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July 2006

ART BRINGS TOP DRAMA ACADEMY BACK TO THE RSC

This summer, the Royal Shakespeare Company plays host to a brand new collection from the paintbrush of LAMDA's senior acting tutor, John Link

It is not the first time that John Link and top drama school, LAMDA have been spotted strutting their stuff in Shakespeare's streets. In September 2004, the Academy mounted an ambitious 140 mile sponsored walk from Stratford to London, raising over £105,000 for LAMDA and its students. With his latest exhibition, inspired by the works of the Bard, John will once again lend his invaluable support to the Academy's fundraising efforts, by very generously donating 10% of the proceeds from the sale of his paintings to the LAMDA Student Hardship Fund.

The Hardship Fund was established to help LAMDA students who experience severe, unexpected financial difficulties during their training. John has been teaching at the Academy for over ten years now and, in supporting this cause, he is playing a significant role in maintaining LAMDA's safety net for students who suddenly find themselves in significant need.

Describing why he has chosen to support this crucial fund, John comments: *I remember the struggles of my student days, working all the hours that God sends and still not having enough. The Hardship Fund is there to help in those moments. It is not a rich fund, but a vital one. If I can help ease the burden of debt that seems to fall on our young people at their most financially vulnerable time, then I am happy to try and do my bit.*

Commenting on the exhibition, Sarah Aspley, Head of Enterprise at the RSC, says: The Complete Works Festival allows us to celebrate Shakespeare's genius in many different ways and the exhibition provides us with another media to explore his work. It also provides a another way in which we can support our actors of the future. John's paintings capture the essence, mood and diversity of Shakespeare's characters in a way that I'm sure people will enjoy.

The exhibition opens with a Private View at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre's Quarto Restaurant on Thursday 27th July and runs until 13th October 2006.

[Photographs available upon request]

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NOTES TO EDITORS

John Link

John was born in London in 1941. He trained as an actor in the early sixties and worked for 30 years as an actor, theatre director and television producer. Since 1996, John has been a director and senior acting tutor at LAMDA. John is also a self-taught artist (coupled with some classes at the Royal Society of British Sculptors and the St. Ives School of Art). He has drawn and sketched for 30 years, but only started painting in oils in 2000. John's work has strong theatrical themes, using Shakespeare and Chekov as inspiration. This will be John's fourth solo art exhibition, following successful shows at the Victoria Miro Gallery in 2004; The Crooked House Gallery, Suffolk and Absolute, London in 2005.

For further information, please visit www.johnlink.org.uk

LAMDA

- LAMDA is one of the oldest drama schools in the UK dating back to 1861 and LAMDA graduates are generally recognised as among the leading theatre practitioners around the world.
- LAMDA is an affiliate member of the prestigious Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (CDD) a premier division in performing arts training established by the government to strengthen access to training for talented students regardless of their background.
- LAMDA provides acting, stage management & technical theatre tuition, as well as special programmes in directing, scenic design, and movement.
- LAMDA alumni appearing in the RSC's 2006 Season include: **Joseph Alessi** *Antony And Cleopatra, Julius Caesar* **Julian Bleach** *Antony And Cleopatra* **Tim Chipping** *The Crucible* **Nick Court** *Antony And Cleopatra* **Hannah Eidinow** (Assistant Director) *As You Like It* **Chris Jarman** *Antony And Cleopatra, Julius Caesar* **James Laurenson** *The Crucible* **John Light** *Julius Caesar* **Bruce Mackinnon** *Women Beware Women* **Nancy Meckler** (Director) *Romeo And Juliet, The Comedy Of Errors* **Sam O Mahony-Adams** *Romeo And Juliet, Much Ado About Nothing* **Leon Ockenden** *Women Beware Women* **Adam Rayner** *Romeo And Juliet, Much Ado About Nothing* **Patrick Robinson** *Much Ado About Nothing* **Gurpreet Singh** *As You Like It* **Janet Suzman** (Director) *Hamlet, Coriolanus* **Tim Treloar** *Believe What You Will, Thomas More, Sejanus: His Fall* **Harriet Walter** *Antony And Cleopatra*
- Nearly 100% of stage management & technical theatre graduates in the last three years have found work in their chosen field within three months of graduation.