

Join Us

If you would like to be involved in the world of theatre, why not join us as a Member.

Club Membership – Benefits

- ✓ The right to participate in club activities, including putting on shows
- ✓ A say in the running of the club through voting rights at the AGM and in electing the Board of Trustees
- ✓ Access to our members' website and receive a regular club newsletter by email
- ✓ Full credit to your account for booked tickets to Questors productions if you let us know that you can't make the show
- ✓ Priority booking for courses or special events
- ✓ Meet new people and learn fresh skills as part of the Questors team
- ✓ Feel great about being a member of one of Europe's largest community theatres with over 90 years of contribution to the arts

Note that this new, lower-priced membership does not include ticket discounts.

We have a wide range of opportunities for you to become actively involved throughout the theatre. Volunteer help is always needed for selling programmes, stewarding or serving behind the bar, and training is provided if you'd like to work in Box Office with our computerised system. 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 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.

Season Pass – Benefits

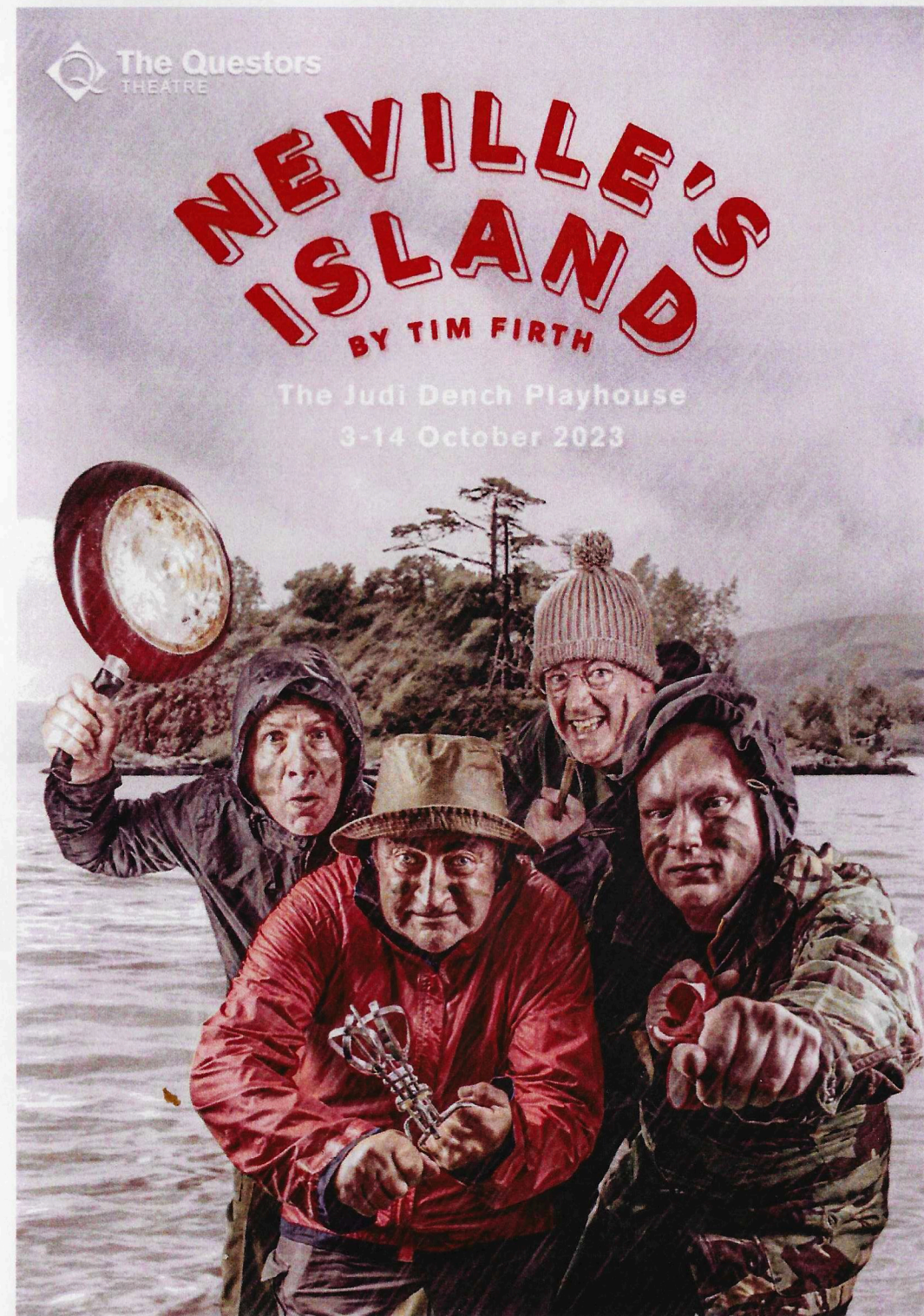
A Season Pass is also available to both members (the combined cost is equivalent to that of the old-style membership) and non-members, which gives the following benefits:

