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All Questors productions are created, performed and run by volunteers! You too can get involved in:



To volunteer, join The Questors Theatre club for as little as £15 per year. As a member you'll get:

- To work on productions as an actor* or backstage
- Membership of the Grapevine members' bar
- Special invitations and offers
- Member voting rights
- Access to our members' website

£25

Standard*

£15

Concessions*

*All Club Membership periods are 1 year. Members must be over 18. To perform in productions, members must audition to become a part of our acting company. Concession rates apply for under-30s, 65+ and benefit recipients.

questors.org.uk/join

The Questors Theatre 12 Mattock Lane, London, W5 5BQ. Registered charity no 207516.

The Questors
THEATRE

a number

by Caryl Churchill



19-27 September 2025
The Studio

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**The Questors
THEATRE**

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by sponsoring one of the brand new seats in our iconic
Judi Dench Playhouse.

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THE GRAPEVINE BAR

The Grapevine, our award-winning bar, is open to members of The Questors Theatre and audience members with a valid ticket.

Our friendly bar is managed and staffed entirely by volunteers.

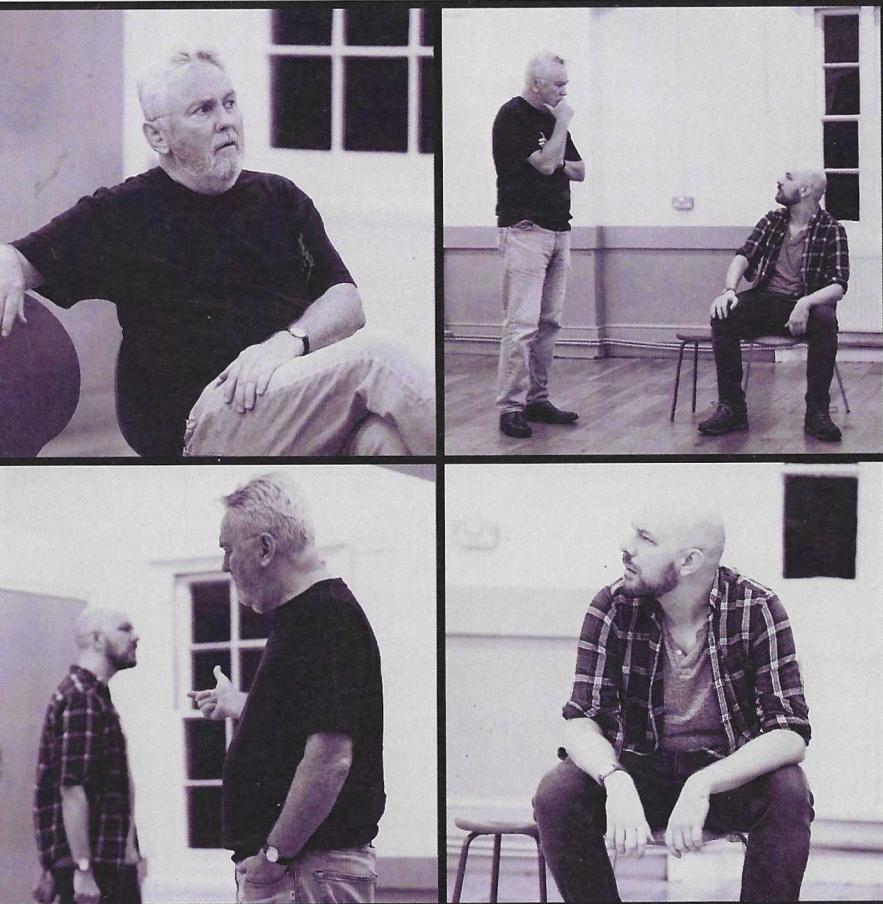
We are proud of the quality of our real ales, we appear in the 2025 edition of The Good Beer Guide and we are CAMRA West Middlesex Club of the Year. We also provide a range of draught lagers and ciders, as well as wines, spirits and soft drinks – all at very reasonable prices.

Opening Hours:

Mon – Sat: 7pm – 11pm

Sun: 1pm – 3pm

questors.org.uk/grapevine



Images: Kanako Hata

A NUMBER

by Caryl Churchill

The Studio

19-27 September

This amateur production of 'A Number' is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

A Number by Caryl Churchill explores human cloning and identity... and so much more.

