

Norfolk & Norwich Festival 2021

Brochure 1: Festival Outside the Box

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Welcome

After the last year it's hard to find the right words to welcome you to this year's Festival. I am excited because we have a great Festival to share with you, but I also find myself reflecting on what a challenging year it has been, and I must acknowledge that the future is still somewhat uncertain. I'm delighted you've picked up our newspaper and hope that like me, you are looking forward to the Festival. At the heart of every festival is a chance for a community to come together to share unique experiences and this year – more than ever – it feels like our Festival will be the right event at the right time. I'd like to thank all of our team, who have worked so hard to create an inspiring festival. Thanks too to our programme partners. The Festival would not be possible without our many supporters – from Arts Council England and Norwich City Council, right through to every sponsor and individual donor. Mostly, I want to reach out to you (metaphorically of course) to offer my hand in friendship and to guide you safely through our Festival.

Daniel Brine Artistic Director and Chief Executive

This year's Festival is subject to change How could it not be?

We're proud of this year's Festival. You'll find a rich programme of music and a whole range of events with a focus on outdoor arts, performance installations and experiences. We've moved the opening day of the Festival from Friday 14 to Monday 17 May. We've chosen this because it is the first day the Government's Road Map allows for indoor and outdoor performance and the opening of museums and galleries. We all know that there is potential for the road to take a turn between now and then and we may have to change our plans too. We're working hard to make all events safe for artists and audiences. Appropriate social distancing will be in place, we'll pay special attention to cleaning and sanitising, and our team of volunteers will be specially trained to look after our audiences. If our plans change, we'll let you know as soon as we can. Our fleet-of-foot approach means we will publish a series of newspapers with up-to-date news. This newspaper has as much detail as possible about all of our performances and talks and our next edition will be out just before the Festival. And we'll make good use of e-newsletters, social media and our website as up-to-date sources of information. No matter what happens some parts of the Festival will take place come what may. We can mail you one of our specially commissioned Experience Packs to unpack at home in your own time, you may like to walk through the City and discover our outdoor installations, or there are performances to take part in online. One of the bigger changes this year is that we are offering all performances on a Pay What You Want basis including a free option. Our aim is to remove barriers to taking part and we hope the Festival is open and welcoming for everyone. We are a Charity, so if you are able to pay for your ticket or make a donation, then your contribution is welcome. As always it's a

pleasure to be working with partners from across Norfolk. The City of Literature Weekend, which we present in partnership with the National Centre for Writing, will be back with a focus on actions and projects. We're also delighted to showcase Future and Form, a rich programme celebrating 50 years of Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia. The visual arts are well represented with great exhibitions across Norfolk. We're looking forward to being back at Festival Gardens (that's our cheeky rename of Chapelfield Gardens). The Garden Party will return and the Festival will conclude with Garden Sessions, a new collaboration with Wild Paths. Restrictions on gathering also means there will be no big opening spectacle. In recent years, audiences have told us how much they have enjoyed gathering on the streets for our launch events and we're planning to be back bigger and better in 2022, when we celebrate our 250th anniversary. We've planned the Festival despite ever-changing limitations around access to venues, gathering of people and travel. We have had to cancel or postpone a number of projects because artists have not been able to rehearse, venues have not been open or we have not been able to work in schools. All going well, we'll present some of these events later in the year. There are less events than previous years and this is a result of us having to cut our cloth to fit our resources. However, our ambition is no less and our pleasure in sharing great experiences with the people of Norfolk and Norwich remains at our heart. All we need for a memorable festival is you. We look forward to you joining us.

Plugged in Festival

Our Head of Communications and Development Darren Cross goes all techy and explores the role of digital work in this year's Festival.

In mid-60s music, Robert Moog's eponymous synthesizer opened up an enduring technology versus tradition debate. With cheaper technology and prevailing social conditions, by the mid-80s, the 'synth' had been widely adopted and was well on the road to an almost ubiquitous presence in popular music. With the advent of the internet, the smart phone and the pervasiveness of digital gaming, theatre-makers rightly found new spaces to explore. Just like Moog's synthesizer, digital theatre has, at times, struggled for acceptance, or in other quarters perceived as an interesting diversion. Arguably, through Covid-19, we have all been largely living inside our favourite devices. Those prevailing social conditions once again at play have opened us up to a new acceptance of theatre and technology. Pre-pandemic, the Festival co-commissioned Javaad Alipoor's Rich Kids – a stage and social media fusion about wealth and consumption in Iran. As the world adapted to COVID times, Alipoor revisited the piece to remake it solely online, aiming to "bring genuine interaction between the digital and the theatrical". What culminates is a fascinating and disturbing portrait of the hyper-connected world we now inhabit. 600 Highwaymen's new work, A Thousand Ways (Part One): A Telephone Call was born of the duo's desire to create a piece of participatory theatre that obeyed the rules around social distancing. An interactive performance, connecting you to an automated voice prompts an experience that, even in times of social isolation, brings you closer to a stranger. Blast Theory's Rider Spoke predates Covid-19 by more than a decade, but the coming together of technology, gaming and solo cycling results in an experience that feels made for today. In it participants discover

how new technologies can create exciting new social spaces where the real and fictional world intertwine and where their contribution adds to a rich mapping of the city. Artists continue to explore how digital tools can help us experience the theatre of the world in new ways. Additional and complimentary, digital is aiding theatre in its search for a new stage and new audiences. This year three of our projects invite contributions from the public. You can put your hand up to take part in Robot Selfie, Arrivals + Departures, & Don't Touch Duckie! by connecting with the artists and watch your contribution emerge in their work. Details of how to take part are on our website. The changing relationship between art forms and technology is a strong thread running through this year's literature programme. Not only do we welcome back City of Literature with a predominantly online programme, we are also delighted to include Future and Form, the UEA's reflection on 50 years of creative writing.

