



PRESS RELEASE: THEATRE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Strawberry Vale Productions presents Simple8's
The Living Unknown Soldier

Based on *Le Soldat Inconnu Vivant* by Jean-Yves le Naour
London's Premiere Sustainable Theatre Production

Summer 2007 saw the launch of Arcola Energy – a bold and unique venture to make Arcola the world's first 'carbon neutral' theatre. To launch Phase II, Arcola Theatre is joining forces with two young companies, Simple8 and Strawberry Vale Productions to create London's premiere ecologically sustainable theatre production: **The Living Unknown Soldier**.

Our ambition is to create a testing ground to promote ecological and ethical standards in the industry. It links directly to the Sustainable Theatre Initiative "Greening London Theatre", launched in October by London Mayor Ken Livingstone. Innovative partnerships lie at the heart of the project: London Hydrogen Partnership are donating a fuel cell, Global Action Plan are auditing us and BASH Creations are supporting the radical transformation of the Arcola bar into an eco-café.

Our greatest challenge is to manage the natural tension between Simple8's artistic vision and the demands of sustainability – we will not compromise either in our attempt to 'make green normal'. We hope to capitalise on the massive interest and pockets of exemplary work already happening across the theatre industry and become a practical resource for other venues and theatre companies.

The Living Unknown Soldier is 'brave young company' (Evening Standard) Simple8's second production. It follows their 2006 critically acclaimed sell-out success **Les Enfants Du Paradis** (**** The Times). 2008 is the 90th anniversary of the end of First World War, making it a most timely resurrection of a forgotten story:

France, 1918. The Great War has ended. Thousands are missing. Relatives are desperately seeking their loved ones as men return from the front. A soldier is found wandering a station platform. With no knowledge of his identity, or the country he has been defending, he is diagnosed with amnesia and committed to an asylum. Saved from death but exiled from life he faces a no-man's land once more.

As news spreads across the country, families flock to him in search of the fathers, brothers, husbands and sons who may never come home. This one man becomes a symbol for a generation ripped apart by war - a living unknown soldier.

The Living Unknown Soldier is based on *Le Soldat Inconnu Vivant* by Jean-Yves Le Naour. It explores the fine line between memory and imagination and serves as a vital reminder of the fallout from war. Created using Le Naour's book, the original source material and the companies' imagination the result is a war story, a ghost story, an absurd comedy and a chilling tragedy where the ensemble will rise from a no-man's land of mud to imagine and remember the life of the living unknown soldier.

PRESS NIGHT 15 FEBRUARY 2008. Green Gala Night (~~between 6-11 March~~
~~to~~) to coincide with EAST Festival. For all press enquiries please contact
Lilli Geissendorfer 07977220414 / 02074012449 or lilli@arcolatheatre.com or lilli@strawberryvaleproductions.com



Notes to Editors:

1. **Simple8 Theatre Company** was formed in 2003 by eight professional actors, writers and directors. We decided to take control of our own creative work and combine our talents to take drama in a direction we believe in. We want to produce simple stories, simply told. Director Sebastian Armesto adapted and co-directed their production of *Les Enfants du Paradis*. He is also an actor and is currently playing Prince George in ITV's *The Palace*.

2. Since its foundation in 2006 **Strawberry Vale Productions** has established itself as an innovative creative production company at the forefront of London's fringe. Past productions include *Notes from Underground* by Dostoyevsky (Arcola), *Mojo Mickybo* by Owen McCafferty (Arcola, Trafalgar Studios) and *Limbo* by Declan Feenan (Edinburgh Underbelly, York Theatre Royal, Arcola). Lilli Geissendorfer also produced the inaugural HighTide Festival.

3. **Arcola Theatre** is one of the country's most renowned independent theatres with a distinct and powerful identity. Since its foundation in 2000 Arcola Theatre has won the Peter Brook Empty Space Award two years in a row and was given the Time Out Live Award twice. Arcola Energy was launched in Summer 2007. See www.arcolaenergy.com for full details.

4. **The Royal British Legion** provides financial, social and emotional support to millions who have served and are currently serving in the Armed Forces, and their dependants. We are very fortunate to have the use of their logo on all our publicity materials.

5. For more information on some of our partners, please see:



The UK's only eco-entertainment company, www.bashcreations.com

London Hydrogen Partnership www.london.gov.uk/lhp/

Global Action Plan www.globalactionplan.org.uk/

Listings information:

Strawberry Vale Productions presents Simple8's The Living Unknown Soldier

Based on *Le Soldat Inconnu Vivant* by Jean-Yves Le Naour

Arcola Theatre Studio 1

12 February – 15 March 2008

8pm (running time approx. 95 mins)

3pm Wed Matinee (excl. 13th)

Tickets: £15 (£10 concessions)

Box Office: 020 7503 1646

www.arcolatheatre.com

Press Contact

Lilli Geissendorfer

lilli@strawberryvaleproductions.com

Press Night 15 February 2008 8pm

Tel: 07977 220 414 / 020 7401 2449

[Website: www.simple8.co.uk](http://www.simple8.co.uk)