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PRESS RELEASE
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Arcola Theatre Launches New Eco-Theatre Plans

At London's City Hall today, representatives from Arcola Theatre and sustainable design innovators Arup present plans for the creation of a new eco-theatre in Dalston, East London.

Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, said, *"As world leaders gather in Copenhagen, Arcola Theatre is at the forefront of how London's arts organisations can champion the environment. We have to take robust yet practical steps to make our city more energy efficient. This has the added benefit of playing a pivotal role in the wider redevelopment of this part of the city, making the urban realm more pleasant. Three cheers for Arcola for raising the bar."*

Developed through a feasibility study funded by London Development Agency, the project will be the UK's first major arts venue to place environmental sustainability at the core of construction, programme and operations.

Mehmet Egen, Artistic Director and founder of Arcola Theatre said: *"Our new building will include an exquisite 350 seat theatre allowing us to create an even greater and more diverse programme, building on our past nine years of success."*

Dr Ben Todd, Executive Director of Arcola Theatre, said: *"Wrapped around the main stage will be dynamic spaces to accommodate our ever-growing environmental sustainability and community engagement programmes. Our aim is to create a place Da Vinci might call home where creative people across multiple disciplines drive innovation for a sustainable and equitable future."*

Global engineering and design consultancy Arup has been appointed to provide theatre and acoustical consultancy services; whilst Arup Associates, Arup's multidisciplinary design studio, will provide an integrated architecture and engineering design. Arup's iconic projects include the Sydney Opera House, and the Birds Nest and Water Cube stadiums for the Beijing 2008 Olympics.

Neill Woodger, director of Arup's theatre consulting and acoustics business said: *"Our task is to conceive a theatre that exemplifies sustainability. It must provide the highest levels of artistic experience, whilst being affordable to build and economical to operate. It must contribute positively to the environment and local community and lead the way in promoting the shift to more ecological lifestyles. This is the first public venue to use a sustainability framework to define the brief and conceptual design, and it will set a new level of performance in theatre design."*

The expanded Arcola Theatre will include:

- A main house theatre seating 350 (500 standing), suitable for mid-scale theatre and opera productions
- 150 and 80 seat black-box studio theatres, similar to those Arcola already run
- An extensive foyer, spilling out on to the public realm, with bar/café/restaurant and informal meeting spaces
- Incubator units for scientists and engineers developing sustainable technologies
- A Bike Hub with storage and change facilities, close to public transport nodes
- Public garden and growing spaces

The new Arcola Theatre will be located at the heart of Dalston close to the new Dalston Square development and a new East London Line station. The project is part of a wider London Development Agency (LDA) funded project *Making Space in Dalston*. This exemplary project, led by the LDA's Design for London team, is bringing together diverse stakeholders to choose and deliver strategic improvements in public realm resources across Dalston.

Cllr Guy Nicholson, Hackney Council Cabinet Member for Regeneration and the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, said: *"Hackney Council is committed to supporting Arcola's ambition to create an innovative new eco-theatre; ensuring that Arcola continues to contribute to the cultural excitement that is Dalston."*

Project partners include:

Integrated Design (architecture and engineering) – Arup Associates
Theatre and Acoustical Consultants – Arup
Sustainability Consultants – Juhi Shareef Associates
Bar/cafe/restaurant Consultants – Ignite Hospitality Consultants
Project Management – Mouchel
Quantity Surveyors – William G Dick
Funders – Design for London & London Development Agency
Host – London Borough Hackney

Project Director, Dr Ben Todd of Arcola Theatre is one of the 2009 London Leaders for sustainability and the launch event is supported by the London Sustainable Development Commission.

