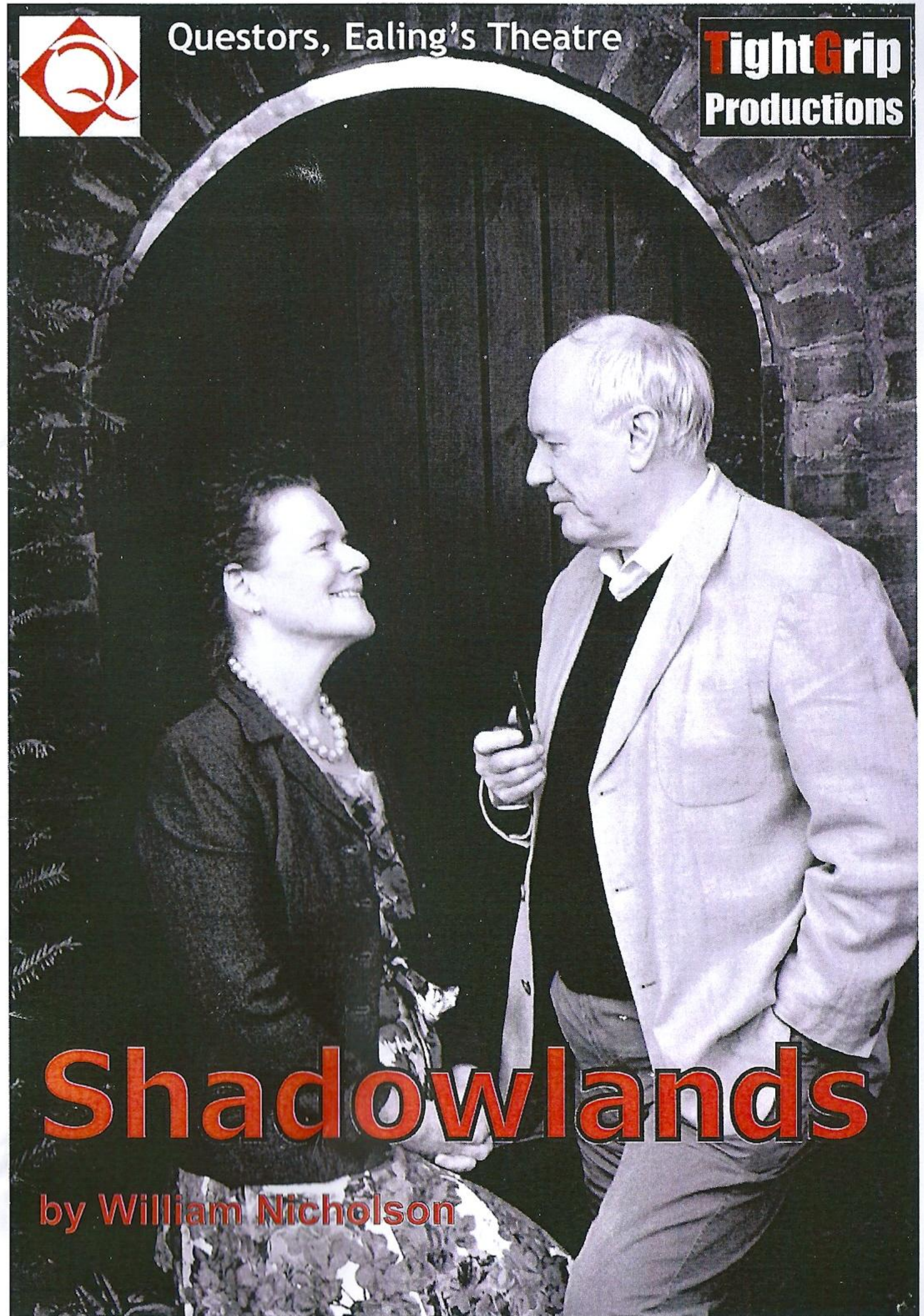




Questors, Ealing's Theatre

TightGrip
Productions



Shadowlands

by William Nicholson



Qafé

Pop in for lunch or an afternoon snack – serving specialist teas and coffees, hot chocolate and soft drinks, with a selection of sandwiches cut to order.

