Much Ado About Nothing

Ecole d’Humanité
March 16th & 17th 2013 at 19:30

50th Anniversary Performance
dedicated with love to
Natalie Lüthi Peterson (1927 – 2012)
Characters in the Play

Boy with Crayon          Harry Wu
Boy’s Parents            Kylie Zimmer, Will Belhumeur
Leonata                 Sachi Watase
Antonia                 Jesse Clements
Hero                    Sofia Kovarich
Beatrice                Kylie Zimmer
Ursula                  Adriana Arancibia
Margaret                Cassia Frazier
Don Pedro               William Chen
Benedick                Will Belhumeur
Claudio                 Yannick Graf
Don John                 Michael Stampfl
Borachio                Chris Wong
Conrade                 Anna Mazzolini
Balthasar                Bryan Mate
Friar Francis           Royina Banerjee
Sexton                   Alex Li
Dogberry                  Liam Collins
Verges                   Max Hackinger
First Watch              Jesse Clements
Second Watch            Royina Banerjee
Guest artist            Silvan Li
Prompter                 June Vinhateiro
Musicians               Eddie Chen, Ernst Thöni, Sigi Thöni,
                          Katharina Hänggi, Nathan Wigton,
                          Bob Liu, Micha Hackinger
Costumes                Sophie Olsen
Set Design              Helen Needham, Melissa Bagg
Prop Creation           Mats Reed
Set Building            Julius zur Nieden, Jan Fehlmann
                          Konstantin Hanusa, Marius Cavin
                          Micha Hackinger, Ashley Curtis
Lighting                Julius zur Nieden, Jan Fehlmann
Technical Advisor       Stefan Wäschenfelder
Choreography            Helen Needham
Directors               Melissa Bagg, Sophie Olsen,
                          Daniel D. Wood

Serendipitously, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year!
As imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
A Midsummer Night’s Dream

Much Ado About Nothing. So much complex fol-di-rol about nothing at all?
But NOTHING is not emptiness. It is possibility, the realm of creativity. The story’s
seed is NOTHING, air, the blank page. “Imagination bodies forth,/ The forms of
things unknown.” It breathes.

A little boy, alone and forlorn in his room, begins to imagine, drawing a circle with his
breath on the window. He dreams of escape, summoning a purple story out of the
surrounding walls - castles, ladies, lovers, and the happy reunion of his quarreling
parents, whom he paints in his tale as Beatrice and Benedick (their merry war of wit
may end in a kiss…)

But, as happens in creation, the elements of the boy’s design take on a life of their own.
Illusions, lies, deceptions swirl about him and become the theme of the story. Don
Pedro of Aragon, the Prince, arrives at the castle of Signora Leonata with his soldiers,
done with war and ready for reveling. The Masked Ball begins! Suddenly all the
characters play with disguise.

Some of these delusions alter reality deliciously. Beatrice and Benedick are caught in
the net set by their friends, tricked into falling in love by garden theatricals. Don Pedro
woos Hero, Leonata’s only daughter, masked as Claudio, who desires her but fears
failure. And then there is the darker deception of Don John the Bastard, brother to the
Prince, who in his bitterness seeks to destroy Claudio’s joy in Hero by “painting out her
wickedness.” “The lady is diabolical!” he hisses, and Claudio and the Prince, in an
instant, are convinced. Hero has “fallen into a pit of ink.”

Finally, though, imagination works to heal, rather than kill. The Friar’s plot raises our
smothered spirits: once again Claudio and the Prince are deceived, but this time the fiction
opens their eyes: illusions also allow us, ironically, to see the truth, to re-vise
assumptions, cast off opinions and false images, and embrace the “flesh and blood” of
other human beings. In the end, Claudio will be taught to see a Hero who “surely…
lives.”

“Let them be opinioned,” Dogberry, the chief of Police, insists about the villains
Borachio and Conrade, who have been players in Don John’s plot. (The fact that the
ridiculously inept WATCH catches them, when the Prince and Count were blind to the
deceit, is delightful.) “Let them be, in the hands,” his faithful deputy Verges echoes
eagerly. Dogberry’s characteristic garbling of language means, “Let them be bound
(pinioned).” But his confused creation gets it exactly right: to be “opinioned” in this
world of delusions is “to be bound,” as Harold Goddard says.

If love rests on a single image of the beloved, as Claudio’s did, then it is also a “binding,”
a “very ominous ending,” as Benedick fears. Instead, “strike up pipers,” and dance! “For
man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion!” Exactly because we are giddy, we can

We would like to acknowledge our debt to the wonderful
Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson, which also,
never conclude! And any “happy ending” will fix possibility too stiffly. One little boy’s tale ends, but other tales continue.