

Norfolk & Norwich Festival 2025

Friday 9 – Sunday 25 May

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HELLO!

Whether you're a Festival devotee or novice, we welcome you for 17 days of adventure, exploration and extraordinary imagination as Norfolk & Norwich Festival returns for 2025.

This year's programme leads you on a journey through everything the creative world has to offer – whether it's glorious nights out with circus and cabaret in Festival Gardens; uncovering new music gems; reacquainting yourselves with firm Festival favourites; or just taking time out to explore new perspectives – we hope you'll find something to tempt you within these pages.

Woven through the programme, our stories (p6) help you explore work along a common theme. This year, we delve into 'Magic and Mystery' through a quartet of shows that explore how magic and illusion can perforate performance. In 'Coastlines', we explore this unique, beautiful environment and how it has shaped who we are, while in 'Create & Share' we celebrate the contributions everyone can make to the Festival as we present a selection of our year round Festival Connect & Create work for you.

This year marks the first Festival for our new Chair, Richard Ross. Thank you to him and our board of trustees and to the tireless work of our volunteers, staff, freelancers, artists and participants – all of whom help make the special event you'll uncover this May. A massive thank you too to the funders, donors and sponsors who, in the current funding climate, are more important than ever. They, like you we hope, back our vision to make this part of the world a truly great place to live, work, learn and play. Join us and see how!

Daniel Brine

Artistic Director & Chief Executive

Our stories help you explore routes through the Festival, bringing together shows and events that share common themes...

Create & Share

As we strive to bring all audiences to the Festival and creative opportunities to thousands across the region, Artistic Director Daniel Brine shines a light on why our Festival Connect & Create programme is so important.

If 'all the world's a stage', why do we so often find ourselves sitting watching? Our Festival always puts great art in unusual places and offers audiences new experiences. Now, we're working together with more people – especially children and young people – co-creating projects with artists and sharing them with our audiences.

Year-round, we work in schools and with communities to support extraordinary art projects which enhance the cultural life of participants. Usually this creativity goes unnoticed and is rarely shared beyond family and friends. This is a pity because for many artists this social engagement with participants is an important form of creation, as valid as writing a script or painting a picture.

In this year's Festival we're doing more to bring these co-created projects to more people. The Norwich Nine; MONSTERS; and Sea Like a Mirror are some of the highlights which have been co-created by artists with people from across East Anglia.

All offer audiences fantastic experiences which match the rich engagement and reflect the creativity of the participants. They are rightly at home in the heart of the Festival.

Magic & Mystery

Trick or real magic? Magician Augusto Corrieri (aka Vincent Gambini) reflects on the enduring appeal of the magic show.

What draws us to magic shows? That's an easy one: it's the magic. We want to experience the seemingly impossible, to witness the laws of physics come undone, and enjoy the feeling of our mind expanding.

Fine. But what is magic, and how can we define it? If language can be slippery, the word 'magic' is as elusive as it gets. As someone who has studied the art form for several years, I am still baffled by the fact that the word magic has two opposite meanings.

On the one hand, it means trickery and deception: for example, we all know those white rabbits aren't really appearing out of nowhere. It may be clever, but it's ultimately a trick, a lie, or a scam – magic is never far from the world of con artists and swindlers.

On the other hand – and this is where the troubles begin – magic can mean the opposite of trickery: magic is genuine mystery, events that defy a simple explanation and point towards a different type of reality, one we cannot easily perceive or access. Think of ghosts, fairies and gods.

In this sense of the word, magic is not far from the sacred and the spiritual: shamans perform magical rituals to contact their ancestors, or to connect with the single life-force that binds plants, animals, humans and landscapes...

To experience magic is to remember that life is far more fluid and perplexing than we assume. It probably doesn't matter whether the magician is a charlatan or a mystic, a trickster or an artist: when we experience magic, words fail us and certainties crumble.

Coastlines

With more than 100 miles of coast, our region has an intimate relationship with the sea. Author of *A Flat Place* and joining us for this year's City of Literature Weekend, Noreen Masud (p40) explores our fascination, and our impact, on our coastline.

At the beach we're all children. You can dig, or hunt for shells; chase or be chased by waves. You touch and find and smell. Or you go right into the sea, to feel yourself clasped in its cold dark fist. Good to be cold and dark, sometimes, in this hot bright world. Too hot, too bright.

Even the beach's graver truths are ones that children know. That when the romping sea pulls back, for a second, we see a vast flat landscape, stretching out like a great question no one's old enough to answer. That everything is bigger than we are, and churns like a mangle, endlessly. If we close our eyes, it could eat us up in an instant.

Children know these things. They cry over them at night. Adults have learned to forget, most of the time. But at the beach, we face facts again. Because the ocean returns what we put into the world, tidy as a library book. Lego pieces, tampons, plastic bags like jellyfish. Oily gannets, hollowed to bone by chicken-farm bird flu. The sea smooths the sand tenderly flat, but it never forgets. When we go to the beach, it brings out its dead.

