

The London Organising Committee of the
Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Limited

Media briefing on the launch of the London
2012 Cultural Olympiad
September 2008



cultural olympiad

MEDIA BRIEFING FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD

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*“The Olympics is the wedding of sport and art”
Pierre de Coubertin (1863 – 1931)*

London 2012’s Cultural Olympiad

At the heart of the Olympic Movement is the desire for world peace and unity between sports, culture and education. Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic Movement followed the classical Greeks in maintaining that the purpose of the Olympic Games was to celebrate the harmony of mind, body and spirit.

On 24th August 2008, London became the host city for the 2012 Olympic Games and on 17th September 2008 it becomes the host city for the 2012 Paralympic Games. London 2012 is more than just four weeks of sport. From this year on, and for the next four years, cultural projects will be presented across the whole of the UK that have been inspired by the Olympic and Paralympic spirit.

London 2012’s Cultural Olympiad will celebrate the athletes, artists, people, places and cultures of London, the UK and the world. It will span the spectrum of arts and culture, from the traditional to street culture and beyond. The focus is on celebrating youth, diversity and creating a lasting legacy.

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are the biggest cultural, sporting and regeneration opportunity of our time.

Until 1948 medals were awarded for sculpture, music, literature and art, just as in sport. Today, the role of arts and culture in the Olympic movement has an increasing importance as young people seek to achieve excellence and explore their role in the world through all fields of creativity. London 2012 will put culture centre stage in the lead up to the Games through the Cultural Olympiad.

Here we describe how London 2012 will deliver its Cultural Olympiad over the next four years.

The vision of the Cultural Olympiad

To use the inspiration of the 2012 Games to unleash the creativity of young people everywhere.

We will do this by providing:

- Opportunities to work with great artists and storytellers
- Platforms for new and developing work
- Opportunities to get started
- Chances for young people to be leaders of change

The values of the Cultural Olympiad

- Celebrate London and the whole of the UK welcoming the world – our unique internationalism, cultural diversity, sharing and understanding
- Inspire and Involve young people
- Generate a positive legacy

The themes of the Cultural Olympiad

The Cultural Olympiad will focus on the following themes:

- Bringing together culture and sport
- Encouraging audiences to take part
- Animating public spaces through street theatre, public art, circus skills and live big-screen sites
- Using culture and sport to promote environmental sustainability, health and well-being
- Encouraging collaborations and innovation between communities and cultural sectors
- Promoting learning, skills by linking with education programmes.

Launch of the Cultural Olympiad

26 – 28 September 2008 is **Open Weekend**, the launch weekend for the Cultural Olympiad. The weekend starts a four-year celebration of the UK's culture, on a scale that has not been done before, designed to enable the widest range of people across the country to take part. It will also launch a number of large-scale creative projects. It is more than a weekend; it is the start of a four-year celebration.

A Full list of Open Weekend events can be found at:

<http://www.london2012.com/get-involved/cultural-olympiad/find-an-event.php>

Major Projects

London's successful bid to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games was built on the commitment to create cultural projects that would involve and inspire everyone in the UK and across the world. Ten strands of work have been developed, and the projects (see following) will form the centrepiece of the Cultural Olympiad and will be phased over the coming four years.

Live Sites

For London 2012 there will be a network of big screens-'Live Sites'- which will be in towns and cities around the country. These will show highlights of the Games and content from the Cultural Olympiad. Some of the screens were in place the 2008 Beijing Games. They will be focal points for cultural activity throughout the four years.

Celebrating Internationalism

In partnership with the British Council, artists, organisations and producers participating in the Cultural Olympiad will be able to benefit from information and advice, to develop new collaborations, new touring and joint projects across the world.

Major Projects

Artists Taking the Lead

This unprecedented £7m programme will challenge artists to lead a celebration of the excellence, diversity, innovation and internationalism of the arts across the UK.

12 artists' commissions - one in each of the nine English regions and in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales - will respond to and celebrate our local and national cultural life. Whether mounted in a city centre or development site, on a beach or up a hillside, and whether rooted in one artform or weaving together a range of disciplines, each commission will be the realisation of an artist's vision, in partnership with children, young people and communities.

The aim of *Artists Taking the Lead* is to put down a celebratory marker for 2012 in each region, creating a new expression of our creativity for presentation on the world stage. It will enable a wide range of people to enjoy a once in a lifetime experience and hopes to achieve a genuine legacy of opportunity and aspiration beyond 2012.