Unpack an Experience

Rachael Putland, Communications and Development Assistant says it's time to enjoy some alone time and get back to nature, by trying art in a new way with one of our newly commissioned Experience Packs.

We believe that everyone should be able to access green spaces. Sometimes, when we think about areas of nature, it can be easy to slip into grand ideas of sweeping forests and expansive wildlife reserves, despite the majority of us being unlikely to have either of these in our back gardens. So, alongside trying to figure out what art is in the 'new normal' (a phrase I'm sure none of us particularly want to hear again), many artists have been investigating our connection with the space around us. How can we boost wellbeing through nature, and how can we put people back at the centre of performance, after a year in which audiences really felt the distance? With this in mind, we commissioned a group of artists to create Experience Packs – kits designed to be a reflective and personal experience, providing ideas to spice up the now well-trodden walk around the block and put yourself and your environment at the centre. Fancy a thoughtful walk in the rain, a relaxed ramble around the countryside or even a re-imagined journey to your own garden? We've got just the thing! These packs are limited edition artworks and personal experiences designed with physical distancing in mind – whether you see a mountain range or a street with overgrown hedgerows out of your window, we hope these packs give you some inspiration to get out and explore again.

Experience Packs

Experience the world in a new light with these newly commissioned packs. You order, we'll post them to you to complete in your own time. Order online at nffestival.org.uk

Andy Field & Beckie Darlington

A Rain Walk

A walk in the rain accompanied by recorded voices of children from across the UK and Ireland. With their guidance the rainfall will become your own private theatre. Pay What You Want

Sheila Ghelani

Rambles with Nature Kit

A kit to help you ramble with nature! Each kit comes carefully presented in a pouch and contains six tools with instructions that encourage attentiveness to nature. Tickets Pay What You Want

Noëmi Lakmaier

Going Somewhere

With illustrations by Margaret Sturton. An exercise in slowness and drawing in space that takes participants on a purposeful 1,000 metre stroll, while leaving a trace. Tickets Pay What You Want

Frozen Light

Something for your Shelter

An outdoor sensory experience designed for audiences with profound and multiple learning disabilities and their families. Tickets Pay What You Want.

The Bandwagon – sharing Festival Spirit with our Community

In a new initiative, we bring some special work to communities on the back of a truck! Rachael Putland tells us more...

We're excited to announce our very own Festival Band Wagon will be doing a grand tour of Norwich! From residential homes and community squares to schools and hospitals, The Band Wagon will roll up and bring live acts and the Festival spirit direct to the hearts of communities, especially to those who may not be able to travel to venues and those hit hardest by Covid-19.

It has been difficult to get out and about this year for many, even more so than usual, and we really want to make sure as many people as possible get to experience live performance. Watching online has so many positives, but can sometimes miss that powerful connection between audience and artist that brings people together and creates such a sense of belonging.

The Band Wagon is part of our commitment to ensuring lots of people get to access and experience the Festival, and is completely designed around physical distancing. So, as Medieval actors would board their pageant wagon and voyage across the country to bring stories to audiences, so too shall we ready a troupe of lively performers to spread the Festival spirit across Norwich.

We don't want to give too much away just yet, but there will be something for everyone, from contemporary dance to classical music. If The Band Wagon visits you make sure to look out for some surprises!

Keep an eye on our social media for

The Band Wagon's exploits!

Joy of the Outdoors

Norfolk & Norwich Festival is a member of 'In Situ', a network of arts organisations brought together to promote, develop and tour exceptional outdoor arts in Europe. Our Head of Production & Programme Mark Denbigh and the other 'In Situ' partners helped create an online course Create in Public Space. Robbie Maloney, Communications and Development Assistant took the course – and he thinks you should too.

My love affair with outdoor arts has been a bit like that first hit of Tabasco: sudden and fiery, with a sprinkle of je ne sais quoi (MSG) that leaves you exhausted but exhilarated.

If you've ever seen one of the Festival's large-scale launches, you'll know that outdoor performance has the power to transform a space, or transport an audience. Very few art forms are capable of turning a city centre into a fantasy playground for duelling giants, or reimagining an empty car park as a charred, post-apocalyptic hellscape of fire and smoke. Outdoor arts can.

Through outdoor arts, I've stormed a dark windswept seafront with French anarchist acrobats, and been one of ten thousand voices falling silent, mesmerised as a single tightrope walker steps out onto a high wire. Public arts is a phenomena of collective imagination, mixing the fantastical with the familiar.

Not only is it transformative, good outdoor art is accessible. Taken out of the usual theatres and performance spaces, with their hundreds of years of tradition and etiquette, it lives in familiar surroundings that soften our ideas of art as something as 'not for me': as intimidating, or 'over there'. It's a way of exploring your city or area and experiencing something with your neighbours, often for free.

This year, understandably, we aren't having a huge outdoor spectacle, however our work with IN SITU continues, and we are delighted to welcome Matt Adams of Blast Theory, Seth Honour of Kaleider, and 600 Highwaymen, all of whom are Associate Artists of IN SITU for (Un)Common Spaces, our new four-year programme funded by Creative Europe.

While a glug of hot sauce may be a fleeting sensation, great outdoor art is set to leave you with an experience that can linger a lifetime.

Want to learn more about outdoor art? Create in Public Space is a new MOOC (Massive Online Open Course) from

Fai-Ar. This free, online whistle stop course provides a broad overview of the outdoor art world over four weeks, and is suitable for those thinking of getting into the industry, artists and makers looking to develop their own creative practice, or for those keen to find out what goes on behind the scenes. Registration opens mid-April at createinpublicspace.com

First Out – Last Back

We are lucky to have snagged south London club legends Duckie to open our Festival with a unique show just for us! Here's Duckie Promoter Simon Casson reflecting on the strange year they've just had

Until lockdown, Duckie had been the longest running cult performance nightclub in the UK – functioning enduringly every Saturday night for 25 never-ending years at the Royal Vauxhall Tavern in London. Like everything else, it was interrupted with a thunderbolt last March and it looks like it won't be back in action until July this year at the earliest. Nightclubs – these heady showgrounds where we press the flesh, watch the turns and hit the dancefloor – were the first out and will be the last back. They are peerless provocative places, dangerously intimate, now more than ever.

