

Co-Opera's theatrical crew to perform today

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KOTA KINABALU: You can't get any closer to the truth - that is what Co-Opera's theatrical crew hope to translate on stage to its audience when they perform Mozart's celebrated play Don Giovanni at two venues today.

The play's director, Tessa Bremner said that unlike full-blown operatic productions, which are performed before crowds of up to 2,000, their plays are of such small scale that every member of the audience will be able to experience the play to its fullest effect.

"The audience is so close that you just cannot lie on stage. This way, the audience can really get the drama of it all," she said at an informal press conference at Hyatt Kinabalu here yesterday.

The Co-Opera troupe is performing at two venues today, as part of a tour outside of Australia. Focusing on "chamber" or small-scale performances, the troupe has just completed a tour in Peninsular Malaysia and will move on to Singapore tomorrow.

The play, written by Mozart in 1787, revolves around Don Giovanni, a young nobleman bent on satisfying his lust for women in any way possible, and the people he betrayed and their efforts to seek revenge against him.

Bremner said that unlike many other productions of the play, theirs is more comedic in a way she feels is how the original playwright had



Bremner (right) and Ellis (left) with musical director Brian Chatterton (second left) and members of the cast, Jeremy Tatchell (third left) and Jillian Chatterton (second right), during the press conference.

intended it to be.

"Most productions make out the play as usually dark, but ours is comedic. There will be quite a bit of physical comedy which both children and adults can understand.

"It only takes a dramatic turn towards the end, when Don Giovanni meets his end in an unusual way and the audience will feel that he is too bad a person to laugh along with," she said.

When asked how the play would translate to local audiences here, Co-Opera management board member cum Friends of Co-Opera chair Libby Ellis said that it is an experience that everyone will come across at some point in their lives.

"Mozart wrote this play sometime in the 1780s, and it has such a

universal meaning. Everyone has to meet with it sometime in their lives and I don't think the first experience will be any different from anyone in Europe, US, or anywhere else.

"The play is as relevant today as it was when it was first written, and I don't think it will be quite the new experience as many would think ... many would be familiar with the music as much of it is used in hand phones and advertisements," she said.

The play will be performed at 10am at the KDCA Hall in Penampang, followed by a second performance at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) School of Arts Recital Hall at 8pm.

For more information, contact the KDCA office at 088-713337 or the UMS general line at 320000.