



MIRAGE MAKERS

Media Release: 8 August 2008
The Noël Coward Society
invites Australian troubadour to London

Media Contacts: David Hall 0423 083 004 (Perth)
Darren Ray 0413 334 523 (Melbourne)

London calling Australian troubadour

Cabaret singer, John Michael Swinbank has been invited by The Noël Coward Society to perform at the annual gala celebration of the life and achievements of one of the theatre's greatest legends Sir Noël Coward in London this December.

The Australian based singer renowned for his distinctive interpretation of the British composer's songs will make his UK debut at the occasion. Distinguished actor, Sir Donald Sinden will host the gala at the legendary Garrick Club on December 13, following a flower-laying ceremony at the statue of Noël Coward at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

On Coward's birthday, December 16, John Michael and long time accompanist, Tim Cuniffe will open a season of their cabaret *Noël at Noël* at the New End Theatre in Hampstead.

It was in Hampstead 84 years ago that Coward shot to fame with his contentious play, *The Vortex*. Sir Peter Hall's revival starring Felicity Kendall has just scored a huge success in The West End, further proof of Coward's current and continuing appeal.

Chairman of The Noël Coward Society, Barbara Longford said that the Society was excited by the singer's visit. "We have heard so much about John Michael's work with Coward's music on the international cabaret circuit and also of his stage performances," she said. "It will be our honour and delight to be serenaded by a renowned Australian troubadour, especially as he is celebrating 25 years as a professional exponent of Coward's music."

An early devotee of the works of Coward, John Michael made his professional singing debut in Perth, Western Australia in December 1983, alongside old friend, David Helfgott at Ricardo's. He built his career through innumerable tours throughout WA (and later Australia) and a breakthrough season during the 1988 Artrage Festival at the University Club at The University of Western Australia.

John Michael's special affinity for Coward's witty and nostalgic material came to international prominence in 1991. He was invited to perform at the grand re-opening of Singapore's Raffles Hotel, which had been closed for two years for a \$200 million renovation. Twenty international tours later, including gala performances aboard QE2 and a special invitation to fire Hong Kong's Noonday Gun (immortalised by Coward in *Mad Dogs & Englishmen* and fired by him in 1968) cemented Swinbank's reputation as "Australia's foremost Coward exponent" (Ron Banks, *The West Australian*).

Prior to the London performances, John Michael will make his Melbourne cabaret debut at Chapel Off Chapel on September 19. In Perth, a grand farewell series of performances prior to his London debut will occur at the John Inverarity Music & Drama Centre, Hale School on November 28 and 29. For more information, call Mirage Makers on 08 9328 4588 or visit www.miragecorporation.com

All media enquiries to David Hall 0423 083 004 (Perth) or Cr Darren Ray 0413 334 523 (Melbourne)

JOHN MICHAEL SWINBANK SINGS NOËL COWARD WITH TIM CUNIFFE AT THE PIANO

Melbourne Debut *Noël it All!* Chapel Off Chapel

8pm Friday & Saturday 19 & 20 Sep & 2pm 20 September, 2008 www.chapeloffchapel.com.au 8290 7000

Perth Gala *Noël it All!* John Inverarity Music & Drama Centre, Hale School

8pm Friday & Saturday, 28 & 29 Nov & 2pm 29 November www.bocsticketing.com.au BOCS 9484 1133

London Debut The Noël Coward Society, Garrick Club Saturday, 13 December, 2008

Noël at Noël New End Theatre, Hampstead 16 December to 25 January, 2009 www.newendtheatre.co.uk

