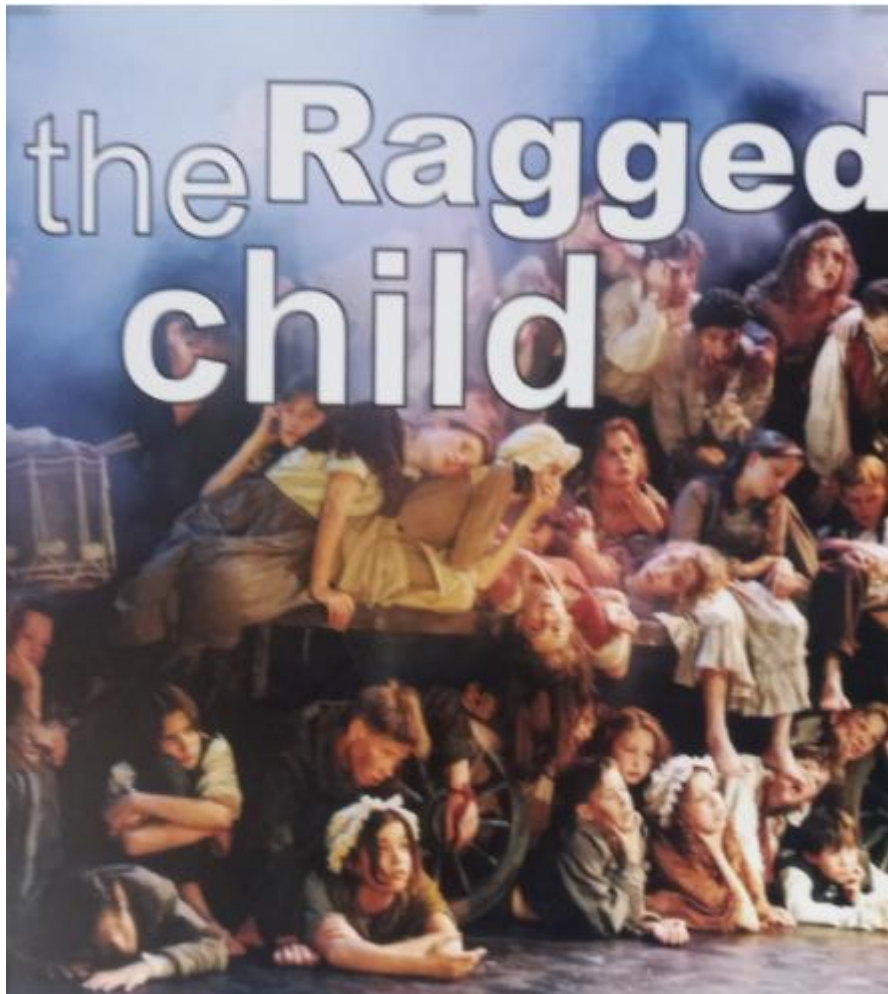


**Thames Music Theatre**  
**Music Theatre Workshop**

# **THE RAGGED CHILD**

**By Jeremy James Taylor and Frank Whately**  
**Music by David Nield**



The Ragged Child is a powerful and dramatic music theatre work which Jeremy has directed a number of times when it has enjoyed considerable success with productions in London (at Sadler's Wells) New York (The Triplex Theatre) Toronto – (The Oakville Centre), Sydney (The Packer Theatre) and at the Edinburgh International Festival following which it was televised by the BBC and broadcast on December 24<sup>th</sup> 1987.

Set in the London of 1851, when there were over 40,000 homeless and illiterate children roaming the streets, the story traces the fortunes of two of them, 13-year-old Joe Cooper and his 11-year-old sister Annie, both of whom were striving to survive as orphans with no-one caring for them. Cholera was rife, food was scarce and it was the pioneering work of the great politician and philanthropist, Anthony Ashley-Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, whose tireless work to educate the uneducated by setting up free schools was matched only by his determination to eradicate cholera and also to abolish the transportation of petty criminals to Australia by, instead, sending worthy young people there to establish a new world of thriving and healthy citizens.



David Nield's wonderful music score includes extensive use of folk tunes and street ballads requiring a dozen or so musicians alongside a cast of about 30.

There are over 50 roles for all ages between 11 and 19, played by a cast of about 36.

Directed by Jeremy and with musical direction by John, the workshop will involve four days spent exploring and staging sections from the show concluding with an informal showing of the work for parents and friends.

It is very much an “ensemble piece” and working as a group will be an important part of the workshop. You can expect your acting and singing skills to be further developed too. Whilst there is very little dance as such in the show, there is a considerable amount of atmospheric movement.



This show is under consideration for complete set of performances in the second half of 2026, which will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its premier showing in Kingston. Participants of this workshop will therefore be in a strong position when it comes to auditions for the production.

The workshop will take place in our usual rehearsal venue which, for new members of TMT is:

The Parish Hall (at the rear of) Our Lady Immaculate Church  
401/403 Ewell Road, Tolworth KT6 7DG  
“What3words” address: skips.props.nobody

Because of the nature of the workshop, participants will have to commit to all four days, Monday 27<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. This is during the October half term.



Participation in this workshop will be by audition and there will be NO course fee because this is a workshop rather than a set of performances. Unlike our other shows, which have two rounds of auditions, we will invite successful applicants to join the workshop solely after the first round auditions the dates of which are as follows (you pick one of these):  
30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> August, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 14<sup>th</sup> September.

Please apply via the audition page of our website: [www.thamesmt.org](http://www.thamesmt.org)

This project does not overlap with our other show, HONK!, in any way, so you may apply for both if you wish.

## WHAT THE PAPERS SAID:

*Performed with a degree of professionalism and raw energy which is nothing short of sensational.*

**THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH**

*THE RAGGED CHILD is an extraordinary achievement reaching standards of performance and excellence rarely seen from such young performers.*

**ANDREW LLOYD – WEBBER**

*A remarkable piece by a highly disciplined team working in perfect unison.*

**TIME OUT**

*Executed with frightening professionalism by a joyfully enthusiastic young cast with seething, swaying ensemble tableaux of RSC Nickleby standard.*

**THE FINANCIAL TIMES**

*Ensemble theatre at its absolute best. It is staggeringly good.*

**THE SCOTSMAN**

*One of the best things I have ever seen young people doing on the stage.*

**THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT**

*Vivid and breathtaking. It will stay in my mind long after I have forgotten most of the work I have seen this year.*

**NEW YORK POST**