

## **Gorky 's The Enemies: workshop and theatre trip**

"The Enemies" is a play written by Maxim Gorky in 1906 after the Petersburg massacres and when he was in political exile for his activism in Moscow.

Set in a provincial backwater, the play explores the reactions of a privileged family to the threat of an industrial strike. The factory owner, Zakhar Barkin, is a humane man who respects the workers. By contrast, his partner Mikhail is a tyrannical boss. When Mikhail is assassinated, Zakhar's attitudes have to change. The play's mood is a mix of resignation and expectation. It describes a critical period in modern Russian history and is written by one of Russia's most important twentieth century authors.

A new version of "The Enemies" by David Hare was performed at the Almeida Theatre to great acclaim. As part of JAGS' programme designed to bridge the gap between AS and A2, the Russian department arranged for Almeida's Assistant Director and her team to conduct a workshop on the afternoon of 22 June 2006 for all AS student of Russian and History. Our pupils were able to really explore the mood and characters of the play in an informal and "hands on" way.

In addition, seats were secured to see "The Enemies" at the Almeida Theatre that evening. I'm sure that everyone who went would agree it was a stunning and thoroughly enjoyable performance.