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Immediate Release



PRESS RELEASE

***Dalston: Arts Space of the Future* Exhibition & Project Launch**

Arcola Theatre hosts Arts Council & RIBA exhibition *Arts Space of the Future* to bring the arts centre stage in development plans for Dalston.

Dalston is ripe for development - just 2 miles, straight up the Kingsland Road, from the City, and with new tube links under construction. Hackney is allegedly home to the highest concentration of artists in Europe and the progression from post-industrial decay to artist colony to 'young professional lifestyles' is in full swing - illustrated most dramatically at Dalston Junction where the £160 million Dalston Square complex and transport hub is under construction.

Arcola Theatre, along with many others, is keen to deploy the arts as a means of brokering a new set of relationships and keeping Dalston real, by capitalising on the opportunities offered by the new indoor and outdoor spaces being. One of the purposes of this exercise is to ask the question "*Must 'adding value' always displace the value that is already in situ?*"

Mayor of Hackney, Jules Pipe, said:

"The new developments at Dalston will bring major investment to the local community, with the borough's first proper link to the Tube network offering easier access to jobs across London and encouraging more investment into the area. The new homes, library, open space, shops and restaurants will boost the heart of Dalston while creative industries like the Arcola Theatre will have an important part to play in this regeneration..."

Nearby Gillett Square, opened in 2007, was the first of the London Mayor's 100 public spaces programme and Dalston Square is set to join the list. Arcola Theatre believes that with the two squares, renowned local arts organisations such as the Arcola Theatre, Rio Cinema and Vortex Jazz Club, Dalston can host an exceptional cultural programme with events for the people of Hackney, London and the world, catalysed by the delivery of the Cultural Olympiad.

To open the discussion Arcola Theatre is hosting an exhibition "*Dalston: Arts Space of the Future*". The exhibition builds on the 2007 Arts Council England / RIBA London competition challenging architects to present visions of how arts venues will evolve in the 21st Century. The winning entries from the competition are on display at Arcola Theatre from 23 May – 7 June, having transferred to Arcola from the National Theatre.

Also on display at Arcola Theatre are two new maps of Dalston. The first shows a first trawl of arts and culture in Dalston (currently 123 organisations and rising) and the second the existing Open Spaces in Dalston. The next step is to bring these maps together to illustrate the extraordinary potential for Dalston to connect cultural activity inside and out and to ensure existing cultural assets are identified, retained, enhanced, linked and recognised together, rather than displaced as regeneration of the area commences.

These maps are seen as a prompt for discussion on how the arts can extend into and influence the public realm. The maps have been produced by muf architecture/art, designers of the new library and Hackney archive for Dalston Square, and J & L Gibbons Landscape Architects, who are working on the design of the square itself with Michel Desvigne Paysagiste.

Agencies involved in this work include London Borough of Hackney, the London Development Agency, Design for London, Arts Council England, RIBA London, Central St Martins and Central School of Speech & Drama.

Renowned for its pioneering professional theatre work, Arcola Theatre last year launched Arcola Energy, a project which has successfully integrated state-of-the-art sustainable technologies, engineers and scientists with the theatre's organisation and artistic programme. *Dalston: Arts Space of the Future* will build on this success by directly bringing Arcola's eco-cultural leadership and partnership working skills to bear on the regeneration of Dalston.

The winners of the Arts Council / RIBA competition, on display at Arcola until 7 June, are:

- First prize: *Art Spaces lead global ecology of ideas*, a collaborative project by architects Manuel Shvartzberg & Yiannis Kanakakis with writer Fabian Faltin.
- Second prize: *Heterotopia* by David Kohn, Director, David Kohn Architects.
- Third prize: *Hoodies* by Ashley Seaborne, a student at the University of East London.

Friday 6 June at 2pm, Arcola Theatre: Next Steps – Local creatives invited to 'put yourself on the map' and contribute to a discussion of creative futures for Dalston.

Maps will remain accessible at Arcola Theatre until 2012

Notes to editors:

For more information contact Dr Ben Todd, Executive Director, Arcola Theatre
ben@arcolatheatre.com or 07974 240 612

Arcola Theatre was founded in 2000 by Artistic Director Mehmet Ergen and Executive Producer Leyla Nazli, when they converted a textile factory on the borders of Stoke Newington/Dalston into one of London's largest and most adaptable venues. Arcola Theatre has won a numerous awards, including Time Out Live Awards in 2003 and 2006. It has gained a reputation for staging innovative work by renowned actors, writers and directors, as well as maintaining a strong commitment to involving the local community. Arcola Energy, launched in July 2007 aims to harness the creativity of arts, sciences and engineering to tackle climate change and encourage environmental sustainability. Arcola Theatre is a regularly funded organisation of Arts Council England. www.arcolatheatre.com and www.arcolaenergy.com

muf architecture/art author Strategies, Buildings and Art. www.muf.co.uk

Dalston Square is the site of a major transport, urban and retail development which will create 500 new homes, including affordable housing, a new library and public archive, a new public square, a London Overground station and transport interchange and shopping amenities to be completed by 2012.

Arts Council England works to get more art to more people in more places. It develops and promotes the arts across England, acting as an independent body at arm's length from government. Between 2006 and 2008, it will invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and the National Lottery in supporting the arts. This is the bedrock of support for the arts in England. Arts Council believes that the arts have the power to change lives and communities, and to create opportunities for people throughout the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk.

Arts Space of Future is part of Arts Council England's 21st century programme, which looks at numerous aspects of organisational development in arts organisations and at the context in which arts organisations work. www.artscouncil.org.uk.

RIBA London supports its membership by providing high quality support services, organising regular activities and training. It seeks to increase the political and professional influence of RIBA within the region and works to raise public awareness of architecture as a profession. It encourages improvement in the built environment by delivering cultural activities and by encouraging architectural debate in the public arena. To find out more about what we do visit www.architecture.com/ribalondon.

The London Borough Hackney has recently been recognised as the fastest improving local council in the UK. It is now 3-star rated and won the award for best performing public sector organisation in Mayor of London's Green Procurement Awards 2007. www.hackney.gov.uk

The Mayor of London & the GLA developed the Climate Change Action Plan, which aims to deliver 60% reduction in London's CO2 emissions (relative to 1990 levels) by 2025. This plan is one of the most comprehensive and ambitious in the world. The Mayor's Culture Strategy, based on the principle of diversity, has four key objectives focused on: excellence, creativity, access and value. The recognition that the excellence and quality of culture in London will only be achieved by ensuring that London's diverse communities are reflected, and active, in the cultural life of the city. www.london.gov.uk

The London Development Agency is the Mayor's agency responsible for driving London's sustainable economic growth. www.lda.gov.uk

Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design provides specialist education and research in the fields of art & design. www.csm.arts.ac.uk

Central School of Speech & Drama provides specialist education and research in the fields theatre and performance. www.cssd.ac.uk

Design for London was established by the Mayor of London to support the delivery of well-designed projects across London. www.designforlondon.gov.uk

Barratt Homes is a developer of new homes houses and apartments and leader in design, urban regeneration, social housing and innovation www.barratthomes.co.uk

J & L GIBBONS LLP - Landscape Architects and Urban Designers - are involved in every aspect of the design and development processes. Johanna Gibbons has been a Design Advisor for London Development Agency since 2003. www.jlg-london.com

Dalston: Arts Space of the Future exhibition was organised by Arcola Theatre, David Kohn Architects (www.davidkohn.co.uk) and MUF with construction provided by REM Projects.