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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

*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.

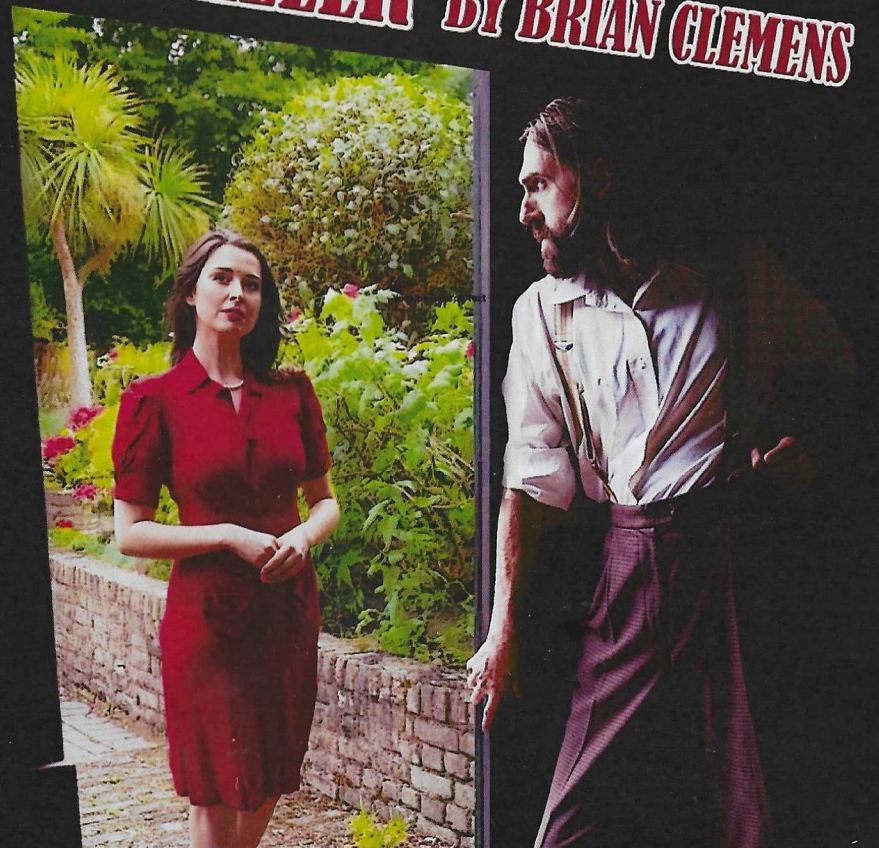
questors.org.uk/join

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

 The Questors
THEATRE

STRICTLY MURDER

A THRILLER BY BRIAN CLEMENS



26 September - 4 October 2025

The 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: Robert Vass

STRICTLY MURDER

by Brian Clemens

The Playhouse

26 September - 4 October

This amateur production of "Strictly Murder" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Strictly Murder is first and foremost a thriller, a genre that is historically linked closely to theatre. Even the longest-running show in the West End, *The Mousetrap*, is a thriller, although the two scripts take a very different approach to the genre. In Clemens' own words "It's not so much a murder mystery because we sort of know whodunit, but we're not sure why? [It's a] what the hell's going on dunnit," an approach I can't help but adore.

Brian Clemens, known most widely for *The Avengers* (1961) and *The Professionals* (1977), is no stranger to thrillers, having even released an anthology television series called "Thriller" (1973) and several plays and books in the genre. *Strictly Murder* was first performed on 26 February 2006 at the Mill at Sonning Theatre, and has had a good few revivals since.

Mystery

Something which captured my attention with this script is Clemens' focus on the mystery and characters, drip-feeding us information that gives us enough time to adjust to and enjoy each new perspective on the events while not leaving us without a good twist for too long. The characters themselves have a wonderful duality to them, each torn in (at least) two directions throughout the course of the play, meaning depending on when we catch them, or who we catch them with, we can have a completely different understanding of who they are.

Another aspect which drew me to the play was its setting, Provence, France in 1939 - right in the build-up to the Second World War. Clemens explained this choice in an interview with the BBC, where he said that modern technology can limit the availability of action in thrillers: "DNA and hand held phones

mean that you can no longer have the vicar doing it in the library. So I've gone back to the time when technology was still in its infancy" - leaving more room to tell the story through characterisation.

