

Tŷ Bernarda Alba

1 MAY 2009
PRESS RELEASE

Tŷ Bernarda Alba

7.30pm, 20–21 May 2009



Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru (the Welsh National Theatre Company) perform this brand new Welsh-language production of Lorca's *Tŷ Bernarda Alba* (*The House of Bernada Alba*) at Aberystwyth Arts Centre from Wednesday 20th to Thursday 21st May, 7.30pm.

Tŷ Bernarda Alba was the last play penned by the poet and renowned dramatist Federico Garcia Lorca, who was executed during the Spanish Civil War. It is a theatrical masterpiece on frustrated desire and the complex relationships between sisters.

Tŷ Bernarda Alba has been adapted into Welsh by Mererid Hopwood: the only female ever to win the bardic chair in the National Eisteddfod of Wales. In 2003 Mererid Hopwood, a First-Class Honours Spanish and German Graduate from Llangynnwr near Carmarthen, was awarded the Eisteddfod's bardic crown, and in 2008 she won the festival's Prose Medal. "Mererid's writing talents excel once again in her adaptation of Lorca's last and most poignant play," said Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru's Deputy Artsitic Director, Judith Roberts. "Mererid is now part of a long tradition of Welsh literary giants who have successfully brought the best of European theatre to a Welsh audience," she added.

The play centres on the events in a house in rural Spain during a period of mourning. Bernarda, a 60-year-old widow, wields total and tragic control over the whole household. The play explores themes of repression, passion, and conformity, and inspects the effects of men upon women. Bernarda's cruel tyranny over her daughters foreshadows the stifling nature of Franco's fascist regime, which was to arrive just a few weeks after Lorca finished writing his play. The play was completed shortly before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 but was not performed for another nine years. Lorca's work was banned by Franco's incoming fascist regime. Lorca himself was abducted and murdered by persons unknown and his body was never found. The investigation into his death is ongoing.

The all-female cast includes well-known and hugely experienced stage and television actresses: Sian Alwen, Ffion Wyn Bowen, Rhian Jayne Bull, Carys Eleri, Jenny Livsey, Betsan Llwyd, Catrin Morgan, Rhian Morgan, Sharon Morgan, Christine Pritchard and Tonya Smith. The play is directed by Judith Roberts, supported by lighting director, Nick Munford, and set designer Colin Falconer. The music for the production is composed by Conor Linehan.

Tickets for this production are £10 (£9) and can be booked by contacting the Arts Centre ticket office on 01970 62 32 32 or online at www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre

Notes to editors:

Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru will tour some of Wales' main theatres in the coming weeks.

Further information is available from Rachel Taylor on 01970 622889 email rst@aber.ac.uk

Further Aberystwyth Arts Centre press releases can be found at

www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/press.shtml.