

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

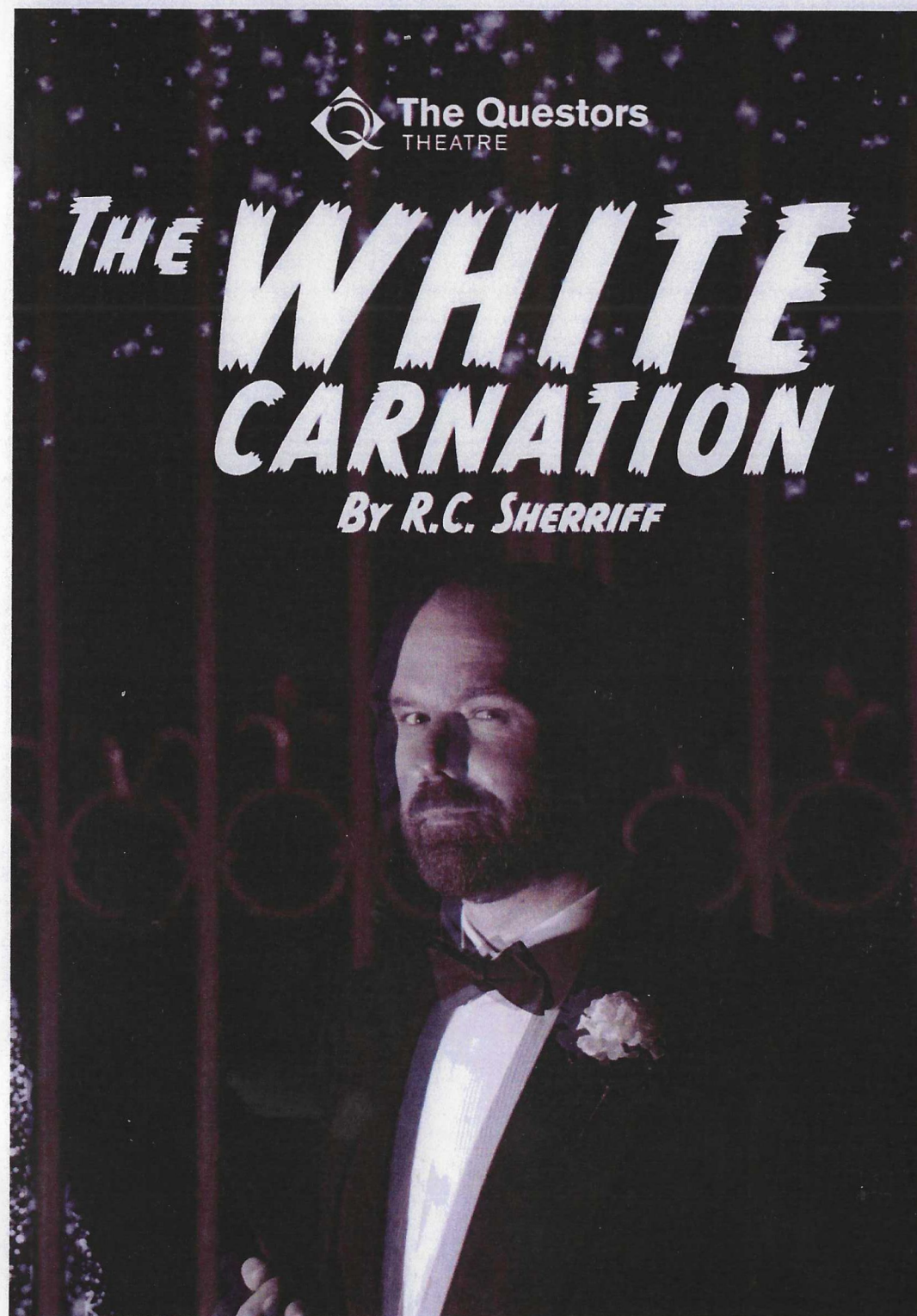
A Season Pass is also available to both members (the combined cost is equivalent to that of the old-style membership) and non-members, which gives the following benefits:

- ✓ 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.

