

Join Us

If you enjoy theatre, why not join us and benefit from membership:

- ✓ Half price personal tickets for Questors productions*
- ✓ Discounted Guest tickets when you bring friends to Questors productions*
- ✓ Children's FREE tickets†
- ✓ Opportunities to be actively involved in our productions
- ✓ Opportunity to audition to join our company of actors
- ✓ Exclusive or discounted training courses
- ✓ Access to *iQ* – the members-only website: members.questors.org.uk
- ✓ Access to exclusive news on *iQ* and email newsletter
- ✓ Receive the regular programme leaflet
- ✓ Membership of The Grapevine Club
- ✓ Special invitations, events and offers not available to the public
- ✓ Ticket reservation facility (conditions apply)
- ✓ Voting rights in the company

*Reduced prices exclude certain events. †Under 18, excludes certain events, maximum four per event. Must be collected at the performance and accompanied by the member.

Getting the most from your membership

We have a wide range of opportunities for you to become actively involved front-of-house or backstage. Volunteer help is always needed for selling programmes or stewarding, and training is provided if you'd like to work in Box Office with our computerised system. To meet members in a social setting, volunteer to help behind the Grapevine bar. 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'll find a place for you. 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.

The Questors Youth Theatre – QYT

Our Youth Theatre, QYT, runs weekly drama classes for all ages from 6 to 18. Younger groups meet on Saturday mornings and older ages at weekday teatime. There's often a waiting list for membership, so put your name down now! Details are online at questors.org.uk/qyt.

The Questors Theatre
12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, W5 5BQ
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 The Questors
THEATRE

QEXTRA WRITERS' WEEK



THE STUDIO
22 – 27 JULY 2024

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Mon 22	Opening Night	Poetry with Nick Barth <i>The Timekeeper and the Immortal</i> by Anayis N. Der Hakopian <i>Priti & Mandeep</i> by Kulvinder Gill <i>Between the Lines</i> developed by Matt Sparkes <i>The Consequences</i> by Ben Francis
Tue 23	Composers' Night	From the Soul to the Stave Oleta Haffner and Emerson Bramwell
Wed 24	Through Irish Eyes	Poetry with Michael Harris and guests <i>Betrayal</i> by Peter Gould <i>Wilde in Love</i> devised by Guy Smith
Thu 25	The Devil's Day	<i>The Devil Makes Work for Idle Hands</i> by Martin Choules <i>The Weigh Station</i> by Rick Gustafson
Fri 26	Special H	Poetry with Martin Choules <i>Hat's House</i> by David Hovatter <i>What's My Gilbert?</i> by David Hovatter
Sat 27	A Chorus to Close	Poetry with David Erdos Songs to Savour The Feeling supported by Julian Smith

Each evening at 7:30 in the Studio with £5 tickets on the door

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

This year's festival takes a step further in establishing QExtra as a venue for the examination, exploration and practice of New Theatre Writing. In conceiving of and organizing the week I wanted to show the strengths, limitations and issues surrounding the creation of viable theatrical events across all the forms from play and songwriting, to conception, composition and improvisation. To these ends, I invited a number of established Questors writers and those new to the building to provide a range of shorts and one-act plays that link across separate nights through theme and approach.

As a complement, we have two musical evenings featuring discussion with Questors resident composers Oleta Haffner and Emerson Bramwell and a Saturday Night song set featuring Matt Saldanha's *The Fleeting*, supported by Questors Poster Boy of choice, the incomparable Julian Smith.

Most nights will also feature a short opening set from a Pitshanger Poet, The Questors' resident poetry collective, as a way of uniting the creative forms.

Just as every play casts its performers, so should an audience be also cast, as theatre is after all a shared experience. While community theatres have an in-built audience to some extent, it is hoped that these QExtra events garner their own support group, for you as an audience are invited to become part of the creative and critical faculty I would love to see develop across the Monday evenings of the future. There will be Q&A opportunities for you to give immediate feedback and the chance for a wider forum should you wish to join the mailing list by scanning the QR Code.



As these are new plays with only one unique performance, the week is dedicated to script in hand staged readings. This developing form lends itself to the notion of a musical recital. What we rarely do in the theatre is listen, and by focusing on theatre as a study of language in light I hope these presentations lead you across the divide into new forms of communication and collaboration.

