

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

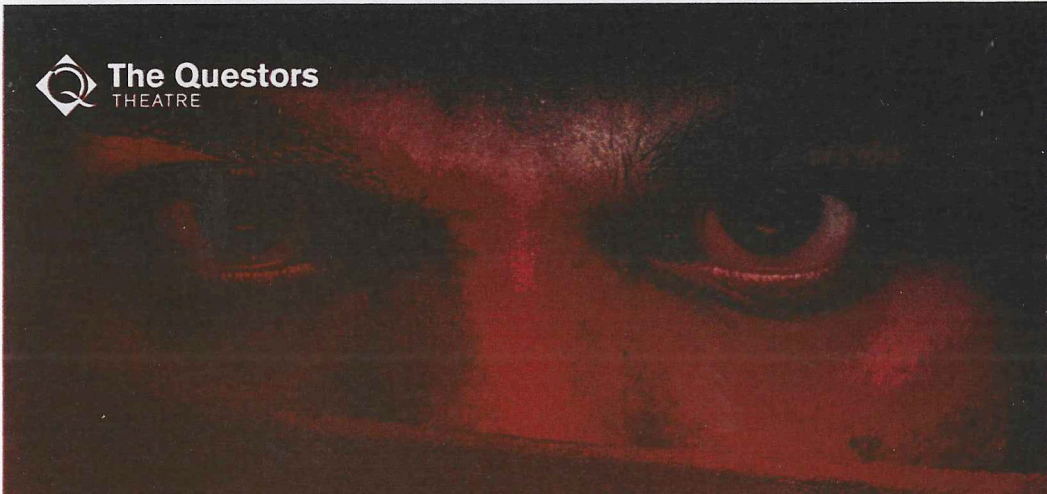
A Season Pass is also available to both members (the combined cost is equivalent to that of the old-style membership) and non-members, which gives the following benefits:

- ✓ Ticket discounts for every Questors production (except the pantomime):
an adult ticket at a discount for the Season Pass holder
£2 off ANY number of additional adult or concession tickets
up to FOUR child tickets at a 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

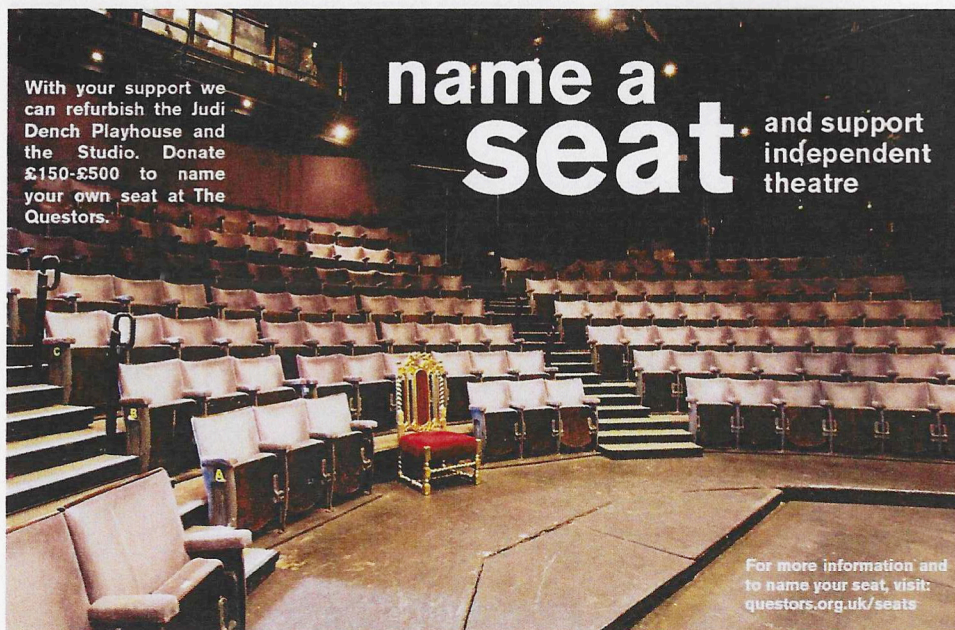
Programme: Nigel Bamford
Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011
Box Office: 020 8567 5184
Email: enquiries@questors.org.uk



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE JULIUS CAESAR



THE JUDI DENCH PLAYHOUSE
26 APRIL - 4 MAY



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.