Opening Hours:

Tuesday to Friday 11:30 am – 7:00 pm*

Saturday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

**last orders for food at 6:30 pm*

For Playhouse productions:

Hot meal menu up to 6:30 pm followed by drinks, ice creams and snacks through the first interval.

The Grapevine Bar

The Grapevine is our friendly club bar open to Members and Friends of The Questors Theatre and their guests, as well as audience members on show nights.

The club is open seven nights a week and Sunday lunchtimes and is managed and staffed entirely by volunteers.

We are the proud holders of a Cask Marque award for the quality of our real ales, we appear in the 2014 edition of The Good Beer Guide and we are **CAMRA West Middlesex Club of the Year**. A choice of at least three real ales is usually available, including Fuller's London Pride. We also provide a range of draught lagers and ciders, as well as wines and spirits – all at very reasonable prices.

Opening Hours:

7:00 pm – 11:00 pm (10:30 pm close on Sundays)

Sunday lunchtime: midday – 2:30 pm

See questors.org.uk/grapevine for more details

Neither the Qafé nor the Grapevine
is able to accept credit or debit cards.



Joy Gresham and C S Lewis at The Kilns

Image © The University of Dundee: Michael Peto Collection

The Questors Theatre in association with TightGrip Productions presents

SHADOWLANDS

by William Nicholson

The Studio

24 January – 1 February 2014

SHADOWLANDS

"We are like blocks of stone, out of which the sculptor carves the forms of men. The blows of His chisel, which hurt us so much, are what make us perfect."

This forceful statement delivered by C S Lewis in the opening of William Nicholson's *Shadowlands* seems to encapsulate the feelings that Lewis has about God, love and pain. A lifelong Christian Apologist, Lewis remained staunchly convinced that pain and suffering were a necessary part of the process of 'waking up' to the awareness of one's fellow man and caring for others. Through the relationship that is developed in the play, between Lewis and Joy Gresham, the American poet, Lewis comes to understand just how poignant and relevant those words will become for him personally. *Shadowlands* was never intended to be a biographical play about C S Lewis but a dramatic reconstruction of the life that Lewis and Gresham shared together. However unlikely the paring of Lewis and Gresham might have initially seemed, their relationship was based on enormous mutual respect and a deep and fulfilling love.

Today, Lewis is mostly remembered for his Narnia books, the most well-known of which must be *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, but interestingly it is *The Magician's Nephew* that is referred to in *Shadowlands*. Our production of this play is set in an attic, where a suggestion of items from Lewis's past is stored and gathering dust. For the Narnia books, Lewis drew from many of his own real-life experiences. He does recall how he and his brother Warnie used to climb up into an old wardrobe and tell each other stories about talking animals, magic kingdoms, knights and dragons. Many years later, after their father had died, Lewis and his brother went to the family home in Belfast, to visit his grave and the now empty old family house. They were overwhelmed by the stillness and lifelessness of the rooms. In response to the depression they felt, they buried all their toys in an old attic trunk in the vegetable patch. It was a sad goodbye to their childhood and the fictitious worlds they created as children. In his autobiographical book about his early life, *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis wrote about his childhood home:

"The New House is almost a major character in my story. I am the product of long corridors, empty sunlit rooms, upstairs indoor silences, attics explored in solitude, distant noises of gurgling cisterns and pipes, and the noise of wind under the tiles. Also, of endless books. My father bought all the books he read and never got rid of any of them. There were books in the study, books in the drawing-room, books in the cloakroom, books (two deep) in the great bookcase on the landing, books in a bedroom, books piled high as my shoulder in the cistern attic, books of all kinds reflecting

every transient stage of my parents' interests, books readable and unreadable, books suitable for a child and books most emphatically not. I soon staked out a claim to one of the attics and made it 'my study'. Pictures, of my own making or cut from brightly coloured Christmas numbers of magazines, were nailed on the walls. There I kept my pen and inkpot and writing books and paint-box."

One of the questions we wanted to answer is what is the significance of the wardrobe in the play? We decided that it can mean different things to different people. It can be the embodiment of one's fears or the doorway to a new life. The decision to open the door requires the courage to face the risk of suffering.

As Lewis says: "I have been given the choice twice in my life. The boy chose safety. The man chooses suffering."