All our gang have really missed this hedonistic cornerstone in our weekly calendar. As we are all queer we don't have to do all that boring family stuff that takes up most people's time. So we were well pleased to get the call from the Festival's Daniel Brine asking us to put on a socially distanced post-lockdown version of our funny, draggy, arty cabaret on the very first day it becomes legal. It will be strange to be in a room with lots of other post-pandemic punters, but we are really looking forward to it.

In this weird year, Duckie have experimented with a bunch of ideas to plug the gap while remaining safe and socially distanced – doorstep cabaret, back garden shows, open top bus trips, community zines, global Zoom performance parties. We have had some fun inventing these new formats, but I tell you, nothing beats being in a real room with real people and sharing a sherbet together.

On the first day the pubs are open indoors, Duckie are coming to Norwich with a playful, tentative, gentle little do. Only 150 people in a 500 capacity venue, socially distanced dancing in bubbles, broadcast live on Zoom, with those that can't make it being encouraged to send their mugshot in to be immortalised in cardboard and make up the numbers.

What will happen on the night? There is only one way to find out. Get on your glad rags and come in person, or watch on Zoom and come as a cardboard stiff. Welcome to the new normal.

Simon Casson - Promoter, Duckie

For more info on Duckie go to duckie.co.uk

Catch Don't Touch Duckie! A Socially Distanced Launch for Norfolk & Norwich Festival 2021 on the first night of the Festival.

Find out more at nnfestival.org.uk

Celebrating 250 Years

We can't wait to celebrate 250 years of the Festival with you next year. To mark the occasion, we're developing some special projects that focus on work with communities – and for Re/Collect 250 we need you! With a long and rich history of concerts, performances and projects, the memories of Festivalgoers paint a rich picture of Norfolk community, music, love, drama, and everything in between. Re/Collect 250 is a new student-led oral history project aiming to uncover and document some of these more recent artistic tales, but we need your help to do so.

We're looking for your stories. Maybe you attended an early Festival concert that kicked off your love for a composer, or maybe your child's first live show was at the Garden Party. Do you have a cracking story about a night at the Adnams Spiegeltent, or are you an annual attendee at one of our legendary tea dances? If you've participated in a schools projects, contributed to one of our community pieces, or just have something to say about the Festival, we want to hear from you.

Across May's Festival, University of East Anglia students and award-winning sound designer Helen Atkinson will be conducting hundreds of virtual and in-person interviews with audience members to help paint this picture. To register your interest, email recollect250@nnfestival.org.uk. There will even be a little treat for the first hundred interviewees!

Re/Collect 250 is one of several projects shaping up as we look towards our 250th anniversary in 2022. The Common Ground Leaders are busy forming their ambitious vision for the future of heritage, which they will set out at a special Festival event in May. Keep up to date with all our Festival 250 projects, including Common Ground and 'Lost & Found Films of Norfolk', at nnfestival.org.uk/about-us/festival-at-250.

City of Literature – An Introduction

Each year we present a veritable feast of literary delights in collaboration with National Centre for Writing. Their Programme Director Peggy Hughes shares the creative process and what to expect.

‘Go and open the door. Maybe outside there’s a tree, or a wood, a garden, or a magic city.’

To open a door, as Miroslav Holub reminds us in his celebrated poem ‘The Door’, is to allow other worlds in – as well as gardens, trees and woods. To imagine that something else and some other place – ‘a magic city’ – is possible. After the 2020 we’ve collectively weathered, the National Centre for Writing wanted to programme a City of Literature strand that embraces the magic of Norfolk & Norwich Festival itself; nurturing the forests of the unknown, the unusual and the unexpected.

While doors were closed we spent our time commissioning new work that we hope will surprise and intrigue you. At a time when creative livelihoods have been imperilled and when risks have been very near and real (but often under an invisible cloak), it felt vital to conjure a magic city on the horizon. It is, after all, as Rebecca Solnit says in her book, *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*, ‘the job of artists to open doors and invite in prophecies, the unknown, the unfamiliar.’

This year, we bring you seven wonderful experiments in writing.

Writer and NCW Associate Artist Jay Bernard and sound artist Mwen present ‘Tombland’, a haunting digital soundscape which transports you from your home to ours, at the beautiful Dragon Hall.

Each year we present a veritable feast of literary delights in collaboration with National Centre for Writing. Their Programme Director Peggy Hughes shares the creative process and what to expect.

City of Literature is a Norfolk & Norwich Festival and National Centre for Writing Presentation, programmed by National Centre for Writing.

Writers Rowan Hisayo Buchanan and Jessica J. Lee invite us to look closely at the nature around us – to peer at tiny mosses beneath the hedgerow and search forests for crown shyness in **Looking Large and Small**.

Theatre maker Jack McNamara and composer/ violinist Angharad Davies will deliver **The Group**, a three-part play told live via WhatsApp.

Four writers reflect on the atmospheric pressure of the year they've just had in **Weather with You**.

Future & Form marks an ambitious collaboration with UEA in celebration of the 50th anniversary of their world-renowned Creative Writing programme. UEA graduate and prize-winning novelist Ayòbámi Adébáyò asks questions of the future of writing, in a daring commission entitled **Provenance**.

Our annual **Harriet Martineau Lecture** will be delivered by critic and editor Ellah P. Wakatama, with a new visual score by filmmaker and poet Julian Knox.

And if, as we hope, this suite of work drives you back to the books of these and other writers, then we hope you'll be able to join us for a special festival chapter of The Book Hive's **Page Against the Machine** at Plantation Gardens.

We're proud to present this weekend of experiments, original commissions, and interactive experiences, and invite you to encounter these prophecies with us and each other.

