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Visit London What's New Press Briefing

27 March 2008

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This April, enjoy London in full bloom as Kew Gardens opens a gallery dedicated to botanical art and Covent Garden returns to its roots as a flower market. Visit London has also revamped its website for kids at www.kidslovelondon.com. Packed with child-friendly ideas, family days out, events and special offers, families won't be stuck for things to do in London.

Hotels

Hilton London Kensington receives executive upgrade

Luxurious new facilities have been unveiled at the London Hilton hotel as part of an £8m refurbishment. Hilton London Kensington has spent £2m on the re-launch, with a stylish new lounge overlooking Holland Park Avenue and 100 new executive bedrooms and suites. For press information contact [Jules Kerby](#).

The Ultimate Sunday Brunch at Marriott West India Quay

The Curve Restaurant & Bar has introduced a fantastic new brunch menu featuring eight different food stations, including a knee high station for children. Food stations designed by the Executive Chef, Chef Jolly include: the traditional breakfast; stir-fry station; grill station; and a soup, cheese and bread station. The new Brunch menu is available every Sunday from 1pm until 4pm, priced at £37 per person. For press information contact [Alison Hull](#) on +44 (0)20 7288 8000.

Marriott County Hall – Free mountain bike offer

Get into shape this spring with The Club & Spa at County Hall which is offering a free mountain bike for every new member that signs up for a club membership. Memberships start from £85 per month, joining fee £100. For more information contact [Nick Davis](#).

Attractions

New Gallery of Botanical Art at Kew Gardens

The Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art at Kew Gardens will be the first gallery in the world dedicated to botanical art and open to the public all year round. The gallery, designed by award-winning architects Walters and Cohen, will exhibit precious works of art from the collections of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Dr Shirley Sherwood, many of which have never been on public display before. For press information contact [Kew Gardens Press Office](#).

Covent Garden Spring Renaissance

This April Covent Garden will become a symbol of spring regeneration as a giant living flower installation bursts into bloom across the iconic piazza. Covent Garden's Spring renaissance – a seasonal month long programme - will see Covent Garden celebrate its heritage as the UK's original flower market. Attractions include an 'Urban Garden Boutique', a garden 'surgery' and each weekend a Flower Market will return to the area, reincarnating the piazza in its original role. For press information contact [Paul McEntee](#) on +44 (0)20 7208 7108.

Walk Talk Tours - New audio MP3 tours

Walk Talk Tours have launched 5 new MP3 audio walking tours guiding visitors to London's top tourist attractions. The interesting, informative and sometimes amusing commentaries turn your iPod into your tour guide. With commentaries in English, French, German and Spanish they are ideal for individuals, groups and schools. Download to iPods, MP3 players and mobile phones from

the website www.walktalktour.com. For more information call +44 (0) 789 026 8341

Exhibitions

For Your Eyes Only at the Imperial War Museum

To celebrate the centenary of Ian Fleming's birth, Imperial War Museum London is producing the first major exhibition devoted to the life and work of the man who created the world's most famous secret agent, James Bond. Rare material will be on display, including Fleming's research notes for *From Russia With Love*, along with items from the Bond films, such as Halle Berry's bikini from *Die Another Day*. From 25 April – 1 March 2009. For press information contact [Victoria Main](#) on +44 (0)20 7416 5497.

The Science of Survival at the Science Museum

This hands-on exhibition explores how the way we live will change over the next few decades in response to climate change. As visitors journey through *The Science of Survival*, they will be led by four characters who invite visitors to help them solve problems in a city in the year 2050. In five interactive areas – Drinking, Eating, Enjoying, Moving and Building – the exhibition looks at why the future will be different and what we can do about it today. Visitors explore current global issues and some possible technological responses. At the end of the experience visitors will see how well they survived and discover the choices made by other people. Opens 5 April. For press information contact [James Rudoni](#) on +44 (0)20 79424326.

SKIN+BONES: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture

The first major international exhibition devoted to the relationship between fashion and architecture opens at Somerset House in April. *SKIN+BONES* focuses on the visual and conceptual ideas that unite fashion and architecture, dating from the 1980s to the present day. The show features around 200 works by over 40 internationally-renowned architects and designers including Alexander McQueen, Vivienne Westwood, Thomas Heatherwick and Zaha Hadid. From 24 April – 10 August. For press information contact Jane Quinn or Victoria Enderby on +44 (0)20 7221 5000.

Daniel Pflumm at Whitechapel Art Gallery

Swiss artist filmmaker Daniel Pflumm absorbs the multitude of images from TV advertising and newsreels and brings them together in mesmerising films set to soundtracks of his own composition. Working since the 1990s Pflumm's work explores the effect of corporate branding and the mass media on people's everyday lives. Taking images from all over the world, the continuously repeated images from advertising take on a hypnotic and often seductive feel. The Whitechapel now presents a selection of Daniel Pflumm's films. From 2 April – 11 May. For press information contact [Rachel Mapplebeck](#).

