

# questotopics

QUESTORS THEATRE MATTOCK LANE W5 5BQ 567 0011 Box Office 567 5184

No.73 NOVEMBER 1972

## November Production

# THE ALCHEMIST

by Ben Jonson

*November is unfailingly a dark, wet, misty month. To brighten the prelude to winter, this month's production is designed to break out the smiles in warm enjoyment. Alan Chambers, who directs *The Alchemist*, here introduces his production. One has only to perceive his own enthusiasm to anticipate the treat in store for us all.*

'The Alchemist' is one of the funniest plays in the English language. It is a classic tale of three confidence tricksters and their attempts to gull everyone who comes within their wiles. As each dupe arrives, his own plot complicates the action until the pace reaches that of farce and yet all this is presented in a verse that is so easily natural that the actors found it dictating their characters. And what a lot of splendid characters Jonson provides for us. Subtle, devious and sly, with Face, a bravura pimp who is master of disguise and Doll, the epitome of all bawds, form the villainous triumvirate, while Sir Epicure Mammon (does his name need elaboration?), Ananias and Tribulation Wholesome, the original Puritans, and Abel Drugger, the seedy tobacconist, are only a few whose antics have rolled people in the aisles since the first performance

in 1610. The play has been de-severedly popular ever since that time for, in looking and laughing at the human weaknesses portrayed, we are laughing at ourselves. It is seasy to replace Alchemists with Financial Journalists, Football Pool Tipsters or any other of the get-rich-quick merchants of today. And when we laugh at poor Abel Drugger's simple request for the stars to tell him how to build his shop, how many of us haven't looked at our horoscope in the papers recently?



LYN LANGRIDGE plays Doll



ROGER SHERMAN plays Face

With Ted Scrivener (who, rumour has it, learns his lines in the bath) as Subtle, Roger Sherman as Face and Lyn Langridge as Doll—all of them gave hilarious performances in last Christmas's farce 'Ding-Dong'—the comedy is in safe hands. The rest of the cast includes a mixture of both old and new faces in Harold Lorenzelli, Simon Brett, Bill Rudderham, Christ McDermott, Neville Bradbury, David Lorraine, Alan Chisholm, Mary Gilbert and Tony Worth, and as we write, rehearsals are going with the sort of swing that even make the Stage Manager smile.

Added to this, the designer is Norman Barwick whose fantastic sets for 'The Comedy of Errors' and 'The Strange Case of Martin Richter' will long be remembered and I think we can guarantee an evening of laughter and delight.

OCTOBER 27th, 28th, 29th

# Narrow Road to the Deep North

by Edward Bond

The start of something new is always exciting and 'Narrow Road.....' represents the first of The Questors Workshop Theatre's productions in the Stanislavsky Room.

The pressure amongst the membership for this new venture in our Theatre activity has been considerable for some years now, particularly amongst the acting and active membership and, at last the time and space has been etched from our crowded programme and its happening. However, just because the 'active's' wanted it most, doesn't mean that the Workshop should become some kind of inner sanctum where weird, wonderful and uncommercial experiments are introvertedly performed to an exclusive audience of the 'new intellectuals'. Quite the contrary—the Workshop is about exploring all the facets of theatre. Not just modern plays, new techniques of direction or acting, but improving some of the old 'habits' too.



WYLLIE LONGMORE plays Shogo

Neither is it simply an exercise, to judge from the way producer Roberta Hornstein and her cast have been preparing for 'The Narrow Road.....' which is a very fine play by all accounts.

Incidentally we have it on the highest authority that it's going to be good: only two nights ago the writer heard the production's Stage Manager whisper these very words.... and when the stage management are confident, it *must* be good.

Personally, I want to see what 'workshop' theatre is all about, I have a sneaking suspicion that not only will it be enjoyable, but understandable. Furthermore, it's FREE to members.

Some time ago, *Questopics* featured a correspondence column somewhat unsuccessfully. But your current Editor, somewhat prompted by a distinguished previous Editor, would like to repeat the experiment, as a serious attempt to increase the comment and discussion amongst the members of our Theatre.