This has been a very challenging and rewarding process for Caroline and me, not only taking the whole concept of the play forward but acting in it and directing it at the same time. Without the help, understanding and support of our extremely experienced and talented actors and production team it would have been an immeasurably much more difficult process. Also we owe many thanks to Pam Redrup, who provided us with her valuable directorial support on this project.

Over the years, we have lost many relatives, friends and close Questors colleagues to cancer. This play is dedicated to their memory. Perhaps the profound message of the play comes from Joy's coping mechanism for Jack.

"I think it can be better than that. Better than just managing. What I'm trying to say is, that pain, then, is part of this happiness, now. That's the deal."

Mike Langridge, director

Next Questors Productions

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

by John Webster

8 – 15 February 2014

The Playhouse

A macabre, brutal tale set in a dark world of political intrigue, involving secret seduction, marriage and gruesome family revenge. A stunning piece of theatre.

BE MY BABY

by Amanda Whittington

28 February – 8 March 2014

The Studio

A poignant drama set in the 'Swinging Sixties' follows the fortunes of an unmarried 19-year-old forcibly sent to a Mother and Baby Home to live out the remainder of her now all too evident seven-month pregnancy.

THE QUESTORS THEATRE IN ASSOCIATION WITH TIGHTGRIP PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

SHADOWLANDS

by William Nicholson

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 24 January 2014

CAST

in order of appearance

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Young Jack | Joshua Ward / Zachary Jackson |
| C S Lewis | Mike Langridge |
| Major W H Lewis ('Warnie') | Alan Waldock |
| Professor Christopher Riley | Francis Lloyd |
| Alan Gregg | Mark Redrup |
| Rev. 'Harry' Harrington | John Dobson |
| Dr Maurice Oakley | Tony Barber |
| Waiter | Paul Mackley |
| Waiter | Derek Stoddart |
| Woman in Tearoom | Victoria Sandford |
| Joy Gresham | Caroline Bleakley |
| Douglas | Zachary Jackson / Joshua Ward |
| Registrar | Victoria Sandford |
| Registrar's Clerk | Paul Mackley |
| Nurse | Victoria Sandford |
| Doctor | Mark Redrup |
| Priest | Tony Barber |

The action takes place in Oxford, in the 1950s.

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 25 minutes including a 15-minute interval.

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

PRODUCTION

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Director and Set Designer | Mike Langridge |
| Director for TightGrip Productions | Caroline Bleakley |
| Associate Director for TightGrip | Pam Redrup |
| Costume Designer | Nichola Thomas |
| Lighting Designer | Andrew Dixon |
| Sound Designer | Richard Halberstadt |
| Stage Manager | Bernard Brady |
| Deputy Stage Manager | Frances Sherwin |
| Assistant Stage Managers | Paul Mackley, Joao Matos, Derek Stoddart, Wayne Wilson |
| Properties | Cathy Swift |
| Stationery Designer | Geoff Moore |
| Prompter | Bridgett Strevens |
| American Accent Coach | Michael Hayes |
| Movement Advisor | Nicholas Jonne Wilson |
| Rehearsal Stand-Ins | Tony Barber, Frances Sherwin |
| Wardrobe Assistant | Jenny Richardson |
| Lighting Operator | Mel Pereira |
| Lighting Assistants | John Green, Andrew Whadcoat |
| Sound Operator | Rebecca Wiltshire |
| Set Constructor | Colin Horne |
| Scenic Painter | Bron Blake |
| Hair and Make-Up | Abbigail Richards, Andreea Dumitrescu |
| QYT Tutor | Jessy Moat |
| Photographers | Carla Evans, Robert Vass |

Thanks to: **James Gadson, Paul Jackson, Doug King, Gordon Miller, Terry Mummery, Genevieve Simmers, Alan Smith, Jane and David Ward, Film Medical, Kall Kwik (Chiswick), www.teadarling.co.uk**

Biographies

Tony Barber – *Dr Maurice Oakley, Priest*

Tony first appeared at The Questors in 1957. Since then he has been in numerous productions including *Ring Round the Moon* (the twin brothers Hugo and Frederic), *Juno and the Paycock* (Joxer Daly) and *The Weir* (Jack Mullen). More recently he was in *Humble Boy* and Tony Rushforth's *Voyager*.

