

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

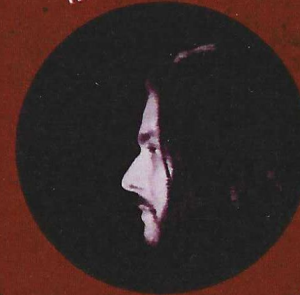
Programme: Nigel Bamford
Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011
Box Office: 020 8567 5184
Email: enquiries@questors.org.uk

 The Questors
THEATRE

THE PHYSICISTS

BY FRIEDRICH DÜRRENMATT

MÖBIUS



EINSTEIN



NEWTON



NEW TRANSLATION
BY RUSSELL FLEET

THE STUDIO
19-27 JANUARY

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 Monday to Saturday (9:30 – 6:00), and 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 Physicists

by Friedrich Dürrenmatt,
translated by Russell Fleet

The Studio

19 – 27 January 2024

THE PHYSICISTS

Friedrich Dürrenmatt (1921 – 1990) was a Swiss playwright, novelist, and essayist whose satiric, almost farcical tragicomic plays were central to the post-World War II revival of German theatre.

Written in 1961, *The Physicists* (*Die Physiker*) is a modern classic of German post-war theatre. It premiered in Zürich, Switzerland in February 1962 and is his most well-known and most performed piece. It is considered his most impressive yet most easily understood work. Dürrenmatt had previously found fame with *The Visit* (*Der Besuch der Alten Dame*), written five years before. Like Bertolt Brecht, Dürrenmatt explored the dramatic possibilities of epic theatre and, next to Brecht, he has been called its 'most original theorist'.

At the end of the first Act, you are convinced you are watching a murder mystery, not so much a 'whodunnit' as a 'whydunnit', as the three physicists of the title, all patients in a sanatorium, have each murdered the nurse charged with their care. Act 2 reveals their motivations for these brutal acts in a twist worthy of Agatha Christie, but this is not the end of the plot; there is still a final twist to come, involving the head psychiatrist and owner of the sanatorium, Fräulein Doktor Mathilde von Zahnd.

The Physicists is often classified as a satirical drama, but Dürrenmatt describes it as a 'tragicomedy' (Tragikomödie). The label satire is, in my opinion, incorrect as nothing is being sent up or satirised in the play. It is, however, meant to be funny. The play observes the Aristotelian unity of time, place and action because, as Dürrenmatt says in his introduction to the play, "the actions of madmen require the constraints of the classical form."

The fundamental subject of the play is the responsibility of science and scientists, and humanity's general ability to manage its intellectual discoveries. Dürrenmatt links this topic with his theory of drama, according to which every story triggered by chance must take the worst possible turn. The global annihilation of humanity was an imminent threat at the time Dürrenmatt was writing. In the wake of World War II, the Korean War and the H-Bomb tests, a frantic armaments race coupled with increasing belligerence and paranoia had brought the superpowers to several confrontations and to the brink of nuclear war. Thus the question of scientists' responsibility towards humanity at large

was very much in the fore of public discourse, especially since the United States had actually used atomic bombs.

Dürrenmatt's interest in the dangers of uncontrolled scientific advancement was longstanding. As early as 1950 he had expressed his 'scientophobia' in a comedy written for the cabaret stage and a short story from the same period. In these early works, Dürrenmatt depicts a world in which technological growth is out of control and no one seems to recognise the danger. This plight is all the more disturbing in *The Physicists*, since science threatens to take on a more ominously powerful dimension than heretofore, transcending even the massive destructive capabilities of the atomic bomb.

Except for one lyric interlude – the starkly pessimistic 'Song of Solomon for the Spacefarers' that Möbius recites to his shocked former wife in the first act – Dürrenmatt's language is decidedly matter-of-fact. The calm, convicted tone of remarks by the psychiatrist von Zahnd and her murderous inmates contributes much to the grotesque effect Dürrenmatt intends, highlighting the extremes to which the various characters take logic and reason in the pursuit of power. In fact, *The Physicists* marks a turn away from the varied and sometimes lavish use of language that characterised the most productive period of his career, the decade of the 1950s. In fact, his art on the whole became more distant and more macabre, his characters more stiff, and these traits probably account for the limited critical and popular success of his later works.

