Poppins musical gets flying start

The stage adaptation of children's film Mary Poppins has had its opening night in London's West End.

Sir Cameron Mackintosh's lavish production, which has cost £9m to bring to the stage, was given a 10-minute standing ovation. Lead actress Laura Michelle Kelly soared over the heads of the audience holding the nanny's trademark umbrella. Technical hitches had prevented Mary Poppins' flight into the auditorium during preview performances. A number of celebrities turned out for the musical's premiere, including actress Barbara Windsor, comic Graham Norton and Sir Richard Attenborough.

The show's director Richard Eyre issued a warning earlier in the week that the show was unsuitable for children under seven, while under-threes are barred. Mary Poppins was originally created by author Pamela Travers, who is said to have cried when she saw Disney's 1964 film starring Julie Andrews. Travers had intended the story to be a lot darker than the perennial family favourite. Theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh has said he hopes the musical is a blend of the sweet-natured film and the original book.