Mountbatten/Lutyens), *Whipping It Up* (Alastair), *Days of Significance* (Lenny), *Rutherford and Son* (Martin), *The Bear* (Smirnov), *Season's Greetings* (Neville), *Measure for Measure* (Pompey), *She Stoops to Conquer* (Mr Hardcastle), *Jack and the Beanstalk* (Giant Blunderbore) and *Dracula – Fangs of Destiny* (Dracula).

### **Fiona Partington – Jenny Paxton**

Fiona joined The Questors in 1983, and has been in 21 productions since then, including *Benefactors* (Michael Frayn), *La Ronde* (Arthur Schnitzler) and *Absent Friends* (Alan Ayckbourn). She took time away from The Questors due to work and study commitments, until returning for *Be My Baby* in 2014, followed by *The Heiress* and *Pygmalion*. She has also been acting with The Spread Eagle Players at the Bridewell Theatre in Blackfriars.

### **Priya Patel – Sarika Chatterjee**

Whilst this is her first show at The Questors, Priya has been an acting member of the central London-based Spread Eagle Players since 2014. Highlights of her time there include appearing as exasperated hotel maid Polly in *Fawlty Towers*, as well as in *Sweeney Todd*, a host of pantomimes (*Cinders*, *Jack & the Beanstalk* and *Beauty & the Beast*) and *In Basildon*, which she also assistant directed.

### **David Sellar – Colin Jenks**

David's first appearance at The Questors was in *Sleepers in the Field* in 2018, followed by John Rutherford in *Rutherford and Son*, two roles in *King Charles III*, Bob Price in *Things I Know to be True* and most recently *The Remarkable Theatrical Adventures of Peregrine Proteus*. Productions with previous companies include *What the Butler Saw*, *The Birthday Party*, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*, *Chicago*, *Guys and Dolls* and *A Little Night Music*.

### **Despina Sellar – Tessa Fortnum**

Despina's first appearance at The Questors was in Peter Whelan's *Sleepers in the Field* in 2018, then as Ann Rutherford in *Rutherford and Son*, Fran Price in *Things I Know to be True*, and most recently *The Remarkable Theatrical Adventures of Peregrine Proteus*. Roles in previous companies include Mrs Manningham in *Gaslight*, Maggie in *Outside Edge*, Amanda in *Private Lives* and Beatrice in *A View*

from the Bridge. Directing credits include *Shirley Valentine*, *Stones in His Pockets*, *Moonlight and Magnolias* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

**Simon Taylor – Robin Paxton**

Simon is grateful to The Questors for such juicy roles as Furtwängler (*Taking Sides*), Krapp (*Krapp's Last Tape*), Goldstein (*George Orwell's 1984*), Robin (*The Children*), Crocker-Harris (*The Browning Version*) and most recently Daniel Doyce in *Little Dorrit* and Doctor Baugh in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. He has also been busy with roles in short films, including *Horse Play* (Cannes Film Festival), and one feature film, *Application Process*.

**David Emmet – Director**

David trained as an actor in Student Group 28, but is now known more as a director. *The Contingency Plan* is his 61st main production. His most recent productions were *Whipping It Up*, *Things I Know to be True*, *Nell Gwynn*, *Daisy Pulls It Off*, *Scarborough*, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*, *The Pride*, and his own translation of Schiller's *Mary Stuart*. His next production will be another translation from the German: Lessing's *Sara Sampson* in February 2024. David is also Director of Studies for the Student Group and teaches acting in the Foundation Year.

**Martin Choules – Sound Designer**

Martin has recently designed the sound for *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*.