This brings me to my choice to translate the play myself. The original English language version, dating from the mid-60s, certainly remained true to the distancing effect of the original German as this is part and parcel of the epic theatre approach. However, it was over-wordy and unwieldy for English actors. In translating the play I had the challenge of trying to remain true to Dürrenmatt's style and yet to make the play accessible to an English language audience and easier for English language actors to perform because, as Dürrenmatt himself said, "The stage is always the author's teacher, and he can learn from it." Also, with many of the smaller roles, we have opted for a heightened acting style more in keeping with the epic theatre approach, more declarative and demonstrative and less naturalistic. While we wanted to give the piece a 1960s feel in homage to the time of its writing, we are conscious that an LED flat screen TV would not fit with that, so we have chosen not to fix the play in any specific time period. We hope you will like what we have done with it.

Russell Fleet, Director

THE PHYSICISTS

by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, translated by Russell Fleet

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 19 January 2024

CAST

in order of appearance

Detective Inspector Richard Voss	David Hovatter
Matron Marta Boll	Carmel Corcoran
Blocher	Shenji Schaeppi
Guhl	Diego Fonjac
Medical Examiner	Angus Duke
Herbert Georg Beutler (Newton)	Craig Nightingale
Fräulein Doktor Mathilde von Zahnd	Sunita Dugal
Ernst Heinrich Ernesti (Einstein)	Dumitru Stratulat
Johann Wilhelm Möbius	Jerome Kennedy
Mrs Lina Rose	Kate Kasampali
Nurse Monika Stettler	Tilly Benson-Reid
Chief Orderly Uwe Sievers	Angus Duke
Orderly McArthur	Shenji Schaeppi
Orderly Murillo	Diego Fonjac

and **Russell Fleet** as himself

The play lasts approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes
including a 20-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	Russell Fleet
Set Designer	Katarzyna Kryńsk
Costume Designer	Russell Fleet
Lighting Designer	Alasdair Graebner
Sound Designers	Emerson Bramwell (composer), James Connor (engineer)
Stage Managers	Russell Fleet, Paula Robinson
Deputy Stage Manager	Sarah Clopet
Assistant Stage Managers	Angus Duke, Diego Fonjac, Ella Ross, Shenji Schaeppi
Properties	Russell Fleet, Paula Robinson
Prompter	Maggie Anderson
Wardrobe Assistant	Paula Robinson
Video Engineer	Terry Mummery
Lighting Riggers	Martin Bird, Ben Hart, Emma Hunt, Terry Mummery, Andrew Whadcoat
Set Constructors	Roger Brace, Stephen Souchon
Assisted by	Mike Chislett, Ben Hart, Simon Higginson, Derek Stoddart
Get-In Assistance	Ignatius Crean, Alasdair Graebner, Andy Kotowicz
Production Photographer	Robert Vass
Rehearsal Photographer	Jane Arnold-Forster
Videographer	Jane Arnold-Forster

Thanks to: **John Green, Peter Adam Hill, the Questors Office**

This new translation is authorised by kind permission of
Diogenes Verlag AG Zürich.

Biographies

Tilly Benson-Reid – Nurse Monika Stettler

Tilly's productions at The Questors have included *Diana of Dobson's* (Diana), *Ariadne & the Monsters* (Theseus), *Pride and Prejudice* (Miss Bingley) and *The Ghost Train* (Peggy Murdoch). They also work backstage in stage management, most recently for *Arcadia* and *Death and the Maiden*.

Carmel Corcoran – Matron Marta Boll

Carmel joined The Questors in 2012 and attended the Acting for All and Encore classes before becoming an acting member. More recently Carmel has become involved in improvisation and has trained with major improv schools including the FA, Hoopla and The Maydays and is an active member of the Slack Captains, the house improv team. Carmel has appeared on stage as Molly in *Me and Gregory Peck* and Jess Bales in *Improbable Fiction*. More recently she performed as Red Devil and Mistress Plenty in the Blackbox Theatre production of *Speak of the Devil*.

