

Join Us

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 Club 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):
 - up to 50% discount on an adult ticket for the Season Pass holder (to a minimum ticket price of £10, £8 concessions)
 - £2 off ANY number of additional adult or concession tickets
 - up to FOUR child tickets at up to 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

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NAME A SEAT
AND SUPPORT INDEPENDENT THEATRE

Write your name into the history books of our theatre by sponsoring one of the new seats in the Judi Dench Playhouse. Find out more and name your seat: questors.org.uk/seats

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 2025 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: Rui Ricardo

THE MYSTERY OF FELLSTONE MANOR

by Jude Emmet

The Studio

13 – 30 December 2024

THE MYSTERY OF FELLSTONE MANOR

Welcome to the first ever production of *The Mystery of Fellstone Manor*.

Often in Director's Notes we discuss the historical context of a play, its impact when it was released, and how different productions have approached it. However, on this occasion we instead have the opportunity to find out more from the playwright herself.

I asked the writer Jude Emmet to tell us a little about herself and how the idea for the show came about, as she has a deep, long-standing association with The Questors Theatre. I'll let her explain:

"The Questors was a huge part of my childhood – my parents, Alfred and Kit, were usually involved in one production or another and so my Sunday afternoons were spent watching rehearsals, or roaming around the garden behind the Lodge, as it then was. Highlight of the afternoon was always the Sunday tea! Attendance at rehearsals and indeed as an audience member at every play (except those deemed by my parents as unsuitable for my tender years) meant I had a wonderful opportunity to see a whole variety of theatre and the process involved in putting on plays. My favourite productions were the melodramas performed at Christmas time – I thrilled to the piano accompaniment, wept, laughed, fell in love with the hero, booed the villain and was enraptured by the Victorian language. Not surprisingly, then, my debut acting role at The Questors, age 13, was in the melodrama "The Silver King" by Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman. Having passed through various Questors youth groups, in the early 1970s I became a member of Student Group 29, where my final role was as Jane Bennet in "Pride and Prejudice"; acting roles in subsequent productions included in "The Colleen Bawn" (another melodrama), "Penny for a Song", "The Ride Across Lake Constance", "The Beggar's Opera", "A Taste of Honey", "Cabaret" and "Hamlet". In 1983 my husband Mike and I moved to Gloucestershire where we have lived happily ever after – though always enjoying our trips back to Ealing and The Questors."

I also asked Jude for some insights into the origins of the play:

"The Mystery of Fellstone Manor" started life as a story, in the form of a diary written by the character Charles recording the momentous events of one Midsummer's Eve at an old Manor. I had been invited to read some ghost stories for a library event, and was having difficulty in finding suitable material. Influenced no doubt by my early introduction to 19th century melodrama at The Questors, a Gothic setting appealed to me: I put pen to

paper and "The Mystery of Fellstone Manor" was born. Sometime later, a chance conversation led to the suggestion that my story might be adapted as a play, especially if it could be a Christmas play. I thought I would give it a go and setting it in the depths of winter instead of mid-summer, which seemed to give the old manor and its inhabitants a greater sense of mystery and atmosphere, I set to on its re-incarnation. Once finished, however, I wasn't sure what to do with it – it seemed its destiny was to languish in a drawer unperformed, until I had the thought of sending it to my brother David here at The Questors. A few adjustments later and here we are! I am so thrilled that The Questors decided to produce it. It gave me a lot of pleasure to write, and I hope it will please its audiences over this Christmas festive time."

I hope that you have enjoyed *The Mystery of Fellstone Manor* origin story. It is the first new play I've directed, and the first melodrama. This isn't a style I was immediately familiar with, and indeed doesn't seem to be that common in theatre today.

As an aside, someone asked me recently, "When do you think we'll see the first Director's Notes written by AI?" Not just yet, but I did think it might be fun to see what AI thought melodrama was...And the answer is:

- "...a subgenre of drama, heavy on plot and high emotion, leading to a place where virtue and moral order prevail."
- "....actors use exaggeration, with intense facial expressions, large gestures and clear delivery. They focus on showing emotions rather than feeling them."
- "....in modern context, the term melodrama is often used in a pejorative way, suggesting a lack of subtlety or character development."