**Katarzyna Kryńsk – Set Designer**

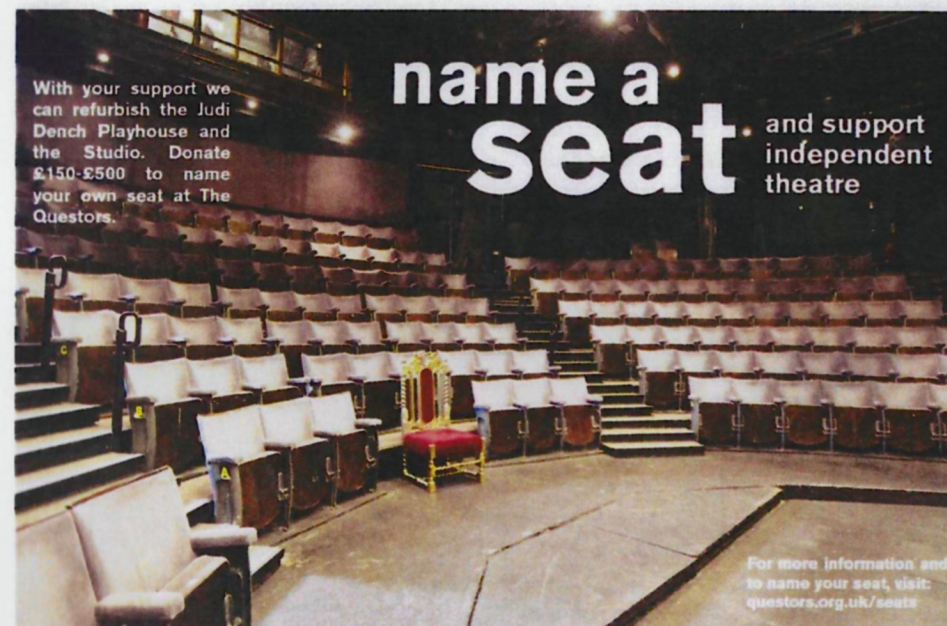
Katarzyna is a graduate of Fine Art, Painting and Printmaking from Glasgow School of Art. Since then she has exhibited at the Leadenhall and Portobello galleries and also worked as a photographer. Her involvement in theatre began in 2015 and she joined The Questors earlier this year, helping out as a set painter and builder and as an assistant designer. *The Contingency Plan* is her first production as set designer.

**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 *Murder on the Nile*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Little Dorrit*, *The Remarkable Theatrical Adventures of Peregrine Proteus*, *Hangmen*, *Apologia*, *The Children*, *First Love is the Revolution* and *Fault Lines*. Jenny is also frequently in demand as an upholsterer.

**Andrew Whadcoat – Lighting Designer**

Recent lighting designs at The Questors include *Not About Heroes*, *The Dog and the Scarf*, *The Ghost Train*, *The Remarkable Theatrical Adventures of Peregrine Proteus*, *Little Dorrit*, *Escaped Alone*, *What If Only* and *A Doll's House*. Andrew has also designed for AppEaling Theatre, Idle Discourse, Orange Moon and PlayGC Theatre at The Questors and other venues.



## Next at The Questors

### ARCADIA

by Tom Stoppard

3 – 10 June 2023

#### The Judi Dench Playhouse

Two contemporary scholars, Hannah and Bernard, set about a Derbyshire country estate, piecing together clues recalling events of 1809. What really happened to Thomasina Coverly, a gifted student, 180 years ago at Sidley Park? Thomasina proposed an extraordinary theory. Around her, the adults, including her tutor Septimus, were preoccupied with forbidden desires, illicit passions and burning rivalries. *Arcadia*, is a tale where past and present come crashing together to search for an elusive truth.

### ON THE RAZZLE

by Tom Stoppard

15 – 22 July 2023

#### The Judi Dench Playhouse

A romping play, where Weinberl and Christopher escape their menial jobs to go on a spree in Vienna, while their master is away with the mistress. Expect a right carry on!

This humorous production of Tom Stoppard's *On the Razzle* will be staged by The Questors Student Group. First played at the Royal National Theatre in 1981, this farce of 'no substance', as said by *The Guardian*, will be vibrant, full of music and gaiety.