The ethical, moral, social, and physiological risks associated with human cloning mean that it remains universally condemned. With the cloning of a sheep known as Dolly in 1996, the idea of human cloning resurfaced as a hot subject for speculation and discussion.

This science somewhat passed me by; Dolly was front page news, but I didn't link this to the potential for human cloning... But doing a bit of research for directing this play, I discovered quite a lot of interesting, and disturbing facts, both scientific and internationally political.

There is quite a history of cloning research — far too much to quote here! But suffice to say that Dolly wasn't alone in the animal kingdom, and the cloning of primates in 2018 was a significant development when two Macaque monkeys were cloned in the same way as Dolly.

But in 2005 the United Nations passed a non-binding Declaration on Human Cloning that member states should "adopt all measures necessary to prohibit all forms of human cloning inasmuch as they are incompatible with human dignity and the protection of human life."

So, in most countries human cloning is illegal for reproductive purposes - i.e. to make another human. Some allow therapeutic cloning of human embryos - for research purposes into disease cure and prevention.

However, although most countries have legislation that makes reproductive cloning illegal, and quite a few that allow regulated 'therapeutic' cloning, a lot of countries have no legislation in place at all! So it looks like the scientists could probably do what they like, depending on where they based themselves...

Nature vs Nurture

The other aspect that *A Number* highlights is the concept of Nature vs Nurture. Experts debate the relative contributions nature and nurture play in who we are. Whether nature or nurture plays a bigger role in personality and development is one of the oldest philosophical debates within psychology. They both clearly play a role in our unique character traits and behaviours. But it is the interaction between our genetics and hereditary and environmental factors, including relationships and experiences, that are the most influential. The nature-nurture debate is concerned with the relative contribution that both influences make to human behaviour, such as personality, cognitive traits, temperament and psychopathology.

A Number illuminates this head-on. Genetically identical sons have different life experiences, and their personalities have developed quite differently. This definitely creates the drama, and illustrates just how significant our childhood experiences, environmental factors and learning shape our personalities and behaviours.

The concept of human cloning drew me to the play, being a bit of a SciFi /futuristic science fan! But on closer inspection — and I do mean closer — of the dialogue and relationships that are portrayed here, I realised that the nature/nurture consequences following on from the cloning of the son was the most riveting aspect. Finding out you've been cloned, or are one of a number of clones, is surely a life altering environmental factor of the highest order! Add this to the backdrop of upbringing, social and family relationships and surroundings, and you have a recipe for a very complex human personality. It is not surprising that there are behavioural flaws and coping mechanisms displayed in all the characters, specifically the sons.

Caryl Churchill

This intriguing play by innovative playwright Caryl Churchill is on par with her prolific catalogue of thought-provoking work, many that challenge abuses of power, sexual politics and feminist themes. She has won numerous awards and accolades for her work, from the late 1950s to the 2010s, and the Caryl Churchill Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London, in Egham was named in honour of Churchill in 2013. She has adapted her own plays for radio and television, in addition to specifically written TV and radio dramas, as well as her rich body of work for the theatre. She served as resident dramatist at the Royal Court Theatre from 1974 to 1975, and was the Royal Court's first female playwright in residence.

A Number was written in 2002, and won Churchill her third Obie for playwriting in 2005. Her adapted screenplay of *A Number* was shown on BBC TV in September 2008.

It has been a privilege to work on this complex and mesmerising script. The text allows for interpretation, while also being prescriptive in the way it is written and punctuated. Myself and my two actors have delved deep into the text, and discoveries have been a daily delight - and sometimes even a eureka moment. You'll not realise any of this as you watch it, of course. But we did have many a brainstorm of possibilities and an immense amount of fun.

I'd like to thank my very excellent team of Creatives, Stage Management and crew, who have been extraordinary in the build up to this production. They are testament to the community of The Questors Theatre and all it stands for. Their professionalism and commitment to excellence is admirable and I thank them hugely for their help.

I trust you will enjoy this quite short, but intensely thought-provoking play, and be discussing it at length in the Grapevine afterwards!

Lucy Aley-Parker
Director — *A Number*

A NUMBER

by Caryl Churchill

First performance of this production at
The Questors Theatre: 19 September 2025

CAST

Salter	Robert Gordon Clark
Bernard 1 & 2, Michael	James Burgess

The play is set the same throughout. It's where Salter lives.