Sunita Dugal – Fräulein Doktor Mathilde von Zahnd

Sunita joined The Questors as an acting member in 2004. Her first role was as Celia in *As You Like It*. Other roles include Emma Bovary in *Breakfast with Emma*, Berthe in *Boeing Boeing* and the Slave of the Ring in the pantomime *Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp*.

Angus Duke – Medical Examiner / Chief Orderly Uwe Sievers

Angus joined The Questors back in 2012, starting out backstage on numerous productions such as *Little Voice*, *Dick Whittington & His Cat*, *Daisy Pulls It Off* and *Albert Makes Us Laugh*. After achieving his degree in Theatre Management and Design in 2019, Angus has since returned to The Questors to be part of Student Group 77. Angus's previous acting roles include productions such as *Stags and Hens*, *Equus* and *Trelawny of the Wells*.

Diego Fonjac – Guhl / Orderly Murillo

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.

David Hovatter – Detective Inspector Richard Voss

Recently David has directed *Little Dorrit* and *Dragon's Teeth*, and acted in *Murder on the Nile*.

Kate Kasampali – Mrs Lina Rose

Kate, a seasoned actress since joining The Questors, boasts rich stage experience, recently captivating audiences as Alice (*Rotterdam*) in 2022. Noteworthy roles include Alice Ayres/Jane Jones (*Closer*), Harper Pitt (*Angels in America*), Portia (*Julius Caesar*) and Helen (*Euripides*) showcasing her versatile performances. Delve into the richness of Kate's artistry, a performer whose diverse roles intricately mould her journey on the stage.

Jerome Kennedy – Johann Wilhelm Möbius

Jerome returns after a number of years away to make his sixth appearance with The Questors since joining in September 2011. He most recently starred as Ralph Clark in *Our Country's Good* at the Hampton Hill Theatre, shortly after playing Alan in Gary Owen's harrowing thriller *Killology* and directing Margaret Lawless' Deep South melodrama *House of Bernarda*, both at Putney Arts Theatre.

Craig Nightingale – Herbert Georg Beutler (Newton)

Craig took part in the Student Group in 1983 and went on to study acting in England and France. He recently rejoined The Questors, and this is his second show following *The White Carnation* (Sir Horace Duncan) in December 2023. As well as working in theatre and television in the UK and Austria, Craig has taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and currently works as a project manager and strategy consultant with UK charities focussing on social care, education and mental health.

Shenji Schaeppi – Blocher / Orderly McArthur

Shenji has acted in both screen and stage productions. He last appeared on stage as Spurio (*The Revenger's Tragedy*) at the Tower Theatre. Other recent productions include various short and indie films. He is also trained in screen combat and has worked as an action choreographer.

Dumitru Stratulat – Ernst Heinrich Ernesti (Einstein)

Dumitru has been part of The Questors for five years – first in Student Group 73 and now as an acting member. He appeared in last year's panto *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight*, *Quietus*, *An Invitation to Three Murders* and the *Student Look-In*.

Emerson Bramwell – Sound Designer

Emerson is a composer and sound designer with a background in drums and percussion. Most recently, he composed the theme music for *God of Carnage* and designed the sound for *The Ghost Train*, *Apologia*, *Hangmen*, *Death and the Maiden*, *Peregrine Proteus*, *A Doll's House*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Arcadia* and *Albion*.

James Connor – Sound Designer

With a background in live music and event engineering, James's full productions at The Questors include *The Rehearsal*, *The Children*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *GOOD TIMES TOGETHER with the Everly Brothers*, *Dead Boy Café*, *The Ealing Club*, *Bull & Contractions* and *Whipping It Up*. He regularly supports QExtra and other special events, and during lockdown worked on audio dramas including *Radio Refuge*, *The Intruder* and *Persons Unknown*.