The week acts as a curtain raiser for a larger project THE PLAYWRIGHTS APPRECIATION GROUP (PAGE) which next season will work towards developing new work inspired by neglected and still unsurpassed standards. I very much hope to see you at these workshops, classes and readings.

David Erdos, QExtra Producer/Director

OPENING NIGHT — Monday 22 July, 7:30

Warm Up: Pitshanger Poet Supremo Nick Barth

THE TIMEKEEPER AND THE IMMORTAL

directed and written by **Anayis N Der Hakopian**

Time is losing track of Horatius (**Tom Goodwin**) as he slips between the memory of days to the centuries at stake. His grounding line is tied to the fanged immortal Seraphine (**Samira Teymouri**), as she lives in all the moments and he lives within the gaps, trying to put together the present and the past, holding the eroding memories to their last.

The Timekeeper and The Immortal plays with the poetry of memory and love in the shared pockets of time to when time itself can't hold those moments together forever.



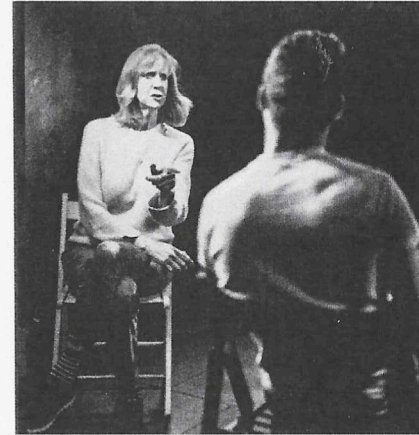
PRITI & MANDEEP

by local writer **Kulvinder Gill**

A comedic snapshot of two female South Asian sixth formers from Ealing discussing course work, politics and dating rich. Priti (played by **Kiran Benawra**) is a very sociable, chilled-out, repeating-a-year student, whereas Mandeep (**Yazmin Joy Vigus**, who also directs) is a super-serious, straight-laced, straight-A pupil. Yet, despite their differences, they are BFFFFs (best friends forever and forever and, er, forever).



BETWEEN THE LINES: A Performance of Relational Improvisation



Developed by **Matt Sparkes** and drawing inspiration from the Meisner Technique, Relational Improvisation focuses on character and relational dynamics rather than story. Actors focus on behaviour and the resulting subtext, thus allowing narratives rich with emotional authenticity and significant contextual ambiguity to emerge, allowing audience engagement through the subtleties of interaction. Matt is fortunate to be performing tonight's scenes with **Meg Wilde**, an accomplished actor, director and improviser.

THE CONSEQUENCES

by **Ben Francis**, directed by **Guy Smith**

Stan (**Harry Miller**) is a murderer serving a life sentence. Byron (**Ben Francis**) is his warder. But Byron is more than his warder, he's his friend; more than a friend, he's his agent, trying to manage his client's image to the outside world. But frustratingly, in a world where murderers are media stars, Stan doesn't seem to see his star potential. Stan also gives away all the gifts that people send him, and you can't do that in prison. Byron realises that Stan will have to be taught a lesson...



Give nothing away. Take what you can get. Or you take the consequences.

The Consequences is an excerpt from a full length play that is an updating of *The Money Order*, a story by Tolstoy.

COMPOSERS' NIGHT — Tuesday 23 July, 7:30

FROM THE SOUL TO THE STAVE

An open discussion and deep dive into the nuanced world of writing original music for theatre with composers

Oleta Haffner and Emerson Bramwell.

Oleta Haffner is a composer for visual media based in the UK. She incorporates her passion for storytelling through her music and has collaborated with directors for films, animations, web series, theatre productions, and dance.

Oleta served on the film music jury for the Ivor Novello Awards 2023 and was a panelist on Abbey Road Equalise 2023. She was one of the inaugural AMPAS Jonas Gwangwa Composition Initiative winners, which aims to foster broader representation in the film-music industry with an emphasis on Black British talent.



Emerson Bramwell has been performing and composing music for over 20 years. Over the last five, he has composed soundtracks and sound plots for multiple productions at The Questors and other theatres. With a strong sense of the cinematic and story-telling, Emerson loves working with epic, immersive sound. He and a fellow collaborator run EnGarde Music – a production team dedicated to creating music and sound for stories.



