

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

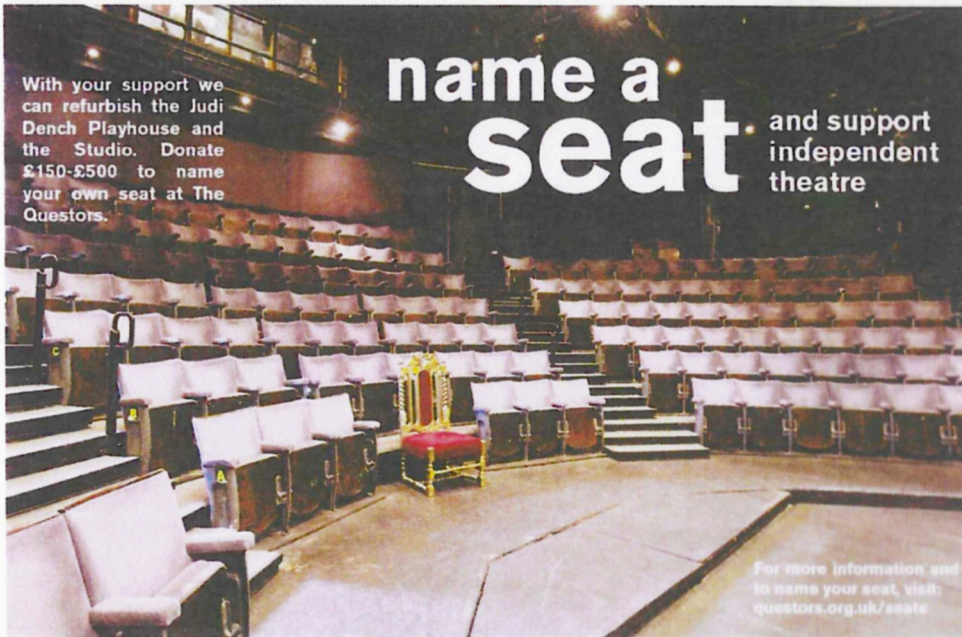
The Questors
THEATRE

13-20 July

London Wall

by John Van Druten

The Judi Dench Playhouse



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 proud of 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.



LONDON WALL

by John Van Druten

The Judi Dench Playhouse

13 – 20 July 2024

LONDON WALL

Before redevelopment, London Wall was a long street running along the inside of the northern part of the Roman city wall (only a few remnants of which still remain). It ran from the north end of Broad Street to Cripplegate. The modern London Wall is now a major traffic thoroughfare and looks very different indeed to how it did in 1931. It still vaguely tracks the path of the former Roman wall, from Old Broad Street to the Museum of London (the address of which, for the time-being, is 150 London Wall).

If we take ourselves back to the early '30s, many of the offices that those lucky enough to find work in during the Depression had a recognisable and accepted hierarchy. Of course, the men were, as a matter of course, to be found at the top. Mr Walker ('Our Lord') is a fairly typical depiction of the mainly absent boss whose infrequent visits to the office cause some consternation. Although, by virtue of his youth, Birkinshaw would be an exception, and sit at the bottom of the pile. In those days, the women, in their own pecking order, would be somewhere below the men. (Hec Hammond, of course, not only has his youth against him but he is also an unwanted visitor from another company.)

By the time this play was written, about a third of women in Britain had jobs outside of their domestic work (which they were still expected to do, employed or not). They were mainly in low-paid positions so as not to take work from their male counterparts. The First World War was some thirteen years ago and females had been put firmly back into their box. A man would be paid 20-30% more than a woman sometimes for doing exactly the same job. An average annual wage was around £130 for a man (something just over £8,000 today).

In 1928, all women over the age of twenty-one had been at last granted the vote. Conservative Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin is quoted as having said, "The subjection of women, if there be such a thing, will not now depend on any creation of the law. It will never again be possible to blame the sovereign state for any position of inequality. Women will have with us the fullest rights. The ground and justification for the old agitation is gone."

Despite this, there was to be little or no change in attitude: men were still assumed to be superior and the casual sexual harassment we see in *London Wall* was not only tolerated, but it was accepted as quite normal. Even in the 1970s, when I started as a junior in a newspaper office, the elderly 'absent boss' used to come in when the pubs closed for the afternoon and he would openly fondle the only female present who, though she didn't like it, really didn't see it as anything she had the right to complain about.