Caroline Bleakley – *Joy Gresham*

Caroline is Joint Artistic Director of TightGrip Productions and has appeared in over 30 plays at The Questors including: *Translations*, *The Rivals*, *Yerma*, *Dancing at Lughnasa* and *Heartbreak House*. Parts include Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*), Hermione (*The Winter's Tale*), Elizabeth Proctor (*The Crucible*), Betty (*Lady Betty*), Fanny Squeers (*Nicholas Nickleby*), Muriel (*Habeus Corpus*), Else (*Festen*), Merteuil (*Les Liaisons Dangereuses*), Arkadina (*The Seagull*), Mrs Lovett (*Sweeney Todd*) and most recently Mrs Warren in *Mrs Warren's Profession*.

John Dobson – *Rev. 'Harry' Harrington*

John Dobson joined The Questors in 1981 and has played pretty well everything from an evil spider to a French maid and a Japanese biker in black leather. Highlights include *The Faith Healer*, *Breaking the Code*, *The Lesson* and *Dublin Carol*. In between acting, he looks after The Questors' archives.

Zachary Jackson – *Young Jack, Douglas*

Zak joined Questors Youth Theatre in Autumn 2012. Shortly afterwards he appeared as Tommy Bailey in *It's A Wonderful Life!* In October 2013 he auditioned for the shared part of Douglas in *Shadowlands* and was awarded the role.

Mike Langridge – *C S Lewis*

Mike is Joint Artistic Director of TightGrip Productions and has appeared in over 100 plays at The Questors including *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Treats*, *The Front Page*, *Good*, *All My Sons*, *Faith Healer*, *Heartbreak House*, *A View From The Bridge*, *Festen*, *The Seagull* and *Broken Glass*. He has also directed *The Hired Man*, *Noises Off*, *Privates On Parade*, *The Crucible*, *Lady Betty*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Great Expectations*, *Sweeney Todd* and most recently *Mrs Warren's Profession*.

Meet The Company – Wednesday 29 January

Come and meet the director, cast and crew for an informal discussion in the Studio as soon as possible after the Wednesday performance.

Francis Lloyd – *Professor Christopher Riley*

Francis Lloyd joined The Questors to play Bohun in *You Never Can Tell*. Recent parts include Sir Robert Morton in *The Winslow Boy* and Stephen in *Dealer's Choice*. Among the plays he has directed are *After the Dance*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Engaged*.

Paul Mackley – *Waiter, Registrar's Clerk*

Paul trained with the National Youth Theatre, where he went on to work as an assistant course director. After becoming an acting member at The Questors last year, he has performed in *House & Garden*, *Mary Stuart* and *Antigone*. He is also a professional dance music producer and DJ.

Mark Redrup – *Alan Gregg, Doctor*

Mark has been acting at The Questors since 1990. His recent parts include Jim in *Brassed Off*, Willie in *Blue Remembered Hills* and Rev. Samuel Gardner in *Mrs Warren's Profession*.

Victoria Sandford – *Registrar, Nurse, Woman in Tearoom*

Victoria was in Questors Student Group 51 and has since appeared in numerous productions including *Brassed Off* (Sandra), *Coarse Shakespeare – The Final Folio* (Cleopatra), *The Talented Mr Ripley* (Marge/Sophia) and *Beauty and the Beast* (Babette). Other Questors highlights include: director of *The Flint Street Nativity*, lighting designer for *The Winterling*, set designer for *The Taming of the Shrew* and scenic artist for *The Marvellous Land of Oz*.

Derek Stoddart – *Waiter*

Derek has acted in a range of productions over the last 30 years with The Questors. His last appearance was as Gavin Ryng-Mayne in *House & Garden* and prior to that as Sir Amias Paulet in *Mary Stuart*. In 2012 he appeared in *The School of Night* and was a member of the company presenting *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet* at The Questors as part of the Shakespeare Open Stages Festival. Other notable productions prior to that include *Sweeney Todd*, *Great Expectations* and *Nicholas Nickleby*.

