

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE PRESENTS
ADVENTURES IN THE SKIN TRADE

"Dylan Thomas himself, without doubt, would have enjoyed this production immensely" Wales Arts Review

"What Lucy Gough allows us to hear is the unmistakable voice of Dylan Thomas" Theatre in Wales

Upon his premature death in 1953, Dylan Thomas left an unfinished novel. Adapted for the stage to celebrate the centenary of his birth, ***Adventures in the Skin Trade*** will expose youthful exploration and discovery in all its uncomfortable glory from 31 July – 2 August at the Sydney Opera House.

Described by British Theatre Guide as the "darkly poetic rambling of a questing soul", *Adventures in the Skin Trade* is a coming-of-age tale filled with promise, youthful eagerness, family, danger, the unknown, risk and awakening. Over 60 years since it was first published, this story of the formative years between childhood and adulthood are as relevant today as they were when first penned.

Welsh poet Dylan Thomas was a prolific writer in his short 39-year life. Best known for his poem *Do not go gentle into that good night* and play *Under Milk Wood*, Thomas captured the fragility and patterns of life and death in his unique prose. His incomplete autobiographical novel follows the central character of Samuel Bennett, a young man embarking on a journey of self-discovery in London, much like the young, impressionable Thomas who first visited London in 1933 aged 19.

Welsh youth Sam leaves home in search of adventure in London. Innocence and enthusiasm prove a dangerous mix as Sam encounters people and experiences that he is ill-prepared for and could never have foreseen. From strangers with questionable motivations to his first sexual experience – in a cold bath – Sam navigates many challenges in his initiation into adulthood. All with a beer bottle stuck on his little finger.

Thomas began the novel in 1940 but by the time of his death in 1953 it remained unfinished. It was published the year after his death. **Theatr Iolo's** *Adventures in the Skin Trade* premiered in 2014 as part of Welsh celebrations of the centenary of Thomas' birth and was labelled "the absolute highlight of the Dylan Thomas anniversary" by Wales Arts Review.

Award-winning Welsh theatre company Theatr Iolo has been creating challenging work for children and young audiences for over 25 years. With the support of the Arts Council of Wales and the British Council Wales they gave voice to Thomas' unfinished work for a new generation to relate to and enjoy. Playwright Lucy Gough was granted access to Thomas' estate, including letters Thomas wrote explaining his plans for the novel. She has brought Dylan Thomas' story to life on stage in a way that captures the madness and melodrama of youth and echoes his poetic outlook on life.

Sydney Opera House Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning, Bridgette Van Leuven believes this revival of Thomas' work is particularly relevant to young adults of today: *"We are delighted to bring Theatr Iolo's Adventures in the Skin Trade to Australia. This timeless tale about the age of discovery will delight Dylan Thomas fans and be a unique first-time introduction to the rich language and imagination of Dylan for many young audience members."*

At once universal but intimate, entertaining but confronting, *Adventures in the Skin Trade* will take Sydney Opera House audiences on a surreal journey through Dylan Thomas' poetic lens on life.

ADVENTURES IN THE SKIN TRADE

Dates: 31 July – 2 August 2015

Venue: Studio, Sydney Opera House

Website: http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/whatson/adventures_in_the_skin_trade.aspx

Bookings: 02 9250 7777

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