London Wall was originally billed as a 'romantic comedy'. We might see it today as – to quote Alan Bennett about his own work – 'more of a play really'. The 'bouncer' in the office, Mr Brewer, was a type long seen as comic, rather than predatory. Of course, we remember the loveable rogues that Leslie Phillips and

Sid James (*et al*) so often played: we were definitely invited to forgive their dreadful behaviour but, nowadays, much of what we laughed at then would give us pause for thought.

I applaud Van Druten's courage for at least pointing the finger at inequality and, although all the screen and stage 'cads' did get their comeuppance eventually, Van Druten always has the aptly named Miss Janus – Janus being the two-headed god of doors, gates, transitions – looking out for Pat. She, together with the kindly but eccentric Miss Willesden, are equally on hand to save the day.

Incidentally, as is remarked on in the play, Miss Willesden, despite her wealth, does bear an uncanny resemblance to Dickens' Miss Flite in *Bleak House*: an eccentric who haunts the courts day after day, waiting for a civil judgement that will never come.

London Wall was rediscovered by the Finborough Theatre in 2013 (with a set by our own Alex Marker). We hope you find it as engrossing, thought provoking and entertaining as we have.

John William Van Druten was born in London in 1901, son of a Dutch father and his English mother. He was educated at University College School and read law at the University of London.

Before commencing his career as a writer, he practised law for a while as a solicitor and university lecturer in Wales. He first came to prominence with *Young Woodley*, a slight but charming study of adolescence, produced in New York in 1925. However, it was banned in London by the Lord Chamberlain's office because of its then-controversial portrayal of a schoolboy falling in love with his headmaster's wife. When the ban was lifted, it had a successful run at the Savoy Theatre.

Van Druten was one of the more successful playwrights of the early 1930s in London, with star-studded West End productions of his work, including amongst many others, *Diversion*, *After All*, *There's Always Juliet*, *Flowers of the Forest*, *London Wall* (later to be filmed as *After Office Hours*) and the ever popular *Bell, Book and Candle* (also filmed).

He later emigrated to America, where he wrote *Leave Her to Heaven*, which was shortly followed by major successes with *Old Acquaintance* and *The Voice of the Turtle*. His subsequent play, *I Remember Mama* was later made into a film and a television series. In 1944, he became a naturalised citizen of the United States.

Incidentally, he was also a director, notably on the original production of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic, *The King and I*.

His 1951 play *I Am a Camera*, together with his friend, Christopher Isherwood's, short stories, *Goodbye to Berlin*, formed the basis of Joe Masteroff's book for the Kander and Ebb musical *Cabaret*.

John Van Druten died in Indio, California on 19th December 1957 of undisclosed causes.

Richard Gallagher, Director

Glossary

(Hopefully, the following facts will be of interest but not necessary information in order to be able to follow the play.)

Eric, or Little by Little: a book by Frederic W. Farrar about a boy at boarding school. (Eric is Brewer's first name).

'Aren't you the little Wendy?': referring to *Peter Pan and Wendy* – in Neverland; Wendy becomes a maternal figure for the Lost Boys.

'Lyons': refers to Lyons Corner House a chain of cheaper cafés numbering about two hundred at their height of success.

Express Dairy: also a cheaper option for a bite to eat.

Miss Flite: in *Bleak House*: see director's notes.

Messuage: pronounced *message* or *messwige*. A legal term for a building with land and possibly adjacent buildings.

'... sold his birth right for a pot of message': Brewer is punning the biblical tale of Esau who sold his birth right for a mess (*meal*) of pottage (*lentil stew*).

Garnishees: a person served with the legal process of garnishment (taking money directly from a person's wages).

Writ of Fi Fa (or writ of Fieri Facias): a document issued by a court for the purpose of seizing a debtor's property.

A hundred and twenty-five pounds: in 1931 would be approximately £7,138 pounds today; certainly an excessive amount to spend on underclothes!

The Great Eastern: now the Andaz Hotel in Bishopsgate.

Don Giovanni: an operatic womaniser (Mozart). In the original script, Miss Janus calls Brewer 'High Wind in Jamaica' referring to a popular book in which children are abducted by pirates.

Five hundred pounds: approximately £28,550 today.

30 shillings or 30 'bob' (£1/10/0): approximately £86 today.

One hundred and fifty pounds: approximately £8,565 today (amounting to several hundred thousand pounds today if calculated over a lifetime).

Peg O'My Heart: 1912 play about a family whose lives are changed by the introduction of an Irish-American heiress into their midst. Also a song written in 1913.

The White Queen: a character in *Through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carroll (the second 'Alice' book). She lives backwards (because she is on the reverse side of the looking-glass) and therefore yelps in pain *before* pricking her thumb on her brooch.