THROUGH IRISH EYES — Wed 24 July 7:30

Warm Up: poetry with **Michael Harris** and special guests

BETRAYAL

by **Peter Gould**, directed by **Lucy Aley-Parker**

Danny: **Ben Connaughton**

Tom McGlone: **Iain Reid**

The Leader: **Caroline Ash**

Cathy McGlone: **Holly Gillanders**

Mairead: **Fionna Gough**

The Priest: **Mark Redrup**

TV Reporter: **Victoria Smith**

Radio Newsreader: **Lucy Aley-Parker**

Betrayal is set in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Two young IRA recruits kidnap a local schoolteacher, Tom McGlone, accused of being a police informer. His captors, Danny and Mairead, were both in his class at school.



They, like everyone else in their community, know that the penalty for betraying the IRA is death. But can they kill their teacher? The play explores the conflicting loyalties within the Nationalist community in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Danny and Mairead are pulled in different directions by ties to family and community, religion and the politics of the Republican cause. Who really commands their loyalty? The first part of the play, which

explores their personal dilemma, was staged by QExtra early in 2020, shortly before the pandemic. This expanded version moves the story on to the Good Friday Agreement, which brought an end to decades of violence. But what is the price of peace for those who survived the Troubles?

WILDE IN LOVE

devised and directed by **Guy Smith**

Following his disastrous downfall and enduring solitary confinement in Reading Jail, Oscar Wilde (**James Burgess**) tries to make sense of his calamitous double life. He still loves Constance (**Priya Patel**), his loyal and devoted wife and the mother of his two young sons, yet he remains obsessed by his fatal infatuation for Bosie (Lord Alfred Douglas – **Guy Jack**), the young man who led to his ruination. But in the depths of his despair solace comes from an unlikely source. A kind-hearted turnkey, Warder Thomas Martin (**Robert Baker-Glenn**), befriends Prisoner 4099 and helps him to come to terms with the harsh prison regime and renew his faith in human nature.

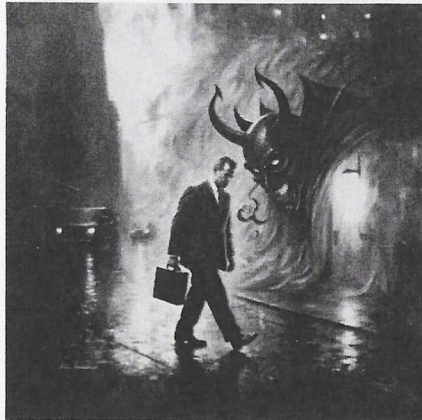


THE DEVIL'S DAY – Thursday 25 July 7:30

THE DEVIL MAKES WORK FOR IDLE HANDS

written and directed by **Martin Choules**

with **Omar Aga, Lily Baker, Alex Hunter, Sara Mearza, Pascal Orzabal**



"The life of the modern office drudge can seem pretty hellish, as can the fruitless chase for something better. I have always been wary of surrealism, as I find it often comes across as a series of sketches with no emotional meaning, much as the crazy characters come and go. But I also wanted to give it a try, to see if we can't have a stable central character with which we can all identify, in a situation where absurdity is half-expected. And then give him a fever as an excuse for what follows..."

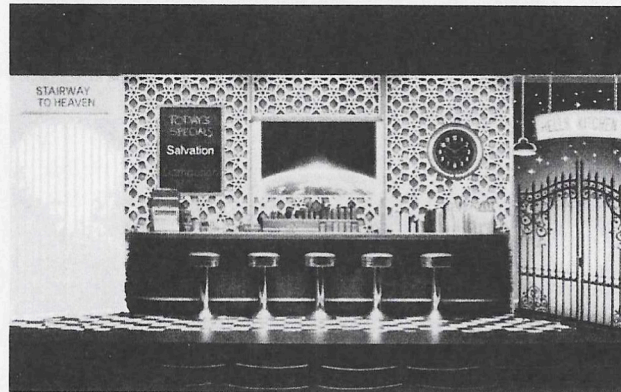
Martin Choules

THE WEIGH STATION

by **Rick Gustafson**, directed by **Anna Fiscus**

Set in a nineteen-fifties' styled diner approximately five-hundred years into the future, *The Weigh Station* dramatises the battle between God and the devil for heaven's final soul.

