

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

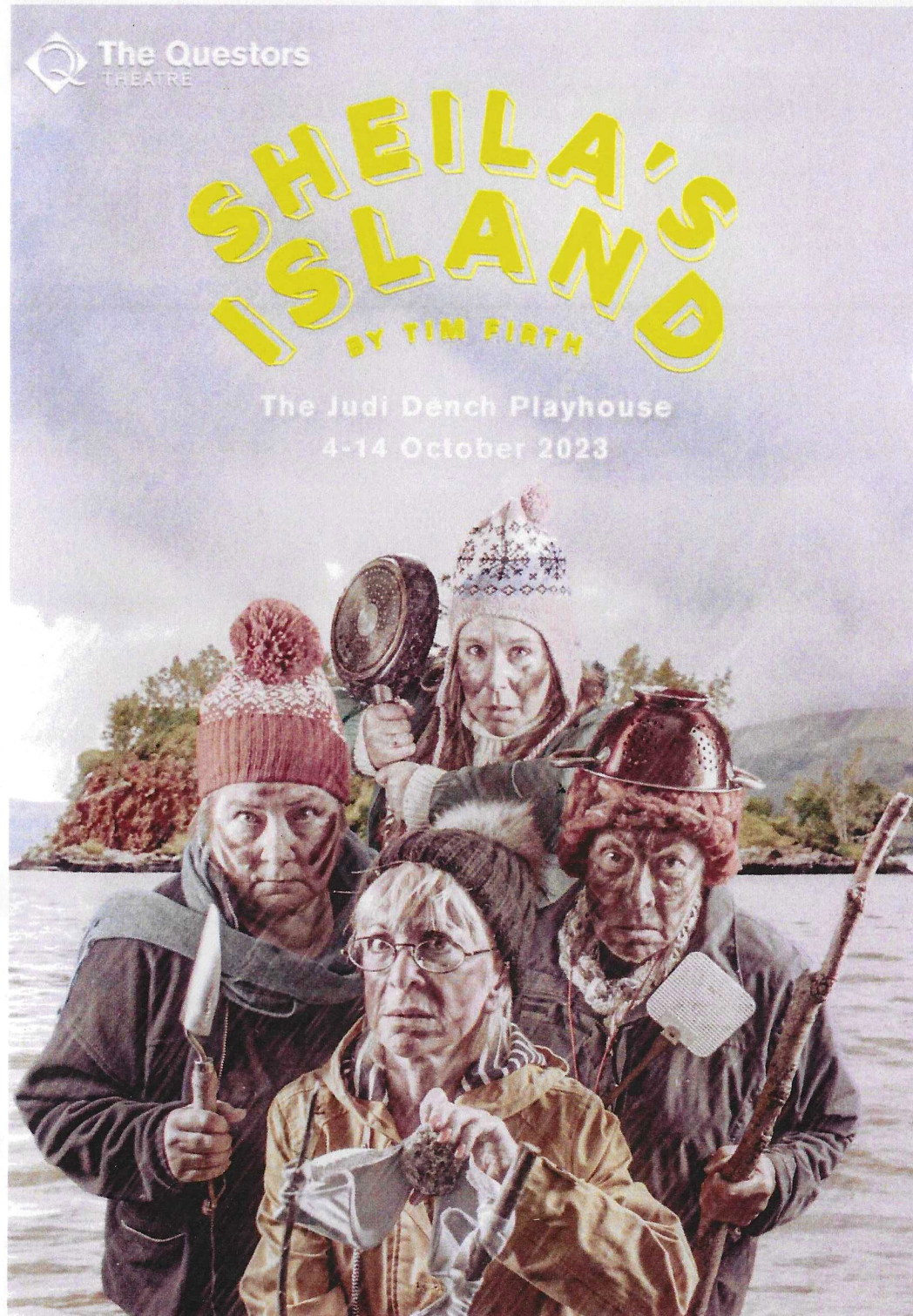
A Season Pass is also available to both members (the combined cost is equivalent to that of the old-style membership) and non-members, which gives the following benefits:

- ✓ 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

Sheila's Island

A comedy in thick fog

by Tim Firth

The Judi Dench Playhouse

4 – 14 October 2023

SHEILA'S ISLAND

A COMEDY IN THICK FOG

"It was all about winning – until they completely lost it!"