Questors Student Group Tutors

Director of Studies and

First Year Tutor **David Emmet**

Second Year Tutor **Richard Gallagher**

Voice Teachers **Adam Ganne, Lucy Aley-Parker**

Movement and

Physical Theatre Teacher **Nathalie Joel-Smith**

The Questors at the Edinburgh Fringe

Much Ado About Billy unfolds in a small, eccentric town where love is in the air but so is chaos! Our story revolves around a clash of love interests that takes unexpected turns. In the midst of the romantic chaos, two innocents become the target of two bumbling villains who mistake them for someone else.

After a short run of *Much Ado About Billy* at last year's Student Look-In, Year Group 76 had the bright idea of taking this story to the fringe. We are well on the way to gathering finance for this project and would be delighted to have your support.



Tiger in a Bath
Much Ado About Billy

Scan the QR code for more information
or to donate to our Edinburgh Fringe fundraiser!

QUESTORS STUDENT GROUP 76 PRESENTS

LONDON WALL

by John Van Druten

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 13 July 2024

CAST

in order of appearance

Birkinshaw	Quinn Goodliffe
Mr Brewer	Daniel Thompson
Miss Hooper	Maya Jagger
Miss Janus	Preeti Bhambri
Miss Milligan (Pat)	Greta Azzopardi
Miss Willesden	Patricia O'Brien
Hector Hammond	Kennet Kärema
Miss Bufton	Agata Frankowska
Mr Walker	Wesley Lloyd

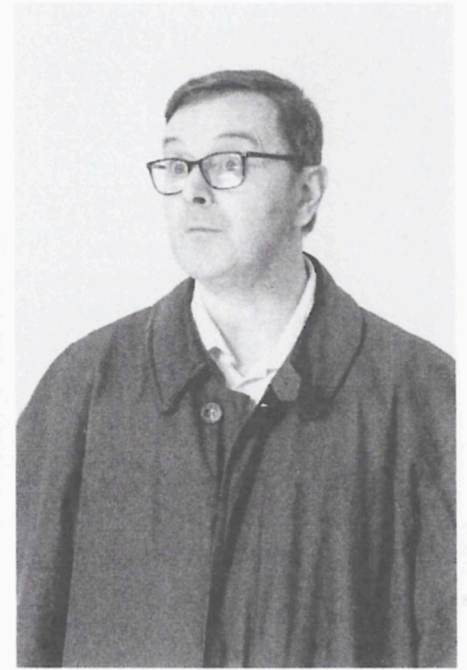
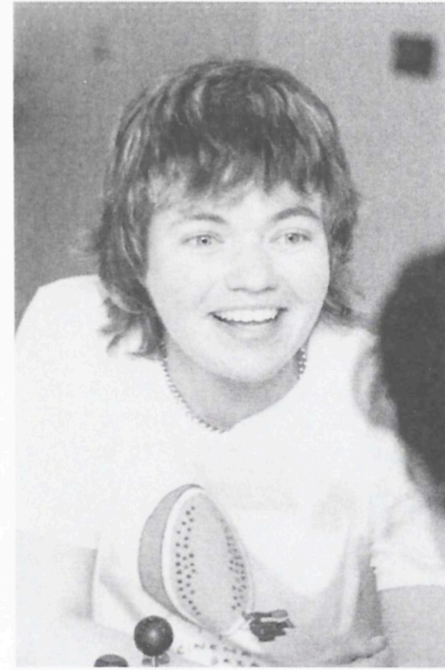
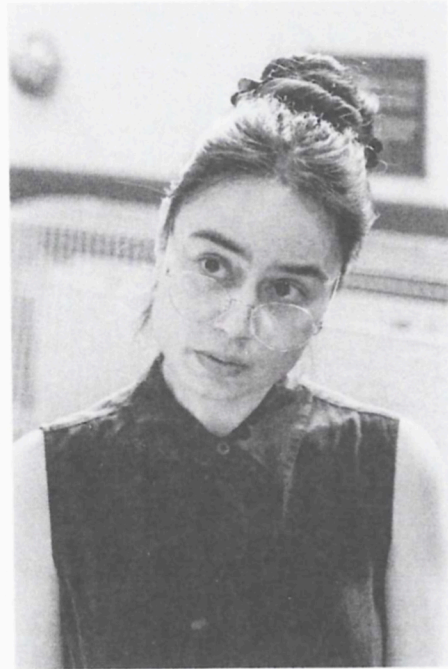
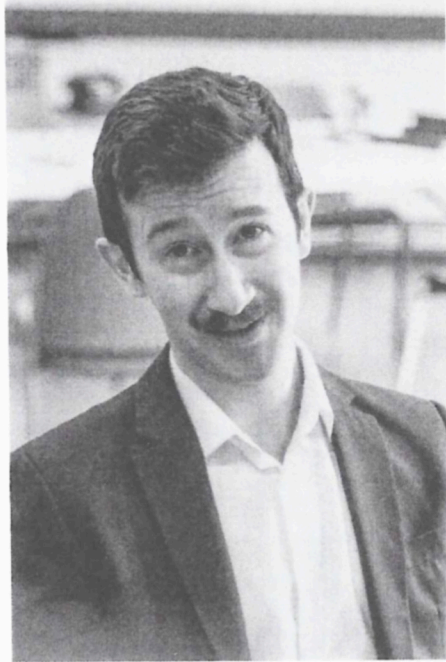
The offices of Walker, Windermere & Co, London Wall, 1931