The performance lasts approximately 65 minutes with no interval.

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Michael Ibbison for providing bespoke edition art print of 'Siblings' from his series 'Seed'. More info at
<https://www.eamesfineart.com/>

To Robyn Backhouse for original song composition 'One'.

To Alex Marker for design advice.

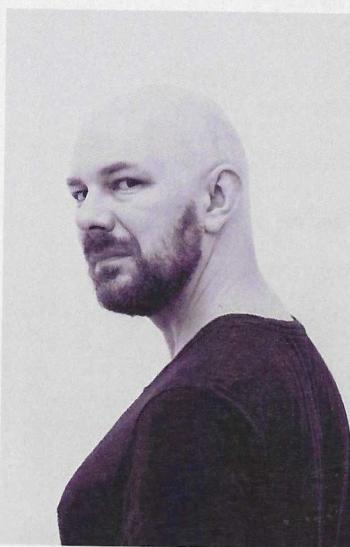
Thanks also to The Questors Theatre Marketing department, and all those in the Questors office.

PRODUCTION TEAM

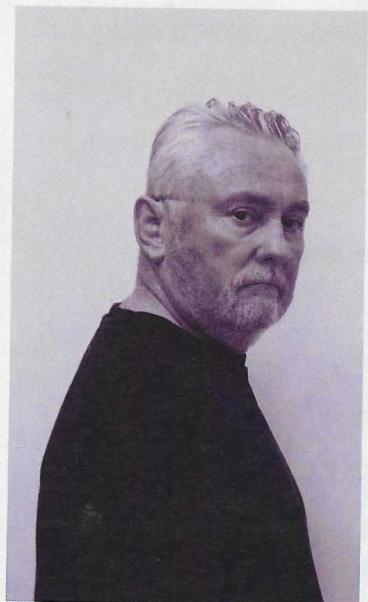
Director	Lucy Aley-Parker
Lighting Designer	John Green
Sound Designer/Composer	Robyn Backhouse
Costume Designer	Nichola Thomas
Set Designer	Lucy Aley-Parker
Deputy Stage Manager	Sarah Louise Clopet
Stage Management team	Guy Smith, Eleanor Wilson, Jane Casey
Prompters	Guy Smith, Jane Casey
Lighting Riggers	Andrew Whadcoat, John Green
Lighting & Sound Operator	Sydney Stevens, Robyn Backhouse
Show Videographer	Robyn Backhouse
Set Realisation and Get-in	Roger Brace, Gareth Williams, Guy Smith, Bronwyn Blake, Derek Stoddart, Su Smee, Rani Singh, Nikoleta Stefanova
Furniture & Frame Maker	Gareth Williams
Upholsterer	Jenny Webb
Musical Composition for Trailer	Paul Whiting
Photographer	Kanako Hata
Community Captioner	Michael Eppy

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



James Burgess - Bernard 1 & 2, Michael
James trained as an actor at Drama Studio London. His roles at The Questors include: Aegeus in *Medea*; Cassius in *Julius Caesar*; 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*. Other theatre includes: Aeneas in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*; Subtle in *The Alchemist* (Rose Playhouse); Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* (On The Rocks Festival); Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost* (Touring).



Robert Gordon Clark - Salter
Over 40 years at Questors, recent roles include Mr Bennet (Pride and Prejudice), Dr Frobisher (The Browning Version), Joe Ryan (When the Rain Stops Falling), Colonel Pickering (Pygmalion) and Paul Walters (Albion). For PlayGC Theatre Company, Geoff (Tonight will be a Memory too), Charles Prime (Six Bad Poets - also featuring James Burgess at The Playground Theatre, London) and John (The Letter of Last Resort) on UK tour and at Jermyn Street Theatre, London. His play Can't Kill the Spirit was staged at Waterloo East Theatre, London in July, directed by Lucy Aley-Parker. Delighted to be working with James Burgess again and thanks, as ever, to Lisa Day.

