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# PRESS RELEASE

## Record Attendances as Theatreland celebrates 100 Years

2007 saw record attendances in London theatre with an extra 1.25 million visits to Plays, Musicals, Opera and Dance in the capital. In the year that trade body the Society of London Theatre (SOLT) celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the figures were welcomed by industry figures – though a note of caution was sounded amidst the good news.

Attendances in 2007 stood at 13,630,810, with many theatres reporting that first-time theatregoers were responsible for many attendances. Ticket Revenues rose to £469,729,135 generating VAT receipts of £70 million.

SOLT President Rosemary Squire commented:

“This is obviously excellent news for the industry, for all those who work in it, and for the UK economy. The Theatre Capital of the World continues to come up with shows that the public want to see. It’s a costly business, however, putting on world-class theatre, and we’re investing more and more in productions to meet public expectations. However, for the moment, I think we can all celebrate an on-going success story.”

SOLT Chief Executive Richard Pulford added:

“2007 was something of an *annus mirabilis* for London theatre with many new productions which caught the public imagination. These figures are a wonderful start to our Centenary Year – but we’re under no illusions that in the current economic climate we’re going to have to work very hard to maintain this level of success.”

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## **Notes to Editors:**

Box Office figures are compiled on behalf of the industry by the Society of London Theatre, and relate to the 53 theatres, both Commercial and Grant-aided, in Central London.

### **The Society of London Theatre**

Founded in 1908 by Sir Charles Wyndham, the Society of London Theatre is the trade association which represents the producers, theatre owners and managers of the major commercial and grant-aided theatres in central London. Today the Society combines its long-standing roles in such areas as industrial relations and legal advice for members with a campaigning role for the industry, together with a wide range of audience-development programmes to promote theatre-going.

### **Centenary Year**

The centenary year sees a series of major events take place to mark the occasion. Highlights include the annual Get into London Theatre promotion; the Laurence Olivier Awards, which will have a centenary theme; Celebrate the Play in May; a special centenary walk of London's Theatreland and Open Rehearsal, a weekend of behind the scenes tours at leading theatres.

### **Get Into London Theatre.**

This annual promotion, aimed at encouraging new or occasional theatregoers to experience West End Theatre, is now in its seventh year. Instigated by the Mayor of London in the wake of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, it has now become a much-loved part of the theatrical year with thousands of people beginning the year with specially discounted trips to London theatre. For full details, visit [getintolondontheatre.com](http://getintolondontheatre.com) or contact: Louise Drabwell/Susanna Underwood at Rare Communications Tel 020 7483 2500.

### **The Laurence Olivier Awards**

Nominations for the 31st Laurence Olivier Awards which reward excellence on the London Stage will be announced in the week of the 4<sup>th</sup> February ahead of the Awards Ceremony on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London. For full details, visit [www.olivierawards.co.uk](http://www.olivierawards.co.uk) or contact Eleanor Johnsey or Katy MacMillan-Scott at Colman Getty Tel 020 7631 2666.