

## 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](http://questors.org.uk).

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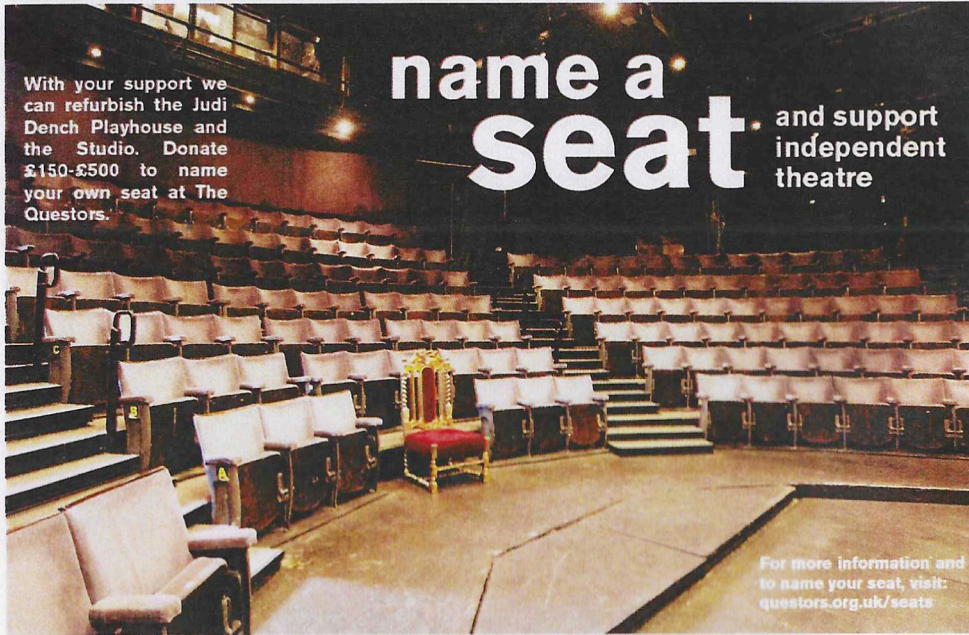
The Questors  
THEATRE

JUDI DENCH PLAYHOUSE

SINGLE  
SPIES

22-30 MARCH

TWO PLAYS BY  
ALAN  
BENNETT



## 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](http://questors.org.uk/grapevine) for more details.



image: Carla Evans

# SINGLE SPIES

Two plays by Alan Bennett

The Judi Dench Playhouse

22 – 30 March 2024

# SINGLE SPIES

It's not hard to understand the appeal that the Cambridge spies of the 1930s and 1940s continue to exert on the British imagination. Their stories are set in the corridors of power in Westminster and Washington, and involve astounding acts of espionage, the systematic betrayal of close friends, and lots of sex – both gay and straight. Small wonder they still command the attention of novelists, playwrights and biographers.

There were five of them altogether, and four of these belonged to an elite group which had been raised to become part of the British ruling class. They had attended leading English public schools, and had been educated at a University that has supplied the United Kingdom with 14 of its Prime Ministers. One of them was even a cousin of the late Queen Mother.

Astoundingly, when they left University, they seemed to move effortlessly into the key institutions of the British Establishment: the Foreign Office, the BBC, Oxbridge and, in time, the Intelligence agencies.

In *Single Spies* – the title comes from the quotation from *Hamlet*, "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions" – Alan Bennett relates two fascinatingly entertaining stories. The first, *An Englishman Abroad* is based on true events and the second, *A Question of Attribution*, is entirely fictional. In both he mixes his signature dry wit with rueful sadness.

*An Englishman Abroad* came out of a play Bennett had on in the West End in 1977. The play was called *The Old Country* and starred Alec Guinness, who played a Foreign Office defector now living in exile outside Moscow. In the course of the run of the play, various friends and well-wishers went backstage, often with reminiscences of similar spies, like Guy Burgess and Kim Philby. The most notable of these was Coral Browne who, at the time, Bennett did not know but who told him about meeting Guy Burgess in Moscow in 1958 and of the particular incidents that make up this play.

The picture of the elegant actress and the seedy exile sitting in a dingy Moscow flat for a long afternoon listening again and again to Jack Buchanan singing "Who stole my heart away?" seemed to Bennett funny and sad. But it was a few years before he got to writing it up. It was only when he sent the first draft to Coral Browne that he found that she had kept not merely Burgess' letters thanking her for running him errands but also her original notes of his measurements and even his cheque, uncashed and for £6/0s/0d, to treat her and one of her fellow actors to lunch at Le Caprice.

Burgess longed to come back to England. He wasn't allowed to because it was never plain what he could have been charged with and he might well have compromised too many of his former associates in the Foreign Office.