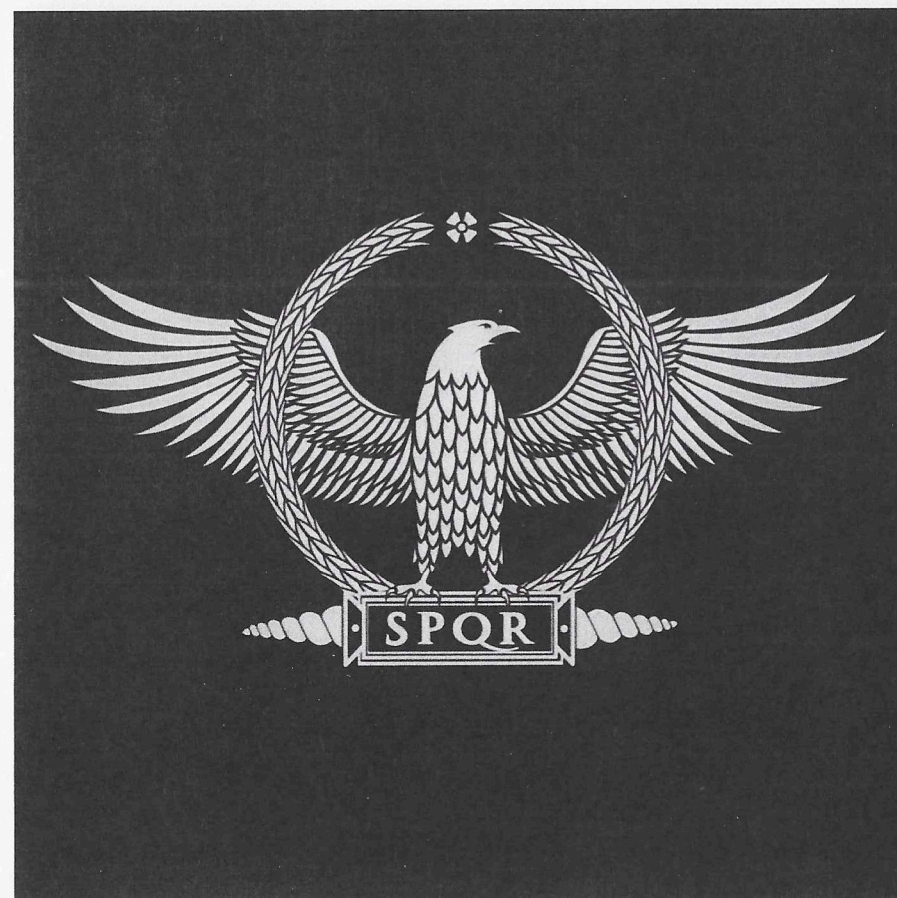
Opening Hours (subject to change):

Monday – Saturday: 7:00 pm – 11:00 pm

Sunday lunchtime: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Grapevine Spring Beer Festival – 23 to 25 May

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



JULIUS CAESAR

by William Shakespeare

The Judi Dench Playhouse

26 April – 4 May 2024

JULIUS CAESAR

"Reality is a dirty word for me, I know it isn't for most people, but I am not interested. There's too much of it about." Ken Russell

"... the technique of acting is finally... What I'm talking about is a couple of basic precepts; that theatre should be true, that every moment on stage should be true and interesting, and that it should be done in such a way that the audience is going to be diverted, amused, and entertained. The theatre does not exist to give an actor an experience, but to give the audience an experience. Given those fairly basic precepts, everything else is going to follow: the desire to do good plays, to do them well, to have the theatre be a clean, inviting place, to treat the audience with respect, to treat the fellow members of the company with respect. They all follow pretty basic precepts." David Mamet

"In everyday life, 'if' is a fiction, in the theatre 'if' is an experiment. In everyday life, 'if' is an evasion, in the theatre 'if' is the truth. When we are persuaded to believe in this truth then the theatre and life are one. This is a high aim. It sounds like hard work. To play needs much work. But when we experience the work as play, then it is not work anymore. A play is play." Peter Brook

When asked to direct *Julius Caesar* I started the process of asking questions. These questions help define the form of the production. These questions also shape my understanding of the play which informs my approach. The choice of modern dress is always the simplest to make. Does setting it in a modern period support my understanding of the play and will it enlighten or confuse the audience? And in setting it in a modern period what does that universe look like?

In our universe, whilst modern in feel, there are no computers, mobile phones or airplanes. It is a universe in which the democracy of Rome is threatened by a populist leader who manipulates the populace to become King (effectively of the World). The oligarchy of Senators sees this as a retrograde step, having established a democracy for the wealthy and powerful. They come up with a bloody and final solution with little or no consideration of the ramifications of that solution. It is not difficult to find any number of close parallels in our lifetime, for each of us they will be different depending on our own experiences.

