

# VOLUNTEER AND BE PART OF ALL THIS

All Questors productions are created, performed and run by volunteers! You too can get involved in:



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



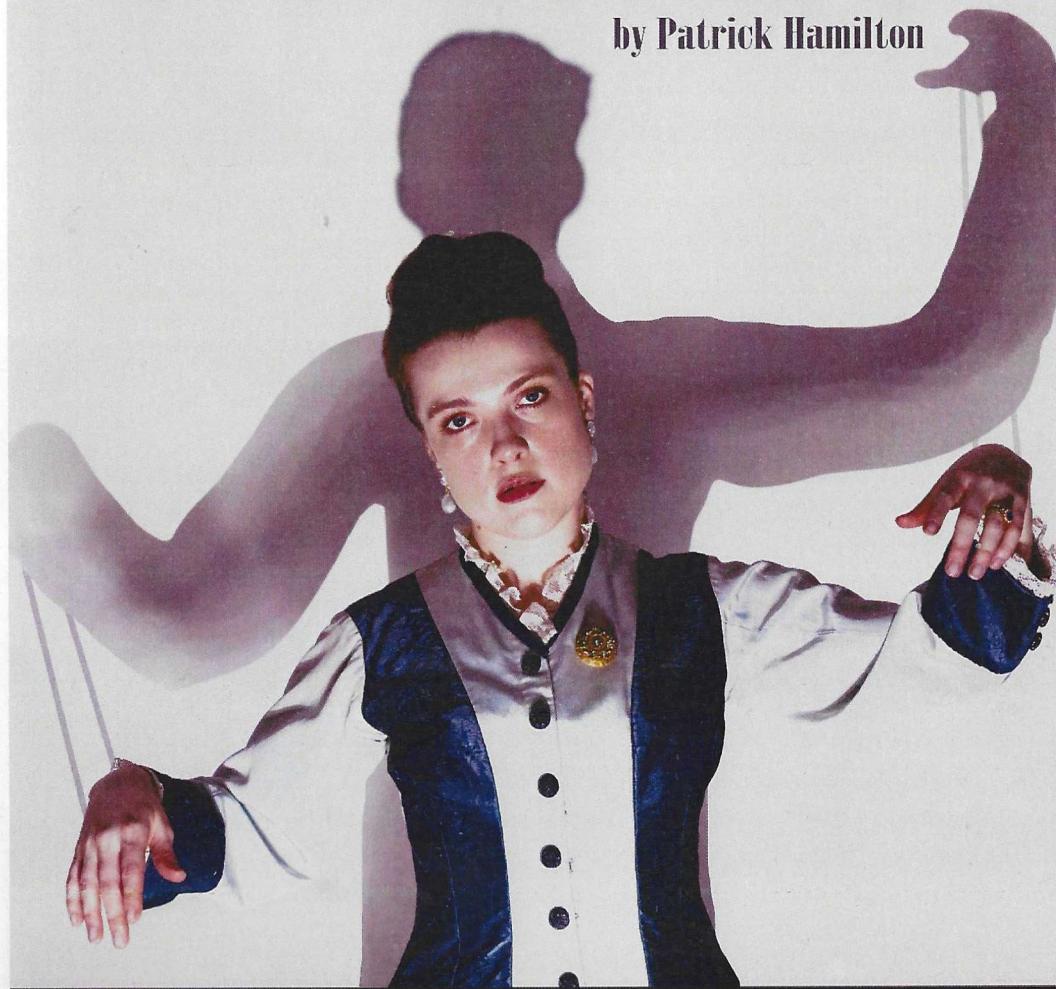
\*All Club Membership periods are 1 year. Members must be over 18. To perform in productions, members must audition to become a part of our acting company. Concession rates apply for under-30s, 65+ and benefit recipients.

[questors.org.uk/join](http://questors.org.uk/join)

The Questors  
THEATRE

# GASLIGHT

by Patrick Hamilton



12-31 December  
The Studio

## COME HERE OFTEN? TRY A SEASON PASS

Get up to **50% off** tickets to in-house Questors productions with a Season Pass!

