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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Blind Summit Theatre and BAC present:**

**GEORGE ORWELL'S  
1984**

**BAC, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> DECEMBER 2009 & 4<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2010 (exc. Suns), 7.30PM**

**PRESS NIGHT TUES 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER,  
7.30PM**

60 years after *1984*'s publication, leading puppetry innovators Blind Summit Theatre and BAC bring George Orwell's visionary dystopian novel to the stage in a minimalist low tech new adaptation. Drawing on agit-prop techniques, the company returns to a simple form of theatre making free from modern digital technology, using just cardboard props, live actors and puppetry. The ensemble manipulates objects, people, puppets and the set to tell the story of Winston and Julia's dissident love affair in a futuristic totalitarian state.

The production marks a new phase in the work of Blind Summit Theatre, bringing actors and puppets together as equal elements on stage for the first time, developing the work they have done in collaboration with other theatre companies. It is the latest project in a long standing relationship between BAC and Blind Summit Theatre, which has borne a number of genre-breaking productions at the venue, in particular *Low Life*, which has had three sell out London runs and has toured the world with the support of the British Council.

Over the past 12 years, **Blind Summit Theatre** has established itself as a world leader in high quality puppetry for adult audiences. Their innovative programme of work and collaborations are helping to redefine the art-form in British Theatre today. They are particularly known for their contemporary reworking of the ancient Japanese art-form of Bunraku through collaborations with Anthony Minghella on his acclaimed production of *Madam Butterfly* at the ENO and the Metropolitan Opera.

George Orwell published his novel in 1949, shortly after the Second World War and just one year after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and his story is defined by the great public interest in human rights issues during this era. The pertinence of many of Orwell's observations has increased since the time of writing, with the UK having become one of the most surveyed countries in the developed world.

In acknowledgment of the many relevant human rights themes it contains, **Amnesty International** is working in partnership with BAC and Blind Summit Theatre on the production. Amnesty is keen to support this innovative and skilful production of *1984* - one of the world's most well-known stories to stress the importance of freedom of expression and other basic rights - as it is presented to a diverse audience.

Amnesty recognises the powerful impact that drama, poetry, music and comedy can have to illustrate human rights violations around the world. The arts industry brings people together and it can inspire and inform and also provoke people to action. This is why the arts and entertainment industry plays such an important role in Amnesty's campaigning work.

"Blind Summit's puppetry is capable of mesmerising audiences. We are particularly excited to be co-producing an adaptation of Orwell's masterpiece, a brilliant and relevant narrative that provides an exciting artistic challenge for Blind Summit. We are looking forward to welcoming audiences to catch the first London run of *1984* after a year of development through Scratch and before the show travels beyond Lavender Hill."

- David Jubb and David Micklem, Artistic Directors, BAC

'If puppetry is ever going to be the next rock'n'roll these animators may well be its front men' - *Time Out*

[www.bac.org.uk/www.blindsummit.com](http://www.bac.org.uk/www.blindsummit.com)/Running Time: 2hrs 15mins including interval (subject to change)

**Company information**

Based on: *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell (Copyright, 1949) by permission of the Estate of the Late Sonia Brownell Orwell

Co-produced by: Blind Summit Theatre and BAC

Set & Puppets Designed: Nick Barnes

Composer & Sound: Chris Branch

Cast: Simon Scardifield, Giulia Innocenti, Josie Daxter, Robin Beer, Alice Barclay, Gergo Danka, Henry Maynard

Directed: Mark Down

Lighting Design: Chahine Yavroyan

Costume Design: Dulcie Best

**Listings Information**

Venue:	Battersea Arts Centre
Address:	Lavender Hill, London SW11 5TN
Dates:	2 <sup>nd</sup> - 23 <sup>rd</sup> December 2009 & 4 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2010 (exc. Sundays)
Times:	7.30pm (Matinees: 3, 7, 10, 15 Dec, 7 & 9 Jan, 2.30pm)
Price:	£16 (Concs £14/£12), Matinees £10
Box Office:	020 7223 2223
Transport:	Clapham Junction overground station