



PRESS RELEASE

Under embargo until 11am Tuesday 6th October

Society of London Theatre (SOLT) and UK Theatre launches the SEE IT SAFELY campaign to prioritise safety as audiences start to return to live theatre

The Society of London Theatre (SOLT) & UK Theatre have launched a new scheme called See It Safely, to support venues as they navigate the challenges of re-opening, and to give audiences the confidence that venues are consistent in their approach and implementation of the latest guidelines. In order to display the See it Safely mark, venues have to sign up to a code of conduct to demonstrate that safety forms the foundation for their reopening plans. Once past an initial approval process that confirms a venue is operating in line with the latest Government guidelines and Public Health guidance, as set out in a COVID-19 Risk Assessment, all participating theatres will receive the toolkit. This includes a 'See It Safely' mark that can be displayed in venues and on promotional materials; an animated safety video; signage and recommended website copy. Training, on-going support and advice is also offered.

In addition to adopting the toolkit, theatres can sign up to a set of ticketing principles which have been designed to reassure audiences that in the event of cancellation they will be able to get an exchange, credit voucher or refund and if an audience member is feeling unwell they can exchange their ticket at least 24 hours prior to the performance for a later date.

To date, just a small number of theatres across the country have opened or announced plans to open with social distance measures in place, whilst the majority sadly remain closed. For those able to open, the response from returning audiences has been overwhelmingly positive with runs selling out or being extended.

SOLT President Kenny Wax has recently announced that his production of SIX will be reopening in London at the Lyric Theatre on Shaftesbury Avenue allowing for social distancing. SIX will also be returning to the Lowry in Manchester for a six week Christmas run, also with social distancing. Commenting on the recent on sale of both productions Kenny said,

"I am delighted that theatre fans have responded so positively and performances are selling extremely well. I expect both productions of SIX to sell out their entire runs and such positive sales give me confidence to open my other shows including THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG at

the Duchess Theatre. There is clearly huge pent up demand for live theatre and it is wonderful to give audiences something to look forward to as we head into the Christmas season.”

DCMS have welcomed the creation of the toolkit and over 140 theatres have already accessed it. It has been shared with other organisations in the live events sector including Association of British Orchestras, British Association of Concert Halls, Concert Promoters Association, Music Venue Trust, National Arenas Association, and One Dance UK. The Federation of Scottish Theatre will be administering and promoting the campaign for its members in Scotland who don't hold a UK Theatre membership, in line with guidance from the Scottish Government.

The scheme has been a collaboration with creative agencies working together for the first time in order to create the toolkit. It has been led by marketing representatives from theatres across the country and will be supported by the #BackOnStage social campaign where venues, as they open, will ask audiences and cast to share their experiences of being back and enjoying live theatre.

The industry has learned a huge amount from the pioneering venues that have already opened including Regent's Park Open Air, Story House and Troubadour theatres and the pilot at The London Palladium. We are indebted to them for sharing their insight and experience in terms of the type of queries audiences had and how to ensure that everyone complied with the measures that were put in place.

Julian Bird, Chief Executive of SOLT/UK Theatre said, *“Going to the theatre is a very organised and civilised affair mainly due to its ticketed nature (it is simple for venues to track+trace exactly who is in the building and when) and well trained front of house staff are on hand throughout the experience to ensure that everyone is considerate and complies with the safety measures in place. One way systems and strict entrance and exit areas make our venues easily adaptable to the implementation of new safety measures, such as temperature checks, contactless payments, face masks and hand sanitizer stations. There is also minimal face to face and social contact as most audiences face forward.*

We have a number of challenges to meet before the majority of our theatres can open but we are confident that from a safety perspective audiences and our workforce can be reassured that every measure is being addressed and we look forward to rolling out the scheme and welcoming our audiences back. It is very encouraging that there have been no reported cases of Covid in any of our venues that have opened so far. We hope that the See It Safely mark gives audiences the peace of mind to return to the live theatre that they love.”

END

Media Contacts

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Notes to Editors

See It Safely

To register for a safety toolkit, please contact kayley@soltukt.co.uk

'See It Safely' video [HERE](#)

Creative agencies: AKA, Dewynters, Little Demon, Matt Hodges Design and Snow Creative

Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre

Society of London Theatre ([SOLT](#)) and [UK Theatre](#) are the trade associations and members' organisations representing the interests of those engaged in the production and presentation of medium to large-scale dramatic and lyric theatre in the UK. Their memberships are drawn from both subsidised and commercial theatre.

The combined box office income of SOLT and UK Theatre's membership was more than £1.28 billion in 2018 across London and the rest of the UK, with 34 million tickets sold.

SOLT represents approximately 230 London-based producers, theatre owners and managers, including all the major subsidised theatrical organisations in London.

UK Theatre represents approximately 240 theatres, concert halls, dance companies, producers and arts centres throughout the UK. UK Theatre also operates as a professional association, supporting over 1,400 individuals working professionally in theatre and the performing arts in the UK.