In the case of *Strictly Murder*, I think that there's more to it than that. The setting is its own character and reminders of the coming war and clashing ideologies are constant. While it is for the most part a backdrop for the events we see on stage, it's very much a part of the DNA, and *Strictly Murder* wouldn't be the same play without it.

Intimate

However, this isn't a political thriller. *Strictly Murder* keeps its story intimate, focusing on an English couple and the impact of historical events on them. The relationship between Peter and Suzy is the heart of the play, and although we catch them at a time when the world was suffering such a large-scale tragedy, there is a certain amount of doubt from the characters around Hitler's intentions. Many at the time were sceptical about an approaching war.

The rise of fascism in Germany is now heavily documented, but it was only in 1942 that the House of Commons formally recognised that there was an ongoing Holocaust and in 1939, outside of Germany, there was too much mystery for the general public to agree that war was on the horizon, a point we now often forget.

Quinn Goodliffe

Director — *Strictly Murder*

STRICTLY MURDER

by Brian Clemens

CAST

Josef	Tim Pemberton
Peter Meredith	Ed Clements
Suzy Hinchcliffe	Sophie Platts-Martin
Ross	Anthony Foran
Miriam	Sarah Morrison
Radio announcers	Rory Hobson, Francis Lloyd, Stephan Mirre

The play is set in a cottage in Provence, France, in 1939.

Act 1

Scene 1: Early morning in April

Scene 2: Later that day

Scene 3: Some time later

Act 2

Scene 1: Morning. Five months later

Scene 2: Early evening. Later that same day

Scene 3: That night

The performance lasts approximately one hour and 55 minutes,
including a 15-minute interval.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Quinn Goodliffe
Lighting Designer	Alasdair Graebner
Sound Designer	Martin Choules
Costume Designer	Jenny Richardson
Set Designer	Alex Marker
Stage Manager	Bernie Brady
Deputy Stage Manager	Sarah Vass
Assistant Stage Manager	Graeme Kay
Props	Harriet Parsonage
Set construction and painting	Edward Crump, Greta Gerbert, Steven Hyndman, Christine Mills, Alice Segilas Padin, Dominic Thompson
Get-in	Simon Higginson
Production Plumber	Derek Stoddart
Prompter	Dotti Lawson
Dressmaker	Karen Latimer
Fight Choreographer	Catherine Luff
Lighting and Sound Operator	Ben Hart
Lighting riggers	Martyn Bird, Megan Bostock, Ben Hart, John Green, Cecily Johnson, Carroll Konpacki, Hayely Lee
Photographer and videographer	Robert Vass
Vocal Recording Designer	Jane Arnold-Foster
Community Captioner	Eleanor Wilson
Thanks to	Gary Reid, Vicky Saumarez, Callum Smith

The use of cameras, video cameras and recording equipment is strictly prohibited.

BIOGRAPHIES

Ed Clements – Peter Meredith

This production marks Ed's Playhouse debut after appearing in The Anniversary at the Studio in January. A graduate of LAMDA and The Atlantic Acting School (NYC), Ed has recently starred as Cymbeline at the Bridewell Theatre and has appeared on Sky TV in *World's Most Evil Killers*. He is also an active member of the Tower Theatre Company.

Anthony Foran – Ross

Since joining Questors in 2023, Ant has appeared in *You Can't Take it With You* (Mr Kirby), *Julius Caesar* (Brutus), *The Welkin* (Justice), and *My Fair Lady* (Henry Higgins). He is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts.

Sarah Morrison – Miriam

Sarah has been an active acting member since first joining in 1980. She has since appeared in over 70 productions. She has most recently been seen on stage playing Big Mama in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Ethel Merman in *Treasure Island*, Cheryl in *Albion* and Mrs Anthony in *The Mystery of Fellstone Manor*.

