

MEDIA RELEASE

TOYNBEE STUDIOS TRANSFORMED

Toynbee Studios at the legendary Toynbee Hall complex, one of the East End's great social landmarks, will be transformed in a £6 million development led by the pioneering arts management service, Artsadmin, opening in **March 2007**.

Founded 27 years ago by Judith Knight and Seonaid Stewart, Artsadmin is a unique creative management service and resource centre for contemporary artists working in theatre, dance, music, live art and mixed media. The organisation is renowned for its commitment to developing the careers of some of the most innovative artists in Britain. Companies and artists linked to Artsadmin include DV8, Mike Figgis, Bobby Baker and Station House Opera. Based at Toynbee Studios since 1995, Artsadmin also offers a bursary and mentoring scheme, a full-time advisory service, school residencies and a programme of showcases. Artsadmin is the largest, single distributor of individual awards to disabled artists in the country.

Toynbee Hall, set in the cultural heart of the East End, in Commercial Street, was established in 1884 by Samuel and Henrietta Barnett, as a pioneering centre for social reform, which became known as the "working-man's university." The recent history of Toynbee Hall has become inextricably linked with the extraordinary story of John Profumo, who became a revered charity worker at Toynbee Hall following his downfall in the 1960s and, until his death in March this year, was the centre's longest serving volunteer. **Funded by private donors including Sir John Gielgud and Bernard Shaw**, Toynbee Studios were inaugurated by Queen Mary in 1938, with extensive spaces for art, dance and music and the National Youth Theatre staged their first performance at the 240-seat theatre with their production of *Henry V* in 1956.

The Toynbee Studios development, designed by Levitt Bernstein, includes the restoration of the original theatre, four rehearsal spaces and café, eight new creative media spaces and a brand new rooftop dance studio, to provide state of the art facilities for the next generation of creative artists supported by Artsadmin.

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PRESS ENQUIRIES Jane Quinn, Bolton & Quinn on 020 7221 5000

NOTES TO EDITORS

LEVITT BERNSTEIN, formed in 1968, has been responsible for the regeneration of a number of major cultural buildings in the UK. Amongst these are the Theatre Royal, Stratford East, LSO St Luke's, and Victoria Hall in London, the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester and the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds, due to open next year.

**TOYNBEE STUDIOS, 28 COMMERCIAL STREET
LONDON E1 6AB UNITED KINGDOM**

TELEPHONE **+44 (0)20 7247 5102** FAX **+44 (0)20 7247 5103** TEXTPHONE **+44 (0)20 7247 5182**
EMAIL **ADMIN@ARTSADMIN.CO.UK** WEBSITE **WWW.ARTSADMIN.CO.UK**

DIRECTORS STEPHEN AINGER, CHARLES GARRAD, SHREENA GHOSH, LEW HODGES, CHRIS HORSNELL, LOIS KEIDAN, ALISON RITCHIE, MHORA SAMUEL, EUGENE SKEEF, SEONAI STEWART, SALLY STOTE, DAVID THORP. **REGISTERED OFFICE** HARBOTTLE AND LEWIS SOLICITORS, HANOVER HOUSE, 14 HANOVER SQUARE, LONDON, W1S 1HP. VAT REGISTRATION NO. 657086117. REGISTERED NO. 2979487. REG. CHARITY NO. 1044645

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