

A TALE OF TWO CITIES



Photo: Johan Persson

A Tale of Two Cities, a modern adaptation of the Dickens classic novel, by Matthew Dunster, Regent's Park Open Air Theatre is the first of a two-part Dickens season at the popular summer venue, also featuring a family friendly version of *Oliver Twist*, both until 5 August.

Dunster's adaptation is not for the faint hearted and did cause some controversy during previews although changes have since been made to the script. In spite of the appearance of several junior cast members in the production, at three hours, it still remains very much an adult's only affair.

The play juxtaposes the present day with Dickens depiction of the 18th century, similarly contrasting the backdrops of London and Revolutionary Paris and the fortunes of the main characters, the haves and have-nots. To this end the cast cope well with the many costume and scene changes, with several taking on multiple roles.

A Tale of Two Cities is described in the programme notes as a 'play for today' with its strong themes of political turmoil and social upheaval. Expect to be challenged about whether the world has really changed since Dickens penned his novel 150 years ago.

The award winning production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* will be making a return to the theatre on 11 August until the end of the season, now extended to accommodate extra performances until 23 September.

On a balmy summer's evening with the twinkling lights and the breeze gently rustling the leaves on the trees, it is difficult to think of a better place to be than enjoying one of the productions at this special London landmark theatre.