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More details and hi-resolution images: www.futurearcola.com/press

For additional information please contact: Laura Jukes at Arcola Theatre on 020 7503 1645 or laura@arcolatheatre.com.

www.arcolatheatre.com / www.arcolaistanbul.com / www.arcolaenergy.com

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Arcola Theatre was founded in 2000 by its present Artistic Director Mehmet Ergen and Executive Producer Leyla Nazli. From humble origins Arcola has grown to become an important London and UK venue serving both as receiving house and producer of its own critically acclaimed work. Arcola has strong links with the local community, delivering an extensive programme of participatory arts for all ages. Since 2007 Arcola has been working with local and international partners across arts, science and engineering to drive mass adoption of sustainable lifestyles. Arcola Theatre is a Regularly Funded Organisation of Arts Council England. www.arcolatheatre.com

Arup is the creative force behind many of the world's prominent building, infrastructure and industrial projects. Founded in 1946 with an enduring set of values, Arup's unique trust ownership fosters a distinctive culture, an intellectual independence and encourages truly collaborative working. www.arup.com

Arup Associates is the integrated design studio of the multinational consulting engineering group Arup. Started by Sir Ove Arup more than four decades ago to develop his concept of total architecture, Arup Associates offer a radical alternative to conventional architectural practice, creating pioneering holistic design that is focused on people. The studio practices multidisciplinary design where engineers and architects work side by side in embedded teams in a single practice. Teamwork is at the core of our structure. www.arupassociates.com

Mouchel is a consulting and business services group that builds great relationships with clients in the public sector and regulated industry to make a difference to customers and communities. Operations include highways, water, rail, property, housing, education, energy, management consultancy and 'business process outsourcing' in a wide range of disciplines. Mouchel has more than 11,000 employees, 123 offices in the UK and an audited turnover of £740.6 million. Mouchel was awarded 'Top 20 Best Big Companies to Work For' status in March 2008 in the annual Sunday Times rankings. In March 2008 it also achieved Two Star accreditation from awarding body Best Companies for an outstanding level of employee engagement across the company. www.mouchel.com

Juhi Shareef Associates (JSA) is a consultancy specialising in sustainability for events and the creative industries. JSA has a particular focus on the role of cultural institutions in sustainable development and has recently returned from the COP 15-related Culture Futures event, working on engaging the cultural sector in moving towards an ecological age by 2050. www.juishareef.com

Ignite Hospitality Consultants is a pioneering Hackney-based agency, providing marketing, strategy, branding, design and concept development for hotels, restaurants and bars in the UK and internationally. A collective of consultants under one roof provide support to Start-Up or Grown-Up hospitality operators in driving sales, growth and improving efficiency. www.ignitehospitality.com

William G Dick Partnership LLP is an Chartered Quantity Surveying practice. Established for over 25 years, the practice prides itself in providing clients with an enthusiastic and pro-active service. www.williamgdick.co.uk

London Borough of Hackney is working with Transport for London, the London Development Agency and local partners in the regeneration of Dalston. Work is centred on Dalston Square - a new public square bordered by a new East London Line Overground station, new shops, new homes and a new library and public archive. Across Dalston a programme of public realm improvements will integrate new developments with the existing town centre, and enhance the cultural mix. www.hackney.gov.uk

London Development Agency (LDA) works to improve the quality of life for all Londoners – investing in jobs, skills and growth. In Dalston, the LDA has worked with the London Borough of Hackney, Transport for London, architects and developers to capitalise on the East London Line extension. The new housing developments around Dalston Junction will create a new public square and other facilities. The London Development Agency – through the ***Making Space in Dalston*** project led by its **Design for London** team – will invest a further £750,000 in improving the wider public realm in Dalston; this includes the feasibility study for Arcola’s future theatre. www.lda.gov.uk

London Sustainable Development Commission was established in 2002 to advise the Mayor of London on making London a benchmark for sustainable cities. The Commission is made up of a individual experts from the economic, social, environmental and London governance sectors. The Commission’s London Leaders programme brings together London’s leading lights in sustainability, to deliver change, and inspire others to do the same. www.londonsdc.org

Arts Council England works to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives. As the national development agency for the arts, we support a range of artistic activities from theatre to music, literature to dance, photography to digital art, and carnival to crafts. Great art inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves, and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2008 and 2011, we will invest £1.3 billion of public money from government and a further £0.3 billion from the National Lottery to create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk