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Canolfan y Celfyddydau
Aberystwyth Arts Centre

PRESS RELEASE

Far From The Madding Crowd
Aberystwyth Arts Centre Youth Theatre
By Thomas Hardy
Adapted by Marc Healy
Directed by Richard Hull
7.30pm, Thursday 19 - Saturday 21 November 2009



From Thursday 19th to Saturday 21st November the Youth Theatre return to Aberystwyth Arts Centre's main stage to present one of Thomas Hardy's most popular and enduring novels 'Far From The Madding Crowd'.

Aberystwyth Arts Centre Youth Theatre take their audience on a theatrical journey through Hardy country, following a passionate young girl propelled into womanhood by her experiences of love and loss. Having inherited her uncle's farm, the spirited and feisty young Bathsheba Everdene finds herself playing mistress in a man's world. She is pursued by three would-be lovers: the constant shepherd, Gabriel Oak; the obsessive landowner, William Boldwood and the reckless Sergeant Troy. But are any of them a match for the wilful Bathsheba?

Director Richard Hull says "this adaptation of *Far From The Madding Crowd* was first performed in 2008, so we are very lucky to have been granted permission to stage the piece. The text remains truthful to Thomas Hardy's original work, and the cast have worked harder than ever before to ensure that the piece has the necessary energy, emotion and pace to drive it forward (too often adaptations tends to be quite lumbering - endless scene changes covered by music, slowing down the action and losing the audience's attention at every turn). Due to the episodic nature of the original publication, the play also has this structure, which is something we have worked around by the staging and lighting used - ensuring a constant stream of the drama, rather than individual scenes."

'Far From the Madding Crowd' will be followed by the Youth Theatre's annual Christmas production in December, in co-production with the community theatre. This year's Christmas production will be the childhood classic 'The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe'.

2009 has been an eventful year for the Arts Centre's Youth Theatre. The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) once again sent examiners to the Arts Centre to assess the Stage School and Youth Theatre pupils. Youth Theatre Director, Richard Hull said "once again, our candidates have surpassed all results in previous years - with many students taking top level LAMDA Gold Medal Acting exams and obtaining Distinction. In terms of percentages 66% of our students obtained a Merit or Distinction." Long term Stage School and Youth Theatre members, Gwyneth Keyworth and Taron Egerton have achieved outstanding results. Gwyneth Keyworth obtained the highest distinction ever awarded to an Arts Centre student in her Gold Medal exam. Taron Egerton, who most recently appeared in Richard Hull's production of 'The Tempest' has now taken his place at RADA - the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. Youth Theatre members are now rehearsing intensively in preparation for their busy autumn season.

Tickets for 'Far From The Madding Crowd' are £8 (£6) and can be booked by contacting the Arts Centre ticket office on 01970 62 32 32 or online at www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre

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Notes to editors:

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