In doing this, I am particularly mindful of the fact that our audience membership has precious little opportunity to make observations to the Management about the service they get for their money, not only in terms of the productions they see, but the facilities at the theatre such as refreshments, the bar, the programmes, etc.—even *Questopics* itself.

In addition to our audience members, doubtless the active members will make use of the facility, though they do have the benefit of regular meetings to make their comments.

May I emphasise that the object is to gain Members' reactions to The Questors, the organisation and the facilities offered. Also, if you want to comment on a particular production, please do so.

All letters will be credited with the correspondent's name, unless especially requested that it is omitted, however, no letter will be printed unless the Editor knows its source—I'm the soul of discretion.

N.J.C.

## THE ALCHEMIST

(continued)



TED SCRIVENER plays Subtle

Coming Shortly

# CATSPLAY

by ISTVAN ORKENY<sup>1</sup> Translated by MARI KUTTNA

Members free seats available. Guests 50p and 35p

DECEMBER 2 · 3 · 5 · 6 · 8 & 9 at 7.45

# 'Doctor in the House' Gordon to Judge W.C.A.C.

## Christmas Gift Stall



(from our own correspondent)

Following reports of a well-known personality being invited to judge the World Coarse Acting Championship (previously thought to be fictitious propaganda), it has not been confirmed that Mr. Richard Gordon, famous author of 'Doctor in the House' and other books, has agreed to act as adjudicator for the Championship. Legitimate sources are reported as believing that this coup is the result of activity by Championship Organiser and Originator, Michael Green, who himself is not averse to producing the odd best-seller. Mr. Green told your reporter:

"Yes, I can now reveal that this widely planted rumour is true" Mr. Gordon was not available for comment, though a surreptitious glimpse at his diary by an anonymous informant last night, confirmed that Sunday, November 12th at 7.45 p.m. is indicated 'W.C.A.C. Questors'.

Back at the Theatre itself the Box Office Manager was



MICHAEL GREEN

eager to disclose that 100 seats had already been sold for this occasion and urged me to urge my readers to book early for this unique experience (Royters).

Following its great success last year, Meg Kirby has offered, once again, to organise the Christmas Gift Stall in the Foyer.

The most urgent of Meg's requirements are the provision of gifts for sale on the stall – the proceeds of which are all going towards the Theatre. Please leave your gifts in the office.

Then, having done that, make sure you visit the stall itself which will be open from 3rd to 14th of November, i.e. during the run of *The Alchemist*. Please note that this year the Christmas Gift Stall is opening on Friday, 3rd; this is due to the considerable demand experienced on the O.A.P. night last year.

The stall will be open from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. each evening.

Incidentally, if you consider yourself a dab hand at retailing, Meg would appreciate some offers of assistance. Please contact her at 574 3705 after 5 p.m.

## Noting the Minutes

This is a new column which we hope to make a regular feature in *Questopics*. All it will do is simply pick out odd quotes from various minutes from the various Committees of the Theatre, mainly the Committee of Management, and report them without comment. Don't worry, it isn't a sort of industrial espionage – all Minutes of all Committees are available for scrutiny by any member of the Theatre in the office.

*Sept. 18th Committee of Management.*

### Report on Value Added Tax

The report on V.A.T. from Maire Steadman was received..... a working party of Maire Steadman and Messrs. Barber, Pritchard,

Nelson and Caleb, was set up to report to the next meeting at which some decisions regarding V.A.T. would have to be taken.

### Acting Members out front

The Secretary reported a fair response to a letter sent to Acting Members asking if they wished to remain active, and noted that so far, 50% had indicated a willingness to work on Front of House duties.

### Plays and Productions

It was reported that three producers had been offered *Shop Windows* in November and that Leigh Eduardo would direct the December Workshop production.

### 'Joe Egg' Discussion

It was reported that there had been a good attendance at the public discussion after 'A Day in the Death of Joe Egg' (i.e. at the

new time – after performance on last Saturday). It was agreed that the discussion on 'The Alchemist' should be on the last Saturday of the run, at the request of the director.

### Lets

A memo from Terry Morris regarding the effect of Lets during a show was received and noted. Tom Pritchard agreed to arrange clarification of the position over Lets with all Stage Managers.