*A Question of Attribution* is a play about Sir Anthony Blunt who, as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures, was personal art adviser to Queen Elizabeth II. In 1964, after being offered immunity from prosecution, Blunt confessed to having been a spy for the Soviet Union. His confession – a closely guarded secret for years – was revealed publicly by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in November 1979 and he was stripped of his knighthood. It was at that point that, on spec, Bennett made some notes of the kind of conversation Blunt and The Queen might have had as he was hanging a picture in Buckingham Palace. This later became the heart of the play Bennett wrote for The National Theatre in 1988. The painting at the centre of the play is actually a painting in the Royal Collection; *A Triple Portrait* attributed to Titian. Originally the painting had only included two figures. Cleaning revealed a third figure. An X-ray revealed a fourth figure and when the painting was revolved there was the shadow of a fifth figure. The analogy with the Cambridge Spies seemed obvious to Bennett. So, the first two figures stand in for the original two defectors, Burgess and Maclean, and the third figure the next defector, Kim Philby. The fourth figure is Blunt and the fifth figure is ... well, who knows?

It was this painting and related historical matters which provided the framework of the play, though the deeply ambiguous conversation The Queen has with Blunt is at its heart. Blunt himself remained a fascinating figure; hated by some of his colleagues, adored by others. Bennett admits that he never met or even saw him but, as with Burgess, he felt more kindly towards him because he made such good jokes.

In my researches into the protagonists of both plays, the following works have proved invaluable, not just for their fascinating and detailed content but for the easily accessible style in which they are written.

*Stalin's Englishman – The Lives of Guy Burgess* by Andrew Lownie

*Anthony Blunt: His Lives* by Miranda Carter

*Coral Browne – This Effing Lady* by Rose Collis

And, of course, Bennett's own writings and diaries, *Writing Home*, *Untold Stories* and *Keeping On Keeping On* are deep wells of priceless, sparkling anecdotes and observations.

**Simon Meadon, Director**

# SINGLE SPIES

Two plays by Alan Bennett

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 22 March 2024

## CAST

in order of appearance

### An Englishman Abroad

Coral Browne	<b>Carol Fullilove</b>
Guy Burgess	<b>Simon Roberts</b>
Tolya	<b>Dumitru Stratulat</b>
Tailor	<b>Simon Higginson</b>
Shop Assistant	<b>Craig Nightingale</b>

The action is set in 1958 in and around Guy Burgess' flat in Moscow and in two London shops.

### A Question of Attribution

Anthony Blunt	<b>Francis Lloyd</b>
Restorer	<b>Dan Dawes</b>
Chubb	<b>Adam Kimmel</b>
Phillips	<b>Quinn Goodliffe</b>
Colin	<b>Dominic Reed</b>
HMQ	<b>Kate Langston</b>

The action is set in 1968 in Anthony Blunt's office at The Courtauld Institute and a corridor in Buckingham Palace.

*An Englishman Abroad* runs approximately 50 minutes.

*A Question of Attribution* runs approximately 1 hour 15 minutes.

There will be a 20-minute interval between plays.

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	<b>Simon Meadon</b>
Set Designers	<b>Bron Blake, Roger Brace</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Nichola Thomas</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Mark White</b>
Sound Technician	<b>James Connor</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Douglas Willis</b>
Deputy Stage Manager	<b>Sarah Clopet</b>
Assistant Stage Managers	<b>Jennifer Kerr, Paula Robinson, Diego Fonjac, Oliver Taylor, Mia Biagio</b>
Properties	<b>Joanna Mludzinska</b>
Portrait Graphics	<b>Geoff Moore</b>
Rehearsal Prompter	<b>Bridgett Stevens</b>
Hair and Make-Up	<b>Peter Wang, Claire Stokes</b>
Projections	<b>Mike Chislett</b>
Lighting/Sound Operator	<b>Emma Hunt</b>
Lighting Riggers	<b>Alasdair Graebner, John Green</b>
Set Realisation	<b>Sue Collins, Ian Black, Dennis Dracup, Monica Lomas, Peter Salvietto, Stephen Souchon, Derek Stoddart</b>
Get-In Assistance	<b>Ignatius Crean, Tina Harris, Doug King</b>
Photographer	<b>Robert Vass</b>

Thanks to: **John Davey, Michael Eppy, Carla Evans, Annie Harries, Sue Peckitt, Jenny Richardson, Sarah Stoddart, the Wednesday Sewing Group, Alphabet Books ebay store, Annie Eastland Park, Caroline Davies of The Racehorse Association Ltd, Charlie Button of Henry Poole & Co (Savile Row), Charles Moore of Wiggin & Co (Solicitors), Goldonyi Music (St Mary's Road, Ealing), Catherine Mould of Philip Mould Ltd, Kall Kwik (Chiswick)**

# Biographies

## **Carol Fullilove – Coral Browne**

Carol joined The Questors as an acting member in 2000. Her many productions include *The Birthday Party*, *A Memory of Water*, *Playhouse Creatures*, *Look Back in Anger*, *A View from the Bridge*, *The Village Bike*, *The Effect*, *King Charles III*, *Little Dorrit*, *Dead Boy Café* and *The Herd*.

