

The Questors Theatre Archives

Questories

7th New Plays Festival

County Times, 8 July 1966

NOT PLEASED WITH COICE OF PLAYS..

THE current revue by the Questors, of Mattock-lane, Ealing, has the title "Late of This Theatre." I don't think it is nearly as good as "Questronics," which was the subject of the first Questors notice just over seven Years ago.

I liked Vincent McQueen as "Lord Moron" with his "Hypocritic oath," and as the panto dame; and Michael Green is always fun.

In the past seven years, I have enjoyed a great many Questor's productions: and a few of them provided me with really memorable experiences ("The Birthday Party," "Three Sisters," "The Glass Menagerie," "Long Day's Journey Into Night." "Neighbours").

The Questors are still a fine company. I don't therefore, feel that it's hardening of my critic's arteries which accounts for my long-standing, and now increased, dissatisfaction with their annual New Plays Festival.

LAST STRAW

The fact simply is that the three festival offerings this year were all Greek to me: and "The Guy" was the last straw.

Of course, the audiences appear to find anything put on absolutely delightful: but then they are surely the most indulgently partisan club-theatre audiences in Britain. Their loyalty is naturally, in one-way, a vast source of strength to the Questors in their work: but occasionally they must surely be considered a mixed blessing? Such built-in, total approval can lead to complacency in the selection of programme.

This is what has happened, I believe, in the festival. The last six plays have ranged from the mediocre to the downright rubbishy.

'DEPRESSED ...'

I attended a discussion about "The Guy," and was amazed and depressed that not a single one of the members seemed to share my own view that Walter Lever's play was a thunderingly tedious rehash of worn-out symbolisms and moralisings.

I've nothing at all against "new plays," so long as they are entertaining and genuinely original new plays. On the evidence of the past couple of festivals, the Questors would be wiser to stick to the newer writers of proven worth. (I'm glad to note it is planned to present "Look Back in Anger" next season, for instance).

As for the revivals of the older classics, well, they have always been reliable, and long may you continue with them.

Only-lay off those Greeks for a bit, ... just to please me!

DOUGLAS MeVAY