The creative process (rehearsals) becomes about discovery not practice. For the actor it is about finding the truth of the character in the moment. And connecting those moments into a coherent narrative. For me that is the art of theatre.

For me art is a highly diverse range of human activities engaged in creating visual, auditory or performed artefacts that express the author's imaginative or technical skill and are intended to be appreciated for their beauty or emotional power.

Art, in its broadest sense, is a form of communication. It means whatever the artist intends it to mean, and this meaning is shaped by the materials, techniques and forms it makes use of, as well as the ideas and feelings it creates in its viewers. Art is an act of expressing feelings, thoughts and observations.

But one should always be aware that *"All art is quite useless."* (Oscar Wilde)

Mark Oldknow, Director

JULIUS CAESAR

by William Shakespeare

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 26 April 2024

CAST

Brutus	Ant Foran
Cassius	James Burgess
Mark Antony	Julian Smith
Caesar	Max Fisher
Casca	David Erdos
Trebonius	Catherine Luff
Cinna	Julian Casey
Metellus	Stephan Mirré
Portia	Priya Patel
Calpurnia	Hyssop Benson
Octavius	Julian Casey
Lucius	Rory Andrews
Soothsayer	Hyssop Benson
Lepidus	Diego Fonjac
Cinna the Poet	Stephan Mirré
Ensemble	Diego Fonjac, Nikhil Ghai, Iain Reid, Nicky Wild

Citizens, soldiers, servants and other parts
played by members of the company.

Scene 1: Outside the Forum

Scene 2: A restaurant

Scene 3: Brutus' Garden

Scene 4: Caesar's Garden

Scene 5: Brutus' Garden

Scene 6: The Senate

Interval

Scene 7: The Forum

Scene 8: A street

Scene 9: A restaurant

Scene 10: Republican Army base

Scenes 11 – 14: The plains of Philippi

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

PRODUCTION

Director	Mark Oldknow
Set Designer	Alex Marker
Costume Designer	Carla Evans
Lighting Designer	Alasdair Graebner
Sound Designer	Russell Fleet
Stage Manager	Harriet Parsonage
Deputy Stage Manager	Gemma McDonald
Assistant Stage Managers	Oliver Ings, Simon Rudkin, Guy Smith
Director's Shadow	Anna Fiscus
Fight Arranger	Catherine Luff
Wardrobe Assistants	Anne Gilmour, Jane Higginson, Jenny Richardson
Sound Technician	James Connor
Lighting/Sound Operator	Sue Lowndes
Lighting Riggers	Jane Arnold-Forster, Robyn Backhouse, Martyn Bird, Richard Farthing, John Green, Ben Hart, Emma Hunt, Andrew Whadcoat
Set Constructors	Andy Kotowicz, Alex Marker, Stephen Souchon
Set Painter	Ian Black
Get-In Assistance	Bernie Brady, Henry Broom, Ignatius Crean, Simon Higginson, Doug King, Paul Souchon, Rob Spencer, Derek Stoddart
Photographer	Carla Evans
Thanks to	Bea Hart, 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

Hyssop Benson – *Calpurnia / Soothsayer*

Benson (known as Hyssop to some) was a member of Student Group 75. Since finishing the course they assistant stage managed the panto, but *Julius Caesar* is their first appearance on the Questors stage since their student shows. Outside of The Questors, Benson is also a drag king under the name General Body-Pain and makes and sells up-cycled jewellery.

James Burgess – *Cassius*

James trained as an actor at Drama Studio London. His roles at The Questors include Long John Silver in *Treasure Island*, Bernard Nightingale in *Arcadia*, Gerardo in *Death and the Maiden*, Frank Hunter in *The Browning Version*, Jonathan Wilderness in *Six Bad Poets*, William in *King Charles III*, John in *Absent Friends*, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Clive in *Season's Greetings* and Claudio in *Measure for Measure*.

Julian Casey – *Cinna / Octavius*

Julian has been a Questors Acting Member since 2006 and has enjoyed playing in a wide variety of productions, including *Neville's Island* (2023), *The Contingency Plan* (2023), *Whipping it Up* (2022), *Days of Significance* (2019), *The Bear* (2018), *She Stoops to Conquer* (2015), *Othello* (2012), *The Winterling* (2011), *Three Sisters* (2010), *The Taming of the Shrew* (2009) and *Two* (2008). Julian has appeared with Leeds University Union Theatre Group, Middlesborough Theatre Players and Billingham Theatre.