Peggy Hughes - Programme Director, National Centre for Writing

Future and Form – A Personal Reflection

Future and Form is a remarkable showcase from University of East Anglia celebrating 50 years of Creative Writing, Director of Creative Writing Professor Henry Sutton explores what inspired him.

The question was simple enough: what will literary writing look like in 50 years' time? Then it got more complicated, and exciting.

Poetry, prose, scriptwriting – what shape, what form will it take? The original question stemmed from the fact that UEA's world-renowned creative writing programme, which I'm currently privileged to lead, is 50 years old this academic year. As a fiction writer myself, I didn't want to look back at all we'd achieved, but to look forward, to the next 50 years.

Part of my thinking was that books are still produced, and that, to be honest, they don't even look all that different from how they did half a century ago. How could this be, especially as the technological, digital world was unrecognisable? People consume and engage with art, culture and entertainment in wildly different and innovative ways. Was writing, and for that matter were writers, somehow out of the loop? Were stories, poems, scripts, really still operating first and foremost on the page, or Kindle screen?

Yes and no. As ever, there are always pioneers, and in this area there are numerous digitally-minded writers (and publishers) happy to explore new possibilities. However, much of the work has tended to fall either on adaptation or embellishment. With Future and Form, a project now involving over 400 people, and many of the region's most important cultural organisations, we wanted to explore collaborative literary digital creativity. We set out to push the interface between contemporary writing and technology. We wanted to engage new and inclusive audiences

in strikingly new ways, and question the very concepts of both author and reader. The six resulting multi-modal works, premiering at Norfolk & Norwich Festival, are prototypes, or possibilities.

Our six writers – Ayòbámi Adébáyò, Mona Arshi, Tash Aw, Imogen Hermes Gowar, Mitch Johnson and James McDermott, working with creative technology partners Guildhall Live Events and Mutiny, and the various cultural organisations – have all moved way beyond the page. While the virtual and physical experiences are rooted in words, the space they shape and occupy is anything but flat, two-dimensional. This work could not have been possible five years ago, let alone 50 years ago. Enjoy.

Professor Henry Sutton - Director of Creative Writing, UEA

Find out more about Future and Form at futureandform.net

Festival People

It takes many hands to deliver our Festival. Journalist Alice Saville has been learning a bit more about some of the miraculous, generous and creative people who make it happen.

Lexine Lee - Festival volunteer

How did you first hear about Norfolk and Norwich Festival, and what made you want to get involved?

I'm currently a third year student at University of East Anglia. Back in Fresher's Week, someone in my flat had left a flyer about volunteering for the Festival on the dining table. I was quite reluctant at first. I don't know why, because signing up was one of the best decisions I made that year. It was the first time I really felt I was part of the Norwich community; I met people from all walks of life, and discovered cool new places to go to.

What do volunteers do at the Festival?

On the sign-up form, there's this huge list of 20 or 30 jobs that you can express an interest in, from admin to flyering to ushering to outreach. So you could be doing anything from helping manage an event, to going into primary schools, to running errands all round the city. They always look after you, making sure you're hydrated, rested and well fed, and there's a really cool after party with silly awards.

What's your warmest memory from previous editions of NNF?

The one that's popping into my mind now is Wild Longings by Curious (2019), an immersive outdoor performance in the Plantation Gardens - I'd never been there, so it was like discovering a beautiful secret garden in the city centre. I helped prepare canapés with edible flowers on them for the audience,

which is just not something I thought I would be involved in when I volunteered, but that was very fun.

What are you most looking forward to about this year's Festival?

I spent most of lockdown living by myself. So I'm yearning for social contact, in that kind of really artistic and creative environment - to see those familiar faces round town, and to feel like a part of something big again.

Sascha Goslin - Creative Individuals, Norfolk Artist

How are you involved in this year's festival?

I'm involved because I was awarded a commission as part of the Creative Individuals Norfolk project for Norfolk Black and POC Creatives Network, which is a supportive space for performers, visual artists, designers, everybody!

Why is the network needed? What barriers are there for Black and POC artists locally?

One of the barriers is being able to make connections with venues, which can be quite intimidating, especially for new artists. Now, I'm confident enough to call up a venue five or six times until they eventually answer me, but I wasn't when I first started out! Another barrier is representation; sometimes artists don't see any opportunity for them because they don't see anyone who looks like them getting programmed. So we want to create more opportunities for them and raise awareness of their work.

How did you get involved in the world of performing arts?

I went to university intending to become a lawyer, but just before I graduated I worked at Sea Change Festival in Devon and it changed everything; just seeing the atmosphere and its impact on people. I like spreadsheets. I like accounts. So being a producer came naturally to me. But now I'm starting to feel a bit more

confident in my own creativity - I'm training in clowning, and starting to think about performing myself.

What are you most looking forward to about this year's Festival?

This year the Festival is Pay What You Want, and I think that's a really wonderful, brave decision. It's really important that people can access art, whether or not they can afford to pay; it opens doors to people. And if people do have disposable income, who knows, maybe they'll pay more! I really feel that the arts make a massive difference to people's lives. It may be temporary, and it may feel frivolous, but I feel like escapism and enjoyment are really necessary.

Andy Wood - CEO of Adnams, Festival Partner

Festival Partner

What are you most looking forward to about this year's festival?

I'm really looking forward to being able to go out and celebrate. And with this year's Norfolk & Norwich Festival coming so close to some restrictions easing, it feels like the first big, big day out for over a year really. It's a wonderful opportunity for the Festival organisers to showcase what they've been doing. And for businesses like ours. It's wonderful to get alongside them and support them.

What's your warmest memory from previous editions of NNF?

I've really enjoyed going to evening sessions in the Spiegel tent. We took one long-standing customer who'd never been to the Festival before to an avant garde circus performance, and he told me it was the best corporate hospitality he ever had. There's nothing wrong with going to the football or playing golf, but NNF offers things that are so different.