- ✓ Ticket discounts for every Questors production (except the pantomime):
an adult ticket at a 50% discount for the Season Pass holder
£2 off ANY number of additional adult or concession tickets
up to FOUR child tickets at 50% discount
- ✓ Will receive other *audience loyalty* special offers from The Questors or other organisations performing at The Questors
- ✓ Available to all – you do not need to be a club member

Further details and pricing of Club Membership (and enhanced Supporter Memberships), the Season Pass and Questors Youth Theatre can be found on the Questors website: questors.org.uk.

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



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 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 2024 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):

Monday – Saturday: 7:00 pm – 11:00 pm

Sunday lunchtime: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

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



image: Robert Vass

Neville's Island

A comedy in thick fog

by Tim Firth

The Judi Dench Playhouse

3 – 14 October 2023

NEVILLE'S ISLAND

A COMEDY IN THICK FOG

There are a lot of fictions about being marooned on a desert island, going back at least as far as Homer's *Odyssey*. From *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver* to *The Admirable Crichton* and *Lord of the Flies*, the clash between Civilisation and 'Nature Red in Tooth and Claw' has been played out in countless novels, dramas, films and, more recently, TV Survival shows.

Neville's Island, first written in 1992, predates the vogue for TV endurance tests, so nobody actually says "I'm a middle-manager, get me out of here", but it still acknowledges its debt to this rich heritage: *Lord of the Flies* is referenced in one of Gordon's more laboured jokes, and Angus's summary of the clichés of the genre almost requires a spoiler alert:

"What happens is they all ... go back to nature and shed twenty-first-century values. And the power relationships change and they tell each other deep secrets ... and in the end there's a big showdown between the one they thought was the weakest and the one they thought was the leader."

Except it doesn't quite work out like that. Certainly, our sympathies shift in the course of the play, and the underdogs in the group definitely have their day. But it is no simple role-reversal. Neville, 'the one they thought was the leader', despite his initial incompetence, is surely the only one in the end who manages to see through the fog that metaphorically, as well as physically, envelops the island. The others, in their own ways, all succumb, at least temporarily, to the darkness. Roy is battling against the existential darkness of loss, death and despair; Angus is victim to the dark anxieties of jealousy and insecurity; and even Gordon can't always joke away his fear of 'the big, raw, wide-open real thing'.

Admittedly, Neville's main revelation in the course of the play seems to be into his own mediocrity – the realisation that he is 'middle-of-the-road' in almost everything – yet that humility seems to give him a stability the others lack. For them it is precisely the thing they rely on for strength – Roy's religion, Angus's marriage, Gordon's overweening sense of self-worth – that leads them to crisis.

But there's no real return to nature or shedding of twenty-first-century values – any savagery manifested on the island is either the product of their own imaginations (fuelled by the very fictions Angus is recalling), or else the

result of the neuroses and resentments they bring with them. The challenges they face are not caused by Nature, but by their thoroughly twenty-first-century attitudes and the morals of modern business life.