Richard Rogers + Architects - From the House to the City

The Design Museum presents a new exhibition featuring the work of one of the most influential architects of our time, Richard Rogers. His work includes the headquarters of Lloyd's of London, the Millenium Dome and the National Assembly for Wales. The exhibition gives a detailed history of Rogers' work. From 24 April – 25 August. For press information contact [Josephine Gaffikin](#) on +44 (0)20 7940 8771.

The American Scene at the British Museum

The American Scene will feature spectacular prints of American society and culture made during a period of great social and political change from the early 1900s to 1960. Featuring 147 works by 74 artists, the exhibition includes the work of John Sloan, Edward Hopper, Josef Albers, Louise Bourgeois, Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock. All the works come from the British Museum's own American print collection, which is the most comprehensive outside the United States covering this period. From 10 April – 7 September. Admission free. For press information contact the [press office](#) on +44 (0)20 7323 8583.

Dan Dare and the birth of High Tech Britain at the Science Museum

A free exhibition which shows the way Britain reinvented itself as a hi-tech nation after the Second World War. Design, seen as a key to the nation's rebirth, went hand in hand with a boom in British consumer goods and the exhibition will reveal a surprising 'lost world' of British manufacturing. Dan Dare, hero of Eagle comic, introduces the show to reflect the spirit of optimism and faith in technology of the time. From 30 April until October 2009. For press information contact [Richard Purnell](#) on +44 (0)20 7942 4357.

Life Before Death – Wellcome Collection

The German photographer Walter Schels and journalist Beate Lakotta spent a year talking with terminally ill patients in hospices across Germany. They photographed 24 consenting people shortly before and just after death. The resultant portraits are shown side-by-side, accompanied by short texts that describe the individuals' experiences of the situation in which they find themselves – having to come to terms with the imminent end to their lives. From 9 April to 18 May. For press information contact [Mike Findlay](#).

Events

Olympic Torch Relay

London is one of 22 cities hosting the Olympic flame in 2008. The Olympic Torch Relay for the Beijing Olympic Games will travel across the capital on 6 April, when thousands of people are expected to line the streets. Under the slogan 'Light the Passion, Share the Dream', the flame will travel to 22 cities on the five inhabited continents; all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities of China; as well as the top of the world - Mt. Qomolangma. The Torch Relay route, which will be the longest in history, has the flame arriving in London from St. Petersburg and continuing on to Paris. [Read more.](#)

The Blue Planet Live! at Wembley Arena

Prepare to be taken on a journey to places you've never been before as the ground breaking BBC TV series becomes a breathtaking live experience at Wembley Arena on 5 April. From pole to pole across and beneath the oceans of the earth, The Blue Planet Live! will draw you into a moving and dramatic world projected onto one of the biggest screens ever seen in the UK. The show will feature a full size orchestra conducted by the series' composer George Fenton, together with special guest presenter Kate Humble. For press information contact [Faye Grimes](#) on +44 (0)20 8782 5623.

St George's Day in Trafalgar Square

This St George's Day, 23 April, the famous Borough market will set up in Trafalgar Square for 'Food Glorious Food', with the square decorated to suggest the atmosphere of a traditional English fete. The Square will be transformed into a food lover's delight complete with a performance stage with banqueting table and larger than life table ware. There will be other activities to coincide with St George's Day including free events at The Globe and the annual festival for St George in Covent Garden. For press information contact [Ben McKnight](#) on +44 (0)20 7983 4071.

Celebrate Bangladeshi New Year at Museum in Docklands

Museum of London is holding a series of events to celebrate Bangladeshi New Year on 14 April. Learn about Bangladeshi traditions and the contribution the Bangladeshi community has made to London. Activities include silk painting, an arts and culture variety show and rhythm workshops with traditional Bangladeshi musical instruments. For press information contact [Stacey Witter](#).

Alternative Fashion Week at Spitalfields

From 21-25 April, Spitalfields will play host to original and creative collections by a fresh crop of new designers with truly innovative ideas. Alternative Fashion Week provides a platform for over 60 young designers to present their work directly to the press, public and the fashion industry. Admission is free with special press and buyer front seats available. For more information contact [Alternative Arts](#) on +44 (0)20 7375 0441.

Cirque du Soleil brings Delirium to The O2

Having sold out in 55 cities across Europe and USA, Cirque Du Soleil's award winning show Delirium will transport its magic to The O2 arena on 18 and 19 April for its only London dates. The critically acclaimed show, inspired by music and movement, fuses fantasy and realism together guaranteeing to awe, delight and dazzle fans. Delirium delivers a multi sensory experience using holograms, virtual reality, multi-media sound, theatre, dance, international music and video projectory imaging to create a magical world. For press information contact [Lucy Ellison](#) on +44 (0)20 7536 1625.