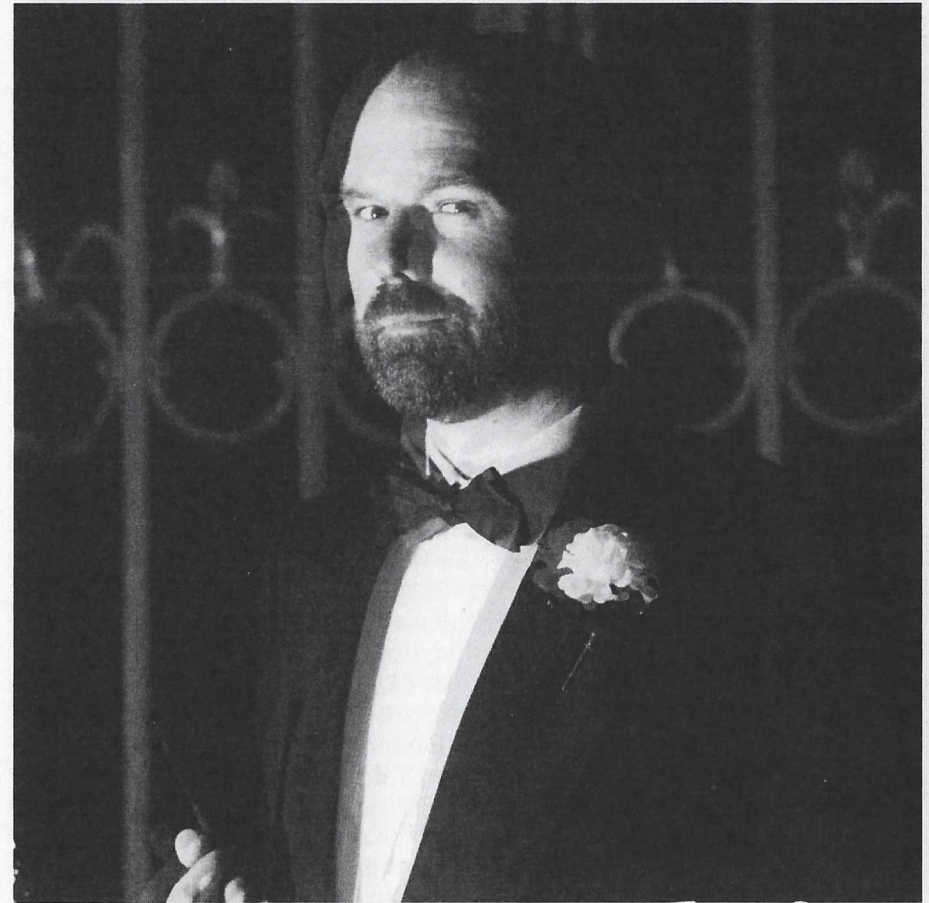
We are the proud holders of a Cask Marque award for the quality of our real ales, we appear in the 2024 edition of The Good Beer Guide and we are **CAMRA West Middlesex Club of the Year**. A choice of at least three real ales is usually available, including Fuller's London Pride. We also provide a range 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.



THE WHITE CARNATION

by R.C. Sherriff

The Studio

15 – 30 December 2023

R.C. SHERRIFF

Robert Cedric Sherriff was born in Hampton Wick, Middlesex, in 1896. After leaving Kingston Grammar School in 1913, he began working as a clerk in an insurance office. Soon, however, war broke out and he served as an officer in the 9th battalion of the East Surrey Regiment. He saw action at Vimy Ridge and Loos, and was awarded the Military Cross. He was invalided out of the army in 1917 after being severely wounded at Passchendaele near Ypres.