## **Simon Roberts – Guy Burgess**

Simon's previous roles at The Questors include Lopakhin in *The Cherry Orchard*, Vladimir in *Waiting for Godot*, Ray Say in *Little Voice* and Solness in *The Master Builder*. His adaptation of Patrick Hamilton's novel *The Slaves of Solitude* will receive its premiere at The Questors in May.

## **Dumitru Stratulat – Tolya**

Dumitru has been part of The Questors for six years – first in Student Group 73 and now as an acting member. He appeared in the panto *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight*, and plays such as *Quietus*, *An Invitation to Three Murders* and *The Physicists*.

## **Simon Higginson – Tailor**

Simon has been a member of The Questors for 40 years, and *Single Spies* is his 29th production – which include *Abigail's Party*, *ENRON*, *The Ladykillers*, *Dear Brutus* and a couple of pantos; most recently having a ball in *Treasure Island*.

## **Craig Nightingale – Shop Assistant**

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 third show following *The White Carnation* (Sir Horace Duncan) and *The Physicists* (Newton). Craig has worked extensively in theatre and television in the UK and Austria.

## **Francis Lloyd – Anthony Blunt**

Francis has been an actor and director at The Questors for nearly 30 years. Parts include Vanya (*Uncle Vanya*), Henry Carr (*Travesties*), Dr Wicksteed (*Habeas Corpus*) and, more recently, Victor (*Private Lives*) and Pierrepont (*Hangmen*). The last play he directed was *The White Carnation* and he will be directing Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* at the beginning of next season.

## **Dan Dawes – Restorer**

Dan worked in theatre for ten years, co-founding the company Idle Discourse, and now works as a narrative designer in the gaming industry. He has worked on multiple plays at The Questors as an actor or director. He also ran Questival, a bi-annual new writing festival, was the Director of Studies for the Acting for All classes and sat on the Board of Trustees.

## **Adam Kimmel – Chubb**

Adam was last seen at The Questors as Gordon in *Neville's Island*. Before that, he was Roberto in *Death and the Maiden*, Robert in *Blue/Orange*, Major Steve Arnold in *Taking Sides* and Peter in *The Last of the Haussmans*. Prior to The Questors, he performed in numerous plays on the London Fringe and on tour.

## **Quinn Goodliffe – Phillips**

Quinn's first part at The Questors was in *The Duchess of Malfi* in 2014 and he attended Questors Youth Theatre. He has been acting here ever since including in Shakespeare, panto and new plays. He has also directed productions, most recently at the QWho event.

## **Dominic Reed – Colin**

*Single Spies* is Dominic's first production at The Questors. He has appeared in *A Dream Play* at Tower Theatre and in New Stagers' production of *The House Amongst the Willows*. He gained acting experience with Acting Coach Scotland and the Tron Theatre Glasgow. He is a published writer, with stories in *Thi Wurd*, *Flash Frontier* and *The Los Angeles Review*. He was shortlisted for the 2020 Alpine Fellowship Writing Prize and won third prize in the 2021 Fractured Lit Flash Fiction prize.

## **Kate Langston – HMQ**

Kate joined The Questors in 2003. Most recently she has been seen as Amanda in *Private Lives* and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

## **Simon Meadon – Director**

Simon is returning to The Questors after a thirty year absence, during which time he produced over fifty West End and Broadway shows. His previous Questors directing and co-directing credits include *Lark Rise*, *Marat/Sade*, *On the Razzle*, *Too Clever by Half* and *A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur*.

## **Bron Blake – Set Designer**

Bron has been a member since the early 1970s, doing set design and scenic art since 2004. Her 30+ designs include *The Seagull*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Broken Glass*, *Doctor Faustus*, *The School of Night*, *Betrayal*, *Rope*, *The Master Builder*, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, *Endgame*, *God of Carnage*, *The Ghost Train*, *A Doll's House*, *Arcadia* and *You Can't Take It With You*.

## **Roger Brace – Set Designer**

Since rejoining The Questors in 2022 Roger has been involved in set realisation/construction for several productions and is now co-designer for *Single Spies*. Roger joined The Questors in 1978 initially working with the lighting department. Subsequently he was involved in set construction and stage management. He served as Stage Director for several years.

**Nichola Thomas – Costume Designer**

Specialising in period shows from the 1920s to 1950s, Nichola has been the costume designer on over 30 shows in the last 20 years, including *Shadowlands*, *Present Laughter*, *Blue Remembered Hills*, *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The White Carnation*.