David Erdos – *Casca*

David is a professional actor, writer, director and teacher with over 30 years' experience. He has collaborated closely with leading cultural figures, from Harold Pinter and Heathcote Williams to Alan Moore, Iain Sinclair, Youth and Steve Hackett. He is a published poet, playwright, critic and illustrator, the literary editor of *Mu* magazine and *The International Times*, and has headed many educational drama departments. For The Questors, David has appeared in *George Orwell's 1984*, *Bull*, *Dead Boy Café* and *Little Dorrit*. David also heads QExtra and its new-writing initiative.

Max Fisher – *Caesar*

Max joined The Questors in 1998 and has appeared here in *Popcorn* (2001), *The Balcony* (2000) and *Life is a Dream* (1999). Max directed his first play at the age of 19 – *The Crucible* at the University of Southern California; he has written a one-man play, *Along Comes a Spider*, which played in London and the Edinburgh Fringe; and he played Lambert Le Roux in *Pravda* at the Bridewell, only the fourth actor to play the role after Antony Hopkins at the National, Ralph Fiennes in New York and Roger Allam at Chichester.

Diego Fonjac – *Lepidus, Ensemble*

Diego is an actor, director, drama teacher, producer and eternal student of the performing arts. He has been involved and worked with several theatre companies and cultural institutions in Brazil. He also has experiences with dance and singing. And now he ventures out and seeks to learn more and more in other parts of the world. Diego was previously seen here in *The Physicists*.

Ant Foran – *Brutus*

Ant joined The Questors last year and has since appeared as Mr Kirby in *You Can't Take It With You*. Trained at the Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Ant has also appeared with City Lit in *Animal Farm* (Old Major), *Macbeth* (Banquo) and *Earthquakes in London* (Colin). and at The Tabard in *Ashley* (Sam/Hank).

Catherine Luff – *Trebonius / Fight Arranger*

Catherine joined The Questors in December 2023, having graduated from Drama Studio London in 2021. This is her first play here, but she worked with Volcano Theatre Company for a season, appeared in *The Dread Zone* directed by Paul Davies and has numerous other theatre, TV and voice acting credits. Catherine is a physical actor and is working her way through the British Academy of Stage and Screen Combat qualifications.

Stephan Mirré – *Metellus / Cinna the Poet*

Stephan joined The Questors in December 2003, having trained at the Schauspielschule Atrium, Hamburg, followed by courses in improv, clowning, commedia dell'arte and musical theatre at various London theatre schools. This is Stephan's first appearance here, but he has worked with several other local theatres including The Tower and Richmond Shakespeare Society as well as performances in Hamburg.

Priya Patel – *Portia*

Priya has been a member since 2023 and appeared in *The Contingency Plan*, directed by David Emmet, that same year. She trained at LAMDA and has been an acting member of the central London-based Spread Eagle Players since 2014. Highlights of her time there include appearing as Polly, the exasperated hotel maid, in *Fawlty Towers*, as well as in *Sweeney Todd*, a host of pantomimes and *In Basildon* which she also assistant directed.

Iain Reid – *Ensemble*

Iain left Student Group 29 in 1976 and acted in many Questors productions up to 1992, including *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Boy Friend*, *Twelfth Night*, *Men Should Weep*, various Christmas shows and *Soapsud Island* (the first PlayBack project). Since returning in 2013, his later appearances have included *Red Peppers*, *The Dog & the Scarf*, *First Love is the Revolution*, *Dear Brutus*, *India Gate* and *Peregrine Proteus*.

Julian Smith – Mark Antony

Julian's acting credits at The Questors include Feste in *Twelfth Night*, Edward Kynaston in *Nell Gwynne*, Clov in *End Game*, Winston Smith in *George Orwell's 1984* and Balthasar in *Much Ado About Nothing*. He runs touring theatre company Teatro Unfortunato and has an unhealthy obsession with ukuleles and peanut butter sandwiches.

Carla Evans – Costume Designer

Carla joined The Questors in 2013 and has since worked on over 40 productions as costume maker, set designer, photographer and poster illustrator. Her most recent designs include the set for *How to Spot an Alien* and costumes for *Arcadia*, *A Doll's House*, *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight*, *Treasure Island* and *Sara Sampson*.

Russell Fleet – Sound Designer

Russell trained as an actor in the 1990s and joined The Questors in 2006. He has been involved in over 50 productions as an actor, sound designer, stage manager and director. His most recent sound designs were for the Caryl Churchill double bill, *The Gut Girls*, *Dragon's Teeth* and *Sara Sampson*. He recently directed *The Physicists*.