I am delighted to have been asked to direct *Sheila's Island* and will never forget reading it – alone – and finding myself laughing out loud, over and over again. I knew instantly that I would LOVE to direct Tim Firth's play and I haven't stopped laughing since.

Tim Firth's plays and musicals include *Calendar Girls*, *This Is My Family*, *Greatest Days*, *Now Is Good*, *The Safari Party*, *Our House*, *The Flint Street Nativity*, *The Band* and, of course, *Neville's Island*. Film credits include *Blackball*, *Calendar Girls*, *Kinky Boots* and *The Wedding Video*. Television credits include *Timeless*, *Money for Nothing*, *The Rottentrolls*, *Cruise of the Gods*, *The Flint Street Nativity* and *Preston Front*.

Sheila's Island sees four female employees of Pennine Mineral Water Ltd embark on their annual team-building weekend in the Lake District. What better way to reduce office tensions and unite the work force than an outward bound 'team-building' weekend? Team C, led by their nominated team leader Sheila, get off to a cold and damp start. What we witness is a case of nature vs worker and if it were a case of survival of the wittiest, Denise would be fine. But add hunger, self-doubt and jealousy, and the 'team-building' threatens to tear them apart.

I am sure anyone who has worked in an office environment will recognise Sheila, Denise, Julie and Fay. It is my belief that they survive in the office because they can keep their distance and get away from each other every evening and weekend. They also have food, warmth and shelter, both at work and at home. Strip all that away and you are about to see what ensues.

The wonderful *Neville's Island* has been with us since the early nineties, but *Sheila's Island* was only written very recently. My understanding is that Tim Firth was reminded that women were just as capable of becoming competitive, desperate, sarcastic and cruel

under certain circumstances. Having both *Neville's Island* and *Sheila's Island* produced and performed at The Questors on alternate nights really excites me and I can't wait to see how the dynamics unfold between the four men in *Neville's Island*. I imagine the triggers of each play are very similar but the tone and reactions could be very different. I hope audiences take advantage of the opportunity to see both – and the 20% discount for doing so! It has been incredible to see all the work that has been put into producing these plays by so many people, on stage and off. The Questors is an amazing place with many very talented and generous people who make it possible – a huge thank you to all of them!

Having spent some years, a long time ago, devising shows or directing new plays, *Sheila's Island* is the first time that I have been trusted with an existing script and a full production slot at The Questors. It has been wonderful to explore these characters who have been pushed out of their comfort zones. Every one of them faces their inner demons and prejudices in such painful and comic ways. I hope you enjoy watching it unfold as much as I have.

Additional note

After writing the above, one of our cast members has been taken ill. If they are not able to perform there is an understudy who will be reading in (me). We are gutted at the prospect of not having all of the original four cast members together as they are all incredible and a fantastic team.

In this event, I hope that you are still able to enjoy *Sheila's Island* and see beyond the script. We are so determined to give you the best possible performance and hope that our fourth member will be able to return as soon as possible, if absent. We wish her a speedy recovery, regardless.

I thank you in advance for your understanding and offer huge thanks to Lucy Aley-Parker, who has stepped in as Assistant Director to be my eyes and ears and to help us steer this production to shore. I recently performed for Lucy as Miss ffoliot-ffoulkes in *Murder on the Nile* so it's great to work with her again! Thank you Lucy.