**Mark White – Lighting Designer**

Mark has been lighting stages, people and other surfaces for over four decades. He is a Professional Member of the Association of Lighting Production and Design, and sits on the Executive Committee. He was a recipient of the Knights of Illumination Award for a Lifetime Achievement in Lighting Design in 2009.

**Doug Willis – Stage Manager**

Since joining The Questors, Doug has worked in various stage management roles. In the last few years, he has been the Stage Manager for the productions of *Apologia* and *A Doll's House*.

**Sarah Clopet – Deputy Stage Manager**

Sarah has been involved in The Questors over 16 years covering most aspects of backstage work including set construction, scenic painting, lighting and sound, assistant, deputy and stage management. Her most recent plays as deputy stage manager or stage manager are *The Physicists*, *Albion*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

**Joanna Mludzinska – Properties**

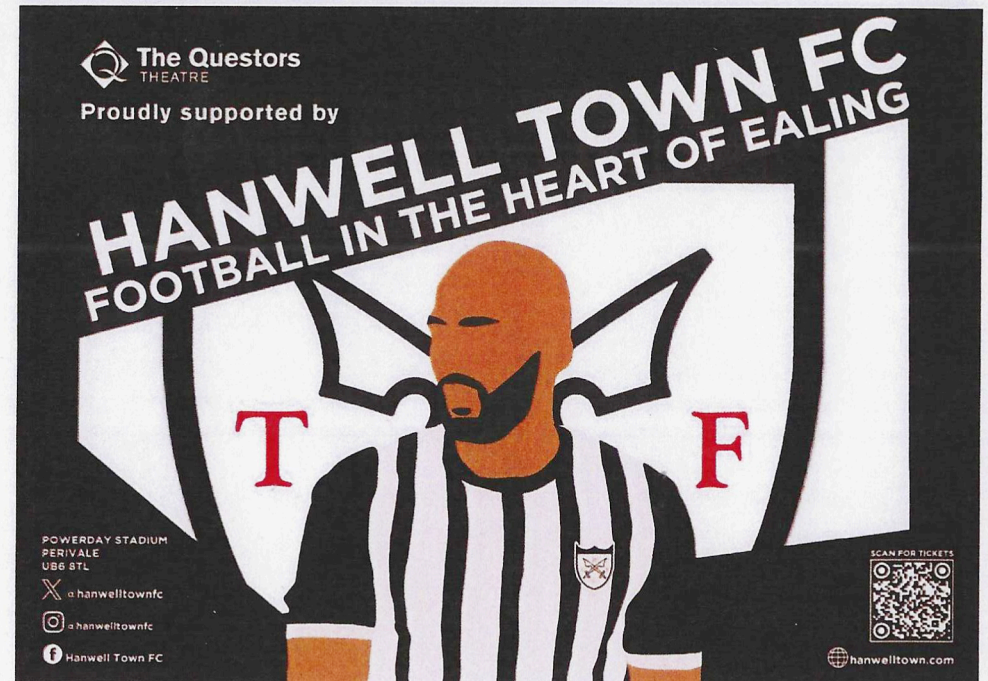
Joanna has been involved with theatre from an early age, moving from acting through stage management to production, mostly in the London Polish community. She was Director of Syrena Polish Children's and Youth Theatre for 17 years and produced seven operas for POSK Polish Opera. At The Questors she has so far done props and stage management.

**Sue Collins – Set Realisation**

Sue has been a member of The Questors for many years. In that time, she has been the SM for numerous productions, DSM and props. In recent years Sue has become involved in helping with set realization. She is delighted to be joining the design team for *Single Spies*.

**Emma Hunt – Lighting and Sound Operator**

Although she only joined The Questors 15 months ago, *Single Spies* is Emma's sixth Questors show! Previous roles include DSM on *Murder on the Nile*, *Treasure Island* and *Whispers in the Wings*, and Lighting Designer on *Low Level Panic*. Previous lighting design credits include *Lightning Thief* (French Woods Festival), *Legally Blonde* (Edinburgh University Savoy Opera Group), *Chicago* (Edinburgh University Footlights) and *Three Sisters* (Edinburgh University Theatre Company).



## Next at The Questors

**JULIUS CAESAR**

by William Shakespeare

26 April – 4 May 2024

The Judi Dench Playhouse

A modern reimagining of Shakespeare's classic. Populism. Polarisation. Post-Truth. Caesar returns to Rome in triumph and is set to tear the Republic apart. The Senators, Brutus and Cassius conspire to assassinate him to save their democracy; but with no plan for what comes after. Differing motives become apparent when principles collide with jealousies and an inescapable political truth. The ambitious Mark Antony turns public opinion against the assassins and plunges the state into civil war.

**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*.