### Farewell auto-coffee

The recommendation of the Executive Committee that the Beverage Vending Machine in the Shaw Block be dispensed with was agreed. Three month's notice is necessary from October 1972.

## Calling – Questors World-Wide

Martin Bowley, Gordon Caleb and Nevile Cruttenden were all interviewed recently by the Overseas Service of the B.B.C. for a daily news digest programme which is broadcast throughout the world. Questions, put by the programme's producer, covered a wide area – from the basic organisation of the Theatre Box Office to why professional actors tend to frown on the amateurs.

Evidently the programme generates lots of mail and has one of the largest audiences of the Overseas Service – with a bit of luck it might push up the number of associate members in Africa, at the moment we're rather short.

## Questors Young Musicians

are giving a  
**CHILDRENS  
CONCERT**

on Saturday, November 18th at  
3 p.m.

Featherstone Secondary School,  
Western Road, Southall.

The Ealing Youth Orchestra, under their conductor John Railton, are presenting a programme which will include some Movements from Tchaikowsky's *Nutcracker Suite*.

Tickets—20p each from Mrs L. R. Baruch, 2 Queen's Walk, Ealing, W5 1TP (enclosing stamped addressed envelope please). Tickets are NOT available from the Theatre.

## A Portrait for Christmas

How about a portrait for a Christmas present. If you're too modest it needn't be you, Ed. Ford can produce the most pleasing results of your loved ones from just a photograph. He works in pastels.

All that's necessary is to make an appointment for a sitting—just one—it's that painless. Ed. is also setting aside Sunday mornings for special appointments for children.

The cost, £1.00.

The proceeds—to The Theatre.

Please ring Meg Kirby 574 3705 (after 5 p.m.) for an appointment.

## Gifts urgently needed for

## CHRISTMAS STALL

*Please leave them  
in the Office  
before*

**3 NOVEMBER**

*Also*

if you can help on  
the Stall itself, ring  
MEG KIRBY  
after 5 p.m. or Weekends  
01-574 3705

## Diary . . .

October 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 at  
7.45 p.m.

*The Cecilian Players present*  
**FIDDLER ON THE ROOF**  
*the hit musical*  
Tickets 35p to £1.00

October 25th in the Shaw Room  
at 7.45 p.m.

NEW MEMBERS MEETING

October 27, 28 & 29 at 7.45 p.m. in  
the Stanislavsky Room

*Workshop Production:*  
**NARROW ROAD TO THE DEEP  
NORTH**  
Members Free. Guests 30p.

November 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 & 14 at  
7.45 p.m.

**THE ALCHEMIST**  
by Ben Jonson  
Members free seats available.  
Guests 50p and 35p.  
Special School Performances on  
November 9th & 13th at 7.45 p.m.

November 4th at 8 p.m. in the  
Bernard Shaw Room.

West London Opera present:  
*An Operatic Concert* with excerpts  
from Faust, Carmen, Nabucco  
Sponsored by Ealing UNA to  
celebrate UNA Day.  
Tickets 40p (members and guests)  
at door, or advance booking from  
Mrs H. Sterne, 10 The Mead, W.13  
as from October 4th. S.A.E.  
997 3776.

November 6, 8, 16 & 17th  
Lighting Course.

November 11th in the Foyer after the  
Show

Discussion on 'The Alchemist'.

November 12th at 7.45 p.m.  
**WORLD COARSE ACTING  
CHAMPIONSHIP**

Tickets: Members & Guests 35p.

November 18th, 3 p.m. at Feather-  
stone Secondary School, Western Rd.,  
Southall.

*Questors Young Musician's Club*  
**CHILDRENS CONCERT**  
Tickets 20p each from Mrs L. R.  
Baruch, 2 Queen's Walk, Ealing,  
W5 1TP (enclosing stamped,  
addressed envelope). Tickets are  
NOT available from the Theatre.

November 22nd in the Shaw Room  
at 7.45 p.m.

NEW MEMBERS MEETING.

December 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 & 9 at 7.45p.m.  
**CATSPLAY**

by Istvan Orkeny  
Translated by Mari Kuttna  
Members free seats available.  
Guests 50p and 35p.