Further information about how artists and communities can get involved will be announced in autumn 2008 and it is expected that the programme will launch formally in spring 2009. The selected commissions will then be developed during 2009 and 2010, and come to fruition from 2011.

Delivery Partners:

Arts Council England

Scottish Arts Council

Arts Council of Wales

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

Sounds

Sounds, led by the BBC, is made up of four strands with a common aim – to celebrate music as a universal language in today's multicultural and multi-faith UK. Together, the four strands and the music that they create will contribute significantly to the nation's changing musical landscape producing new works and exciting performances between now and 2012.

Alongside a countrywide instrumental proposal called **The Band**, under development with the BBC, there will be two vocal projects, run by Youth Music: **Youth Music Voices** - a new youth-inspired vocal ensemble to be developed through regional workshops from 2009 and **National Singing Day**, an initiative with young people at its heart that will encourage schools, families and the wider community to join in. This will include an invitation to create and perform specially commissioned songs and have fun, making and breaking records Olympic-style, animating public spaces in new ways.

The fourth strand - **World River** - will evolve over four years, as new work is created through collaboration and participation, engaging communities from across Britain and artists linked to every Olympic and Paralympic nation. Produced by Serious, World River will culminate in July 2012, on the eve of the Olympics, with a weekend of free performances at landmarks along the River Thames linked by large scale peripatetic work. Each site will be focused on the music and performing arts of a different continent, presenting performances by world-class artists, alongside young people and communities. The programme will create multiple opportunities for interaction between different cultures as London welcomes the world.

Sounds brings together different organisations, musicians and communities through a wealth of music genres. Creative collaborations and experimentation throughout the programme will help to develop and present new sounds – the sounds of the nation in 2012.

Delivery Partners:

BBC

Serious

Youth Music

Discovering Places

Discovering Places is a four-stranded programme led by Heritage Link which introduces a new generation to the hidden places and spaces of the UK and overlooked sporting traditions. This £2million programme is being developed partnership with the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), Natural England and Leeds Metropolitan University.

Access All Areas, builds on the tradition of Open House in London, and on Heritage Open Days/Doors Open around the country to open up both the historic and the new, making hidden architectural treasures accessible, uncovering the buildings that express Britain's diverse culture, and creating new audiences for heritage and architecture. In 2011 we will see the largest ever coordinated opening of Britain's buildings, archaeological sites and other heritage locations. We aim to provide a compelling backdrop for the London 2012 domestic Torch Relay.

Open Up to Nature will connect new audiences to the inspiration of the UK's natural environment - near and distant. Natural England will lead co-ordinated activity by the organisations managing our natural environment and people's access to it and seek to stimulate young people's creativity.

O.space is a programme of activities being organised by CABE to showcase the regeneration and architectural transformation at the London 2012 Olympic Park and its relevance to neighbourhoods across the UK. Events, exhibitions and a website will help make young people and communities more aware of changes to their own area.

Action Replay is Leeds Metropolitan University's roadshow giving young people the chance to have fun by taking part in and learning about early sports and how they shaped the global games of today. It will also highlight relationships between sport and place while providing an attractive link between history, heritage, the popular culture of sport and the Olympic revival movement.'

Delivery Partners:

Heritage Link

CABE

Natural England

Leeds Metropolitan University

Somewhereto

Somewhereto is a project that empowers young people to find ways to access the spaces they need to do what they do. Whether they need space for sport, or dance, or music, or making art or showing their films,

Somewhereto is young people's opportunity to claim access to spaces across the country that they previously didn't use. A space could be a whole range of places, such as new opening times for a building or air space on the radio.

The project is in its very early stages and will begin working with young people and potential spaces to consider the possibilities and ways to broker access. It is hoped the project will build a legacy of young people inspired to pursue sport and culture in a way that suits them and create access to spaces never before available.

Somewhereto is a partnership between LOCOG and the Legacy Trust UK, which has committed £5 million to the project.

Delivery Partners:

Legacy Trust

Stories of the World

Stories of the World celebrates the collections held in the UK's vast range of museums all over the country to display them in new ways and in unexpected venues.

Led by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council in association with the British Museum and partner organisations, *Stories of the World* will be a UK - wide programme over the four-year period of the Olympiad.

A series of exhibitions across the UK, will new stories about the world and about the web of Britain's connections across the globe through travel, empire, trade and immigration. The point is to look at objects not from a purely curatorial point of view, but to ask a whole range of people – some of whom may have direct connection to them through their own cultural heritage – what these objects mean to them.

