



Deckchair Dreams

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NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

EAST MEETS WEST AS DECKCHAIR DREAMS GOES GLOBAL

'Relax on a Philip Treacy in Hyde Park and Shanghai'

The traditional British deckchair receives an international facelift this year when leading designers from the UK come together with a top group of artists from China to create *Deckchair Dreams 2010* in London and Shanghai.

Deckchair Dreams is a high-profile charity initiative launched by the Royal Parks Foundation in 2006 and sponsored by Bloomberg, which raises funds to benefit London's eight Royal Parks. This year's project also sees the Royal Parks Foundation launch a partnership with The Botanical Garden in Shanghai.

Inspired by the UK Pavilion at Shanghai World Expo, this year's artists have incorporated the theme of 'seeds' into their deckchair designs with the UK's own "seed-specialist", artist **Rob Kessler**, leading the pack with his picture of a Chinese Warrior made from magnified, coloured seed and pollen grains. Joining Kessler in the UK artist group are hat designer **Philip Treacy**, cartoonist **Ronald Searle**, Disney illustrator **Alex Williams** and wildlife sculptor **Simon Gudgeon**, creator of Isis in Hyde Park. The designer deckchairs will be on display simultaneously in London and at the UK pavilion at Shanghai Expo (as part of the UK's programme of public events coordinated by the British Council) and in Shanghai Botanical Garden.

Philip Treacy has designed an exquisite chair illustrated by David Downton and featuring model Linda Evangelista. He quotes, "The Royal Parks of London are the most beautiful in the world, so it is fitting to have the most beautiful women in the world in these parks as part of deckchair dreams."

Representing China are some of the country's leading artists, including painter and sculptor **Wu Ching Ju**, photography and video specialist **Qiu Zhiji** and traditional woodblock printer **Wang Chao**. Each artist represents a different form of Chinese art from calligraphy to woodcarving, with some pieces being extremely traditional and others representing today's Chinese modern art movement.

As part of *Deckchair Dreams*, the Royal Parks Foundation also runs an education programme, which helps school children explore and appreciate the natural world through art. This year's project involves five schools in London, as well as schools in Shanghai. Each school works with the Royal Parks' education team to create their designs and the winning design from each school joins the collection.

Royal Parks Foundation Chief Executive, Sara Lom, says: "After the success of previous years, it is wonderful to partner with Shanghai. The Botanical Garden is developing its education programme and we are delighted to have a cultural exchange that teaches young people about the natural world, the importance of urban parks and the need to look after them".

For further information please contact Chloe Lecash or Edwina Bagge:
chloe@ktbpr.com or edwina@ktbpr.com both can be reached on 0207 924 7214

For more details on the auction please contact:
Clare Bowen on 0207 298 2139 or Sara Lom on 07870 676113

- Original artwork for the chairs will be auctioned this autumn at the **Grand Deckchair Dreams Charity Auction**, hosted by principal sponsor Bloomberg, (venue tbc).
- Members of the public will be able to bid for the original pieces of artwork. For details on how to bid either for the artists' originals or for one of the limited-edition reproduction chairs, visit www.deckchairdreams.org
- The innovative and unusual UK Pavilion is designed by Thomas Heatherwick. At the centre of the site is the Seed Cathedral – a building 20 metres in height, formed from 60,000 slender transparent fibre optic rods, each 7.5 metres long and each encasing one or more seeds at its tip from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew's Millennium Seed Bank partnership, given by Kew's Chinese partner Kunming Institute of Botany.
- Limited edition deckchairs cost £86 - £100, plus p+p and can be delivered worldwide
- During the summer, 700 deckchairs – reproductions of the celebrity and school designs – will be available for everyone to sit on and enjoy in Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park, The Green Park, St James's Park and Regent's Park. Also in Shanghai Botanical Garden and at EXPO in China.
- It costs £2 to snooze in a deckchair for 4 hours in a Royal Park
- The Royal Parks Foundation is a registered charity number 1097545
- The public sector founding sponsors of the UK Shanghai Expo, led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, are the British Council, UK Trade and Investment, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the English Regional Development Agencies. The 5 founding corporate sponsors of UK Shanghai Expo are AstraZeneca, Barclays, BP, Diageo and GKN.
- The British Council is leading on the design and development of the Programme of Events for the UK at Expo