

chichester festival theatre

15 April 2024

Full cast announced for the enthralling 18th century adventure *CORAM BOY*

24 May – 15 June, Chichester Festival Theatre

21 – 29 June, The Lowry, Salford

The full cast has been announced for **Anna Ledwich**'s new production of *Coram Boy*, running at Chichester Festival Theatre from 24 May – 15 June (press night: Thursday 30 May) and at The Lowry, Salford from 21 – 29 June.

Helen Edmundson's adaptation of **Jamila Gavin**'s Whitbread Award-winning novel premiered at the National Theatre in 2005 before transferring to Broadway. Nominated for several Olivier and Tony Awards, it won the Time Out Live Award for Best Play.

The cast is: **Will Antenbring** (Alexander Ashbrook), **Louisa Binder** (Young Alexander/Aaron Dangerfield), **Pandora Clifford** (Lady Ashbrook/Mrs Hendry), **Rhianna Dorris** (Melissa Milcote/Angel), **Holly Freeman** (Isobel Ashbrook), **Aled Gomer** (Meshak Gardiner), **Harry Gostelow** (Sir William Ashbrook), **Tallulah Greive** (Alice Ashbrook), **Rebecca Hayes** (Young Thomas Ledbury), **Tom Hier** (Thomas Ledbury), **Jewelle Hutchinson** (Miss Price/Toby Gaddarn), **Debbie Korley** (Mrs Milcote), **Milo McCarthy** (Edward Ashbrook), **Jo McInnes** (Mrs Lynch), **Samuel Oatley** (Otis Gardiner/Philip Gaddarn) and **James Staddon** (Theodore Claymore/George Frederic Handel). They will be joined by an ensemble of 12 children.

Angels and abandoned children, glorious music and murder most foul whirl through this enthralling, moving and richly colourful tale of 18th century England.

At Gloucester Cathedral, Alexander Ashbrook, heir to an aristocratic estate, has his heart set on becoming a composer; but his stern father refuses to listen and despite his love for the beautiful Melissa, flight seems his only option. Far darker conflicts are at play for Meshak, son of the brutal Otis Gardiner who preys on young unmarried mothers – promising to deliver their babies to Coram's new Foundling Hospital but instead meting out a terrible fate.

Their stories entwine eight years later in London, where two Coram orphans, Toby and Aaron, find themselves on parallel adventures, and the great Handel is at work on a new score, *Messiah*, embodying the hope of love and salvation over evil.

Anna Ledwich was formerly writer in residence at CFT (*Pinocchio*) and Artistic Director of Theatre on the Fly (2012); her recent directorial work includes *Anthropology* (Hampstead).

The designer is **Simon Higlett**, lighting designer **Emma Chapman**, composer and sound designer **Max Pappenheim**, musical director **Stephen Higgins**, movement director **Chi-San Howard**, fight and intimacy director **Bethan Clark**, casting director **Annelie Powell CDG**, and voice and dialect coach **Joel Trill**.

For ages 12+.

Coram Boy will run at **The Lowry, Salford** from 21 – 29 June, immediately following its Chichester run.

The Chichester production is sponsored by The Portsmouth Grammar School.

Tickets from £10

cft.org.uk Box Office **01243 781312**

Prologue: £5 tickets for 16 – 30s

9,000 £5 tickets are available for 16 to 30 year-olds across all Festival 2024 productions; sign up for free at **cft.org.uk/prologue**.

Images can be downloaded from cft.org.uk/pressimages, password: festivalpress

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