Has the pandemic changed your relationship with Norwich communities?

When the pandemic first hit, we worked with the University of East Anglia and turned our distillery over to making ethanol, which helped make over a million applications of hand sanitizer for local hospitals. We've been backing local pubs that are providing services like Meals on Wheels for those who are shielding. And we've also been doing random acts of kindness, delivering our products to hospitals, care workers and fire stations so that staff can have a drink on us when they finish their shifts.

What does the future hold for Adnams and the Festival?

Next year, NNF is 250 years old and Adnams is 150 years old. So hopefully, we can be able to get together and have some sort of birthday party. We've been delighted to be partners of the Festival for what's going on for a decade now. We love supporting the arts, and we want to see it go from strength to strength.

Jennie Langeskov - Festival Bridge Education Programme Manager

How are you involved in NNF?

I work for Festival Bridge. We have a year round programme of activity working with children and young people in schools and with cultural organisations. We work on the Festival's creative learning strand, which takes artists from the Festival programme and develops some really deep relationships with schools across Norfolk and beyond.

How did you support children and young people through lockdown?

One of the things that we heard is that children found it really difficult to be creative at home. So we developed a creativity at home pack, which encourages kids to be playful, have a laugh and enjoy creating stuff with your family. That's been one of the things that's been really clear about lockdown, that it's crucial that young people have opportunities to enjoy themselves and be creative.

What's your warmest memory from previous editions of NNF?

There's a real lovely vibe about the annual Garden Party; things just happen around you in a really lovely way. I remember talking to one young person there who told me about a particular company he liked. He said "I've seen them in Great Yarmouth and I've seen them in Peterborough but they were much better here." I thought it was wonderful not only that a child of seven had seen so much outdoor theatre, but that he was so comfortable telling a stranger his opinions about it.

What are you most looking forward to about this year's Festival?

You can always tell when the festival's on in the city, it just feels different. I think the kind of art that the festival programmes has the ability to be so magical, and it also has the ability to be crazy. Like Reverse (2019) where you walked backwards all through town. That's really stuck in my brain because it's such a good metaphor for how art changes perspectives and how you look at stuff.

The Festival

Programme Listings

Our Festival listings are short and sweet – but everything you need, from access details and Covid-19 safety information, to repertoires and trailers, is available online.

The safety of our artists and audiences is our priority. All of our events this year are socially distanced and some will have staggered entry times. Some of our work will be online, and there are more digital details on the website.

This year's Festival is Pay What You Want. You'll be given a choice of several price options, including free. You must pre-book for all ticketed events so that we can manage numbers safely.

Enjoy!

Don't Touch Duckie

A Socially Distanced Launch for Norfolk & Norwich Festival 2021

Monday 17 May, 7.30pm St Andrew's Hall

On the first legal day for live performance, south London cabaret münters Duckie present a drag showbiz speakeasy for a few hundred real people and a few hundred cardboard stiffs. Hosted by Bourgeois & Maurice with spectacular performance bulletins by Thick & Tight, Oozing Gloop and Legs '67. Pay What You Want.

A Norfolk & Norwich Festival Commission. Sponsored by PWC

Emergency Exit Arts, Robert Montgomery & Deanna Rodger Recovery Poems

Monday 17–Sunday 23 May, Across Norfolk

An inspiring light poem visits beautiful spaces across Norfolk commemorating loss and celebrating hope for the future. Free

A partnership project between Without Walls, Emergency Exit Arts, 101 Outdoor Arts, Robert Montgomery, Deanna Rodger, Thatcham Town Council.

Yara + Davina

Arrivals + Departures

Monday 17–Sunday 30 May, Throughout the day, The Forum

Arrivals + Departures is an interactive installation about birth, death and the journey in between. Check online for accompanying events including a birth cafe and death cafe. Free.

Supported by Without Walls and commissioned by Freedom Festival Arts Trust and Norfolk & Norwich Festival. R&D investment from Without Walls Blueprint. Co-commissioned and produced by Artsadmin with support from Create to Connect Create to Impact through the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. Publicly funded through Arts Council England. Development supported by the 'In Situ' platform in the frame of ACT project co-funded through the Creative Europe programme of the European Union, Without Walls Blueprint programme and a Seedbed Residency at 101 Outdoor Arts.

Kaleider

Robot Selfie

Monday 17–Sunday 23 May, Norwich City Centre

We invite you to be drawn by Kaleider's wall drawing robot. Wherever you are, submit your selfie and watch as the massive mural emerges. Free.

Kaleider is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and supported by Exeter City Council. R&D investment through Without Walls Blueprint. Robot Selfie is supported by Without Walls and commissioned by Brighton Festival and Norfolk & Norwich Festival. An 'In Situ' Associate Artist.

600 Highwaymen

A Thousand Ways (Part One): A Phone Call

Presented in Partnership with In Between Time UK Premiere
Monday 17–Saturday 22 May, various times, Over the phone

With just two people and a telephone a new type of theatre emerges - one in which the most intimate assembly can be profoundly radical. Pay What You Want.

An 'In Situ' Associate Artist.

Britten Sinfonia Presents

Surround Sound: Norwich Playlist

Tuesday 18 May, 6.30pm & 9pm, Norwich Cathedral

A unique immersive multi-stage music experience with Britten Sinfonia, Norwich Cathedral Choir and Abel Selaocoe. Pay What You Want.

Produced by Britten Sinfonia

Britten Sinfonia is 'Here For Culture' thanks to the Government's Culture Recovery Fund.

Luke Styles and Jessica Walker

The People's Cabaret

Tuesday 18 May, 7.30pm Diss Corn Hall, Wednesday 19 May, 7.30pm Sheringham Little Theatre

Original protest songs from the Weimar cabaret years, along with a brand new cycle of songs about discrimination, social inequality, freedom of expression, and the rise of fake news. Pay What You Want

Sarathy Korwar

Thursday 20 May, 6pm, St Andrew's Hall

Fusing traditional Indian folk music and contemporary jazz and electronics, Sarathy Korwar is an original and compelling voice in the UK jazz scene. Pay What You Want.