BIOGRAPHIES

Lucy Aley-Parker - Director

After acting in various Questors shows, Lucy went on to direct. After initially directing Overnight Plays, Questival, QExtra and New Writing events, she directed *Grimm Tales* and *Animal Farm* for QYT, and took on the challenge of co-directing Alan Ayckbourn's *House & Garden* with Pam Redrup. This was followed by *Days of Significance* by Roy Williams, for which she filmed 2 scenes set in 'Iraq' and projected them to avoid scene changes, Theresa Rebeck's *The Water's Edge*, a play inspired by Agamemnon, *Murder on the Nile* - Questors' first Agatha Christie, and the adaptation of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*. Thanks to Questors, she has returned to professional acting and works on various professional productions, alongside commercial, film, TV and voice over work as it comes along!

Robyn Backhouse - Sound Designer/Composer

Previous sound designs include *The Welkin*, *Slaves of Solitude*, *Tom Jones*, and *Boudica* (and composed and produced most of the music herself). Robyn has also worked on a number of smaller shows including *Slack Captains*, *Tin Tin* and *Hat's House*. She loves rigging and programming lights, and ran the lighting for *Emma* in Walpole Park. A freelance AV technician, she also runs a local monthly music venue, and live sound music events. In her spare time she's a singer songwriter who loves all genres of music, but her favourites are country and western, and blues.

Sarah Louise Clopet - Deputy Stage Manager

Sarah has been involved in Questors for twenty years starting in work experience in the office and covering most aspects of backstage work including set construction, costume, scenic painting, lighting and sound, assistant, deputy and stage management. She trained on the Technical Theatre and Stage Management course at R.A.D.A for one year. Her most recent plays as Deputy Stage Manager include *Emma*, *Relatively Speaking*, *Lionboy*, *The Mystery of Fellstone Manor*, *Medea*, *The Pillowman* and *Single Spies*.

BIOGRAPHIES

John Green - Lighting Designer

John has had a lifelong interest in the use of light to sculpt a space, set a mood and direct the eye. In his twelve years as a member of Questors he has taken on a number of show lighting roles. Shows as Lighting Designer in the last few years include *Dead Boy Cafe*, *How To Spot An Alien*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Whispers in the Wings*, *Tom Jones*, *The Welkin* and *Posh*.

Nichola Thomas - Costume Designer

Nichola has worked on various shows over the last 20 years at Questors, including productions such as *Shadowlands*, *Burnt By the Sun*, *Endgame*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Single Spies*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Posh*. She has a particular interest in costuming shows for the period from 1920 to 1960.

UP NEXT

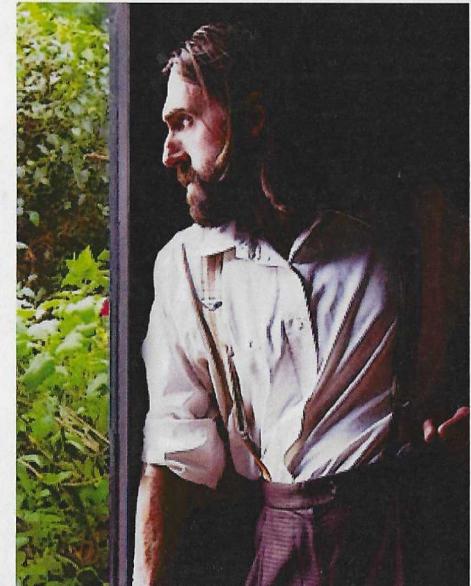
Strictly Murder

by Brian Clemens

April 1939. Peter and Suzy's quiet life in Provence seems far removed from the political hotbed of Europe, but their peace is interrupted when war comes knocking on their door – literally.

This thriller moves with the intensity of an approaching army and never gives away its next move.

26 September - 4 October
The Playhouse



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Get up to **50% off** tickets to in-house Questors productions with a Season Pass!

Season Pass prices:

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Joint (for 2 people): £90 per year

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A £10 minimum ticket price applies to standard tickets and £8 concession. Pantomime not included.

Find out more and become a Season Pass holder by visiting our Box Office or going to questors.org.uk/season_pass

Hindle Wakes

by Stanley Houghton

It's 1912 and the residents of Hindle, Lancashire are enjoying their annual holiday. Spirited mill girl Fanny claims to have spent the weekend with her friend Mary in Blackpool, but a tragedy uncovers the truth. Pressured by her parents and society to 'do the right thing', she decides to do what's right for herself instead.



17-25 October
The Studio