For example, Class, as so often in English comedy, is a powerful motivator: they may all be middle-managers, but it's taken Gordon eighteen years to work his way up from the shop floor, while Angus has got his company car and parking space with his name on with the minimum of effort. Competitiveness is second-nature to them, whether it be in French cricket or the dissection of sausages, and for Gordon at least the idea that 'taking part' is what counts is 'the consolation of the also-ran'. But that is not the law of the jungle: it's just the normal *modus operandi* at the Pennine Mineral Water Company, and is merely thrown into high relief by the wilderness in which they find themselves. The paltriness of their ambitions – promotion, a state-of-the-art mobile phone, a riverside luxury apartment, a thirteen-tog duvet – stands in stark contrast to the elemental life-and-death struggle between predator and prey elsewhere on the island, but remains entirely separate from it – at least until Roy's intervention at the end.

But while this 'comedy in thick fog' may get quite darkly foggy at times, it remains a comedy. Their salvation at the end is the most providential of happy endings, and how else can we respond to their ridiculous vanities and absurd posturing but with the healing, and (mostly) forgiving, power of laughter?

Of course, there's another way of looking at it. Michael Billington's review of the West End revival in 2014 saw it as essentially a study of 'male insufficiency' and suggested that gender was the root cause of all the problems. So you really ought to also come and see *Sheila's Island*, running in tandem with this production, to find out what happens when the women take charge.

Steve Fitzpatrick, Director

Meet the Company – Tuesday 3 October

Please join playwright Tim Firth, the Director and Company for a question and answer session in the Playouse after the opening night performance of *Neville's Island*. Bring a drink from the bar and a question.

NEVILLE'S ISLAND

by Tim Firth

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 3 October 2023

CAST

in order of appearance

Neville, Marketing Manager **Julian Casey**
Gordon, Production Manager **Adam Kimmel**
Angus, Distribution Manager **Adam Hampton-Matthews**
Roy, Finance Manager **Willo Johnston**

The action of the play takes place on Rampsholme Island
on Derwentwater in the Lake District.

Time: the present. November.

The play lasts approximately 2 hours and 15 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 **Steve Fitzpatrick**
Set Designer **Alex Marker**
Costume Designer **Anne Gilmour**
Lighting Designer **Alasdair Graebner**
Sound Designer **Jane Arnold-Forster**

Deputy Stage Manager **Robert Eagle**
Properties **Quinn Goodliffe**
Technical Supplies **Nigel Worsley**
Rehearsal Prompter **Jane Casey**
Sound Support **James Connor**
Lighting/Sound Operators **Emmanuel Hardy,**
Emma Hunt (programmer)
Martyn Bird, Collette Green,
John Green, Ben Hart, John Hart,
Alice Johnson, Cecily Johnson,
Carole Swan, Martin Walton
Roger Brace

Set Constructor **Ian Black, Bernard Brady, Mike Childs,**
Set Construction Team **Michael Chislett, Tina Harris,**
Simon Higginson, Andy Kotowicz,
Stephen Souchon, Derek Stoddart,
John Webster

Set Painters **Leah Kelly, Katarzyna Kryńsk,**
Elinor Turner

Production Photographer **Carla Evans**
Poster Photographer **Robert Vass**
Videographer **Robert Vass**
Thanks to **Sarah Andrews, Roger Beaumont,**
Shane Kennedy, Sarah Stoddart

Biographies

Julian Casey – Neville

Julian has been a Questors Acting Member since 2006 and has enjoyed playing a wide variety of parts since then, including *Resilience* (Casson), *India Gate* (Mountbatten/Lutyens), *Whipping It Up* (Alistair), *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* (Daisy the Cow/Giant Blunderbore), *50 Years of the Playhouse* (CSM Rivers), *West 5 Story* (George), *Dracula – Fangs of Destiny* (Dracula/Van Helsing plus six other small parts) and *Othello* (Iago).

