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CONTACT:

Stan Goldin

Whimsic Alley

310-453-2370

FAX: 310-453-2374

[press@whimsicalley.com](mailto:press@whimsicalley.com)

[www.whimsicalley.com](http://www.whimsicalley.com) (photos available for download)

## **Harry Potter Fans Taking the Knight Bus to Goblet Screening**

**SANTA MONICA, CA 11/15/05** A handful of die hard Harry Potter fans will experience the ultimate screening party for this week's release of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire. Whimsic Alley, the Southern California shop and attraction that has been the nation's premier destination for Harry Potter fans since opening a year ago, is taking Potter-fanatics to the ultimate Goblet of Fire screening party.

The Thursday evening party is for adults only, and Potter-related costumes are a requirement. Following a pre-screening party, guests will be transported to the Mann Criterion theater on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Promenade via a London double decker bus—enlisted for the evening as the Knight Bus—for the 12:01 a.m. showing of the fourth film in the Harry Potter series. Following the screening guests will be transported back to Whimsic Alley in the same manner.

“It should be quite a sight,” said Stan Goldin, owner of Whimsic Alley. “60 costumed witches and wizards on a double decker bus.” He pointed out, however, that the people attending are hard core Harry Potter fans—people who are determined to see the movie the first minute after it opens.

He should know. He has been catering to thousands of Potter fans for the past six years—first via a website---whimsicalley.com (formerly hpwizardstore.com)—and now through the Santa Monica facility as well. Since Whimsic Alley opened its doors last October, thousands of Harry Potter loyalists all over the world have made a pilgrimage to its Southern California location.

Tourists from all over the country have stated that going to Whimsic Alley was their principal reason for visiting Southern California this year. One group of tourists told store personnel that in planning activities to fill their limited vacation time, they selected Whimsic Alley over Disneyland.

Whimsic Alley is reminiscent of a mystical London street where student and professional wizards converge to procure their magical wares. One of its shops—Phoenix Wands—offers twenty styles of handcrafted wooden wands. Other shops offer such things as wizard clothing, crystal balls, quill pens, potion bottles, caged owls and phoenixes,

swords, staffs, magical candies and more. The centerpiece is HP Wizard Store, boasting the largest selection of licensed Harry Potter products in the world.

“We wanted to create a place like no other in the world, one that immerses visitors into the wizard world once they enter our door.” said Goldin. To achieve his vision, he hired Paul-Felix Montez, a Hollywood visual set designer, to develop the interior. What Goldin and Montez have built in Whimsic Alley is more like a theme park than a shop.

Whimsic Alley is located at 2717½ Wilshire Blvd. in Santa Monica, California.