

155 Talgarth Road
London W14 9DA

Telephone: 020 8834 0510
Facsimile: 020 8834 0501
E-mail: development@lamda.org.uk
Internet: www.lamda.org.uk

PATRON
HRH Princess Alexandra
The Hon Lady Ogilvy KG, GCVO

PRINCIPAL
Peter James FRSA

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
Gina Napoli

PRESIDENT
Timothy West CBE FRSA

VICE-PRESIDENT
Janet Suzman

THE LONDON
LAMDA
ACADEMY OF
MUSIC AND
DRAMATIC ART

October 2005

PROVOCATIVE PLAYWRIGHT PETER MORRIS BRINGS IRAQ TO THE LONDON FRINGE

Young actors desperate to make their mark in the industry would do well to follow the recent example of two exceptional young graduates from the **London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA)**. Seeking an innovative new work for this year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Hywel John and MyAnna Buring, both founding directors of the **MahWaff Theatre Company**, approached one of the fastest rising writing stars of the UK/US theatre scene, **Peter Morris**. Their resulting collaboration led to the creation of ***Guardians***, an indelible exploration of the now infamous snapshots from Abu Ghraib and other atrocities committed in Iraq in the name of freedom. Now, hot on the heels of its award-winning success at the Fringe, *Guardians* is playing at one of London's most exciting fringe venues, Theatre503, for an unmissable three week run.

Morris, a graduate of both Yale and Oxford University, is synonymous with the creation of provocative theatre. Twice winner of *The Sunday Times* playwriting prize, he attracted tabloid contempt and critical plaudits in equal measure when his controversial play, *The Age of Consent*, premiered at the Bush Theatre in 2002. Since then, works such as *Gone Missing* and *Guardians* have led him to be heralded as not just a welcome arrival on the playwriting scene but a necessary one. [Ian Shuttleworth, *Financial Times*] No surprise then perhaps that alumni from as prestigious and progressive a drama school as LAMDA would turn to him for a work that is as compelling as it is controversial. Morris was more than happy to oblige.

Yet *Guardians* is neither LAMDA's nor alumnus Hywel John's first collaboration with Morris. Whilst at the Academy, he and fellow two-year professional acting students worked with Morris to devise the light opera *A Million Hearts For Mosley* as part of LAMDA's Long Project Initiative. Intended to increase students awareness of the responsibilities of play-making as opposed to simply rehearsing an established piece, the Long Project is becoming recognised as a source of exhilarating new work, with two such projects going on to the National Theatre and beyond: *Mother Claps Molly House* by Mark Ravenhill and Di Trevis production of Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*.

On working on both LAMDA's Long Project and *Guardians*, Morris commented: "I was thrilled by the chance to be a resident writer at LAMDA. Because I'd worked with more professionals who trained there than at any other school, I was impressed in advance. But LAMDA students exceeded even my highest expectations. I began my residency as their teacher, but left as their eager student, eager to continue our collaboration out in the world. And eager to return to LAMDA."

EXECUTIVE BOARD
CHAIRMAN
Luke Rittner

EXECUTIVE BOARD
VICE-CHAIRMAN
Harold Sandten

Eileen Collins LLAM Hon
Kay Ellen Consover
Jeremy Conway
Gerard Hargreaves
Lew Hodges
Doreen Jones
Victoria Legge-Bourke LVO
Martin Mellish
Hon Ann Money-Coutts
Jennifer Page CBE
Mark Schnebli
Dallas Smith
Sue Stapely
Dr Martin Stephen
Richard Szpiro
Thomas Vaughan
Wilf Weeks

DEVELOPMENT BOARD
CHAIRMAN
Wilf Weeks

Stephen Anderson
Floella Benjamin OBE
Julia Brodie
Jonathan Cohen QC
Jason Flemyng
Richard Foulkes
Mary H Friday
Anthony Fry
Victoria Hamilton
John Krumins
Nicolas Lethbridge
Hon Giles Money-Coutts
Charles Morgan
Philip Noel
Georgia Oetker
Nicky Oppenheimer
Howard Panter
Martin Pilkington
Gilbert Rodway QC
The Baroness Smith
of Gilmerehill
David Suchet
Victoria Tate
Charles Whiddington
Thai Ping Wong



Praise for *Guardians*:

A little cracker sharply written and superbly acted. **Lyn Gardner, *The Guardian***

Memorable, moving and disturbing Peter Morris's script is very fine indeed.

Joyce McMillan, *The Scotsman*

[Photograph: MyAnna Buring and Hywel John sparkle in *Guardians*. Photograph by Jessica Malik]

NOTES TO EDITORS

MahWaff Theatre Company

MahWaff is a collective of the best up-and-coming young performers, writers and directors in British theatre and film. Founded in 1999, MahWaff is rapidly establishing itself as a respected centre for exciting new writing and powerful productions. MahWaff exists to produce theatre which is accessible and challenging, innovative and fun.

Absolutely terrific exciting young theatre company with lots of talent **BBC**

For more information on the MahWaff Theatre Company, please contact them at 07866 717835 or info@mahwaff.com.

Peter Morris

Peter has twice won the *London Sunday Times Playwriting Prize*, in 2000 and 2001.

His work has been staged professionally at the Bush; the Gate; the Latchmere and the Union Theatres in London, and in New York at Soho Rep; the Belt; HERE and Dixon Place.

Peter's controversial plays include *The Age of Consent*, which premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe 2001, then transferred to London's Bush Theatre in 2002. The play has since been staged professionally in Dublin, Rome, Berlin, and Tokyo, and as a television play in Reykjavik. Readings and workshops in the UK include the Old Vic, the King's Head, and the Arts Theatre in London.

Peter has also written for BBC1 (*Born and Bred*), BBC2 (adapting John Lanchester's *The Debt to Pleasure*), Film Four (adapting Paul Murray's novel *An Evening of Long Goodbyes*), and for film director Robert Altman (BBC Films), a 6-part adaptation of Roald Dahl's *Tales of the Unexpected*.