### Season Pass prices:

Single: £45 per year

Joint (for 2 people): £90 per year

Concession (Under 30s / those receiving benefits): £20 per year

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

Find out more and become a Season Pass holder by visiting our Box Office or going to [questors.org.uk/season\\_pass](http://questors.org.uk/season_pass)

## 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 2026 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](http://questors.org.uk/grapevine)



Images: Paula Robinson

## GASLIGHT

by Patrick Hamilton

**The Studio**

**December 12-31 2025**

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Few plays have entered our language as completely as *Gaslight*. Patrick Hamilton's 1938 drama gave a name to something that had always existed but rarely been recognised — the slow, deliberate erosion of another person's sense of reality. *Gaslight* began life as a tightly wound domestic mystery, but its central idea has outgrown its period setting to describe something we still struggle with today. Behind the politeness and the period detail is something modern and uncomfortable: the manipulation of perception itself. Hamilton understood, long before the psychologists, how easily care can become control and how quietly cruelty can present itself as concern.

What's striking is how long it took the word to arrive. Hamilton wrote *Gaslight* in 1938, yet it wasn't until the early years of this century that "gaslighting" entered the vernacular. The term appears in psychological writing from the 1960s, but it wasn't until the early 2000s that it settled into everyday conversation. In Britain, many will remember the *Coronation Street* storyline of 2002–3, when Richard Hillman's manipulation of his wife Gail played out to over fifteen million viewers — a quarter of the country — displaying behaviour we would now instantly recognise as gaslighting. Whether or not the soap can be credited with bringing the term into common use, it certainly brought the behaviour itself into the nation's living rooms.

For Hamilton's audiences, none of this existed. *Gaslight* wasn't a metaphor; it was a puzzle. The title pointed simply to the flickering lights in a London house, and the question behind the play was a genuine one: is Bella unwell, or is something else happening around her?

## Our Production

One of the challenges of staging *Gaslight* in 2025 is that almost everyone knows the word, even if they've never seen the play. Most people I've spoken to can describe "gaslighting" without realising the term comes from here. It means audiences arrive already convinced they understand what's going on — the play sets out a mystery, and we come in thinking we know the solution.

At its heart, the play asks us what we believe. Is Bella losing her grip on reality, or is her husband — outwardly calm, patient, and increasingly strained — shaping the world around her? When a stranger arrives offering answers, do we take him at his word? Is he who he claims to be? Early audiences were encouraged to doubt everyone; modern ones bring far less doubt with them. Our aim is simply to hold that uncertainty for as long as the text allows.

My approach has been to lean, wherever possible, toward the tragic rather than the sinister. What if Jack isn't the villain we expect, but a man trying — and failing — to cope with a situation neither of them fully understands? What if Bella's fear is grounded in something real, not imagined? What if she really is losing her mind, as her mother did? The play allows for this more ambiguous reading, especially through its first half, and embracing that tension felt like the best way to reconnect with the experience original audiences might have had.

The design supports this. The house is not quite literal; the audience sits on three sides, while the fourth is marked by a wooden frame covered in black gauze — solid until the light starts to move behind it. Copper gas pipes run through and around the structure, sometimes decorative and sometimes quietly unsettling. The wooden floor, patterned like a spider's web, adds a sense that someone is caught here — though the play leaves it open as to who that is.

Even the smallest roles matter. Hamilton's two maids are not decorative additions; each carries information that shifts our understanding of the household and are both parts with substantial potential to them. They each have a view of what's happening and are to a degree diametrically opposed in their opinions, which strongly supports the dramatic action. Their scenes — often passed over — remind us of the class boundaries, the gossip, and the unspoken expectations that surround Bella long before any "gaslighting" takes place.

So — because the word gaslighting has passed into everyday language, the mystery at the heart of the play is harder to preserve. We already know she isn't mad — or do we? To address that problem, we've obtained special permission from the Hamilton estate to stage a rarely seen alternative ending. The manuscript was found only recently, in a locked bureau not opened for decades... It suggests a darker possibility: that Bella really is losing her mind, that Jack has been trying to protect her all along, and that Rough is nothing more than a projection of her fear...

At least, that's what we were told.....

Simon Rudkin  
**Director — *Gaslight***

# **GASLIGHT**

**by Patrick Hamilton**

## **CAST**

Bella Manningham **Hannah Rosamund**

Jack Manningham **Dan Dawes**

Elizabeth **Lucy Aley-Parker**

Nancy **Talitha Went**

Inspector Rough **David Sellar**

Policeman **Jacob Chancellor, Joe Conteh,  
Zafar Hashmi, Gerard Hogan**

The play is set in Mr and Mrs Manningham's house in 1880s  
London.