After the war, he worked as an insurance adjuster, and began to write plays. His first play was written with the aim of raising money to buy a new boat for the Kingston Rowing Club. It was only with his seventh play that he finally found fame. *Journey's End* was given a single Sunday performance by the Incorporated Stage Society at the Apollo Theatre in 1929. It was directed by James Whale and starred (for just that one performance) the 21-year-old Laurence Olivier. In the audience was the producer Maurice Brown, who then took it to the Savoy Theatre. Colin Clive replaced Olivier, and the play was a great success, transferring to the Prince of Wales Theatre where it ran for two years. A production in New York soon followed and the play has been widely performed ever since. An early enthusiast was George Bernard Shaw; a revival in 1950 was much admired by Field Marshall Montgomery.

Journey's End is of course the play on which Sherriff's reputation largely depends. It has been performed consistently for nearly 100 years and never fails to move and astound with its tale of barely concealed terror, quiet bravery and grim humour in the most appalling of circumstances. If I might be allowed a personal note, in 1978 I played Lieutenant Raleigh in a production by a touring company called Theatre North. After one performance in Southport in Lancashire, one of the audience members came round to talk to the cast. "I were in that battle" he said. He told me that of the 33 young men who had joined up from his village, all but six of his fellow volunteers had been killed in action in that battle of St Quentin. Along with five others he had been taken prisoner by the Germans; the other five were all subsequently killed by 'friendly fire' as a result of being forced to work near the front line. He was the only one of the 33 who returned home after the war.



If Sherriff's name is only remembered today as the author of *Journey's End* it is more than a little unfair. Apart from his plays, he was a successful novelist. Kazuo Ishiguro has declared himself a fan of his 1931 novel, *The Fortnight in September*, praising it as a novel to "inspire, uplift and offer escape" in a list compiled by *The Guardian* during the COVID pandemic. "It is", he enthused "just about the most uplifting, life-affirming novel I can think of right now." Sherriff was also a prolific screenwriter. Among his scripts were several of the most successful British films of all time – including *The Invisible Man* (1933), *Goodbye, Mr Chips* (1939), *The Four Feathers* (also 1939), *That Hamilton Woman* (1941), *Odd Man Out* (1945) and *The Dam Busters* (1955).

Sherriff wrote a number of successful plays in the 1950s, of which the best known is perhaps *Home at Seven* (1950) which was later made into a film with its original leading actor, Ralph Richardson. *The White Carnation* (1953) also starred Ralph Richardson, with Meriel Forbes (aka Mrs Richardson) as Lydia Truscott. It opened at the Theatre Royal Brighton before transferring to the West End. Harold Hobson, in *The Sunday Times*, called the play "extremely and touchingly human" and it seems that the general reception of the play was positive.

However, apart from an Australian TV production in 1963, the play remained – as far as I know – unperformed, until a very successful revival at the Finborough Theatre in 2013, with Aiden Gillet as John Greenwood and Benjamin Whitrow as Mr Pendlebury. The designer was our very own Alex Marker. The play transferred to the Jermyn Street Theatre the following year, where Dominic Cavendish, writing in *The Daily Telegraph*, wrote: "What a neglected little treasure it proves: not life changing, maybe, but life affirming."

In 1968, Sherriff published his autobiography *No Leading Lady*. The title referenced the difficulty he originally had in getting *Journey's End* produced. "How can I put on a play with no leading lady?" one theatre manager had asked. He need not have worried as the play is now firmly established as a modern classic.

Perhaps the time has now come to explore the rest of Sherriff's oeuvre. *The White Carnation* has been a delight to work on – civilised, humane and touching. I am sure there are many more undiscovered gems to be found in that back catalogue.

Francis Lloyd, Director

THE WHITE CARNATION

by R.C. Sherriff

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

CAST

in order of appearance

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Tony Dale | Daniel Thompson |
| Cynthia Gray | Sally Parker |
| Lady Mary | Caroline Ash |
| John Greenwood | Richard Graylin |
| Sir George Wallace | Alan Waldock |
| Lady Wallace | Dorothy Lawson |
| PC Thompson | Daniel Thompson |
| Sergeant Philips | Mark Hill |
| Mr Gurney | Tony Diggle |
| Dr McGregor | Martin Halvey |
| Lydia Truscott | Sally Parker |
| The Rev Pendlebury | John Dobson |
| Mrs Carter | Lynn Scrivener |
| Sir Horace Duncan | Craig Nightingale |
| Butler | Quinn Goodliffe |

The play is set in and around John Greenwood's house in a small town near London.

