THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
by Oscar Wilde

Directed by Bruce Jamieson; Produced by Alice de Sousa; Costume Design by Richard Cooke; Set Design by Sarah Ashpole; Lighting Design by Robert Gooch; Presented by Galleon Theatre Co. Ltd


Tues-Sat @ 7.30pm - Sun @ 4pm
PRESS NIGHT: Thursday, 17th December 2009 @ 7.30pm

Tickets: £12, £10 (concs)
Box Office: 020 8858 9256
boxoffice@galleontheatre.co.uk

VENUE: GREENWICH PLAYHOUSE,
Greenwich Station Forecourt, 189 Greenwich High Road
LONDON SE10 8JA

‘The Greenwich Playhouse is an enjoyably ambitious venue and is a solid producer of classics’
- Evening Standard

Internationally acclaimed Galleon Theatre Company presents a joyous seasonal celebration of Oscar Wilde’s devastatingly funny and enduring play The Importance of Being Earnest.

Wilde’s hilarious comedy of two men whose lives deliciously unravel when they fall in love with two witty women with a partiality for the name ‘Ernest’, is set in the early 1930’s, at Christmas and to the exciting sounds, fashions and dances of the period.

Galleon’s lovingly realised production provides a highly entertaining and blazingly theatrical celebration of one of Britain’s most renowned playwrights and of his celebrated and timeless play.

“This studio-sized venue has been put on the cultural map with productions of epic quality.” - South London Press

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) was an Anglo-Irish playwright, poet and author of numerous short stories and one novel. Known for his incisive wit, Wilde was one of the most successful playwrights of the late Victorian era and one of its brightest “celebrities”. Drama and tragedy marred his private life. He married Constance Lloyd in 1884 and they had two sons; but in 1891 Wilde began a love affair with Lord Alfred Douglas, nicknamed 'Bosie'.
“Never speak disrespectfully of Society, Algernon. Only people who can't get into it do that.” - Lady Bracknell, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

It was during the successful opening night of *The Importance of Being Earnest* that the destruction of Wilde's career and reputation was cruelly instigated. The Marquis of Queensberry, father of Wilde's lover Lord Alfred Douglas, attempted to enter the theatre, intending to throw vegetables at the playwright when he took his bow at the end of the show. Wilde was tipped off and Queensberry was refused admission.

Queensberry's unrelenting hostility to Wilde was to trigger the latter's ill advised pursuit of legal action which resulted in the annihilation of his career and in him being sentenced to two years of hard labour.

Wilde's notoriety was also to cause *The Importance of Being Earnest*, despite its success, to close after only 83 performances. He never wrote again for the stage.

“I do not approve of anything that tampers with natural ignorance. Ignorance is like a delicate, exotic fruit. Touch it, and the bloom is gone. The whole theory of modern education is radically unsound. Fortunately in England, at any rate, education produces no effect whatsoever.”

- Lady Bracknell, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

➢ *The Importance of Being Earnest* is creatively spearheaded by a very experienced and award winning team.

The director: BRUCE JAMIESON has previously directed over twenty highly successful Galleon theatre productions and played leading roles in some sixty stage plays. As an actor, his television and film credits include *The Oxford Murders; Murphy's Law* (Tiger Aspect); *Monarch of the Glen* (Ecosse); *Ali G-Inda House* (Universal); *Roughnecks* (BBC); *In Suspicious Circumstances* (Granada); *Crime Solver* (BBC); and *Spongebob* (BBC). He is the co-founder of the Greenwich Playhouse, Galleon Theatre Company and Galleon Films.

The producer: is multi-award winner ALICE DE SOUSA who has in 2009 won two prestigious international awards, including the Portuguese government's 'Premio de Talento' in recognition of her 25 year career. She has created over seventy stage productions; played leading roles in some thirty theatre plays; and written many highly acclaimed stage and screen scripts. In 2005 the American Biographical Institute awarded her with ‘Great Women of the 21st Century’ and ‘Woman of the Year 2005’. (These awards exclusively recognise the impact on society of the work of 1000 prolific women worldwide).
The dazzling production design includes:
elegant Scenery by Sarah Ashpole; beautiful 1930’s Costumes by Richard Cooke whose design credits comprise of the feature films The Phantom of the Opera and Lassie and the recent television series of Hustle; and evocative Lighting by Robert Gooch.

The talented cast includes MAGGIE DANIELS (Ms. Prism); LAURA DARRALL (Cecily); MILES EAGLING (John Worthing); KATH PERRY (Lady Bracknell); KIRSTEN HAZEL SMITH (Gwendolen); RICHARD UNWIN (Algernon); BARRIE WILMORE (Rev. Chasuble).

Galleon Theatre Company has been staging critically acclaimed theatre since 1989. Recent productions of the classics include:

‘A DOLL’S HOUSE’ by Henrik Ibsen
“In this insightful production, Bruce Jamieson’s revival of the Ibsen play, despite its 19th Century setting always seems startlingly modern.” - The Guardian
“This excellent production benefits from expert steerage from director Bruce Jamieson and producer Alice de Sousa. Highly recommended.” - Theatre World
“If this were a Hollywood movie, we’d be cheering – and not just because the oppressed stands up to the oppressor.” - Time Out

‘THE SEAGULL’ by Anton Chekhov
“Galleon has found the perfect intimate space in which to pull us right into Chekhov’s milieu. We can laugh the laughs of genuine Chekhovian discomfort, and squirm along with our characters caught in a net.” - The Independent
“An impressive production that gives every actor, and indeed, every character, the space they deserve.” - Time Out
“Galleon Theatre Company gives an excellent account of this much loved classic, capturing the sadness of unrequited love and failed aspiration, but finding the humour in it too.” - What’s on in London

ABSENT FRIENDS by Alan Ayckbourn
“Directed at a cracking, heartless pace by Bruce Jamieson, the cast of six revel in the cringe worthiness of the parts they play and make us revel with them” - The Stage
“Blackly-comic statements leave the audience in fits of laughter.” - Kentish Times
“Bruce Jamieson has won performances from the cast that succeed in combining parody with credibility.” - What’s On In London

For further information contact the Galleon Theatre Company on 020 8310 7276; the producer on 07957 548010 or alice@galleontheatre.co.uk

Please consult our website on www.galleontheatre.co.uk