Talking Tulips Brings Leicester Square to Life, 22-25 May

Wednesday 13 May, 2015

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Talking Tulips' is a fun art installation of flower boxes filled with imitation tulips, which will talk and respond to passing visitors using trigger sensor technology.

Heart of London Business Alliance, which represents the businesses in and around the Square, commissioned outdoor events company Fantasy High Street to create the installation; it is a visual celebration of the historic gardens and its surrounding creative community, in one of the busiest destinations in London. The installation has been created with the support of Westminster City Council.

Karen Baines, Head of Marketing & Communications at Heart of London Business Alliance explains: "We want to re-ignite people's love for Leicester Square, reflecting and enhancing its quirky, dynamic and cool characteristics. We want to surprise and delight visitors with something that cuts through the colour and busy-ness of the Square and provides a personal, intimate and fun experience. Heart of London Business Alliance is looking at creating a series of unexpected art installations in the Square, that encourage visitors and Londoners alike to head to this exciting destination and explore the range of activities going on in both the gardens and the surrounding businesses.'

Lydia Fraser-Ward, Fantasy High Street's Creative Director adds: "Our aim was to create something magical, which could truly interact with visitors and animate Leicester Square Gardens. Visitors will be able to hear the intimate voices of our tulips, triggered by hidden sensors. The flowers will welcome visitors in numerous languages, and we've have had a lot of fun creating them and playing with different characters, inspired by various historical facts about Leicester Square, such as the Leverian Curiosity Museum of 1790s and the 18th century plans to build an Opera House on the site."

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Editor's Notes

Heart of London Business Alliance
Established in 2001, Heart of London Business Alliance is a pioneer of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). It began with the area from Leicester Square to Piccadilly Circus, as the very first BID in central London, and became the first nationally to achieve a third term in 2012. At the same time, Heart of London expanded to include the new Piccadilly and St James's BID. It represents over 500 business members within the two BID areas, which attract 100 million visitors every year.

Heart of London Business Alliance acts as a catalyst for change on street management, public-realm projects and destination marketing, with the aim of making the West End a better place for those who visit, trade, live and work here. Led by its Chief Executive, Sarah Porter, its partnerships have global ambition. With new regulations, Heart of London Business Alliance is now preparing to launch the UK's first Property-Owner BIDs, which will mark a step-change in its capabilities.

To find out more, visit www.heartoflondonbid.london @londonwestend

Fantasy High Street

Fantasy High Street was conceived in 2012 by creative producer Lydia Fraser-Ward, to reinvigorate the high street as a public space and explore how audiences engage with it. By placing performance and visual artists in and around local businesses they celebrate the high street as an essential community hub.

The company's first event was in July 2013 in partnership with Waterloo Quarter BID (London) and featured performance and visual arts presentations in shops, restaurant and outdoor street spaces. The project was shortlisted for two Arts & Business Awards in 2014. Since then the not-for-profit organisation has gone on to deliver 8 major projects across the UK and has had its work seen by more than 25,000 people in the first year alone.

Fantasy High Street continues to utilize the imagination and creativity of performance and visual artists to demonstrate the unique characteristics of high street businesses and their products and services. By

placing performance and visual artists in businesses to create interactive 'experiential' shops and creating interactive outdoor events which animate public spaces we support community residents, local business owners and artists alike. Transforming town centres into magical mind-boggling interactive experiences, we create inspirational, high quality arts projects which defy imagination, whilst exploring the values of public space and celebrating its importance within communities.

To find out more, visit www.fantasyhighstreet.org.uk @Fantasy_High_St

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