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PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday 10th November 2016

Judi Dench Backs Powerful West End Theatre Project to Fight Cyberbullying

The Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass Trust (Masterclass) are partnering with anti-bullying charity, Kidscape, to create Cyberscene - an innovative project which will use theatre to support the health and well-being of young people affected by cyberbullying.

The digital age has seen social behaviours change dramatically and the ways in which young people communicate and socialise is shifting. 87% of 16-24 year olds now access the internet via a mobile device and can spend up to 3 hours a day just on social media. With such remarkable developments, are our children and younger generations appropriately educated and equipped to use the internet and digital technology safely?

Ahead of Anti-Bullying Week (14th – 18th November) Masterclass and Kidscape are proud to announce Cyberscene: an essential new theatre project that will work with students from South Thames College, Leyton Sixth Form College, Hackney Community College and Barnet and Southgate College to create a powerful new play which explores the impact of technology, social media and cyberbullying.

Working with director, Guy Unsworth, and writer, Emily Jenkins, the play will be scripted through a series of theatre based workshops. In this supportive environment, young people can share their stories, learn from each other and be part of an empowering project which aims to address the impacts of cyberbullying and the wider digital realm. The final production will be staged at the Theatre Royal Haymarket in March 2017.

Dame Judi Dench DBE has endorsed the project and notes that theatre can play a significant role in addressing the issue of cyberbullying;

"As a Patron of the Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass Trust, I am delighted to lend my support to a worthwhile project which will harness the power of theatre to bring together a community of young students to address the issues associated with cyberbullying."

The heart of the project is about giving young people a voice, creating an exciting platform to support their experiences and to raise awareness of the issue to a much wider audience.

Peter Bradley, Director of Services at Kidscape said;

"We are proud to be partnering with Masterclass. We know the internet can be exciting, informative and fun - yet it's also a world where young people are bullied, exploited and led to harm. There's a



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vital need for this project - what you will see on stage is what's happening in our schools and colleges. Cyberscene will provide a new insight into how young people live their digital lives."

Cyberscene is generously supported by The Pure Land Foundation and the Theatre Royal Haymarket and will be created under the artistic guidance of renowned British theatre director, Jonathan Church CBE.

For more information on the Cyberscene project, please visit the Masterclass [website here](#) or watch the information [video here](#)

Additional links and support

If you or someone you know is experiencing cyberbullying and you would like some additional support please visit [Kidscape's website for further guidance](#).

ENDS -

Notes to editors

Cyberscene Creative Producer

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Anna Ceesay (Kidscape) | anna@kidscape.org.uk | 020 7730 3300

- A selection of images and artwork are attached. Further visuals are available on request.
- Interviews with the creative team and other members of the project are available on request.
- Cyberscene is a creative, hands-on learning project which uses theatre to support the health and well-being of young people affected by cyberbullying.
- The project is generously supported by The Pure Land Foundation and the Theatre Royal Haymarket
- All statistics have been taken from the Office of National Statistics, The Cybersmile Foundation and Nobullying.com. Correct as of 2015.

Cyberscene Workshop Leaders

Hazel Gould – Director, Writer and Workshop Leader

Arne Pohlmeier – Director and Workshop Leader

Joy Richardson – Actress and Workshop Leader

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Theatre Royal Haymarket





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Cyberscene Partners

Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass Trust (Masterclass)

Supporting and nurturing young people through theatre is, and always will be, at the heart of Masterclass. As the in-house education charity of the Theatre Royal Haymarket, for the past 18 years we have been dedicated to opening up this beautiful and historic building as a resource for young people.

The Masterclass programme hosts inspiring and empowering talks with leading industry figures, onstage workshops, careers advice sessions, creative opportunities and paid apprenticeships for young people aged 16 – 30. We are devoted to using theatre as a platform to build confidence, strengthen self-esteem, nurture creativity and develop business and life skills in young people –the talent of the future

www.masterclass.org.uk

Kidscape

Bullying and abuse can destroy childhoods and damage futures. Kidscape has been working for over 30 years to keep children safe from harm and to give parents and professionals the knowledge and skills they need to ensure that every child is protected. We were the first charity in the UK to tackle bullying and child sexual abuse and remain committed to our mission to support and protect children and help them to grow into happy, confident adults.

www.kidscape.org.uk

Cyberscene Supporter

The Pure Land Foundation

The Pure Land Foundation supports institutions, charities and programmes that promote social, spiritual and emotional wellness, with an emphasis on art and music.

Pure Land in Buddhism refers to the realm of higher consciousness and peace. Although not based in any religion, the Foundation seeks to create and promote the interconnectedness and sense of “pure land” in our daily lives.

The Pure Land Foundation was founded by Bruno Wang, a London-based philanthropist, cultural patron and businessman. The Foundation reflects Mr Wang's well-established interests in meditation, holistic wellbeing, art and music.

www.purelandfoundation.com

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