Abel Selaocoe

Wednesday 19 May, 6pm St Andrew's Hall

Combining virtuosic cello performance with improvisation, singing and body percussion, Selaocoe highlights the links between Western and non-Western musical traditions. Pay What You Want.

Hatis Noit

Thursday 20 May, 9pm, St Andrew's Hall

Japanese vocal performer drawing inspiration from Gagaku and operatic styles, Bulgarian and Gregorian chanting, to avant garde and pop. Pay What You Want.

Nabihah Iqbal

Wednesday 19 May, 9pm, St Andrew's Hall

'...airy, propulsive percussion, languid curls of grungy guitar, 1980s-sheen synths and hazy vocals'. 'Guardian' on Ninja Tune artist Nabihah Iqbal. Pay What You Want.

Creative Individuals Norfolk

Making in A Time of Mayhem

Thursday 20 May, 5pm, Digital

Last year, we invited six Norfolk arts practitioners to develop projects that would benefit local communities. Find out how the projects went. Pay What You Want

Garden Party

Saturday 22 & Sunday 23 May, 11am–5pm, Festival Gardens, Chapelfield and Outside The Forum

Two days of beautiful, magical outdoor arts in the park. Featuring circus, dance, theatre and more. Fun for all the family.

Free, but you must pre-book

Norfolk & Norwich Festival is a partner in Without Walls, working with festival and artists and bringing fantastic outdoor arts to people in towns and cities across the UK. See withoutwalls.com for full details. Events at the garden Party are commissioned by Norfolk & Norwich Festival and a number of partners.

World Premiere Requardt & Rosenberg

Future Cargo

Thursday 20 May, 6pm & 8pm, Festival Gardens, Chapelfield

A sci-fi dance show performed in a 40-foot haulage truck, combining a delicate intimate experience within a large-scale dance spectacle. Pay What You Want.

Produced by The Place. Supported by Without Walls and commissioned by Norfolk & Norwich Festival, Stockton International Riverside Festival, Freedom Festival Arts Trust and Out There International Festival of Circus & Street Arts. Co-commissioned by The Place, Greenwich+Docklands International Festival and DanceEast via Stomping Ground, Mayflower400, Milton Keynes International Festival and Pavilion Dance South West. Sponsored by Chadwicks

The Javaad Alipoor Company

Rich Kids: A History of Shopping Malls in Tehran

Thursday 20 & Friday 21 May, 7.30pm, Digital

A darkly comedic virtual experience on YouTube and Instagram about entitlement, consumption, and digital technology. Pay What You Want.

‘Home’ In association with Traverse Theatre Company. Co-commissioned by Diverse Actions, Theatre in the Mill, Norfolk & Norwich Festival, Battersea Arts Centre and Bush Theatre
Digital version commissioned by Battersea Arts Centre and Norfolk & Norwich Festival.

Creative Norfolk

Why Biennials?

Monday 24 May, 7.30pm, Digital

Reflect collectively on the practice and potential of a contemporary art programme across Norfolk. Free.

Creative Norfolk

Hunt and Darton

The Mum Show

Saturday 22 May, 4pm, Future Radio

An exploration into the triumphs and transformations of motherhood, centring on the lived experience of a group of mums collaborating to create a podcast. Free.

Creative Norfolk

Genevieve Rudd, In Partnership with Original Projects

Yarmouth Springs Eternal Conference

Saturday 22 May, throughout the day

Primeyarc, Market Gates Shopping Centre, Great Yarmouth

The Yarmouth Springs Eternal conference will explore the natural world through the arts. It will feature presentations and a Q&A from the featured exhibition artists, while establishing a network of artists working with nature. Free, but you must pre-book.

I Fagiolini

Re-Wilding the Waste Land

Monday 24 May, 8pm Cathedral of St John the Baptist

A concert inspired by T S Eliot's epic poem 'The Waste Land'. Featuring new commissions from composers Ben Rowarth, Joanna Marsh and Shruthi Rajasekar. Pay What You Want.

With kind thanks to Director's Circle Supporter Lynn Biggs

Lotte Betts-Dean & Joseph Havlat

From Norfolk to Newfoundland: Folk Songs of the World

Tuesday 25 May, 1pm, St Andrew's Hall

An entertaining and intimate journey through the world of folk song, including world premiere arrangements from Josephine Stephenson and Isabella Gellis. Pay What You Want.

Creative Norfolk

World Premiere

Holding Hands / Article Xi Double Bill

Tuesday 25 May, 8pm, The Garage, Norwich

A double-bill of two large jazz ensembles featuring some of the most exciting improvisers from around the UK. Pay What You Want.

Manchester Collective and Mahan Esfahani

Friday 21 May, 8pm, St Andrew's Hall

Manchester Collective, a young dynamic ensemble taking the UK music scene by storm, and harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani present a programme of thrilling work by Bach, Laurence Osborn, Gorecki and Horowitz. Pay What You Want.

Samson Tsoy

Wednesday 26 May, 1pm, St Andrew's Hall

Praised for the originality and intense drama of his interpretations, pianist Samson Tsoy will perform Bach's Partita No. 2 and Brahms Variations on a theme by Handel. Pay What You Want.

Tim Spooner with Matthew Robins

Weak Transmission

Wednesday 26–Saturday 29 May, throughout the day

The Guildhall Cells, Norwich

Come alone or bring your family to explore the historic prison cells below Norwich Guildhall, where strange electric animal aliens have moved in, and are trying to get out. Pay What You Want. A Norfolk & Norwich Festival Commission.

Blast Theory

Rider Spoke

Thursday 27–Saturday 29 May, throughout the day

Meet at Festival Gardens, Chapelfield

Cycle through the streets, guided by a smartphone app searching for the perfect place to hide a secret. Ride on and the voices of strangers will draw you to new and unknown places. Pay What You Want.

