

ANCIENT STORIES FOR A MODERN AUDIENCE: A PRIZE-WINNING COMBINATION

On Saturday 8th April the prestigious Classical Association prize will be awarded to Hugh Lupton and Daniel Morden, creators of *War with Troy*. As best-selling author Philip Pullman says, 'Storytelling is one of the most important, most humane, most liberating and most democratic things that human beings can do, and it should have a central place in every classroom'. Hugh and Daniel, two of the UK's leading storytellers, have been doing exactly that, bringing Homer's age-old tales of Hector, Achilles, the wooden horse and the fall of Troy to schools across the country.

The storytellers not only give live performances, but have made their work widely accessible to schools via an audio CD set with Teacher's Guide, *War with Troy: the Story of Achilles*, developed in association with the Cambridge Faculty of Education. Teachers report: 'Children were suddenly wanting to write', 'The boys particularly, and the reluctant readers' wanted to read more', 'I thought it would be too hard for them, but the children just went with it, and it changed all my ideas'. The children themselves say: 'It makes you feel like you're in the story and you're one of the characters who is at that part of the story', 'The story is action filled to the very rim, bursting with blood and gore and full of passion'. A CD set for the sequel, *Return from Troy: the Story of Odysseus*, is already available, and the accompanying Teacher's Guide is in preparation.

Adult audiences, too, have been riveted by Hugh and Daniel's 'spellbinding' performances. Their repertoire includes tales from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, as well as 'grown up' versions of the *Iliad*- and *Odyssey*-based stories used in schools. Reviewers have been full of praise: 'a spellbinding performance which ebbs and flows between the two voices of the storytellers, capturing with equal success the enormous emotional highs and the tiny domestic details which, combined, make the original so gripping', 'Hugh Lupton and Daniel Morden...kept a packed house hanging on their words... There's a poetic quality about the carefully modulated prose that explores man's – and woman's – frailties and strengths...', 'praise be to Morden and Lupton, who made the gods live... in a project that is serious, moving and vital'.

The prize, worth £5000, aims to encourage all forms of promotion of Classics in the UK. At a time when the traditional study of Latin, Greek and Ancient History has been increasingly marginalised, *War with Troy* has a vital role to play in bringing Greek myth into the primary curriculum. Hugh Lupton and Daniel Morden's work nicely complements that of Barbara Bell, who won last year's award for the *Minimus* Primary Latin Project, which has been a runaway success in getting 7-13 year-olds learning Latin.

For more information on the *War With Troy* project, visit <http://www.WarWithTroy.com>, or go to <http://www.angelfire.com/folk/hughlupton/> for details of the other stories Hugh and Daniel tell.