



Educating Indigenous Children

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Sunday, 11 October 2009**

### **OLIVER ~ with a twist**

On October 28, a truly extraordinary production of OLIVER! will open at the Seymour Centre, in Sydney.

This new production will feature a live orchestra and a total cast & crew of over 150 people and will introduce an incredible young talent Zac Collins-Widders. This 13 year old boy from Laurieton in northern NSW is the first Indigenous Australian to ever play the role of Oliver.

OLIVER! is being presented by Artes Christi & Yalari Limited, with 100% of profits going to Yalari's Indigenous educational scholarship program.

"We have staged several major productions over the past decade", explains Anthony McCarthy, the Director of Oliver, "but this is the first show where we have sought to link the themes of the production with the core values of the charity. We believe this will not only make the production richer in terms of its theatrical impact but will actually make the production truly unique in its own right."

Waverley Stanley the founder of Yalari sees OLIVER! as "the story of a boy's courage to overcome adversity and a perfect production for Yalari as an organisation dedicated to giving children a hand up as opposed to a hand out."

Along with Zac Collins-Widders, a Year 7 student at The Armidale School (TAS), the production also stars several other Indigenous students from across Sydney, several of whom are being supported through Yalari.

Amongst the adult cast, the role of Fagin will be played by veteran Australian actor Peter Thoms whilst regular Opera Australia singer Paul McLeod will star as Mr Bumble. The musical director of the show is internationally acclaimed conductor Timothy Chung.

The production stars an adults chorus of 60 people and a children's chorus of another 60 people with the total cast numbering over 125, accompanied by a 37 piece orchestra

Oliver! is being staged in the York Theatre at the Seymour Centre, from 28 -31 October, 2009. Tickets are available from just \$25 and can be purchased over the phone ((02) 9351 7940) or online through the website [www.whoisoliver.org](http://www.whoisoliver.org)

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### **About Yalari:**

- Yalari means 'child' in the Birra Gubba Indigenous Language group
- Yalari was first conceived in 2004 by Waverley Stanley, an indigenous educationalist, and venture capitalist Philip Latham, to support and empower Indigenous children from rural and remote communities to gain access to a first-class education at some of Australia's leading secondary boarding schools.
- Launched in October 2005, Yalari currently supports 61 students attending 17 boarding schools in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. 2010 will see numbers increase dramatically with 17 new schools nationally and over 100 new students.

### **About Artes Christi :**

- Artes Christi Australia Inc (ACA) is a marketing and events group based in Sydney with a specific focus on supporting Christian communities locally and across Australia
- Prior to its current work, Artes Christi have also played a significant event management role in World Youth Day 2008.
- For more info on Artes Christi visit [www.arteschristi.org.au](http://www.arteschristi.org.au) or contact Anthony McCarthy on: 0410 513 056.

### **About OLIVER! :**

- **OLIVER PERFORMANCE DATES:**
  - Wednesday 28 October 7:30pm - Opening Night
  - Thursday 29 October 7:30pm
  - Friday 30 October 7:30pm
  - Saturday 31 October 1.00pm - Matinee
  - Saturday 31 October 5:00 pm - Final Show!
- **GROUP / FAMILY TICKETS**
  - Groups Ticket (Groups of 7+) \$25 each
  - Family (2 adults & 2 children) \$100
  - Oliver Groups Hotline Ph. 0435 386 961
- **INDIVIDUAL TICKETS**
  - Adult \$35
  - Concession \$30
  - Seymour Centre Box Office Ph. (02) 9351 7940
  - [www.whoisoliver.org](http://www.whoisoliver.org)
- **ONLINE TICKETS**
  - [www.whoisoliver.org](http://www.whoisoliver.org)

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