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| ACT ONE | <i>Scene One</i> | Just before midnight, Christmas Eve, 1951 |
| | <i>Scene Two</i> | Midnight on Christmas Eve |
| | <i>Scene Three</i> | Half an hour later |
| | <i>Scene Four</i> | Afternoon on Christmas Day |
| ACT TWO | <i>Scene One</i> | Early February, 1952 |
| | <i>Scene Two</i> | Mid-June |
| | <i>Scene Three</i> | Just before midnight, Christmas Eve, 1952 |

The play lasts approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes including a 15-minute interval.

PRODUCTION

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Director | Francis Lloyd |
| Assistant Director | Quinn Goodliffe |
| Set Designer | Alex Marker |
| Costume Designer | Nichola Thomas, Sue Peckitt |
| Lighting Designer | Andrew Whadcoat |
| Sound Designer | Mark Łucek |
| Production Manager | Jane Arnold-Forster |
| Stage Manager / Properties | Harriet Parsonage |
| Deputy Stage Managers (performance) | Robert Eagle, Maya Jagger |
| Assistant Stage Managers | D'Andre George, Anna Moore |
| Prompter | Debbie Abel |
| Hair and Make-Up | Claire Stokes |
| Lighting Assistant | Robyn Backhouse |
| Lighting Rigger | Terry Mummery |
| Set Constructors | Andy Kotowicz, Steve Souchon |
| Set Painters | Ines McCahearty, Anne Neville, Craig Nightingale, Jacqui Szlachetko |
| Get-In Assistance | Bernie Brady, Roger Brace, Henry Broom, Dan Cawtheray |
| Photographer | Evelina Ploynté |
| Thanks to | Ian Black, Alan Browne, Jon Webster |

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

Caroline Ash – Lady Mary

Caroline's roles at The Questors include Queen Guinevere in *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight*, Elsie in *The Ghost Train*, Millie in *The Browning Version* and Ethel in *For Services Rendered*. Caroline has also performed at The Bridewell as Merteuille in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, Mona in *Trivial Pursuits* and Joanne in *Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*.

Tony Diggle – Mr Gurney

Tony has been a member of The Questors since 1980: first appearance Knight / Tempter in *Murder in the Cathedral* (1981), most recent appearance Sir Johnston Kentley in *Rope* (2013). Other appearances include the Professor in *Insignificance* (2008). Tony has also produced two of his plays on the London Fringe at the Chelsea Theatre: *Show me the Money* (2013) and *A Kingdom for a Stage – a play about Shakespeare –* (2016), both of which were subsequently published.

John Dobson – The Rev Pendlebury

John's many theatre appearances include *The Lady's Not For Burning* (Double Think), *Blithe Spirit* (The Savoy), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Greenwich Playhouse), *Top Dogs* and *Donkey's Years* (UK Tours) and over 90 appearances at The Questors including *The Faith Healer*, *Breaking the Code*, *Dublin Carol*, *Equus*, *Season's Greetings*, *Hangmen* and, most recently, *Albion*. He is currently custodian of The Questors' extensive archives.

Richard Graylin – John Greenwood

The White Carnation is Richard's eleventh Questors show as an actor. He has also appeared as Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Richard Winthrop in *The Ghost Train*, Richard Hannay in *The 39 Steps*, Bernard in *Don't Dress for Dinner*, Frank Gardner in *Mrs Warren's Profession*, Philip in *The Pride*, Lord Goring in *An Ideal Husband*, Macbeth in *Macbeth*, Reverend Hale in *The Crucible* and Henry Higgins in *Pygmalion*. He also directed *Death and the Maiden* last year in the Studio.