Blast Theory are Norfolk & Norwich Festival's Associate Artist at 'In Situ'. Bring your own bike or borrow one from our event partner Beryl Bikes.

Garden Sessions

In Collaboration with Wild Paths

Saturday 29 & Sunday 30 May, 1–5pm,

Festival Gardens, Chapelfield

We're teaming up with Wild Paths to welcome live music back to the Gardens in true Festival style. Two days of park-based pleasure featuring headliners Moses Boyd and Poppy Ajudha. Pay What You Want. Sponsored by FX Home

Ray Lee

Ring Out

Wednesday 26–Friday 28 May, throughout the day

Festival Gardens, Chapelfield

Industrial towers hold suspended and swinging bell-like speaker cones that soar up over the heads of the audience in this outdoor sound spectacle. Free, but you must pre-book.

Sponsored by Lovewell Blake

Compline by Candlelight

Friday 28 May, 9pm Norwich Cathedral

The Girl Choristers, Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars of Norwich Cathedral Choir sing the ancient monastic office of night prayer in the stunning candlelit surroundings of Norwich Cathedral. Free, but you must pre-book.

Creative Norfolk

Holly Bodmer

Peregrinations

Saturday 29 May, 2pm, Norwich Cathedral

A tribute to Norwich Cathedral's peregrines and their following with Eyebrow Arts, Rebecca Chapman and Alice Lee. Pay What You Want.

NORWICH CHAMBER MUSIC PRESENT

ELIAS STRING QUARTET

Saturday 29 May, 3pm & 6pm, John Innes Centre

One of the most intense and vibrant quartets of their generation, Elias String Quartet, perform an engaging programme of Purcell Fantastias, and Haydn and Schumann String Quartets. Pay What You Want.

City of Literature

Experiments and experiences in literature – brought to you by Norfolk & Norwich Festival and National Centre for Writing.

Tombland

Saturday 22 May, 11am, Digital

Writer Jay Bernard and sound artist Mwen present an immersive and unusual online experience which blurs the boundaries between words, music and place. Free, register in advance to receive a link to the website when it launches

Tombland (Event)

Saturday 29 May, 5pm, Digital

Discover the process behind Tombland. An online discussion between writer and filmmaker Jay Bernard and sound artist, producer, composer, and DJ, Mwen. Free, register in advance to receive a streaming link

Weather With You

Monday 24–Thursday 27 May, Digital

Four writers reflect on the atmospheric pressure of the year they've just had in Weather With You – a series of written commissions and podcasts that address what it means to be a writer today, and why we write. Free, register in advance to receive links to all content as it is released

Weather With You (Event)

Friday 28 May, 6pm, Digital

Join the writers behind Weather With You for an online event which takes stock of our unique moment in time and expresses hope for the future. Free, register in advance to receive a streaming link.

Looking, Large and Small

Friday 28 May, 1pm, Digital

Explore the magic of the natural world with this online pack of observations, illustrations and exercises brought to you by Jessica J. Lee and Rowan Hisayo Buchanan. Free, register in advance for access to the resources when they go live.

Looking, Large and Small (Event)

Sunday 30 May, 11am, Digital

Join Jessica J. Lee and Rowan Hisayo Buchanan to peek behind the hedge at the process of creating Looking, Large and Small. Free, register in advance for a streaming link

The Group

Friday 28 – Sunday 30 May, 9pm, Digital

A three-part play by Jack McNamara and Angharad Davies told live via WhatsApp, blending literature and theatre in the palm of your hands. Tune in each evening for a standalone story told through real-time conversations and music. Free, register in advance to receive instructions. Suitable for ages 16+. Contains adult themes, including escaping a situation of threat.

Page Against the Machine

Saturday 29 May, 1pm, Plantation Garden, Norwich

Pick a book, grab a cool drink and turn off your phone for a well-deserved detox read in the beautiful surroundings of Plantation Garden. Free (£2 donation to the Plantation Garden on the door)

Harriet Martineau Lecture

Sunday 30 May, 7pm, Digital

Ella P. Wakatama, literary critic and Editor-at-large for Canongate fiction celebrates the legacy of Harriet Martineau. Ella's lecture will be accompanied by a stunning visual score from Julian Knox. Free, register in advance to receive a link. Supported by The Martineau Society

Future and Form

A series of incredible events from University of East Anglia, as they celebrate 50 years of the world-renowned creative writing programme. What shape and form will the next 50 years take?

Imogen Hermes Gower and Mutiny Eleanor

Friday 21–Sunday 30 May, Starts at Norwich Castle

Human bones have been discovered in Whitefriars, Norwich. Could they be the mortal remains of the controversial Lady Eleanor Talbot? An immersive augmented reality walk through historical Norwich. Free. Norfolk Museums Service, Norfolk County Council, and UEA.

James Mcdermott and Guildhall Live Events

Senseless

Friday 21–Sunday 30 May, Various Times, Digital

Fusing live theatre with state-of-the-art immersive film-making and virtual reality techniques, McDermott's new play is a timely exploration of love, longing and the challenges of communicating how we really feel. Free, but you must pre-book some events. Norwich Theatre and UEA

Provenance

Ayobámi Adébáyo and Mutiny

Friday 21–Sunday 30 May, Various Times

National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

A multi-screen immersive play telling the compelling story of twins separated by death. Follow the journey of the sacred ibeji artefact from its creation in Benin in 1895, to present-day Norwich. Free, but you must pre-book

National Centre for Writing, Sainsbury Centre, and UEA

Mona Arshi and Mutiny

Shifting Lines

Friday 21–Sunday 30 May, Various Times, Norfolk Wildlife Trust
Cley and Salthouse Marshes

The shifting nature of the North Norfolk coast is evoked through the subtle choreography of voice, natural sounds, video, photography and sensor data in this new multimedia poetry collection. Free, but you must pre-book.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust and UEA

Mitch Johnson and Guildhall Live Events

The Living Book

Friday 21–Sunday 30 May, Digital

What will the world look like 50 years from now? In this 360-degree VR imaginarium, school children of today imagine visions of a future affected by climate change. Free.