The main famous melodramas seem to come from the era in which this play is set – the mid-19th century. It has been a genuinely interesting style to work with. Through work in the rehearsal room we discovered that if you heighten the performance too much it can become tiring to watch and make it harder to communicate the story clearly. Nonetheless, if played completely straight, it also doesn't quite satisfy.

I've been blessed with an extremely talented cast who've been up for playing and pushing their performances in a way that doesn't feel comfortable to a modern actor. I'm extremely proud of what they've accomplished and excited for you all to see it!

I'd like to end these notes by saying a big **thank you** to Jude, not just for letting us perform her play, but for being extremely flexible and supportive as we've worked through the process of bringing her script to the stage.

I hope you enjoy it!

Simon Rudkin, Director

THE MYSTERY OF FELLSTONE MANOR

by Jude Emmet

The World Premiere performed at The Questors Theatre: 13 December 2024

CAST

in order of appearance

Young Julia Mountford	Sophie Chen or Stella Gourgaud-Jacobi
Young Tristan Fellstone	Hector Kyratzoglou-Gryntakis or Lucia Brusati
Mrs Anthony	Sarah Morrison
Lucy Cartwright	Greta Azzopardi
Charles Wade	Nick Thomas
Tristan Fellstone	Conrad O'Callaghan
Mrs Fellstone	Patricia O'Brien
Julia Fellstone	Greta Azzopardi
Samuel	Tim Pemberton

The action of the play takes place at Fellstone Manor House and grounds

- Act 1:** by the lake at Fellstone Manor, December 1860
- Act 2:** Fellstone Manor, Christmas, December 1870
- Act 3:** Fellstone Manor, Christmas, December 1869
- Act 4:** Charles' house in Cheltenham, December 1873

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours including a 15-minute interval

PRODUCTION

Director	Simon Rudkin
Assistant Director	Becky Hartnup
Set Designer	Gareth Williams
Costume Designer	Sarah Andrews
Lighting Designer	Andrew Whadcoat
Assistant Lighting Designer	Callum Hartnup Williams
Sound Designer/Operator 'The Shiver'	Martin Choules Emerson Bramwell
Stage Manager	Sue Collins
Deputy Stage Manager	Sarah Clopet
Assistant Stage Manager	Rebecca Llanes
Properties	Harriet Parsonage
Prompter	Bridgett Strevens
QYT Administrator	Michelle Spencer
Pianist	Sarah Stoddart
Hair and Make-Up	Candice Pettifer
Lighting Operator	Paula Robinson
Set Realisation	Bron Blake, Sue Collins
Set Constructors	Gareth Williams, Tom Woods
Photo/Videographer	Jamie Gould
Thanks to	Jane Arnold-Forster, Michael Eppy, Nicola Maddox, Terry Mummery, Tony Smith, Lloyd Wallis

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

Sarah Andrews – Costume Designer

Sarah joined The Questors in 1977 as a member of Questors 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*, *The Rehearsal*, *Find Me* and *London Wall*.

Greta Azzopardi – Lucy Cartwright / Julia Fellstone

Represented by Bazan Talent Agency, Greta studied at the National Youth Theatre on the part time 2024 intake course. Greta was a member of Questors Student Group 76 where she played Verity II/Jean in *Find Me* and Pat Milligan in *London Wall*. In 2024 Greta performed in a semi-improvised piece at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Emerson Bramwell – Composer

Emerson most recently composed scores for *Low Level Panic* and *The Physicists*. He has also designed sound for *Apologia*, *Hangmen*, *Death and the Maiden*, *A Doll's House*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Arcadia*, *Albion*, *Whispers in the Wings*, *How To Disappear Completely* and *The Welkin*.