Alan Waldock – *Major W H Lewis ('Warnie')*

Alan's most recent appearance was in *House & Garden* (Warn). He has also been seen in *Engaged* (Symperson), *After October* (Brian Guest), *The Winslow Boy* (Arthur Winslow), *A Flea In Her Ear* (Dr Finache), *The Seagull* (Shamraev), *Charley's Aunt* (Stephen Spettigue), *Black Comedy* (Colonel Melkett) and *Great Expectations* (Mr Jagers).

Joshua Ward – *Young Jack, Douglas*

Josh has been a member of The Questors Youth Theatre for three years. In 2012 he was in the cast of *It's a Wonderful Life!* playing the roles of Petey Bailey and the young George Bailey. He is a pupil of Mount Carmel School. Josh loves swimming, the piano and computers!

William Nicholson

A native of Lewes, Sussex, William Nicholson was raised in a Roman Catholic family in Gloucestershire. By the time he reached his tenth birthday he had decided to become a writer. He was educated at Downside School, Somerset, and Christ's College, Cambridge.

At the start of his career Nicholson worked for the BBC as a director of documentary films with numerous works to his credit between the mid-1970s and mid-1980s. He has twice been nominated for Tony Awards for best play, for *Shadowlands* and *The Retreat from Moscow*. The play originated from a BBC TV film which starred Joss Ackland as Lewis, with Claire Bloom as his wife Joy Gresham. It won BAFTA Awards in 1986 for Best Play and Best Actress. It was then developed into a critically acclaimed stage play which ran in London and on Broadway and was finally also made into a film directed by Richard Attenborough starring Anthony Hopkins and Debra Winger.

TightGrip Productions

In 2008 Mike Langridge and Caroline Bleakley formed TightGrip Productions with a view to developing and producing shows that reflected their style of theatre. Over a number of years at The Questors, Mike and Caroline have worked on many shows that brought together their ideas about narrative and storytelling, for example, *Lady Betty*, *The Crucible*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Great Expectations* and *Sweeney Todd*.

The TightGrip inaugural production was always intended to be *Shadowlands* but for various reasons, including the fact that the rights weren't available at the time, the project was postponed until now. When The Questors was granted the rights for the play in this current season, it was agreed that the show would be produced as a joint venture between TightGrip and The Questors. It is also fitting that we are presenting this play at the same time as the celebrations surrounding the fiftieth anniversary of the death of C S Lewis are taking place.

Join Us

If you enjoy theatre, why not join us and benefit from membership:

- ✓ Half price personal tickets for Questors productions*
- ✓ Discounted Guest tickets when you bring friends to Questors productions*
- ✓ Children's FREE tickets†
- ✓ Opportunities to be actively involved in our productions
- ✓ Allowed to audition to join our company of actors
- ✓ Exclusive or discounted training courses
- ✓ Access to *iQ* – the members-only website members.questors.org.uk
- ✓ A full-colour members' magazine three times a year
- ✓ Access to exclusive news on *iQ* and email newsletter
- ✓ Monthly programme card
- ✓ Membership of The Grapevine Club
- ✓ Voting rights in the company

*Reduced prices exclude certain events. †Under 18 only, maximum four per event. Must be collected at the performance and accompanied by an adult member.

Introductory offer – as a welcome for first-time members, get your first 12 months' membership for the price of six.

Getting the most from your membership

We have a wide range of opportunities for you to become actively involved front-of-house or backstage. Volunteer help is always needed for selling programmes or stewarding, and training is provided if you'd like to work in Box Office with our computerised system. To meet members in a social setting, volunteer to help behind the Grapevine bar. Backstage staff including stage managers, prop makers, set builders, sound and light designers and operators, painters, wardrobe and costume and set designers are always welcomed; whatever your skills, we'll find a place for you. We also have courses for those wishing to direct.

The Questors has a high standard of acting and, to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – call the Theatre Office for details of forthcoming auditions.

The Questors Youth Theatre – QYT

Our Youth Theatre, QYT, runs weekly drama classes for all ages from 6 to 18. Younger groups meet on Saturday mornings and older ages at weekday teatime. There's often a waiting list for membership, so put your name down now! Details are online at questors.org.uk/qyt.

Cover Image: Cameron Bleakley
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