



Strictly embargoed until 09:00am GMT, Thursday 27 January 2011

London theatre buoyant in 2010

London theatre bucked the trend of economic gloom with excellent box office performance in 2010, the Society of London Theatre (SOLT) announced today. Strong ticket sales led to record revenues and near-record attendances for the capital's plays, musicals, opera and dance.

For the seventh year running, total Box Office Revenues posted a new record level at £512,331,808, up 1.46% on a like-for-like basis on 2009 and topping £500 million for the second time ever.

Attendances totaled 14,152,230, 0.79% down on 2009 levels, topping the 14 million mark for only the second time. Like other industries, London theatre was inevitably hit by the poor weather towards the end of the year.

London theatre ticket sales generated VAT receipts for the Treasury of £76,304,737. The year also saw a record number of performances (18,615), and continued success for Plays which saw audiences grow by 2%.

Against a backdrop of economic uncertainty – with an estimated 0.5% contraction in the UK economy in the final quarter of 2010 recently announced – the results reflect the vibrancy of London's unique mix of commercial and subsidized theatre, as well as ongoing industry investment in new people and product.

Commenting on the figures, Nica Burns, President of the Society of London Theatre said:

“Another great year for London theatre. Despite economic woes, volcanic ash, and huge transport disruption notably during our busiest time of the year at Christmas, we have managed our seventh successive year of growth at the box office. A huge range of superb productions ensured that a visit to the theatre was a must-do for large numbers of the public. London theatre is something for everyone to be proud of and is a great ambassador for UK plc.”

Julian Bird, Chief Executive of the Society of London Theatre, added:

"People have voted with their feet again by flocking to London's theatres. Our customers experience the huge variety of shows that we stage each year, and in these difficult economic times are enjoying the theatre just as much. 2011 promises to be another exciting year for theatre and we look forward to entertaining people again."

– ENDS –

For further information or interview bids contact:

Alison Duguid, Press and Communications Officer, Society of London Theatre

Email: alison@solttma.co.uk | **Telephone:** 020 7557 6727 | 32 Rose Street London WC2E 9ET

NOTES TO EDITORS

Box Office figures are compiled on behalf of the industry by the Society of London Theatre, and relate to the 52 major theatres, both commercial and grant-aided, in Central London.

2010 Key Results (with percentage comparisons to 2009)

Total attendances: 14,152,230 (-0.79%). Previous best year was 2009's 14,257,922.

Total revenues: £504,765,690 (+1.46%). Previous best year was 2009's £504,765,690.

2010 attendances and revenue by genre (with percentage comparisons to 2009)

Musicals: Attendances 8,423,430 (-3%) Revenue £324,357,255 (-1%)

Plays: Attendances 3,702,031 (+2%) Revenue £107,099,335 (+10%)

Other (Opera, Dance, Performance pieces, Entertainments): Attendances 2,026,769 (+3%) Revenue £80,875,218 (+3%)

Interviews: available with Julian Bird, Chief Executive of the Society, Nica Burns, President of the Society and Paul James, Commercial Manager of the Society. Please contact Alison Duguid in the SOLT Press Office (contact details above).

The Society of London Theatre (SOLT) is the trade association which represents the producers, theatre owners and managers of the 52 major commercial and grant-aided theatres in central London. The organisation exists in order to promote theatregoing, develop audiences, and to serve, protect and promote the interests of those engaged in theatre across London, through activities including The Laurence Olivier Awards, **tkts** ticket booth, the Official London Theatre guide, Theatre Tokens and the annual promotions Kids Week in the West End and Get Into London Theatre.

The Laurence Olivier Awards: the Society of London Theatre will present the 2011 Olivier Awards on Sunday 13 March at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane. www.olivierawards.com

For additional facts and figures on London theatre visit: www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk .

Comparative table of London Theatre attendances and revenues 1986 – 2010

Data compiled from all theatres in full membership of the Society of London Theatre.

Year	Attendances	% Difference on Previous Year	Gross Box Office Revenue	VAT paid	Average No of Theatres Open	No of Perfs	No of New Productions
2010	14,152,230	-0.8%	£512,331,808	£76,304,737	*	18,615	*
2009	14,257,922	+2.6%	£504,765,690	£65,839,003	45	17,899	260
2008	13,892,460	+1.9%	£483,349,423	£71,988,212	45	18,275	241
2007	13,636,212	+10.4%	£469,938,749	£69,990,878	44	17,455	243
2006	12,351,495	+0.3%	£400,852,925	£59,701,500	43	16,912	268
2005	12,318,625	+2.4%	£383,941,704	£57,182,807	45	17,406	221
2004	12,025,073	+3.7%	£343,674,090	£51,185,803	43	17,235	225
2003	11,585,446	-4.0%	£321,485,161	£47,880,769	42	16,664	225
2002	12,064,100	+2.8%	£327,971,671	£48,846,845	44	17,090	221
2001	11,734,767	+1.6%	£298,989,461	£44,519,531	44	17,035	264
2000	11,555,178	-3.2%	£286,557,500	£42,668,412	43	16,633	252
1999	11,931,954	+0.1%	£266,565,215	£39,691,560	44	17,089	265
1998	11,924,518	+4.0%	£257,920,278	£38,404,330	41	16,018	207
1997	11,466,248	+2.6%	£246,081,850	£36,641,587	39	15,568	195
1996	11,179,326	-6.4%	£229,016,639	£34,100,577	41	16,084	186
1995	11,937,671	+6.9%	£238,740,636	£35,548,480	43	17,163	208
1994	11,163,023	-3.0%	£217,762,521	£32,424,839	41	16,063	208
1993	11,503,358	+5.5%	£215,619,208	£32,105,700	41	15,922	198
1992	10,899,928	-0.1%	£194,772,331	£29,001,600	41	15,916	193
1991	10,905,395	-3.7%	£186,789,856	£26,919,150	39	15,508	192
1990	11,321,288	+3.4%	£177,903,841	£23,204,849	40	15,887	187
1989	10,944,760	+0.4%	£153,250,633	£19,989,213	42	16,436	237
1988	10,897,384	+0.2%	£139,338,056	£18,174,526	43	16,970	228
1987	10,880,791	+6.3%	£129,586,817	£16,902,627	42	16,603	212
1986	10,236,362	-5.2%	£112,067,737	£14,617,534	42	16,543	213

(* data not yet available)