The production lasts approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes, including one interval of 15 minutes and a second of 5 minutes.

PRODUCTION

Director	Richard Gallagher
Associate Director	Pam Redrup
Set Designer	Charles Dixon
Costume Designer	Sarah Andrews
Lighting Designer	Andrew Whadcoat
Sound Designer	Jane Arnold-Forster
Stage Manager & Properties	Harriet Parsonage
Deputy Stage Managers	Robert Eagle, Emily Hawley
Administrator/Pooh Bah	Dorothy Lawson
Make-Up Adviser and Hair	Sarah Andrews
Lighting/Sound Operator	Colette Green
Set Constructor	Roger Brace
Set Dresser	Ian Black
Set Painters	Ian Black, Grace Connett, Maria Gebhardt
Photographers	Robert Vass, Paula Robinson
Videographers	Robert Vass, Anna Fiscus
Thanks to	Lucy Aley-Parker, Patrick Brennan, James Connor, Jane Higginson, Karen Latimer, Sarah Vass, Michelle Weaver

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



Greta Azzopardi – Miss Milligan (Pat)

Greta's real name is Gabrielle. She attended St Benedict's School in Ealing and went on to study sociology at Nottingham University. Her acting training included courses at Pinewood Studios, the Artists Youth Theatre School and Pineapple Studios. At The Questors, she was an ASM on *The Gut Girls*. Greta's first appearance here was in Student Group 78's *Find Me* earlier in the year. Greta is also involved in the tour of *Much Ado About Billy* to the Edinburgh Fringe and writes scripts in her spare time.



Preeti Bhambri – Miss Janus

Preeti's first dramatic experience was playing Mary in her primary school's Nativity Play – a performance throughout which she cried as she was so shy! Since joining The Questors and overcoming her shyness, she has worked backstage on the Caryl Churchill double bill and appeared in Julian Smith's *Tricorn* in last year's Overnight Plays, which she found to be a lot of fun. She then appeared in the student production of *Find Me* in March.



Agata Frankowska – Miss Bufton

Agata was born in Poznan, Poland where she first studied Diplomacy and later Media and Film at Adam Mickiewicz University. She moved to London to pursue her acting dream and began training at City Academy. She was a supporting artist in various TV series and took part in student productions at MET Film School and Regent's University. She appeared in *Find Me* in March. With her friends, she's currently preparing their play, *Much Ado About Billy*, for the Edinburgh Fringe 2024.



Quinn Goodliffe – Birkinshaw

Quinn has been a Questors member for ten years now. His first play at The Questors was the *Duchess of Malfi* in 2014 and he has since acted in various productions from Shakespeare to panto. Quinn was last on stage here in *Single Spies* and is assistant directing *Posh* coming to the Playhouse in January.



Maya Jagger – Miss Hooper

Maya is from Leeds and studied for a BA (Hons) Visual Communication at Leeds Arts University. She is a passionate environmentalist, active in Extinction Rebellion Leeds and Youth Strike 4 Climate. Maya appeared in the Overnight Plays (2023) and *Find Me*. She has worked backstage on many shows, most recently *The White Carnation*. She is a photographer with marketing skills, and is currently fundraising for Student Group 76 to take their play *Much Ado About Billy* to the Edinburgh Fringe.



Kennet Kärema – Hector Hammond

Kennet is a 27-year-old Estonian who began his acting endeavours here at The Questors as part of Student Group 76. His first time on stage was in the Studio production of *Find Me* earlier this year, and *London Wall* is his second. He has very much loved the challenge of stepping into the head of a young idealistic office boy living in 1930s London and hopes that this will enable him to pursue new roles on stage and film – both at The Questors and elsewhere – in the coming years.