AG1P Regent Street Pitt Stop

A1GP pits nation against nation as drivers from 22 countries compete in the 'World Cup of Motorsport'. Lower Regent Street will be transformed into a racing grid with 22 single-seat race cars each emblazoned with their national flag and accompanied by their race teams on 27 April. The spectacular event is expected to attract 200,000 visitors and will feature a live stage and jumbo tv screens broadcasting racing highlights from the 2007/08 AG1P season. For press information contact [Nikki Rooke](#) on +44 (0)20 7201 9600.

Dancing on Ice comes to The O2

Dancing on Ice, ITV1's spectacular show, comes to The O2 as part of its 2008 tour. The show's star studded celebrities including Chris Fountain, Gareth Gates, Suzanne Shaw and Kyran Bracken, will wow audiences with their ice skating flair at The O2 arena on 29 and 30 April. Andi Peters will host the show and the arena audience will be able to vote using their mobile phones. For press information contact [Lucy Ellison](#) on +44 (0)20 7536 1625.

The World's largest box of chocolates in Leicester Square

Thorntons will unveil a giant box of chocolates, which will break the Guinness World Record, in Leicester Square on 9 April. Following the world record, visitors will be able to climb the steps beside the box and help themselves to free chocolates! For press information contact [Jodie Berman](#) on +44 (0)20 7404 3000.

London Restaurant Week

Celebrity chef Jean-Christophe Novelli will front lastminute.com's London Restaurant Week as it returns even bigger and better this year. Up to 150 leading London restaurants including over 10 Michelin star establishments will take part in the event offering two course lunches for £15 and three course dinners for £25. Restaurants such as Richard Corrigan's Lindsay House, Daphne's, Almeida, Tamarind and Quilon, which recently received its first Michelin star, feature amongst a list of star-studded eateries. Launches 14 April. For press information contact [Charlotte Wilmots](#) on +44 (0)20 7866 4272.

Bars & Restaurants**Proud Camden re-opening weekend with The Enemy**

Proud Camden will re-open in the magnificent grade II listed Horse Hospital building in the Stables Market, Chalk Farm Road. The new venue is more than double the size of the previous site and will continue to focus on the best in live music with bands now playing across two rooms. The re-opening weekend from 3-4 April will feature The Enemy, Jodie Harsh, Babyshambles' Drew McConnell and more. It will also raise money for those affected by the recent Camden fire through collections. For press information contact [Oliver Drew](#).

The Loft launches new menu

The Loft, Clapham High Street, is launching a new menu courtesy of Head Chef Marianne Wit. Formerly of Michelin starred The Glasshouse in Kew, Marianne's aim is to deliver delicious dishes that are 'familiar but with a twist.' Careful sourcing is of paramount concern, for example eggs come from free-range, acorn-fed chickens and fish is from sustainable sources. Dishes include lamb shank, braised Moroccan style, with white beans and Merguez sausages and handmade ravioli stuffed with rabbit and porcini. There is also a brunch menu at weekends. For press information contact [Sam Redman](#).

Palm reading at Moti Mahal

From 1 April, contemporary Indian restaurant Moti Mahal will introduce weekly palm reading every Tuesday evening from 7pm until 10pm. Curious guests can spend five free minutes with the palmist, and if they are impressed by their initial fortune reading can progress to a full 15-minute session for a fee of £10 per person. For press information contact [Kate Bell](#) on +44 (0)20 7288 0800.

Theatre & Film**King Lear at Shakespeare's Globe**

The Globe kicks off its 2008 season with King Lear, opening on Shakespeare's birthday, 23 April. Known as Shakespeare's most profound tragedy, King Lear explores dark themes including justice and betrayal. Directed by Dominic Dromgoole and with David Calder playing Lear, the play runs until 17 August. For press information contact [Fran Eyles](#) on +44 (0)20 7902 1491.

Gone With The Wind at New London Theatre

The famous tale of turbulent love set during the changing times of the American Civil War. Scarlett O'Hara is the eldest of three daughters living a life of luxury on their father's plantation. But Lincoln's call to end slavery in the South sparks the Civil War. Scarlett's progression through this tumultuous time is mirrored by her relationship with the unpredictable Rhett Butler. Opens 22 April. For press information contact [Emma Holland](#) on +44 (0)20 7292 8330.

Shakespeare at The Roundhouse

Brush up on your history this spring, as eight of Shakespeare's historical plays come to The Roundhouse for the RSC Histories programme. The plays are Richard II, Henry IV Parts I & II, Henry V, Henry VI Parts I, II & III and Richard III and chart over 100 years of royal history between them. From 1 April - 25 May. For press information contact [Nada Zakula](#).

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