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PARKS & RECREATION TO LAUNCH IMAGINATION PLAYGROUND TOUR THROUGHOUT NYC BOROUGHES THIS SUMMER

Series of Pop-Up Imagination Playgrounds Designed by Architect David Rockwell will be a Teaser for the Flagship Imagination Playground Opening Late July at Burling Slip

The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation is pleased to announce an Imagination Playground tour throughout New York City's five boroughs on weekends this June and July in anticipation of the grand opening of the city's flagship Imagination Playground (www.imaginationplayground.org) in late July 2010 at Burling Slip by the South Street Seaport. All sites will be free and open to the public between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Imagination Playground is a breakthrough playspace concept conceived and designed by architect David Rockwell to encourage child-directed, unstructured free play. With a focus on loose parts, Imagination Playground offers a changing array of elements that allow children to constantly reconfigure their environment. At five sites over five different weekends, children across New York City will have a chance to play with Imagination Playground's loose parts, such as blue foam blocks, mats, wagons, fabric and crates.

"Opening later this summer at Burling Slip, Imagination Playground is a one-of-a-kind concept in playground innovation, allowing children to exercise their minds, as well as their bodies," said Adrian Benepe, Commissioner of New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. "In anticipation of its debut at the South Street Seaport site, children from throughout the five boroughs will have the opportunity to introduce themselves to the playground's signature elements. Thanks to our partnership with the Rockwell Group, Imagination Playground furthers our commitment to bring the latest in design and creative play to New York City's playgrounds."

"We are so thrilled to bring the concept of Imagination Playground to children in all areas of New York this summer," said David Rockwell, Founder and CEO of Rockwell Group. "We hope that this will make children and families across the boroughs as excited as we are about the opening of the flagship Imagination Playground at Burling Slip."

Imagination Playground Loose Parts will pop up in the following locations this summer:

Saturday June 19 & Sunday June 20: Bloomingdale Park (Staten Island)

Saturday June 26 & Sunday June 27: Playground for all Children, Pelham Bay Park (Bronx)

Saturday July 10 & Sunday July 11: Yellowstone Playground (Queens)

Saturday July 17 & Sunday July 18: Carl Schurz Park Playground (Manhattan)

Saturday July 24 & Sunday July 25: Pierrepont Playground (Brooklyn)

The Imagination Playground at Burling Slip is the first realization of David Rockwell's site-specific park concept that can be designed and conditioned for any place or community, and includes a full set of Imagination Playground loose parts and a sculpted landscape, as well as sand and water installations. Rockwell Group partnered with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation to create this flagship Imagination Playground at Burling Slip in the South Street Seaport in lower Manhattan as part of a public/private collaboration.

Rockwell Group has partnered with KaBOOM!, the leading national non-profit organization dedicated to bringing play to kids everywhere, to roll out the play value concept of Imagination Playground to communities across the country. Because of this partnership, the semi-mobile version of Imagination Playground in a Box is now available to children in a variety of locations throughout the United States.

*New York City Department of Parks & Recreation is the steward of about 29,000 acres of land — 14 percent of New York City — including more than 5,000 individual properties ranging from Coney Island Beach and Central Park to community gardens and Greenstreets. We operate more than 800 athletic fields and nearly 1,000 playgrounds, 550 tennis courts, 66 public pools, 48 recreational facilities, 17 nature centers, 13 golf courses, and 14 miles of beaches. We care for 1,200 monuments and 23 historic house museums. We look after 600,000 street trees, and two million more in parks. We are New York City's principal providers of recreational and athletic facilities and programs. We are home to free concerts, world-class sports events, and cultural festivals. **For more information about Parks, visit our website at www.nyc.gov/parks.***

Rockwell Group** is an award winning, cross-disciplinary 120-person architecture and design firm specializing in cultural, hospitality, retail, product, and set design. Based in New York, with satellite offices in Madrid and Dubai, the firm crafts a unique narrative and an immersive environment for each project. Projects include W Hotel Union Square, the JetBlue terminal at JFK International Airport, Children's Hospital at Montefiore, Nobu restaurants worldwide, set designs for the 2009 and 2010 Academy Awards ceremony and Broadway's "Hairspray," and Walt Disney Family Museum. Mr. Rockwell received the 2009 Pratt Legends Award and the 2008 National Design Award for Interior Design from Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt. **For more information, please visit www.rockwellgroup.com.

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