Wesley Lloyd – Mr Walker

Fifteen years ago this month, Wesley graduated from Student Group 62 after playing the title role in his student Studio production *Henry VI* and Joseph Poorgrass in his graduating Playhouse production, *Far From the Madding Crowd*. Wesley has also made appearances in student group shows for Group 67 as Edwards in *Blue Stockings* (2014) and for Group 74 as Dr Chasuble in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (2022).



Patricia O'Brien – Miss Willesden

Since 2019, Patricia has performed in many productions with the Windsor Theatre Guild, including Terence Rattigan's *After the Dance*, Lorca's *Blood Wedding*, an online production of *The Murders at Tytchesfield Manor*, *Twelfth Night*, *Forever Yours Casanova*, Orwell's *Animal Farm* and Jane Eyre's *Emma*. Patricia also appeared with the Richings Players in *Ladies' Day* as an Irish jockey. She joined The Questors in September 2022 and the March production of *Find Me* was her first appearance here.



Daniel Thompson – Mr Brewer

Daniel studied Technical Art & Special Effects at University of the Arts London, 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 joined Questors Student Group 76 and appeared in their March production of *Find Me*. He enjoys sculpting, archery and the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. He had two roles in the Questors Studio Christmas show, *The White Carnation*.

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 *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, *On the Razzle*, *Find Me* and *The Rehearsal*.

Jane Arnold-Forster – Sound Designer

Jane has been part of The Questors since 2005, during which time she has been involved in most aspects of making theatre. After a period as a professional production manager, she came home to The Questors in 2012. This is her fifth sound design, a discipline she's really enjoying. Working with this cast and company has also been a pleasure.

Charles Dixon – Set Designer

A Questors Youth Theatre member since 2013, this is Charlie's fifth set after *On the Razzle* last year. Being the youngest set designer at The Questors, he spends most of his time studying History and Politics at the University of Glasgow. The set for *London Wall* is Charlie's most ambitious yet, with marble floors, wood panelled walls and headache inducing curves, although, as usual, it is his most enjoyable.

Richard Gallagher – Director

Richard trained at Manchester Polytechnic School of Theatre. At The Questors, his last full appearances were as Lady Bracknell in Francis Lloyd's production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* and as Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. More recently, he appeared in *All Joy of the Worm* and in *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*.

Pam Redrup – Associate Director

Pam joined The Questors in 2006 as a stage manager but she has now directed thirteen shows with her fourteenth being *The Welkin* next season. It has been great fun helping on *London Wall*. The students are amazing and she thanks them for the warm welcome they have shown her.

Andrew Whadcoat – Lighting Designer

Andrew joined the lighting team in 2013 and enjoys training new members as well as lighting shows. Recent lighting designs include *The Ghost Train*, *Peregrine Proteus*, *Little Dorrit*, the Caryl Churchill double bill, *Gut Girls*, *Murder on the Nile*, *The Herd*, *Dragon's Teeth*, *The Rehearsal*, *White Carnation* and *Find Me*.

The Questors THEATRE
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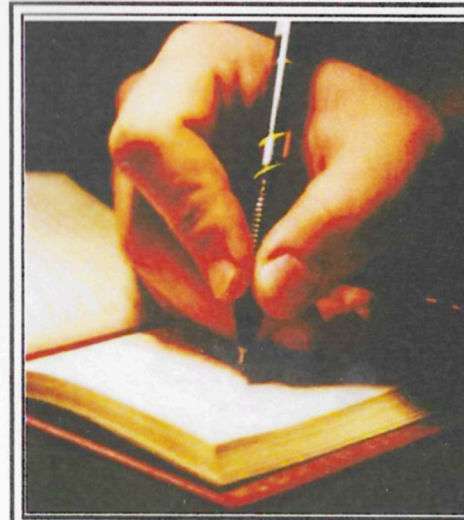
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Next at The Questors



QEXTRA WRITERS' WEEK

22 – 27 July 2024

The Studio

This year's New Writing Festival features six distinctive evenings given to a range of new theatre work. Audiences are encouraged to join us for as much of the week as possible and to play an active part in both critical and creative encouragement. The week has been developed by David Erdos and forms the first part of PAGE, the Playwrights Appreciation Group, whose aim is to workshop and learn from the great theatrical voices and to develop a house style or sensibility within new writing at The Questors. Details at questors.org.uk