Tim Pemberton – Josef

Last seen as the old retainer Samuel in *The Mystery of Fellstone Manor*, Tim has been acting at The Questors since 2012. Other roles include Squire Trelawney in *Treasure Island*, Luka in *The Bear*, John Dryden in *Nell Gwynn* and Richard Noakes in *Arcadia*. Offstage, Tim works at an activity centre for adults with learning disabilities in Hertfordshire.

BIOGRAPHIES

Sophie Platts-Martin – Suzy Hinchcliffe

This is Sophie's third Questors show this year, following on from performances in *My Fair Lady* and On Q's theatrical improv troupe. She is no stranger to the world of am-dram, having performed in numerous productions with the Tower Theatre Company, SEDOS and other theatrical societies. When she isn't prancing around on stage, you can find her drawing or painting things.

Martin Choules - Sound Designer

Martin has recently designed the sound for *Trojan Barbie*, *Lionboy*, *The Mystery of Fellstone Manor*, *Find Me*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *On the Razzle*, *The Contingency Plan*, *Murder on the Nile*, *Haunting Julia*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Loveplay*, *Dear Brutus*, *Strange Orchestra*, *Fault Lines*, *Future Conditional*, *Absent Friends*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Animal Farm*, *Improbable Fiction*, *The Exonerated* and *Fear and Misery in the Third Reich*.

Quinn Goodliffe - Director

Quinn has been at The Questors Theatre since the age of nine, originally in an acting capacity, appearing in plays such as *The Browning Version* and *Hangmen*, but has now assistant directed *King Arthur*, *White Carnation* and *Posh*, along with a few short plays for Disintegration and QWho. This is his first main season production as sole director.

Alasdair Graebner - Lighting Designer

Strictly Murder is Alasdair's eighth lighting design for Questors. Previously he lit *Neville's Island*, *Sheila's Island*, *The Physicists*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Welkin*, *Posh*, and *Boudica*. He returned to stage lighting, following a 20 year break from the theatre. Previously, he worked in both repertory and receiving houses, when not touring or lighting productions.

BIOGRAPHIES

Alex Marker - Set Designer

Alex is the Artistic Director of The Questors Theatre. He joined in 1988 and is active in many capacities. Last season he designed and made *Boudica*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Jack and the Beanstalk* (in which he also played The King). He also wrote *Do Not Pass Go* for the Overnight Plays. He is also director of The Questors Youth Theatre.

Jenny Richardson - Costume Designer

After many years working in stage management, props and set design, Jenny enjoyed a change of direction to costume design, recently for *Emma*, *The Pillowman*, *The Slaves of Solitude*, *Whispers in the Wings*, *Albion*, *The Contingency Plan*, *Murder on the Nile*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Little Dorrit*, *Peregrine Proteus* and *Hangmen*. Jenny is also frequently in demand as an upholsterer.

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

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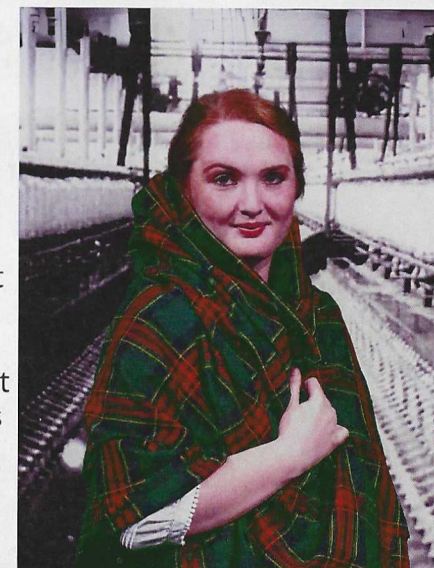
UP NEXT

Hindle Wakes

by Stanley Houghton

It's 1912, and mill workers in the Lancashire town of Hindle are enjoying their annual holiday or 'wake'. Fanny Hawthorn claims to have spent the weekend with her friend, but a tragedy uncovers the truth. Pressured to 'do the right thing', she decides to do what's right for herself instead.

October 17-25
The Studio



Emilia

by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm

Emilia Bassano was a poet, a teacher, a revolutionary force. She refused to bow her head, even when history tried to reduce her to nothing more than Shakespeare's muse.

But what if the words we've worshipped for centuries were actually hers?

Oct 31 - Nov 8
The Playhouse