Stories of the World will place the diversity of the UK's collections, and its peoples, at the heart of cultural and political understanding, showing how communities of objects and of human beings can illuminate overlapping identities. By bringing audiences and objects together through display and other forms of mediation, stories will be revealed that show how meanings, change over time and space.

Stories of the World will be backed by learning programmes and local public events delivered over four years.

Delivery Partners:

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

Film Nation

Film Nation, an exciting four-strand project led by the UK Film Council and its partners across the UK including Film Education, First Light Movies, Screen West Midlands and Screen Yorkshire, aims to facilitate more and more young people to make and deliver stories digitally – and to do so with optimum skill and inventiveness.

Young people know how to use their mobile phones and computers. But creativity comes from left field and real achievement comes from studying with the best. So this project will harness the genius of some of the world's greatest filmmakers along with a younger generation of their peers who are exploiting the new media now. This combined force will work with young people in the UK.

An Olympic-inspired *Schools Film Week* will take thousands of children to the cinema, many for the first time. There will be screenings and live discussions in multiple venues around the country. This will grow incrementally each year, eventually involving hundreds of thousands of young people by 2012.

There will be a high profile *Short Film Competition*, spread over four years, alongside an innovative online documentary film project called **Dreams** – with content generated directly by young people.

Finally, in 2012, young people will have the opportunity to attend *London International Film Talks*, a programme of talks and masterclasses with major filmmakers. They will win their places via the *Short Film Competition* and the *Dreams* project. The masterclasses will be made available online and there will be screenings of young people's films across the UK

Delivery Partners:

UK Film Council

Film Education

First Light Movies

Screen West Midlands

Screen Yorkshire

Film London

Unlimited

A world celebration of disability arts, culture and sport.

Unlimited will be the UK's largest ever celebration of disability arts, culture and sport. £600,000 has been pledged to date for a series of commissions for disabled artists and arts organisations over the next four years. Artists will be encouraged to create work 'like never before' – creating new partnerships and collaborations, site-specific work and international work that all challenge traditional images of disabled people.

In addition, *Unlimited* will combine workshops, mentoring, career and training advice with performance and celebration. Beginning in autumn 2008 it will build towards a series of showcases and festivals in 2011 through to a spectacular finale in 2012, and will cover the nine Arts Council regions of England as well as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Unlimited will be fully accessible to allow all disabled people to participate in creating new work on a scale never seen before in the UK. This unique celebration will link the Olympic and Paralympic values and seek to engage artists and audiences alike. The UK leads the world in disability arts practice as shown recently with disabled members of Candoco appearing in the closing ceremony of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games; the first time disabled artists have ever done so in history. The programme will harness the knowledge of every key disability organisation in the country, and engage partners in the arts, sports and disability sectors in each region.

Delivery Partners:

Arts Council England,
The South Bank Centre

World Shakespeare Festival

The World Shakespeare Festival, led by the Royal Shakespeare Company, will celebrate Shakespeare as international property and the British as international people, through an unprecedented World Shakespeare Festival, centring on exchange and collaboration. It will focus on the relationship between the many communities of the world's diaspora represented in the UK and will include major collaborations between leading UK and international theatre companies, artists and large-scale premieres of international Shakespeare productions. Major UK partners already include the National Theatre and the Shakespeare's Globe, which will be producing its own Shakespeare project as part of the Festival.

The Festival will empower young people at home and abroad through ownership of Shakespeare and the challenge and fun of performance and it will collaborate with the huge non-professional theatre movement in the UK. Schools and communities across the UK will be linked with their peers in other countries, culminating in live performances at regional festivals.

The main hubs will be Stratford-upon-Avon, London and Newcastle, with further regional centres for community and schools performances, as well as touring and online activity worldwide.

The Festival will run from Shakespeare's birthday on 23 April 2012 until the start of the Olympic Games in July.

Festival of Carnivals

Now at an early stage of planning, **Festival of Carnivals** will give the country the chance to make the London welcome spectacularly visible in outdoor spaces, focusing social and creative activity in the years leading up to the London 2012 Games. It will culminate in five major carnivals in London and other cities in 2012.

The aim is to bring our outdoor spaces alive with parades, parties, massive communal picnics, street theatre and media events and, in particular, animate the streets of London during the 2012 Games.

The **Festival of Carnivals** will engage creative people and communities who fall outside the formal arts world, creating another route for taking part in celebrating the 2012 Games. There is huge creative opportunity through the medium of carnival – for example to explore world culture, street culture, street art, urban design and the sheer exuberance of colour and costume.