The performance lasts about two hours and 10 minutes,  
including a 20-minute interval.

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

## **PRODUCTION TEAM**

Director	<b>Simon Rudkin</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Alasdair Graebner</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Russell Fleet</b>
Composer	<b>Emerson Bramwell</b>
Costume Designers	<b>Sue Peckitt, Nichola Thomas</b>
Set Designer	<b>Alex Marker</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Tilly Benson</b>
Deputy Stage Manager	<b>Sarah Vass</b>
Set Design Assistant	<b>Su Smee</b>
Construction and Painting	<b>Chaima Fouad, Doug King</b>
Lighting and Sound Operators	<b>Ben Hart, Laurence Stant</b>
Lighting Crew	<b>Megan Bostock, Andrew Whadcoat</b>
Prompter	<b>Despina Sellar</b>
Photographer and Videographer	<b>Paula Robinson</b>
Community Captioner	<b>Monica Lomas</b>
Thanks to	<b>Matt Davison, Finborough Theatre, Andrew Mauder, Geoffrey Moore</b>

**Please turn off all mobile phones and similar electronic  
devices. The use of cameras, video cameras and recording  
equipment is strictly prohibited.**

**Thank you.**

# BIOGRAPHIES

## **Lucy Aley-Parker - Elizabeth**

Lucy graduated from Webber Douglas many decades ago and spent a decade or so in the profession. She joined Questors in 2008 and has enjoyed many roles since her debut as Smeraldina in *A Servant to Two Masters* – which also toured to Venice. Most recently she appeared in *The Welkin* as Charlotte Carey, and directed *A Number* by Caryl Churchill. Thanks to Questors, she has returned to her professional career.

## **Dan Dawes - Jack Manningham**

Dan worked in theatre for ten years, co-founding the company Idle Discourse, and was nominated for an Off West End award in 2012. He now works as a writer and narrative designer in the gaming industry, but continues to freelance in theatre. At Questors, he has been involved in multiple productions as a director or actor – most recently playing Ariel in *The Pillowman*. He also ran the new writing festival 'Questival', was Director of Studies for Acting for All, and sat on the Board of Trustees.

## **Hannah Rosamund - Bella Manningham**

Hannah joined Questors with Student Group 75, where she appeared as Lady Helena in *The Gut Girls*; as not one, not two, but three dashing men; and as Fräulein Blumenblatt in *On The Razzle*. Since further training for stage and screen, she returned to Questors this spring to play Helen in *Trojan Barbie*, and is delighted to be back for her not-student-group debut this December.

## **David Sellar - Inspector Rough**

David's first appearance at The Questors was in *Sleepers in the Field* in 2018, followed by John Rutherford in *Rutherford and Son*, two roles in *King Charles III*, Bob Price in *Things I Know to be True*, and roles in *Peregrine Proteus*, *The Contingency Plan*, *Sara Sampson*, and *The Slaves of Solitude*. Productions with previous companies include *What the Butler Saw*, *The Birthday Party*, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*, *Chicago*, *Guys and Dolls* and *A Little Night Music*.

# BIOGRAPHIES

## **Talitha Went - Nancy**

This is Talitha's first play at Questors, and she's thrilled to be bringing Nancy to the stage. She recently completed the Foundation course at LAMDA and is a member of the National Youth Theatre. Talitha is excited to be building on her training and is grateful for the opportunity to be part of this production.

## **Russell Fleet - Sound Designer**

Russell trained as an actor in the 1990s and joined The Questors Theatre in 2006. He has since been involved in over 60 productions as an actor, sound designer, stage manager and director. Most recent sound work includes *Hindle Wakes* and *Emilia*.

## **Alasdair Graebner - Lighting Designer**

Alasdair started working backstage in the last millennium, so he knows a bit about old-fashioned lighting technology. Twenty years ago, he ran away from Sadler's Wells. Now, he has returned to theatre as a hobby. *Gaslight* is his eighth design for Questors, but his first using gas. Previous designs include: *Neville's and Shelia's Island*, *The Physicists*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Welkin*, *Posh*, *Boudica* and *Strictly Murder*.