Russell Fleet – Director / Costume Designer

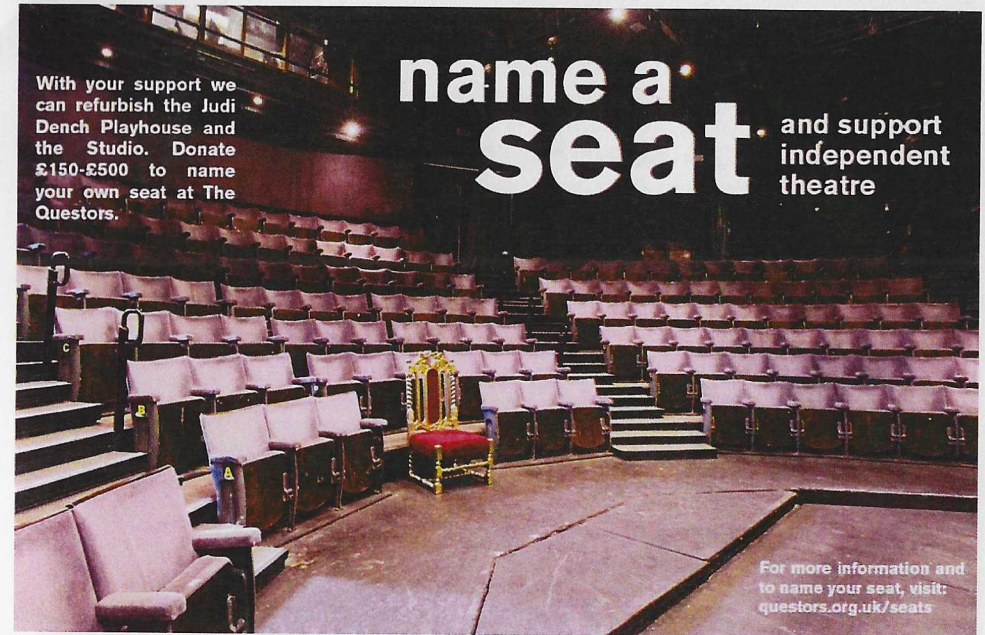
Russell trained as an actor in the 1990s and joined The Questors in 2006. He has since taken on other roles as Stage Manager, Sound Designer and Director in over 55 productions. This is his sixth outing in the big chair and his second as Costume Designer. He holds an MA (Actor Training and Coaching) from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Alasdair Graebner – Lighting Designer

This is Alasdair's second lighting design for The Questors, having only recently rediscovered a love of theatre after driving an office desk for 20 years. Previous lighting designs include *Neville's Island* and *Sheila's Island* (The Questors); *Napoli Millionaria*, *Normal Heart* and *Company* (Mountview Theatre School); *Alice is Back in Wonderland* and *Curtain Raiser* (Aletta Collins Dance Company); *Fairytalesheart* 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).

Katarzyna Kryńsk – Set Designer

Katarzyna is a graduate of Fine Art, Painting and Printmaking from Glasgow School of Art. Since then she has exhibited at the Leadenhall and Portobello galleries and also worked as a photographer. Her involvement in theatre began in 2015 and she joined The Questors the following year, helping out as a set painter and builder, and as an assistant designer. This is her third set design here, following *Dragon's Teeth* and *The Contingency Plan*.



Next at The Questors

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

by George S. Kaufman & Moss Hart

26 January – 3 February 2024
The Judi Dench Playhouse

Love and laughter shine through for one family of eccentrics. A Pulitzer Prize winner on stage and Academy Award winner on screen, this timeless tale of unbridled optimism in the face of adversity is as relevant today as it was in 1936. Step into the weird and wonderful Sycamore residence, where one unconventional family has chosen a path of individuality, authenticity and joy, rejecting the norms of the time for a life less ordinary.

SARAH SAMPSON

by Gotthold Lessing
translated by David Emmet

16 – 24 February 2024
The Studio

A man with a dubious past has eloped with a younger woman promising to marry her – but will he? And what will happen when her father arrives, followed by a ruthless ex-lover? Moral ambiguity abounds and tragedy awaits in this almost forgotten classic. Originally written by the German writer, Gotthold Lessing (perhaps best known for his play *Nathan the Wise*), join us for the world première of this new translation by David Emmet.