



1,500 LONDON CHILDREN ARE FIRST INSIDE THE UNICORN

Barclays announces new community initiative enabling 1,500 London school children to see the first ever production at the new Unicorn Theatre

19 September, London: **Barclays First Class**, a new community initiative from Barclays PLC, will enable over 1,500 school children - drawn from schools in each of London's 33 boroughs - to see the first ever production at the new £13m Unicorn Theatre, it was announced today.

The Unicorn Theatre is the first ever purpose built theatre for children in the UK. Situated close to City Hall on the south bank, it is destined to become a national cultural flagship and international centre of excellence, playing to over 100,000 children a year when it opens in December 2005.

The schools taking part in **Barclays First Class** are those serving some of the most disadvantaged communities in their borough, emphasising Unicorn and Barclays' commitment to make the new theatre accessible to all children regardless of background or parental income.

Barclays First Class will give children, many of whom will be experiencing theatre for the first time, a unique opportunity to be the first inside the iconic Unicorn and see its opening production, *Tom's Midnight Garden* from 24 November, before the theatre opens to the public.

Barclays will provide transport, tickets, t-shirts, programmes and ice creams as part of the initiative.

Debbie Philips, Community Manager, Barclays PLC said: *“At Barclays we are committed to communities and we are delighted to support the new Unicorn Theatre. This is a great opportunity for us to help make a real and lasting difference to the local community”.*

Tony Graham, Artistic Director, Unicorn Theatre said: *“The transformative power of theatre in the lives of children is a belief that drives the Unicorn. We have always aimed to reach out to all children regardless of their circumstances, and Barclays First Class helps us do this in the opening week of the theatre, underlining our commitment to access for all from the very beginning.”*

Schools Taking Part Listed By London Borough

Borough	School
Barking & Dagenham	Leys Primary
Barnet	Queenswell Junior
Bexley	Northend Primary
Brent	John Keble Anglican Harlesden Primary
Bromley	James Dixon Primary Malcolm Primary
Camden	Torriano Infants St Michael's CE Primary School
Croydon	Ecclesbourne Junior
Enfield	Aylands School
Greenwich	Nightingale Primary De Lucy Primary School
Hackney	Jubilee Primary
Hammersmith & Fulham	Wornholt Park Fulham Primary
Hounslow	Ivybridge Primary
Islington	Rotherfield Primary
Kensington & Chelsea	Avondale Park Primary
Lambeth	Richard Atkins Primary
Lewisham	Deptford Primary
Merton	St Marks Primary
Newham	Drew Primary Colegrave Primary
Richmond upon Thames	Barnes Primary
Southwark	Oliver Goldsmith Primary
Tower Hamlets	Clara Grant

Waltham Forest
Wandsworth

Mayville Primary
Chesterton

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Further information and Images

This press release is supported via a dedicated Unicorn Theatre media section at www.kallaway.co.uk/unicorn.htm. All information about the new season is detailed including high resolution images for download. All other Unicorn press releases and high resolution photographs are also available.

Unicorn Theatre Season Brochure

To request a Unicorn Season Brochure please contact Sally Wrench at the Unicorn theatre on 0207 697 1167 or email sally.wrench@unicorntheatre.com. The Unicorn Season Brochure can also be downloaded from www.kallaway.co.uk/unicorn.htm. To join Unicorn's mailing list, please visit www.unicorntheatre.com.

Barclays

Barclays is committed to playing a leading role in the communities it serves and invests one per cent of pre-tax profits in community activity. In 2004 this amounted to £32 million and over 25 thousand (1 in 3) Barclays people took part in fundraising and volunteering activities. For more information visit www.barclays.co.uk/community

Unicorn Theatre

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About the Unicorn Theatre

Unicorn is the one of the foremost producers of theatre for children in the UK. Founded in 1947, Unicorn has been creating theatre productions for 4 - 12 year-olds for 58 years. It aims to produce theatre with the power to transform a child's understanding of the world around them and provide spectacular learning opportunities. All children are welcome. Unicorn runs programmes for deaf and hearing-impaired children as well as those from disadvantaged communities. Its AccessWorks programme has enabled over 15,000 children in financial hardship to see productions.

The striking, copper clad £13m Unicorn Theatre stands poised to become part of London's most vibrant cultural quarter. Unicorn joins other theatrical leaders such as the Globe and National Theatre and is central London's first dedicated theatre and cultural centre for children. Unicorn is located on Tooley Street, close to City Hall and Tower Bridge. It is part of the More London development, which follows the Foster & Partners masterplan for the area. Unicorn is designed by Keith Williams Architects and Mansell Construction Services is the lead contractor. Unicorn's plans and models have been exhibited in the Theatre Museum, Covent Garden along with other ground breaking theatre designs and, in 2003, it won the Architectural Review/MIPIM Award for Future Projects.

Created In Partnership With Children

The new building has taken 6 years to create and has involved a three-year consultation with a class of 30 eight year-old children from Tower Bridge Primary School who acted as 'Unicorn Young Consultants' assisting with the theatre's design and helping to select the public artists. Beverley Hughes, Minister of State for Children, Young People and Family, hailed the consultation report 'The Floors Should Be Made of Chocolate' as a model example of how children can be effective consultants and active citizens.

Fundraising Target

The Unicorn Theatre has raised just over £13m and is now seeking £500,000 in funding to reach its target. Unicorn is running a public appeal, encouraging theatre lovers to join famous actors and actresses to 'Name a Seat' and 'Buy a Brick' in the theatre.

Ticketing And Pricing Policies

The Unicorn believes that theatre should be accessible to everyone and has set its pricing policy accordingly. Top ticket prices for adults and children are £12.50 and £8.50 respectively, which compares very favourably to West End ticket prices which can reach £50+ per ticket.

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