Adam Hampton-Matthews – Angus

Neville's Island marks Adam's third full production with The Questors following lead roles in Mike Bartlett's *Bull* and Nina Raines' *Consent*. Adam is excited to be treading the boards once again with The Questors and has thoroughly enjoyed the rehearsal process and can't wait to see how audiences react to this dark comedy. Day to day, Adam is a Senior Architect for a firm in the city, and is currently working on the delivery of a major housing scheme in Wembley. Thankfully this role hasn't involved any away-days in the Lake District! Acting credits elsewhere include: Matthew in *Rules for Living*, Ben in *Deposit*, Christophe in *Wolf Hall*, Ned in *Nell Gwynn*, Edgar/Poor Tom in *King Lear*, Lomax in *Major Barbara*, George in *Sons of Paradise*, *The Producers* (all for Tower Theatre), Lawrence in *Calendar Girls* (WEOS) and a very brief appearance in *Byker Grove* (Zenith). The least said about the latter the better!

Willo Johnston – Roy

Willo's first appearance for The Questors was as the idiot Bartholomew Cokes in the 1986 production of *Bartholomew Fair*. After a 36-year hiatus, in which he trained at Guildford School of Acting before diverting onto a career in screenwriting, he returned to the Playhouse to play alcoholic idiot, Bill, in Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen*. With *Neville's Island*, the hat trick is complete.

Adam Kimmel – Gordon

Adam was last seen at The Questors mostly tied to a chair as Roberto in *Death and the Maiden*. Before that, he played Robert in *Blue/Orange*, Major Steve Arnold in *Taking Sides* and originally made his Questors debut as Peter in *The Last of the Haussmans*. Prior to The Questors, he performed in numerous plays on the London Fringe, including his own one-man play, *The Coming Forth (by Day) of Conrad Aiken* that he ended up taking to Savannah, Georgia as part of Aiken's Centenary celebrations.

Steve Fitzpatrick – Director

Steve has directed over 25 productions at The Questors. Recent favourites include *Table* (Tanya Ronder, 2019), Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* (2018), *Emil and the Detectives*, *Arms and the Man* (Shaw), *The Winterling* (Jez Butterworth), *The Taming of the Shrew* and Strindberg's *Dance of Death*. He also acts occasionally, most recently as Antonio in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Jane Arnold-Forster – Sound Designer

Since joining in 2005 Jane has turned her hand to most aspects of making theatre. This is the fourth show on which she has been sound designer. This has been the most extensive and complex sound design she's had to do, so she's enjoyed it with some trepidation!

Anne Gilmour – Costume Designer

Anne is a longstanding member of The Questors. It's very nearly 40 years since she first tentatively produced a hat for *Bodies* and it remains the only hat she has ever had to make. Her most recent shows as designer or maker include *The Light Burns Blue*, *The Ealing Club*, *Dead Boy Cafe*, *Whipping It Up*, *Dear Brutus*, *The Dog and the Scarf*, *Di and Viv and Rose*, *Rosmersholm*, *Taking Sides*, *Bird on the Wire*, *Red Peppers*, *The Village Bike* and *Rhinoceros*. She is The Questors' LTG (Little Theatre Guild) Representative and is a member of the PlayBack Reminiscence team.

