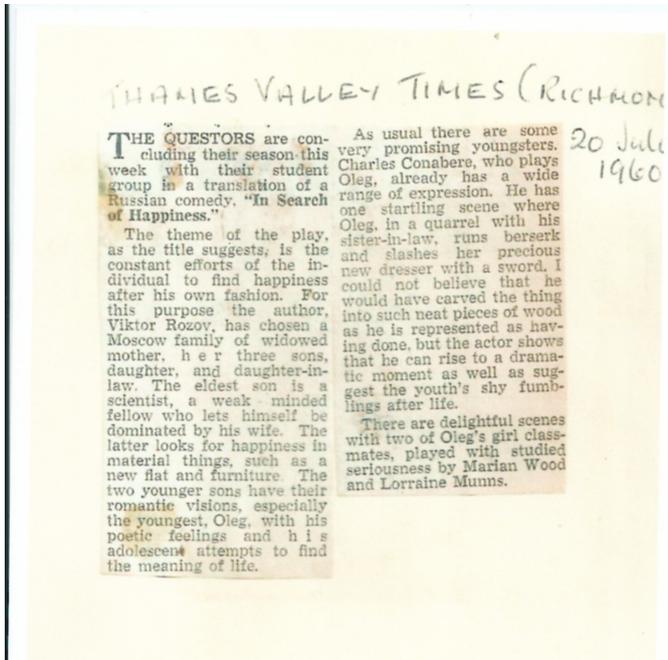


IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS
Student Production July 1960
Press cutting

THAMES VALLEY TIMES (RICHMOND)
20 July 1960

The Questors are concluding their season this week with their student group in a translation of a Russian comedy, **"In Search of Happiness."**

The theme of the play, as the title suggests, is the constant efforts of the individual to find happiness after his own fashion. For this purpose the author, Viktor Rozov, has chosen a Moscow family of widowed mother, her three sons, daughter, and daughter-in-law. The eldest son is a scientist, a weak minded fellow who lets himself be dominated by his wife. The latter looks for happiness in material things, such as a new flat and furniture. The two younger sons have their romantic visions, especially the youngest, Oleg, with his poetic feelings and his adolescent attempts to find the meaning of life.



As usual there are some very promising youngsters, Charles Conabere, who plays Oleg, already has a wide range of expression. He has one startling scene where Oleg, in a quarrel with his sister-in-law, runs berserk and slashes her precious new dresser with a sword. I could not believe that he would have carved the thing into such neat pieces of wood as he is represented as having done, but the actor shows that he can rise to a dramatic moment as well as suggest the youth's shy fumbblings after life.

There are delightful scenes with two of Oleg's girl classmates, played with studied seriousness by Marian Wood and Lorraine Munns.

THE STAGE
21 July 1960

Modern Russian Comedy

'IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS'

play by Viktor Rozov, translated from the Russian by Nina Froud.
Presented at the Questors, Ealing, on July 16. Sets by John Rolfe
and costumes by Denis Huot. Directed by Geraldine Alford.

The current production at the Questors, Ealing, of Viktor Rozov's modern Russian comedy "In Search of Happiness", translated by Nina Froud, falls somewhat short of this theatre's normal standards, leaving one with the awareness, seldom experienced here, that the company is, in fact, an amateur one. By that standard the performances are still good; but it is not a standard which I have hitherto felt the need to apply to their presentations of straight plays.

The play itself is not of great importance, being a slightly sentimental and only mildly funny story of family life among an ordinary family and their neighbours in Moscow, with an arrogant daughter-in-law disturbing the peace and some not very brisk encounters between the rivals for the hand of the student daughter of the house.

One of these, Gennady, was played by Barry Clark who, with Charles Conabere as a fifteen-year-old boy, gave the most polished performance of the evening. There was also some very good characterisation in the brief appearances of Marian Wood and Lorraine Munns, as two schoolgirls.

Jonathan Beavis, despite an overdone make-up, was good as the uncouth cattle breeder Ivan, and Ann Woods was quietly competent as Marina. Terry Quin as the angry Lena and Derek Brown as the other suitor were notably audible - a virtue not always shared by the rest of the company. Geraldine Alford's direction kept a good pace and successfully evoked the right atmosphere.

LGS

