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## PRESS RELEASE

### TICKET PRICES DROP AS THE CREDIT CRUNCH HITS THEATRELAND

Cut price seats now available for top West End shows

Many of London's top shows have dropped their ticket prices, making it cheaper to enjoy a night out at the theatre.

Impresario Cameron Mackintosh has today announced that his shows, which include The Phantom Of The Opera, Oliver!, Les Misérables and Avenue Q, will offer a new £50 Crunch Buster ticket from the 4<sup>th</sup> of December. The Crunch Buster ticket will allow admission for a family of four, two adults and two children, and is the first time that Mackintosh has introduced a family ticket for his musicals. For the time being Crunch Buster tickets can only be bought at the box office or via [www.crunchbustertickets.com](http://www.crunchbustertickets.com)

It's not only Cameron Mackintosh who has dropped prices. Many shows have already passed on the benefit of the reduction in VAT to customers by reducing their ticket prices accordingly. Shows which have implemented new prices include Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Grease, The Sound Of Music and Mamma Mia!

Sadler's Wells is also lowering prices for its Christmas production of Matthew Bourne's Edward Scissorhands by 15%. Tickets bought before Christmas Day are now available for £8.50-£42.50. Prices revert to their original structure from the 26<sup>th</sup> of December.

Robert Iles, founder of theatre ticket comparison website [SeatChoice.com](http://SeatChoice.com) said: 'The credit crunch is affecting ticket sales for shows and plays and it's great to see someone like Cameron Mackintosh taking positive action. However, one of the easiest ways to save money on theatre tickets is to shop around checking which ticket agents have the best discounts and what the booking fees are. One quick search for two tickets to 'Joseph' revealed a 20% difference in the total price between one ticket supplier and another. That's far more than the drop in VAT will save you. With SeatChoice.com you

can search for tickets to any show, play or concert in seconds giving you all the information you need to get the seats you want at the best possible price.”

SeatChoice.com has also put together five simple tips to finding bargain theatre tickets

### **Tip One - Shop around!**

Whether you're buying car insurance or applying for a credit card, it pays to compare what different companies offer and charge and exactly the same applies to buying theatre tickets. Different ticket agents have different mark-ups and charge different booking and handling fees so you could pay more than double for your tickets than the person sitting next to you depending on where you bought them from. When you do a search for tickets with SeatChoice.com it shows you the face value of the tickets available and the different fees payable so you can compare the total price, not just the ticket price.

For example, running a search on SeatChoice.com for tickets to Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat for Wednesday the 10th of December revealed a big difference in cost for seats in the same part of the theatre for exactly the same performance.

One ticket provider was offering two seats in the dress circle for £88.80 including booking fees whilst another was charging £110 including fees for seats in the dress circle for the same performance. A saving of 20%!

### **Tip Two – Book Clever!**

Avoid weekends and school holidays if you can. Theatre producers know that demand for tickets will be high and so they rarely discount tickets for these periods.

### **Tip Three – Monday night is the new Friday night!**

Go earlier in the week. Most shows discount tickets earlier in the week when sales are harder to find. Even for very popular shows it's worth searching for deals on Monday and Tuesday nights as you're far more likely to find discounted tickets available.

### **Tip Four - Be flexible!**

Sometimes good discounts are offered on a "best available" basis. This means you may not know your seat numbers before you arrive at the theatre but the staff will seat you in the best seats that are not sold at full price. They can be pretty good seats too.

**Tip Five - Get up in the Gods.**

If you are on a really tight budget try for seats in the balcony and upper circle. The best seats in the theatre sell out first which often means that theatres struggle to sell the cheaper seats which are higher up or have a restricted view. If you don't mind sitting a bit further from the stage, and are really watching every penny, you can often find great discounts for these seats.

SeatChoice.com conducts real-time searches of theatre box offices and over 20 ticket outlets including leading ticket agents such as Ticketmaster and Keith Prowse, and secondary ticket suppliers such as Seatwave and Viagogo. Combined, SeatChoice's suppliers offer tickets to over 7600 plays, shows and concerts across the country.

**-Ends-**

**For further information please contact:**

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**If you would like to link to our website please use** <http://www.seatchoice.com>

**Notes to editors:**

Robert Iles has spent a lifetime in the theatre industry and has over twenty years experience in ticketing systems including developing the first online ticket sales system for the National Theatre. He is also a keen actor and playwright.