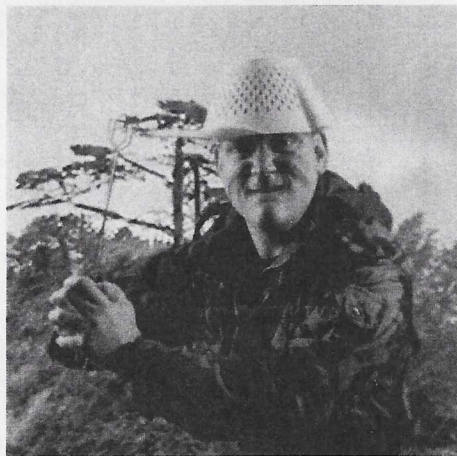
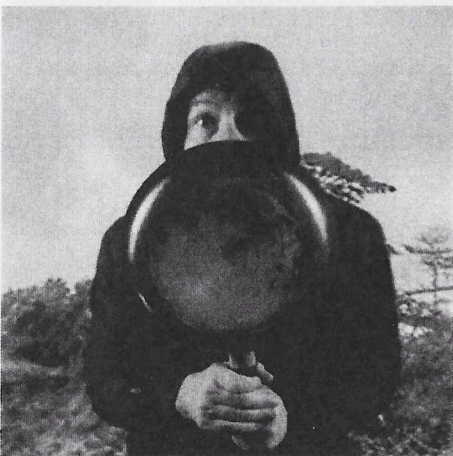
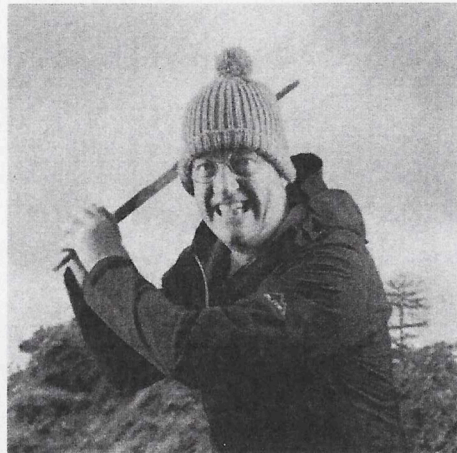
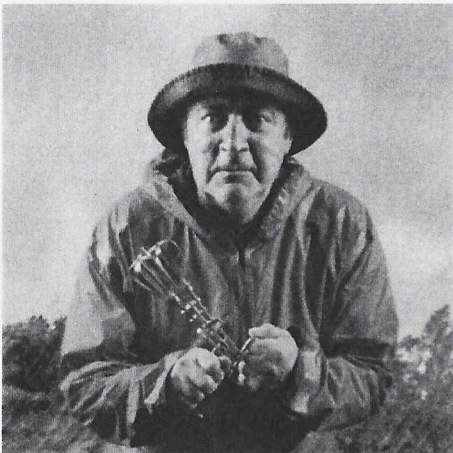
Alasdair Graebner – Lighting Designer

Alasdair ran away from the theatre 20 years ago to work behind a desk but recently started volunteering at The Questors. Previous lighting designs include: *Napoli Milionaria*, *Normal Heart* and *Company* (Mountview Theatre School); *Alice is Back in Wonderland* and *Curtain Raiser* (Aletta Collins Dance Company); *Fairytaheart* and *The Magic Flute* (Unicorn Theatre Company); *Summer Song* (New Music Oldham); *The King and I* and *Rumpelstiltskin* (Oldham Players); *Salt of the Earth* (Increasingly Important Theatre Company); *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* (Grange Arts Centre).

Alex Marker – Set Designer

Alex trained in stage design at Wimbledon School of Art. He has designed over fifty productions for The Questors including: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Murder on the Nile*, *The Light Burns Blue*, *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight*, *Hangmen* and *Snow White*. Beyond The Questors he has designed over 100 productions for a wide variety of venues including fringe, touring, regional and the West End. He has been known to direct and still occasionally appears on stage too, most recently as Merlin in *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight* and soon to be seen in *Treasure Island*.

www.alexmarker.com



images: Robert Vass

With your support we can refurbish the Judi Dench Playhouse and the Studio. Donate £150-£500 to name your own seat at The Questors.

name a seat

 and support independent theatre

For more information and to name your seat, visit: questors.org.uk/seats

Next at The Questors

SHEILA'S ISLAND

by Tim Firth

4 – 14 October 2023

The Judi Dench Playhouse

Four middle managers find themselves marooned in the middle of a lake, as their team-building weekend turns into a struggle for survival. But it's office politics, not Nature, that's red in tooth and claw. The original all-male play is running concurrently with the new all-female version. See both hilarious productions from Tim Firth, the writer of *Calendar Girls*, plus get 20% off when you buy tickets for both productions at the same time!

DRAGON'S TEETH

by Shirland Quin

20 – 28 October 2023

The Studio

Receiving its UK premier at The Questors in 1933, *Dragon's Teeth* was the first production at our Mattock Lane site. This season, we're bringing this lost classic of experimental theatre back to the stage just 90 years after its original production.

Packed with prescient predictions about AI and drone warfare, *Dragon's Teeth* explores one man's doubts about the future and the ethics of his creations.