

For immediate release, Tuesday 19 January 2010

Laurence Olivier Audience Award gives power to the people

www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk

Theatre-goers have an exciting opportunity this year to take part in the Laurence Olivier Awards by selecting both the shortlist and the winner of the newly created Laurence Olivier Audience Award.

Voted for entirely by the public, the new award for 2010 is for the country's favourite long-running London show of 2009. Members of the public can now choose their favourite by clicking onto leading theatre website www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk/olivier_awards/vote, the official website of the Society of London Theatre, organisers of the Laurence Olivier Awards.

This new category is for shows which opened before 1 January 2009 and ran throughout 2009. For all other categories, only shows that opened during 2009 are eligible for the 2010 awards. The eligible productions for the Laurence Olivier Audience Award 2010 are:

Blood Brothers
Hairspray
Jersey Boys
Mamma Mia
La Cage Aux Folles
War Horse
Les Misérables
The 39 Steps
Dirty Dancing - The Classic Story On Stage
The Woman in Black
The Mousetrap
Avenue Q
Grease
Stomp
Billy Elliot - The Musical
The Phantom of the Opera
Wicked
The Lion King
Chicago
We Will Rock You

Voters will have until 12 noon on **Monday 1 February** to make their choice. The list of 20 eligible shows will then be whittled down to a shortlist. The nominated productions in the category will be announced alongside the other eagerly anticipated Laurence Olivier Award nominations in **the week commencing Monday 8 February**. A second stage of voting, which will open once the nominations have been announced, will give theatre-goers the chance to choose the overall winner.

Anyone who votes on the first round will automatically be entered into a prize draw to win a pair of money-can't-buy tickets to the star-studded Laurence Olivier Award

ceremony, which will be held at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London, on **Sunday 21 March 2010**.

Laurence Olivier Awards: key dates for 2010

Nominations: w/c 8 February 2010

Nominees' lunch: 2 March 2010

Winner ceremony: Sunday 21 March 2010

For further information about the Laurence Olivier Awards please contact:

Katy MacMillan-Scott or Jill Cotton at Colman Getty

Tel: 020 7631 2666 / Email: katy@colmangetty.co.uk

Notes to Editors

- For interviews with representatives for the Laurence Olivier Awards, images or logos please contact Colman Getty
- Theatregoers can vote for the Laurence Olivier Audience Award using the Official London Theatre website: www.officallondontheatre.co.uk/olivier_awards/vote
- The Laurence Olivier Awards were created in 1976 as The Society of West End Theatre Awards to recognise excellence on the London stage, and became The Laurence Olivier Awards in 1984 when Lord Olivier agreed to have his name associated with them. Since then, winners have included a roll-call of legendary names and the awards event attracts high profile and extensive media coverage
- The awards now include 24 categories, although they are not all given each year: 18 for theatre, two for opera, two for dance, one for productions presented by SOLT's (Society of London Theatre) affiliate members and the new Laurence Olivier Audience Award in 2010