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PRESS RELEASE

**SUBJECT: Shakespeare's Globe honours Sir Michael Perry GBE with 2013 Sam Wanamaker Award**

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**DATE: Sunday 16 June 2013**

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Sir Michael Perry GBE, one of the UK's leading businessmen and former chairman of a host of blue chip companies, is honoured by Shakespeare's Globe with its most prestigious annual prize, the Sam Wanamaker Award, named after its founder. Sir Michael has given almost thirty years of energetic and tireless commitment to helping rebuild Shakespeare's Globe and then guiding it to become the established Shakespearean venue it is today.

The Sam Wanamaker Award celebrates work that has increased the understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare. It recognises Sir Michael's long and loyal contribution as chairman of the Shakespeare's Globe Trust from which he has only recently retired. The Award was presented to Sir Michael Perry on stage at Shakespeare's Globe after a performance of Dominic Dromgoole's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on Saturday 15 June as part of the Globe Theatre's *Season of Plenty*.

On accepting the Award Sir Michael commented: "It has been a privilege and a joy to help complete what Sam inspired and started. I dare to think I can look him in the eye when next we meet."

In the mid-eighties, having secured the Bankside site for the new Globe, Sam Wanamaker and architect, Theo Crosby, needed to engage voluntary expertise to develop the business rationale for the project and lead the construction phase. Globe Trust chairman, Sir David Orr, suggested Michael, still a full-time Unilever director. He joined the board of Globe trustees and was appointed chairman of its newly formed trading subsidiary, the International Shakespeare Globe Centre Ltd.

On Sir David's retirement, Michael (by now Sir Michael and Chairman of Unilever plc) became chairman of the Shakespeare's Globe Trust. Under his guidance, Sam's vision for the Globe was developed into a business plan to attract financial support and enable the recreated theatre to be sustainable with only a short summer season. From this the Globe educational charity evolved, dedicated to the understanding of Shakespeare in performance and provision of a year-round programme.

When Sam Wanamaker died in December 1993, followed within a year by architect Theo Crosby, construction work on the Globe had scarcely begun, available funds were virtually exhausted and fundraising had slowed. It was a successful Arts Council Lottery Fund bid that enabled construction of the Globe to be completed.



For Sir Michael and the Trust the problem shifted from construction to fulfilling Sam's vision for the Globe in the absence of its creator; 'Hamlet without the Prince'. Princelings were found in Mark Rylance as Artistic Director, Patrick Spottiswoode as Director of Education, and other key professionals, who, under the watch of Sir Michael and his fellow Trustees raised the Globe to the success it is today. Sir Michael himself had little Shakespearean background. He often depicts himself as Sam's anointed 'suit', an enabler, the man behind the scenes, the provider of context and the custodian of the Globe vision.

Congratulating Sir Michael on his Award, Neil Constable, Shakespeare's Globe's chief executive commented, "I am delighted to recognise the huge contribution Sir Michael has given to rebuilding and establishing Shakespeare's Globe and congratulate him on being the 2013 recipient of the Sam Wanamaker Award. Sam, as we all know, had the vision to create a Globe on Bankside but it was Michael who had the skills, energy and persistence to make it happen. And for us his legacy is not just left in timber, thatch and mortar; it is the principles, culture and attitudes by which Shakespeare's Globe is run. Many generations will be grateful for his tireless energy, dedication and commitment over the last 28 years."

Sir Michael follows former illustrious recipients of the Award, the first of whom was Dr Rex Gibson, creator and editor of the Cambridge School Shakespeare; Janet Arnold for her pioneering research into Elizabethan clothing; Professor Stanley Wells, Shakespeare scholar and former Chairman of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; John Barton, founding member of the Royal Shakespeare Company; and actor and director, Mark Rylance, the first Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe.

Following retirement from Unilever Sir Michael became chairman of Centrica, a director of Bass, Marks and Spencer, and companies in the Netherlands and Singapore. He is a former president of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, former chairman of the government's Senior Salaries Review Body and currently chairman of the Leverhulme Trust. He received the OBE in 1978, the CBE in 1990 and the GBE in 2002. He is an Honorary Fellow of St John's College, Oxford, and has been awarded Honorary Doctorates by Cranfield, South Bank, Brunel and Worcester universities.

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Further information

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**Notes to Editors:**

- **Sam Wanamaker** spent the final 23 years of his life tirelessly campaigning, advancing research into the appearance of the original Globe and planning its reconstruction. The Sam



Wanamaker Award was instituted by Shakespeare's Globe in 1994 to honour work which has a similar quality to Sam's own pioneering mission.

- **Previous winners of the Sam Wanamaker Award include** Gregory Doran (2012), Glynn MacDonald and Giles Block (2011), Professor Stanley Wells (2010), Professor Andrew Gurr (2008), Jenny Tiramani, Claire van Kampen and Mark Rylance (2007), Dawn Saunders QSM (2006), John Orrell (2004), Stephen Unwin and Barry Rutter (2003), Paul Scofield CBE (2002), John Barton CBE (2001), Cicely Berry OBE (2000), Glynne Wickham (1999), Janet Arnold (1998), William Hutt (1996), Leon Garfield (1995) and Dr Rex Gibson (1994).
- **Globe Education** presents a programme of workshops, lectures, events and staged readings all year round. For more information [www.shakespearesglobe.com/education](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/education)
- **Globe Exhibition and Tour** is open all year round. For more information visit [www.shakespearesglobe.com/exhibition](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/exhibition)
- **The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse:** Shakespeare's Globe is currently fundraising to build a new indoor Jacobean theatre, to be named after the Globe's visionary founder, opening in January 2014. For further information please visit [www.shakespearesglobe.com/the-sam-wanamaker-theatre](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/the-sam-wanamaker-theatre)
- **Globe on Tour:** The Globe's productions tour the UK, Europe and America and the Globe is currently developing its touring schedule, as well as screening productions in cinemas. For more information [www.shakespearesglobe.com/theatre/on-tour](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/theatre/on-tour)
- **Globe on Screen:** Globe productions are screened across the UK, America, Australia and New Zealand. For more information visit <http://onscreen.shakespearesglobe.com/>
- **Globe Shop** stocks a variety of products, including theatre season specific merchandise. Shakespeare's Globe is a registered charity and all profits from sales go towards supporting our educational mission. Items can be bought at the onsite shop or online at [www.shakespearesglobe.com/shop](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/shop)
- **Swan at the Globe** bar and restaurant is open all year round. For reservations please call 020 7928 9444. [www.loveswan.co.uk](http://www.loveswan.co.uk)
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