Alasdair Graebner – Lighting Designer

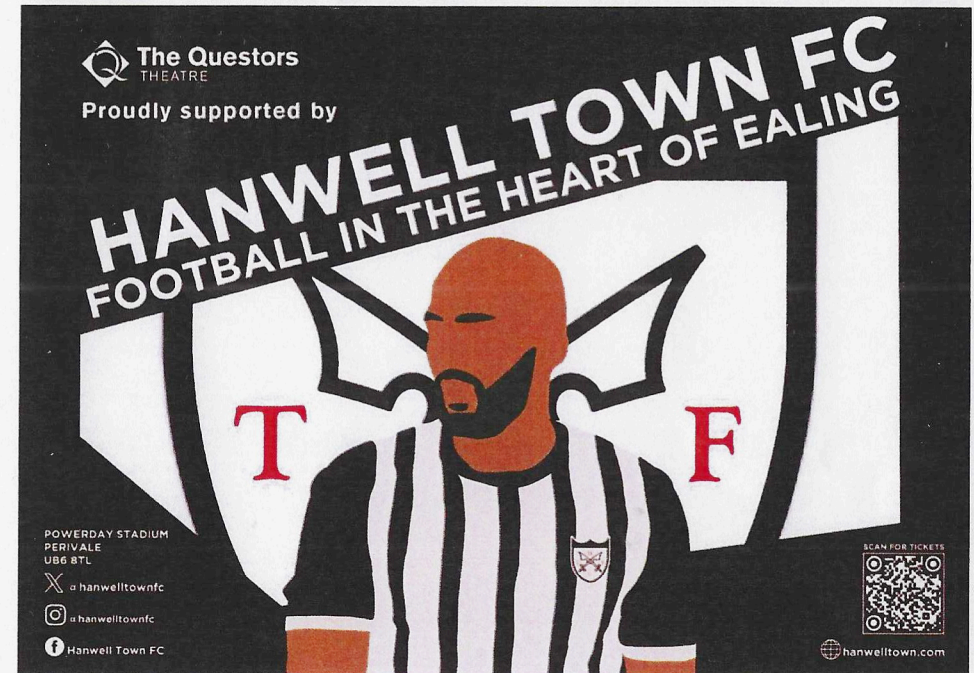
This is Alasdair's third lighting design for The Questors following *The Physicists* and *Neville's/Sheila's Island*. He has only recently rediscovered a love of theatre after driving an office desk for 20 years. Previous lighting designs have been at Mountview Theatre School, Aletta Collins Dance Company, Unicorn Theatre Company, New Music Oldham, Oldham Players, Increasingly Important Theatre Company and Grange Arts Centre.

Alex Marker – Set Designer

Alex trained as a designer at Wimbledon School of Art. He has designed over 50 productions for The Questors (most recently *Whispers in the Wings*, *Sara Sampson*, *The White Carnation* and *Treasure Island*) and many more for professional theatres and companies around the country. He is currently the Artistic Director of The Questors and Director of Questors Youth Theatre.

Mark Oldknow – Director

Mark joined The Questors in 2023 and has since appeared as Ian in *The Herd*. He trained in acting at LAMDA, worked in Regional Rep, touring productions and was Artistic Director of the resident company at the Wycombe Swan. Mark has directed over 100 productions from Pinter to Shakespeare, written a dozen pantomimes and adapted a number of Greek tragedies. He has retired from professional theatre and now works in an acute NHS Hospital Trust.



Next at The Questors

THE SLAVES OF SOLITUDE

adapted from Patrick Hamilton's
novel by Simon Roberts

3 – 11 May 2024

The Studio

In 1943 an ill-assorted group of lodgers in a boarding house a few miles outside London are eking out a wartime existence in safety (they hope) from the trauma of the Blitz. They are joined unexpectedly by two wayward and pleasure-seeking GIs and an attractive German-born lady, who divides opinion. At the centre of the plot is Miss Enid Roach, approaching middle-age and rootless, in this black comedy from the author of *Gas Light*.

TOM JONES

Henry Fielding,
adapted by Joan MacAlpine

24 May – 1 June 2024

The Judi Dench Playhouse

Join the adventures of Tom Jones, the adopted son of an 18th Century English squire as love and mistaken identity lead to a series of hilarious escapades, as he navigates the complexities of society and relationships. The tale satirises social conventions and class distinctions while celebrating the resilience of its spirited protagonist. Tom's youthful recklessness brings him not only into the arms of a number of amorous women but also to the condemned cell.