

St Paul's launches ground-breaking exhibition
Oculus: An Eye into St Paul's brings 1400 years of history alive



Oculus: An Eye into St Paul's

PRESS PREVIEW and PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: Tuesday 13th July 10am

An innovative new exhibition opens at St Paul's Cathedral on 14th July 2010. *Oculus: an eye into St Paul's* uses state-of-the-art projection technology to immerse visitors in the fascinating stories and history of this iconic landmark.

The first project of its kind in a cathedral, *Oculus* is a 270° film experience that brings 1400 years of history to life. Located in the atmospheric former Treasury in the crypt, *Oculus* takes visitors to Saxon London amidst the construction of the first St Paul's in 604AD, through the buildings on the site that have fallen to fire and disrepair, before showing them the Great Fire of 1666 and the devastation of London during the Blitz when St Paul's became a lasting symbol of strength, survival and hope.

In *Oculus* visitors will also discover the life of the cathedral; experiencing St Paul's as a vibrant church in the heart of a cosmopolitan city where worship forms the heartbeat and rhythm of our day.

Two virtual access films open up areas of the cathedral that visitors with mobility issues might not otherwise reach. The first film flies visitors through the world-famous dome; whisking them up to the Whispering Gallery before enjoying panoramic views across London from the Golden Gallery. A second film reveals Wren's room-sized Great Model; 4 metre-high projections take visitors into the interior of the model and reveal its beauty in close-up detail.

Oculus is set within a timeline spanning 1400 years of history and interspersed between the films are timeline sequences in which images and dates float across the screens - encouraging moments of stillness and reflection.

The Right Reverend Graeme Knowles, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral said:

"We are immensely proud of this new project which communicates the cathedral's story in such imaginative and creative ways. We hope that through this experience our visitors will learn more about the cathedral's history and also discover more about the daily life of a vibrant working church."

Martin Stancliffe, Surveyor to the Fabric of St Paul's Cathedral said:

“Now all our visitors - including those who cannot manage the stairs – can see the view from the top of the dome. And to penetrate the interior of the Great Model gives a spectacular insight into Wren's original vision for the cathedral”

Oculus has been generously funded by American Express Company in partnership with the World Monuments Fund, J. P. Morgan, the Garfield Weston Trust for St Paul's Cathedral, the City of London Endowment Trust and AIG.

Dr Jonathan Foyle, Chief Executive of World Monuments Fund Britain, said:

“Oculus is revolutionary in relating the long story of all the St Paul's Cathedrals over the ages, whilst limiting the impact of millions of visitors on the present iconic building. Our management of funds from the American Express/WMF Partners in Preservation Program included St Pauls amongst only five global sites, each of which has solved its challenges and found important opportunities. Oculus will be a triumph.”

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For more information please contact Hannah Talbot, Press and Communications Officer, St Paul's Cathedral on 020 7246 8321 or email Hannah@stpaulscathedral.org.uk

Note to editors:

Press Preview, Tuesday 13th July 10am – 1pm

On 13th July at 10am there will be an opportunity for filming / photography in Oculus, as well as the chance to interview:

- Surveyor to the Fabric, Martin Stancliffe
- Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, The Right Reverend Graeme Knowles

Visitor Information

Oculus: An Eye into St Paul's

Opening times: Monday to Saturday 8.30am – 4pm (last entry)

Cost: Free with admission

St Paul's Cathedral

St Paul's is the cathedral church of the diocese of London, which it has served for over 1,400 years. The current building has become a potent symbol of the life of a nation and is one of the world's most beautiful buildings. Designed by Sir Christopher Wren in the late seventeenth century, its stones have absorbed the hopes, fears, sorrows and joys of generations and stand as an enduring symbol of our communion with those gone before and those still to come. Each year nearly two million people flock to the cathedral for services, concerts, debates, educational events, performing arts and sightseeing. All are most welcome.

Oculus project team

Interpretation Strategy - Anne Fletcher on behalf of Fletcher Teckman Consulting Ltd.

Designers - Ralph Appelbaum Associates

Project management and fabrication - Scena

Film makers Centre Screen and ISO design

Technology – Sysco AV