A tale of foundlings, angels, murder and music

The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts opens its 2009 theatre season with the acclaimed play Coram Boy, adapted by Helen Edmundson from Jamila Gavin’s Whitbread award-winning children’s book.

In the 250th anniversary year of George Frideric Handel’s death, WAAPA brings to its main stage this power-packed drama which fuses the music of the great Baroque composer with a gripping, gothic tale set in the dark heart of 18th century England.

Coram Boy will be performed in the Geoff Gibbs Theatre for seven performances only from Friday 13 March. It will showcase the 3rd Year Acting students, supported by post-graduate Classical Vocal students, with direction by WAAPA’s Head of Acting Chris Edmund and musical direction by David Wickham, WAAPA’s Lecturer in Piano.

Coram Boy tells the story of two boys who find themselves at the Coram Foundling Hospital in London, a children’s home established for the ‘education and maintenance of exposed and deserted young children’. This actual institution was founded in 1739 by the philanthropic sea captain, Thomas Coram. Handel, and other inspired men of the time including the English artist William Hogarth, was actively involved in supporting the institution. By 1953, when the Coram Hospital ceased operating, more than 27,000 children had passed through its doors.

The play weaves the story of the Coram Hospital, the children who made it their home and the music of Handel into a high drama peopled with dastardly villains, cold-hearted aristocrats, devoted friends and passionate lovers. It’s a tale of foundlings, angels, murder and music, with a dash of redemptive love and a heartbreaking family reunion.

“After the show was over, I exited the theatre, wiped my eyes, and walked to the ticket booth to buy tickets to see it again. Coram Boy is the kind of production that feeds my soul and reminds me why I love theatre.” – Michael Knapp, Theatre Guide, New York

“It’s a spellbinder of a book and Helen Edmundson’s adaptation does full justice to the dark power of the original, while also transforming it into a thrilling piece of theatre. An emotionally overwhelming production that will haunt the memory of all who see it.” – Daily Telegraph, London

Performance Information: Coram Boy
Friday 13 – Thursday 19 March at 7.30pm. Matinee Saturday 14 March at 2pm.
The Geoff Gibbs Theatre, WAAPA, Edith Cowan University, 2 Bradford St, Mt Lawley.
Tickets are $25 full/$20 concession. Bookings through WAAPA Box Office on 9370 6636.

***************

For further information, complimentary ticket requests or to discuss interview opportunities, please contact:
Anton Maz, Marketing Manager, Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts
Phone: (08) 9370 6817  Mob: 0404 699 772  Email: a.maz@ecu.edu.au