Martin Halvey – Dr McGregor

Martin has been a member of The Questors since 2006, since when he has appeared in *Festen*, *The Alchemist*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Three Sisters*, *No Fairy Tale* and *Rosmersholm*.

Mark Hill – Sergeant Philips

Mark has been performing at The Questors since his first stage outing in 2008's *The Railway Children*, followed by *The Wizard of Oz*, *Dogs Barking*, *Othello*, *The Fleet Street Nativity*, *Parlour Song* and *Rhinoceros* amongst others. This is his first production in six years and he'd forgotten how much fun it was!

Dorothy Lawson – Lady Wallace

Dorothy joined The Questors as an audience member in the mid-1980s and became an acting member in 2013. She likes to be busy over the Christmas period so she has appeared in four pantos and *The White Carnation* is her third 'Christmas alternative' following *Peregrine Proteus* and *Absent Friends* (ASM and Props) This year she has also appeared in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *On the Razzle*.

Craig Nightingale – Sir Horace Duncan

This is Craig's first show back at The Questors after taking part in the Student Group in 1983. After studying acting in England and France, Craig went on to work in theatre and television in the UK and Austria, eventually moving into teaching English as a Foreign Language (ELT) to cover periods resting! Since moving back to London in 2005, Craig now works as a Project Manager and Strategy Consultant with charities focusing on social care, education and mental health.

Sally Parker – Cynthia Gray / Lydia Truscott

Sally has been a member of The Questors since 2021. This will be her fourth full performance here, as well as taking part in the Overnight Plays and the New Writing Festival. She is extremely excited to be working with the cast of *The White Carnation*.

Lynn Scrivener – Mrs Carter

Delighted to be back on the Questors stage, Lynn last shuffled on a few years ago as a lamp carrying, Victorian carol singer in *A Christmas Carol*. Previous roles include Jackie in *My Mother Said I Never Should* and Marge in *Absent Friends*. Lynn is very happy to be present this December!

Daniel Thompson – Tony Dale / PC Thompson

Daniel studied Technical Art & Special Effects at UAL, having had a lifelong passion for the arts. He could not, however, suppress his desire to be on the stage rather than behind it, and so he has joined Questors Student Group 76. He enjoys sculpting, archery, and the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. *The White Carnation* is his first acting production.

Alan Waldock – Sir George Wallace

Alan has been acting at The Questors, off and on, for quite a few years now. His first appearance here was as Petruchio (*The Shrew*, 1979), and his most recent as Hugh Otecake (*Much Ado About Nothing*, 2023). Sooner or later, he feels, he'll begin to get the hang of it.

Quinn Goodliffe – Assistant Director / Butler

Quinn has worked on many Questors plays, including a leading role in our 2022 pantomime *Snow White*. This is the second time he has been Assistant Director here following last year's panto, *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight*.

Francis Lloyd – Director

Francis has been a member of The Questors for nearly 30 years. Among the plays he has directed are *After the Dance*, *The Browning Version*, *Charley's Aunt*, *Engaged*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and new work by Brian Abbot (*No Fairy Tale* and *Bird on the Wire*), Richard Gallagher (*French Paste*) and Christopher Reid (*Six Bad Poets*). As an actor, his most recent appearances have been as Friar Francis (*Much Ado About Nothing*), Albert Pierrepoint (*Hangmen*) and Victor Prynne (*Private Lives*).

Mark Łucek – Sound Designer

Mark has worked as a sound designer on a number of shows both in and outside of The Questors. Productions at The Questors include *The Canterbury Tales*, *Quartermaine's Terms* and, most recently, *Pygmalion*. He is currently working on a series of radio plays.