The Forum Trust and UEA

Tash Aw and Guildhall Live Events

Where Do Stories Come From?

Workshops–Saturday 22,

Tuesday 25 & Thursday 27 May, Various Times

Exhibition – throughout the Festival

Digital

Combining immersive technology and writing by novelist Tash Aw, the choices you make in this interactive exhibition will affect the story's outcome. Free, workshops must be pre-booked.

British Archive for Contemporary Writing, Norfolk Information and Library Services

Visual Arts

Japan Water

Wednesday 14 April – Saturday 31 July

GroundWork Gallery, King's Lynn

Five artists take us on an exploration of the significance of water in Japanese art and culture. Free.

Presented by GroundWork Gallery

The Purity of Water

Friday 21 May, 2pm, Digital

Starting from the exhibition Japan Water, this is a conference and discussion looking at water purity and threats to it, what we take for granted, and what we ought to be vigilant about. Free, to book email mail@groundworkgallery.com

Presented by GroundWork Gallery

A Passion for Landscape: Rediscovering John Crome

Monday 17 May–Sunday 5 Sep

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

Celebrating one of Britain's great Romantic artists, a long-overdue opportunity to rediscover the work of John Crome. Admission to Norwich Castle is by pre-booked tickets only museums.norfolk.gov.uk

Presented by Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

Somewhere Unexpected

Norwich Castle Open Art Show

Monday 17 May – Sunday 12 Sep

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

Somewhere Unexpected invited artists to submit work that acknowledges the significance of our immediate environments in the shifting context of a global pandemic. Admission to Norwich Castle is by pre-booked tickets only museums.norfolk.gov.uk.

Presented by Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

Grayson Perry

The Vanity of Small Differences

Tuesday 18 May– Saturday 3 July

East Gallery, Norwich University of the Arts

A series of large-scale tapestries by the Turner Prize-winning artist Grayson Perry. The exhibition explores the British fascination with taste and class. Free.

Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London and British Council. Gift of the artist and Victoria Miro Gallery with the support of Channel 4 Television, the Art Fund and Sfumato Foundation with additional support from Alix Partners.

Katie Spragg

Plants, Porcelain, People

Monday 17–Sunday 30 May, 10am–4pm

St Peter Hungate Church

A new ceramic commission and exhibition by the artist, Katie Spragg. Alongside the exhibition are two public Zoom workshops. Free, but tickets must be pre-booked.

Presented by Caroline Fisher Projects

Tony Cragg at Houghton Hall

Wednesday 19 May–26 Sep

Houghton Hall, Norfolk

Curated by the artist, this exhibition of major works by celebrated British sculptor Tony Cragg will include new work. Tickets available from Houghton Hall Presented by Houghton Hall.

Cristina Iglesias

Throughout the Festival, Sainsbury Centre Sculpture Park

Internationally acclaimed Spanish installation artist and sculptor, Cristina Iglesias, presents two major sculptures at the Sainsbury Centre, UEA. Free.

Presented by Sainsbury Centre

With Your Help We Can Make This Work

Norfolk & Norwich Festival champions art and artists, but we also strive to support our communities through creativity. We seek to create access to culture where there is none, welcome everyone, regardless of their background and contribute to the future shape of the world by working with young people to equip them with the skills to succeed.

Beyond the Festival's artistic programme each May, we bring year-round creative activities to schools and isolated communities through our Take Part programmes and coordinate a substantial volunteer programme. We also manage Festival Bridge – a region-wide initiative, improving the cultural offer for schoolchildren, and showcase the work of around 400 local artists to 30,000 visitors each year through Norfolk Open Studios.

Norfolk & Norwich Festival is a charity. We rely on the generosity of our partners and supporters to deliver the outstanding art you see on the streets and in the venues but to also deliver these amazing opportunities to those most in need.

Please Consider Supporting Us

There are many ways you can help make this work happen.

Individual Giving

Our Friends and Supporters schemes offer a range of benefits, bring you closer to our work and support our artistic and community programming. Our Friends scheme starts at just £40 per year. Alternatively, make a small donation when purchasing tickets.

Trusts and Foundations

Norfolk & Norwich Festival offers grant-giving organisations the potential to collaborate on a number of projects encompassing education, health and wellbeing, and artist development.

Businesses

We offer benefit packages for businesses of all sizes. Their support helps us develop and support artists, young people and environmental initiatives.

Find out more at nffestival.org.uk/support-us or contact the Development Team on 01603 877750.

How to Book

Online

nnfestival.org.uk

By Phone

01603 531800

Monday–Friday 10am–5.30pm, Saturday 11am–4pm

In Person

Online booking, e-tickets and contactless payment are encouraged, however we will have an in person box office facility from 12 April, restrictions allowing, at Chantry Place Shopping Centre, NR1 3SH (Next to Hotel Chocolat).

Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays 11am–4pm

Box Office Partner Chantry Place

During The Festival

Extended opening times, see website for details.

Safety

Audience, staff and artist safety remains paramount. For the latest information, please visit our website. We will contact you by email a few days before the show. During the Festival, please follow instructions provided in advance and on site.

Advance Booking Only

To enable safe audience management and to support test and trace, all tickets should be booked in advance. This includes much of the traditionally free outdoor programme. Tickets will remain available online and at the Box Office up until ten minutes before the event. Only ticket holders will be permitted admittance to an event.

Unable to Attend?

If you or anyone in your household feels unwell, please do not attend. If, for any other reason you are unable to attend, please let us know. All tickets are eligible for exchange or return up to three hours in advance of the event at no charge.

End of Norfolk & Norwich Festival 2021 large-print brochure.