Martin Choules – Sound Designer

Martin has recently designed the sound for *Find Me*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *On the Razzle*, *The Contingency Plan*, *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*.

Becky Hartnup – Assistant Director

Becky originally joined The Questors through the Youth Theatre, returning as an acting member in 2017. Acting credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *God of Carnage*. She was Assistant Director and immersive lead on *The Ghost Train* and *Arcadia*, and Creative Director on *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*. She trained in improvisation and performs regularly.

Sarah Morrison – Mrs Anthony

Sarah has been an active Acting Member since joining in 1980. She has since appeared in over 70 productions. She was most recently seen playing Big Mama in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Ethel the Mermaid in the 2023 Questors Christmas panto *Treasure Island* and Cheryl in *Albion*.

Patricia O'Brien – Mrs Fellstone

Patricia has appeared in various productions with the Windsor Theatre Guild, dating back to 2019 as Miss Potter in Terrence Rattigan's *After the Dance*, and including an online production of *The Murders at Tytlesfield Manor* during the Covid pandemic. She has also performed with Richings Players as an Irish jockey in Amanda Whittington's *Ladies' Day*. In 2024, as a member of Student Group 76, Patricia performed in Olwen Wymark's *Find Me* and John Van Druten's *London Wall*.

Conrad O'Callaghan – Tristan Fellstone

Conrad loves performing in all kinds of genres, and so the opportunity to play Tristan was positively thrilling and too good to miss. This is his second Questors play after the 1960s original musical drama, *The Ealing Club*, and he can't wait to hit The Studio once more. He is grateful to both Simon and Becky in casting him and all the cast and crew for their support in staging this spectral production.

Tim Pemberton – Samuel

Last seen as Squire Trelawny in the 2023 pantomime *Treasure Island*, Tim's other roles at The Questors include Luka in *The Bear*, John Dryden in *Nell Gwynn* and Rev Tooker in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. By day Tim works at an activity centre for people with learning disabilities.

Simon Rudkin – Director

Simon joined The Questors in 2006 as part of Student Group 61. He then performed in several plays including *The Rover*, *Rock 'n' Roll* and *Beauty and the Beast*. Simon started directing in 2011 and this is his tenth play, having recently directed *Albion* and *Arcadia*. He is delighted to be directing a play that doesn't begin with A and have a deep connection to a garden.

Nick Thomas – Charles Wade

Nick attended the Questors Youth Theatre where he learned most of what he now knows, before studying classical acting at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. This is Nick's fourth time working with Simon Rudkin, after *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Equus* and *The 39 Steps*.

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, *Murder on the Nile*, *Dragon's Teeth*, *The Rehearsal*, *The White Carnation*, *Find Me*, *London Wall* and *How to Disappear Completely*.

Gareth Williams – Set Designer

Gareth previously designed the sets for *Death and the Maiden* and *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*. He constructed much of the *Arcadia* set and collaborated in creating the immersive experience for the show.



The Questors
THEATRE

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NEXT AT THE QUESTORS

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

by Mark Oldknow

6 – 31 December 2024

The Judi Dench Playhouse

Join Jack on his quest up into the clouds to defeat the Giant and save the Princess aided (or maybe hindered) by his mother and brother. It's the feel-good family show you've BEAN waiting for. Get ready for some Fee Fi Fo FUN with all your traditional panto favourites – expect slapstick, villains, dance routines and piles of audience participation. Can the cow, Pat, save the villagers? Will Jack triumph over the Giant and his evil henchman? Join us for a show full of magic, mishaps and mayhem.

THE ANNIVERSARY

by Bill Macllraith

17 – 25 January 2025

The Studio

It's London 1966, and Mum has summoned the family to celebrate her 40th wedding anniversary, despite Dad being long since deceased. The sharp-tongued matriarch is used to calling the shots as the head of the family business. But each of her three sons arrives with a revelation that will challenge the family dynamics – if they are brave enough to face down her caustic wit. This hilarious horror comedy was famously adapted into a film starring Bette Davis as the conniving mother from hell.