Alex Marker – Set Designer

Alex trained in stage design at Wimbledon School of Art. He has designed over fifty productions for The Questors, most recently *Neville's* and *Sheila's Island*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, as well as our current pantomime *Treasure Island* in which he also appears. Alex also directs.

www.alexmarker.com

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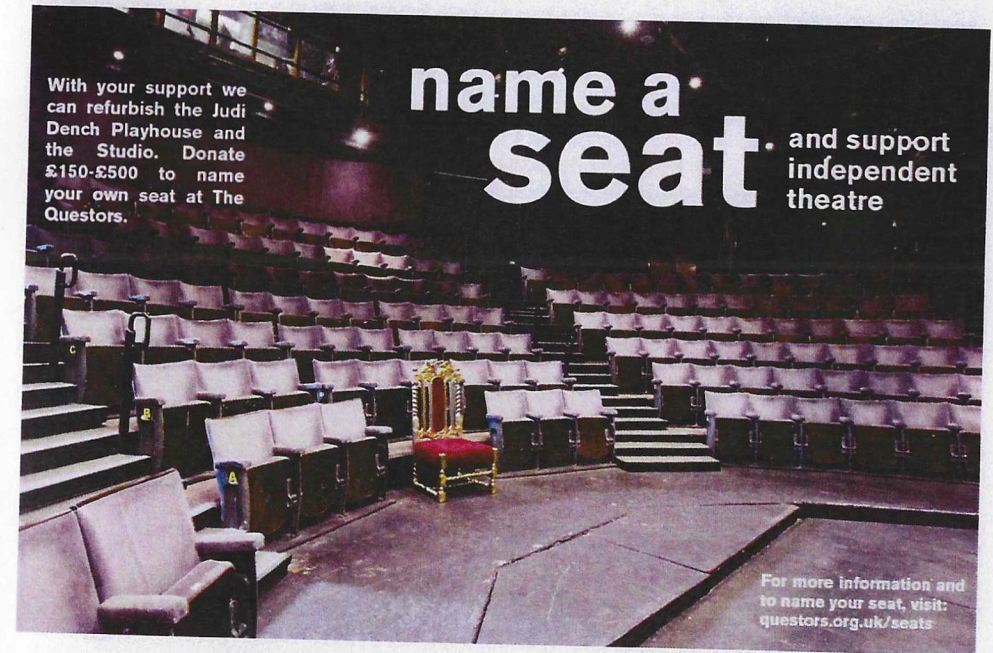
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by James Rushbrooke