Alison Griffin, Director

SHEILA'S ISLAND

by Tim Firth

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 4 October 2023

CAST

in order of appearance

Sheila **Frances Sherwin**

Denise **Wendy Megeney**

Julie **Lesley McCall**

Fay **Holly Gillanders**

Voice of DJ **Shay Kennedy**

Voice of Karaoke Singer **Emre Kose**

Understudy for Fay **Penny Duffy**

Understudy for Sheila and Julie **Carmel Corcoran**

Setting: Rampsholme Island, Derwentwater, Cumbria

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	Alison Griffin
Assistant Director	Lucy Aley-Parker
Set Designer	Alex Marker
Costume Designer	Anne Gilmour
Lighting Designer	Alasdair Graebner
Sound Designer	Jane Arnold-Forster
Stage Manager	Jennifer Kerr
Deputy Stage Manager	Clare Waldock
Stage Management Support	Doug Willis
Properties	Joanna Mludzinska
Technical Supplies	Nigel Worsley
Prompter	Sue Kendrick
Stage Fighting	Lizzie Turner
Sound Support	James Connor
Lighting/Sound Operators	Emmanuel Hardy, Emma Hunt (programmer)
Lighting Riggers	Martyn Bird, Collette Green, John Green, Ben Hart, John Hart, Alice Johnson, Cecily Johnson, Carole Swan, Martin Walton
Set Constructor	Roger Brace
Set Construction Team	Ian Black, Bernard Brady, Mike Childs, 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: **Louisa Minas, Roger Beaumont, Barnaby Cooper, Francesca McInally, Andrew Whadcoat, The Questors Office Staff**

Biographies

Holly Gillanders – Fay

Holly is originally from Nottinghamshire and joined The Questors in 2011. This is her Tim Firth hat trick, having previously performed at The Questors in *Calendar Girls* and *The Flint Street Nativity*. (She met her future husband at the first rehearsal of the latter production!)

Lesley McCall – Julie

Lesley is returning to The Questors after a 25-year gap. She graduated from Student Group 48 in 1995 and has been in various productions for The Questors, including *Gamblers*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Ghost Train*, *See How They Run*, *The Glass Ménage à Trois*, *Course Acting – The Revenge* and *The Revengers' Comedies*, as well as *The Hypochondriac* at the Canal Café Theatre in Little Venice, London.

Wendy Megeney – Denise

Wendy has acted with The Questors since the 1980s, including tours to the Minack (in *Tom Jones*) and an international drama festival in Japan (*Black Comedy*). Recent performances include Mari (*The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*), Mammy (*The Cripple of Inishmaan*), Sunny (*The Exonerated*), Judy (*The Last of the Hausmans*), Molly O'Neill (*A Priest in the Family*), Martha (*That Face*), Nancy (*Nell Gwynn*) and Ruby in the premiere of the winner of a Questors national playwriting competition, *Dead Boy Café* (2022). During lockdown, Wendy played the interviewer in a Questors audio play, *The Interview*, and took part in a series of Zoom plays with theatre company, Upstage (*Zoom Plays for Lockdown*).

Frances Sherwin – Sheila

As an acting member, Frances has appeared as Mrs Lupin in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (for Crucial Image Productions), Mrs Bouncer in *Box and Cox*, Daphne in *Carer*, the Fairy Godmother in the 2016 Christmas pantomime *Cinderella*, Lady Margaret Drayton in the 2022 Christmas pantomime *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight* and the Overnight Plays 2023.

Alison Griffin – Director

Alison's Questors performances include *All My Sons*, *Season's Greetings*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and, most recently, *Murder on The Nile*. Following a three-week run at the ICA and an 18-month UK tour of her devised one woman show, *Shaker*, Alison accepted a five-year post as a South East Arts funded Artistic Director, producing new plays. After many years away from directing, she really enjoyed directing *On Me* for The Questors' New Writing Festival 2022. *Sheila's Island* is her first full production at The Questors.

Lucy Aley-Parker – Assistant Director

Lucy trained at Webber Douglas many years ago and has been an acting member since 2008, making her Questors debut as Smeraldina in *A Servant to Two Masters* and playing many roles since. As a director, she has worked on a number of shows, most recently *Murder on the Nile* (The Questors' first Agatha Christie). She's currently directing *Grounded*, part of a triple bill of new short plays on in November in the Studio. Thanks to The Questors, she has now returned to professional acting.

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 & 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); *Fairytales* 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: Carla Evans

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

NEVILLE'S ISLAND

by Tim Firth

3 – 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.