## **Alex Marker - Set Designer**

Alex is the Artistic Director of The Questors Theatre and Director of the Questors Youth Theatre. He also designs many of their sets including most recently *Strictly Murder*, *Boudica*, *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Blithe Spirit*. Occasionally he acts too, and is currently playing the King of Eternia in *Cinderella*, showing next door in The Playhouse.

# BIOGRAPHIES

## Sue Peckitt - Costume Designer

Sue is a longstanding member of the wardrobe team and always enjoys working on the Christmas productions. Last year it was the panto *Jack and the Beanstalk* so *Gaslight* is a nice change – with not a sequin in sight. Other productions include *Posh*, *My Fair Lady* and *The White Carnation*.

## Simon Rudkin - Director

Simon joined Questors in 2006 as part of Student Group 61. He acted for several years after graduation, performing in productions such as *The Rover*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Alchemist*. Simon started to direct in 2011, and *Gaslight* is his 11th show. Other recent productions include *The 39 Steps*, *The Ghost Train*, *Albion* and *Arcadia*. Simon is also part of a small team looking after The Questors IT and is a Trustee of the theatre, and current Chair.

## Nichola Thomas - Costume Designer

Nichola has enjoyed working on various shows over the last 20 years at Questors, including productions such as *Shadowlands*, *Burnt By the Sun*, *Endgame*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Single Spies*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Posh*.

## LIGHTS UP!

Open-flame gas lighting was first used on stage in 1816, greatly improving the illumination of the actors, but led to a few hundred theatre explosions and conflagrations. In 1885, incandescent gas mantles were introduced, as fitted in our theatre today by the kind patronage of Alice Barlow. These modern devices are far less likely to ignite the actors' costumes; however patrons of a nervous disposition may prefer to take their seats near the exits!

Alasdair Graebner, Lighting Designer

## UP NEXT

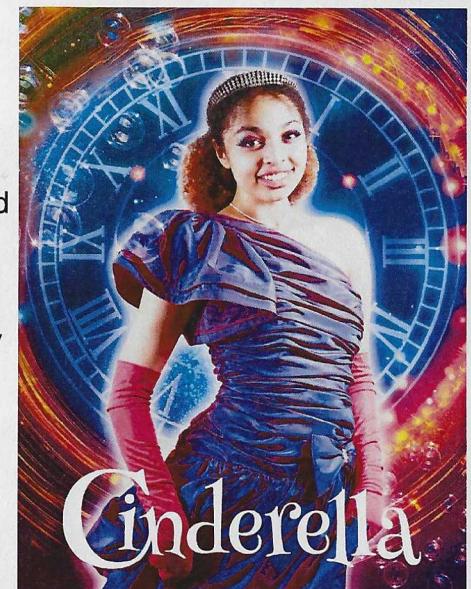
### Cinderella

by James Rushbrooke

Get ready for a riotous retelling of Cinderella like you've never seen before; louder, bolder, and dripping in 1980s' glam.

Join The Questors Theatre this Christmas for our annual family pantomime and enjoy a glitter-fuelled joyride through rebellion, romance, and ridiculousness.

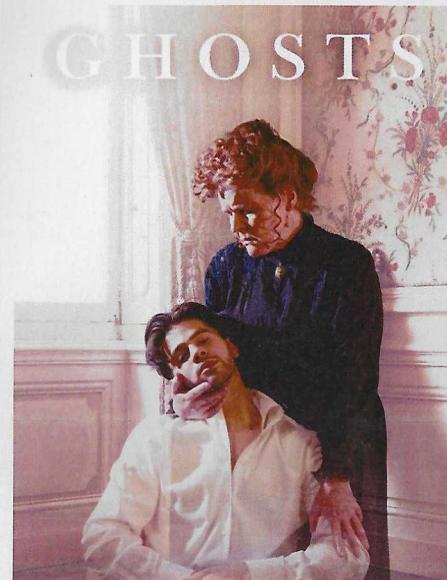
5 - 31 December  
The Playhouse



### Ghosts

by Henrik Ibsen

Mrs Alving thought she had escaped the ghosts of the past, and saved her son from them, but his return triggers a series of events that expose buried secrets and prove that history is doomed to repeat itself.



Ibsen's play was shocking in its time, and is given new intensity in Richard Eyre's translation.

16 - 24 January  
The Studio