



ESTHER
MATCHMAKER



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY SECOND YEAR STUDENT GROUP

First performance 14 July 1984

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

X *The Matchmaker* (a re-written version of *The Merchant of Yonkers*) is based on a comedy by Johann Nestroy, *Einen Jux will er sich machen* (Vienna, 1842). A good deal of academic scholarship has been done comparing the two plays but *The Matchmaker*, Wilder says, is about quite different matters from Nestroy's play: "My play is about aspirations of the young (and not only of the young) for a fuller, freer, participation in life".

Towards the end of the 1920's Thornton Wilder began to lose pleasure in the theatre. He felt that the theatre of his time simply aimed to be soothing to the rising middle classes. The conventional proscenium stages removed, cut off and boxed the action, creating a theatre which could not disturb its audience in any way. The tragic had no heat, the comic had no bite, the social criticism failed to indict the audience with responsibility. In his plays, *Our Town* and *The Skin of Our Teeth* Wilder experimented with new methods of production which did away with realistic settings. *The Matchmaker* was written to parody the 'nonsense of 19th century staging', which Wilder had seen in the Stock Company plays at Ye Liberty Theatre, Oakland, California. Paradoxically, this intention has often been ignored and the play received the ultimate accolade paid to any stock company 19th century play: it was made into the Broadway and Hollywood musical *Hello Dolly*.

THE MATCHMAKER

by

Thornton Wilder



Characters in order of appearance

Horace Vandergelder, *a merchant of
Yonkers, New York* Mark Ivory
Ambrose Kemper, *an artist* Charles Thomas
Joe Scanlon, *a barber* Ian Robinson
Gertrude, *Vandergelder's housekeeper*. . . . Sue Bradford
Cornelius Hackl, *a clerk in
Vandergelder's store* Tony Willis
Ermengarde, *Vandergelder's niece* Peta McRedmond
Malachi Stack, *a clerk in
Vandergelder's store* Tony Cox
Dolly Levi, *friend of
Vandergelder's late wife*. Julie Woods
Barnaby Tucker, *a clerk in
Vandergelder's store* Ian Chitty
Mrs. Molloy, *a milliner* Mari King
Minnie Fay, *her assistant* Lynne Kitch
Rudolph, *a waiter* Mike Law
August, *a waiter* Gavin McQueen
Cabman. Ian Robinson
Miss Van Huysen's Cook Sue Bradford
Miss Van Huysen. Kate Roberts

Time: The Early 1880's

Act I Mr. Vandergelder's house in Yonkers,
New York.
Act II Mrs. Molloy's hat shop, New York.
Act III The Harmonia Gardens Restaurant on
The Battery, New York.
Act IV Miss Van Huysen's house, New York.



There will be an Interval of 15 minutes between Acts II and III.

The play directed by Elayne Gomersall
Settings designed by Phil Pinkham
Costumes designed by Anne Gilmour
Lighting designer Alan B. Smith
Associate lighting designer Francis Stevenson
Sound designer Stuart Dollin

Stage Manager	—	Martin Stoner
Deputy Stage Manager	—	Lucinda Angus
Assistant Stage Managers	—	Steve Anderson, Alison Palmer, Phil May, Alison Jones, Friedl Landau, Judy Adams, Richard Vadon, Steve Davis, Nicholas Doyle, Helen Feather
Wardrobe	—	Anne Gilmour
	assisted by	— Lesley Harris, Gail Sharp, Valerie Rudd
Properties	—	Bob Ricket
	assisted by	— Sian Spry, Krysia Smith, Bridget McCall
Construction	—	Carey Middleton
	assisted by	— Chris Simmonds, Steve Byrne, Richard Lewis
Assistant Lighting Operators	—	John Garforth, Martin Bishop
Assistant Sound Operator	—	Maggie Wilkinson
Prompters	—	Wendi Harrison, Patricia McGrail
Dance Advisors	—	Janet & Lynne Featherstone

*The song **Tenting Tonight** by Andrew Brixey*

Champagne kindly provided by Moët & Chandon

Whip kindly lent by Whitbread Brewery

HOTPLATE

Delicious food is available in the Upper Foyer from 6.30 pm during the run of theatre productions.

Interval refreshments will be served and you can buy tea or coffee tokens in advance.

Orders for Interval drinks can also be given at the bar prior to the performance.

Patrons are respectfully asked to refrain from taking refreshments into the auditorium.

THE STUDENT GROUP

The first Questors Student Training Course for Actors was started in 1947. A new Group has been formed every year since then, to run under the same direction. This is a 2-Year Course, aimed at giving preliminary training for amateur actors and preparing them for membership of the main acting group of The Questors Theatre. Between 20 and 24 students are generally enrolled for the First Year Course, selected by audition from some 60 applicants. At the end of the first year, there is a further process of selection to make up the Second Year Group, whose final production you are seeing this evening.

The Course makes great demands on the Students. In the first year there are 5½ hours of classes every week for 36 weeks, including Speech, Movement, Acting and Make-up. In the second year, the intensity of work steps up greatly, with 7½ hours of regular classes each week and many hours of additional rehearsals for the two productions given by the Group during the year, the first of which was the programme of short plays given in the Studio Theatre in February.

The Course therefore demands a very high standard of commitment and enthusiasm and a great sense of loyalty to the Group. Without that, a student will not make the grade, but with it, will learn how to make a valuable and rewarding contribution to the life of the theatre. More than one third of the present acting members of The Questors had their initial training in our Student Group.

The Training Course is run under the auspices of the Ealing Education Committee. A new Second Year Group is now being formed from those who have just completed their first year and applications are being invited for the new First Year Course to start in September.

The minimum age for the Student Course is 18. The Questors also run an 'Introductory Group' for 17-year olds, likewise selected by audition. For this, the class time is only 3 hours per week, but the personal commitment to the Group is just as high.

For further information, or a copy of the Prospectus of the Course, apply to the Theatre Manager.

STUDENT GROUP STAFF (1983/84)

<i>Director of Studies and Acting Tutor (First Year)</i>	Alfred Emmet
<i>Acting Tutor (Second Year)</i>	Elayne Gomersall
<i>Deputy Director of Studies and Acting Tutor (First Year)</i>	David Emmet
<i>Movement Tutor</i>	Johanna Godliman
<i>Speech Tutor</i>	Sheila Moriarty
<i>Make-up Tutor</i>	Julie Cruttenden
<i>Tutor to Introductory Group</i>	Peter Field

Forthcoming Attractions

IN THE PLAYHOUSE

September 15 – 22

Première of

ABODE OF PEACE

by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala

Directed by Peter Field

October 6 – 13

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

by Oscar Wilde

Directed by John Wilson

November 3 – 17

HENRY IV Part I

by William Shakespeare

Directed by David Emmet

November 24 – December 3

DON JUAN RETURNS FROM THE WARS

by Ödon Von Horvath

translated by Christopher Hampton

Directed by Geoff Webb

IN THE STUDIO

September 29 – October 6

THE JUST

by Albert Camus

Directed by Annie Kimber

New and Prospective Members evenings are held every WEDNESDAY, commencing at 7.45 pm in the Grapevine bar. Included in the programme will be a comprehensive tour of the acting areas, workshops, wardrobe and rehearsal space.