8 – 31 December 2023

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by Friedrich Dürrenmatt

translated by Russell Fleet

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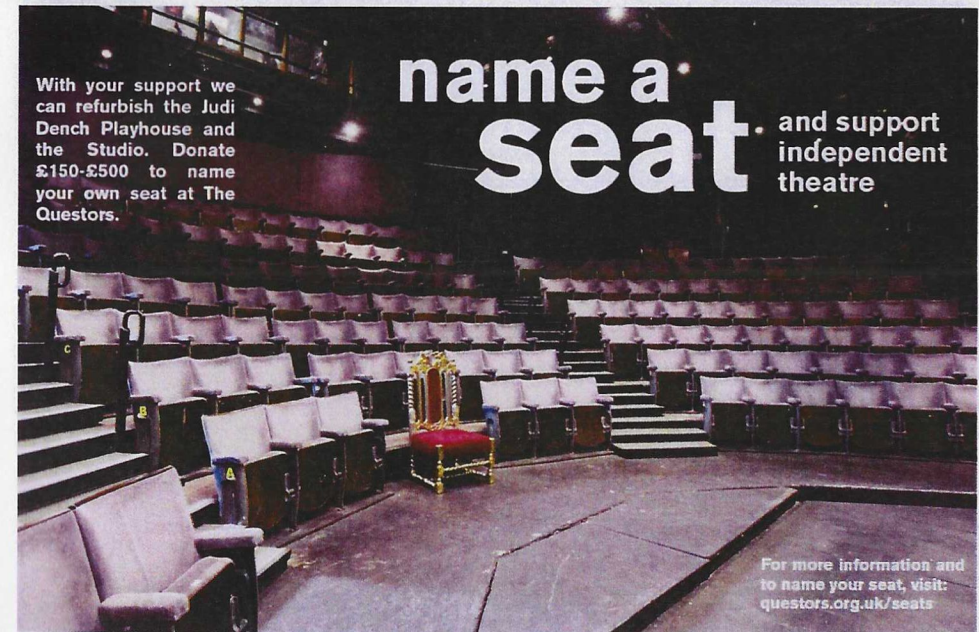
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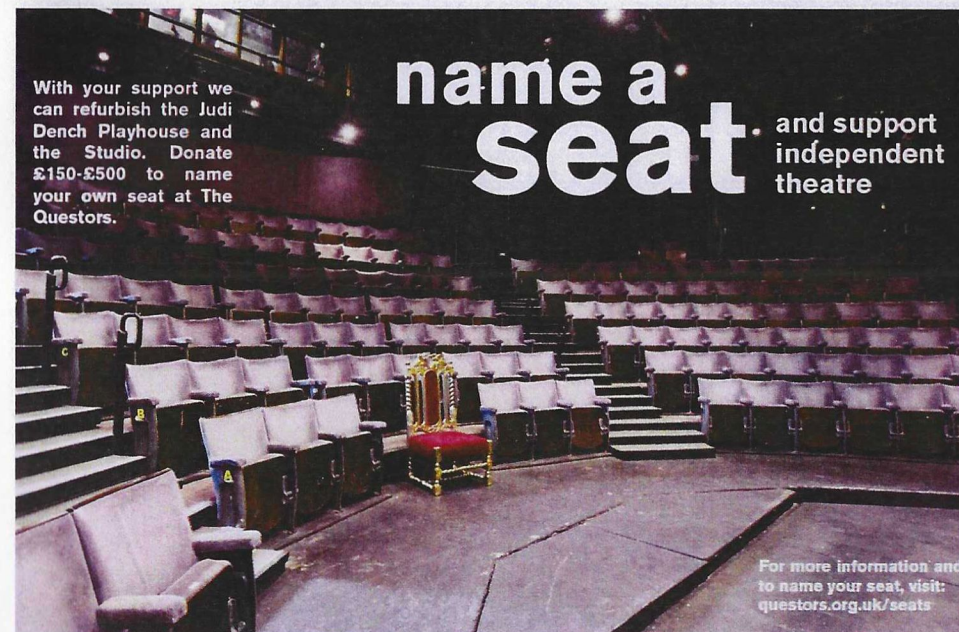
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Nichola has been the costume designer on over 25 shows in the last 20 years, including *Endgame*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *Present Laughter*, *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *Things I Know to be True* and, latterly, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Although she works on various periods, she particularly enjoys designing costumes for shows set in the 1920s to 1950s.

Andrew Whadcoat – Lighting Designer

Andrew joined the lighting team in 2013 and enjoys lighting shows in the Studio and Playhouse and training new members. Recent lighting designs include *The Ghost Train*, *Peregrine Proteus*, *Little Dorrit*, the Caryl Churchill double bill, *A Doll's House*, *Murder on the Nile*, *The Herd*, *Dragon's Teeth* and *The Rehearsal*.



Also at The Questors

TREASURE ISLAND

by James Rushbrooke

8 – 31 December 2023

The Judi Dench Playhouse

From the Admiral Benbow Inn to the palm fringed beaches of the Caribbean on board a leaky pirate ship, come and join us this December for *Treasure Island*, our rip-roaring family pantomime on the high seas. Follow Jim Hawkins on his adventures with the dastardly Long John Silver on a treasure hunt that will change their lives. With barrels of laughs, tub-thumping musical numbers and a spectacular underwater sequence, we've got something for all the family.

THE PHYSICISTS

by Friedrich Dürrenmatt

translated by Russell Fleet

19 – 27 January 2024

The Studio

Saving the world is absolute murder.

Three famed physicists, two brutal crimes, one mental hospital. Enter a world of deception, intrigue and espionage in this dark comedy packed with thrilling twists from start to finish.

Join us for a Cold War era classic from the Swiss Master of the avant-garde, in a new translation by our own Russell Fleet.