Malak: **Guy Jack**
God: **Paul James**
Sarah: **Priya Patel**
Jacob: **Stephan Mirre**
Grim Reaper: **Nicki Wild**
Sephtis: **Diego Fonjac**



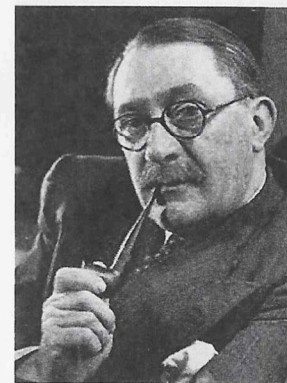
SPECIAL H – Friday 26 July 7:30

Warm Up: Poetry with **Martin Choules**

A themed evening written and directed by **David Hovatter** and featuring two former favourites of cultural nourishment.

"The two short plays I'm presenting here are about two celebrities of the 1960s: Hattie Jacques and Gilbert Harding.

"The Hattie Jacques piece is called *Hat's House* and resembles the TV sitcom *Sykes*, in which Jacques and Eric Sykes played twins. There was one episode where they were handcuffed, and I'm using that premise to dramatise the ménage-a-trois that Hattie found herself in when she had an affair with her chauffeur while married to John Le Mesurier, and they all lived in the same house in Earls Court.



"The Harding piece is called *What's My Gilbert?* and takes a real-life incident in the life of gameshow celebrity, Gilbert Harding, who was famous for his irascible appearances on the popular panel show, *What's My Line?* (in which a panel of four celebrities had to guess the occupations of contestants – usually members of the public – from a mime). Gilbert was a closeted homosexual who picked up rent boys, and who, on one occasion, had his clothes stolen, and had to get the studio to bring him some more so that he could appear on TV that night.

Alison Griffin is Hattie

John Dobson is John Le Mesurier

Jerome Joseph Kennedy is the chauffeur, John Schofield

Mark Redrup is the local policeman, Corky

Paul Collins is Gilbert Harding

Dominic Creed is the rent boy.

Robyn Backhouse is doing sound, **Andrew Whadcoat** is doing lights and I'm directing my own pieces."

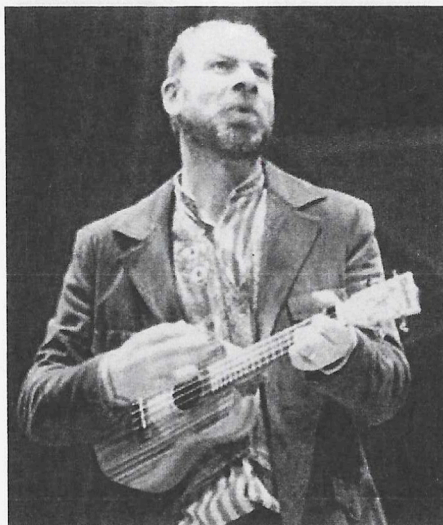
David Hovatter

A CHORUS TO CLOSE – Saturday 27 July 7:30

Warm Up: Poetry with David Erdos

SONGS TO SAVOUR

With all the best theatrical writing aspiring to a musical resonance, what better way to end the week than with a specially commissioned gig from **Matthew Saldanha's The Fleeting**, with glorious support from Creative Polymath, **Julian Smith**?



All original Folk Rock live in the Studio! Fresh from recording their debut album overseas, **The Fleeting** are elated to be closing the QExtra Writers' Week with an hour of original music featuring all of their forthcoming and best-loved songs.

<https://linktr.ee/thefleeting>



THE QEXTRA TEAM

Creative Producer/Director	David Erdos
Associate Director/Marketing	Peter Gould
Head of Lighting	Andrew Whadcoat
Head of Sound	James Connor
Sound Operators	Martin Choules, Robyn Backhouse, Emerson Bramwell
Associate Directors	Anna Fiscus, Anayis N Der Hakopian, Guy Smith, Martin Choules, David Hovatter, Lucy Aley-Parker, Julian Smith
Associates	Oleta Haffner, Emerson Bramwell, Stuart Watson, Sarah Sharpe, Nick Barth, Angela Barth, Michael Harris, Ben Francis, Nigel Bamford, Priya Patel, Ant Foran, James Burgess

COMING UP – NEXT SEASON IN QEXTRA

Pitshanger Poets Open Mic Nights; sound design; film and composer workshops and recitals; new play readings; a restaging of Geoff Webb's *Account*; workshops on the Monologue and One Person Play; Sensibility, Style and Theatre Poetics; Directing for Stage and Screen; and submitted member events alongside of PAGE, the Playwrights Appreciation Group – Step 1: Exploration.

Want to submit your work?

Email enquiries@questors.org.uk