Festival of Carnivals is an amazing visual experience when it is lit up at night, and among the programmes that are planned is a series of Night Carnivals in London throughout the period of the 2012 Games.

World Cultural Festival

Also at an early stage of planning is **World Cultural Festival**.

London is the most diverse city in the world with communities across the UK from every competing nation.

Inspired by the vision of Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic movement, and taking place in 2012, the Festival will involve all the Cultural Olympiad's partners, and will include a world cultural summit. Every one of the 205 nations and their cultures celebrating the 2012 Games with us in London and the UK in 2012 will contribute to the Festival which will also enable us to establish, strengthen and learn from our relationships with our international neighbours.

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Inspire Mark

London 2012's Inspire programme will help to deliver a core strand of our commitment for a Games for *Everyone*.

In March this year, The Cultural Olympiad led the way by being the first part of the London 2012 Games to put out a call for applications for projects to be awarded the Inspire mark. The London 2012 Inspire mark recognises outstanding projects and events helping deliver the Games' lasting legacy.

London 2012's Inspire programme will help bring the benefits of the 2012 Games to every part of the UK – giving millions the opportunity to participate as never before. This is the first time any Olympic and Paralympic organising committee has been able to award a mark of quality to projects making an approach to be part of the Cultural Olympiad, whether from small, community-based cultural organisations or larger institutions. It leads the way for other host cities after London to adopt this very inclusive approach.

So far we have been able to grant 34 projects the Inspire mark:

Carnegie Sporting Words Festival	Harrogate International Festivals	Yorkshire
ONE 8 (One Nation for Everyone 2008)	Renaissance East Midlands	East Midlands
AfroReggae UK Partnership	Barbican Centre	Host Boroughs
Essex-Jiangsu Cultural Exchange	Essex County Council	East
East meets West	Essex County Council	East
The Pied Piper	Ulster Orchestra Society Ltd	Northern Ireland
SYNERGY: The Whitlingham Outdoor Festival	Norfolk County Council	East
Creative Spirits	Tyne & Wear Museums	North East
Derby Festé 08	Derby QUAD Ltd	East Midlands
Afro Reggae – Newcastle.	Dance City	North East
Home Run	Peterborough City Council	East
Village Green (Party in the Park)	Metal	East
West London Festival Finale 2008	West London Alliance	London
Neon attractors	Culture Northwest	North west
ANTI-BODIES: Beyond the Body Ideal	Relational	South West
The Bristol Do	Bristol City Council	South West
Seconds Out	Theatre Royal Newcastle	North East
Imagination Our Nation: Germination	Kinetika	Host Boroughs/National

Literature and Stories	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council	National
People's Record	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council	National
Night Lights	West Yorkshire Playhouse	Yorkshire
Hackney Wick Festival	SPACE	Host Boroughs
Criw Cymru	Wales Millennium Centre	Wales
The CREATE08 Art Award	5 Host Boroughs of Greenwich	Host Boroughs
Border crossing	ISIS Arts Limited	North East
Museums Keep Moving Cultural Olympiad Exhibition	Marches Curators' Group	West Midlands
V&A's Century of Olympic Posters	Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	West Midlands
Extraordinary Cycles Project Launch Event	Coventry Transport Museum	West Midlands
Shape Artist commissions	Shape	London
Light Up East	Commissions East	East
Discover Young Hackney	Hackney Council	Host Boroughs
Children & Young People's Festival	Culture10	North East
Festivals of Light	Discover	Host Boroughs
Inspiring Spaces	Greenwich Theatre	Host Boroughs
B-SIDE (THE SEASIDE)	Weymouth College	South West

Who's Who

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) is responsible for the planning, preparation and staging of the London 2012 Games. Headed by Sebastian Coe (Chair) and Paul Deighton (Chief Executive), LOCOG oversees the staging of the Games, recruitment and training of volunteers, staging of test events and the running of the Cultural Olympiad and Education programmes in the build-up to the Games.

The **Culture Team** will implement the overall vision, values and architecture of the Cultural Olympiad, starting after Beijing 2008.

The key people:

Jude Kelly – Chair of Culture, Ceremonies and Education

Bill Morris – Director of Culture, Ceremonies and Education

Fran Hegyi – Senior Cultural Adviser

Keith Khan – Artist Executive

Steve Mannix – Cultural Programme Adviser

Will Hutchinson – Culture, Ceremonies and Education Adviser

Francesca Canty – UK Cultural Programme Adviser

Sarah Weir – Cultural Olympiad Launch Director

Rebecca Miller – Media Adviser - Culture