2025 Music Residencies

We welcome guitarist Sean Shibe and singer Lotte Betts-Dean back to the Festival, this time as Artists in Residence. Between them, they'll present an enticing array of projects in spaces across the city.

When we invite artists to join us as residents, there is no set brief as to what they do, other than to guide audiences through

a range of exciting and comfort-zone-pushing experiences that demonstrate the range of their work and

interests. This year we move from small, considered and exquisite to big, bold and brash. Sean begins his residency where another legendary guitarist finished his career – the Maddermarket Theatre, which played host to Julian Bream's final professional recital. Sean has taken this as inspiration for a tantalising concert that looks back and forth across the centuries, in music from Bach to Adès.

He joins forces with 12 Ensemble and GBSR Duo for a programme of the intimate and the extreme, culminating in Oliver Leith's *Doom and the Dooms*, featuring Sean on electric guitar. He finishes his residency at Norwich Castle, performing up-close-and-personal on the lute.

Lotte brings three projects demonstrating the extraordinary range of both her voice and her curatorial flair, starting with Olivier Messiaen's *Harawi* in the Octagon Chapel.

With guitarist Dimitris Soukaras she has crafted a beautiful recital for Dragon Hall with music from Debussy and Britten, Sinéad O'Connor and Caroline Polachek. She finishes with an electronic gut-punch in the form of *Voice Electric*, showcasing seminal works of the 20th and 21st centuries that collide human and computer-generated sounds in a haunting sequence of song.

From Friday evening to Sunday afternoon, we've a packed programme of free entertainment popping-up across Norwich.

JOSEPH O'FARRELL (JOF) & SAM HALMARACK HIGH VOLTAGE

Friday 9 May, 6pm, The Forum, Free

In a modern day mash up of dance, music and performance, High Voltage brings together over 150 guitarists from across the region in a showcase of musical talent that really makes you want to rock out!

SPEAK PERCUSSION & ALL THE QUEEN'S MEN MARCH STATIC

Friday 9 May, 6pm, The Forum, Free

Speak Percussion, All the Queens Men and local musicians herald the opening of the Festival with a composition by Thomas Meadowcroft. With bespoke choreography they create an immersive sonic experience that re imagines the concept of a marching band – celebrating community and peace over military might.

WELCOME WEEKEND SHOWS

Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 May, Norwich City Centre, Free

Circus, laughter, dance and drama across the city with a programme of free world premieres from the country's leading outdoor arts companies.

ARTIZANI - HYDROPUNK

An interactive installation created in collaboration with the public, where water takes centre-stage.

COMPANY DHW - GO GRANDAD GO!

A Hip-Hop theatre dance show that inspires the young and empowers the... not so young.

LEVANTES DANCE THEATRE - HUG

The simple power of a hug celebrated through a fusion of aerial dance, physical theatre and striking visuals.

MISH WEAVER - WAITING SONG

Two singing trapeze performers engage audiences in an evolving participatory outdoor performance.

NANDITA SHANKARDASS - ROOTS TO RISE

Dance theatre work 'Roots to Rise' embodies ancestry, agriculture, ecological activism and the wisdom of women.

SADIQ ALI COMPANY - TELL ME

Chinese pole acrobatics, physical theatre and music are used to challenge misconceptions about HIV.

STOPGAP DANCE COMPANY - RO-TESS

Stopgap Dance's latest groundbreaking outdoor production celebrates multiculturalism and community.

THEATRE-RITES & MIGUEL ALTUNAGA - ESHU AT THE CROSSROADS

Dancers and a puppeteer find themselves at an enchanted crossroads in this tale of choice, trickery and joy.

TILLY INGRAM THEATRE - THE HIDE

A peaceful meditation on how we interpret nature and people with hidden disabilities.

Full programme and additional events available from mid-April.

Norfolk & Norwich Festival is part of Without Walls, a network of organisations bringing innovative outdoor arts to towns and cities across England. Shows at the Welcome Weekend are commissioned by a number of Without Walls partners, including Norfolk & Norwich Festival.

Sponsored by The Forum

Supported by the Paul Bassham Charitable Trust

AROOJ AFTAB

Friday 9 May, 8pm, Norwich Cathedral

Declared 'the coolest rock star in the world right now' by UNCUT magazine, Grammy award-winner Arooj Aftab has earned her position at the vanguard of creative music for her embrace of risk and nonconformity. Over the last few years, she has delivered rapturous performances at major venues and festivals all over the world. We're delighted to welcome her for a special opening concert of this year's Festival.

'Few singers can match the delicate warmth and quiet power of Arooj Aftab's voice' (The Guardian)

Tickets £30, £26, £20, £12 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Sponsored by Savills

AN EVENING WITH GILLES PETERSON

WITH SUPPORT FROM TADI THE GREAT

Saturday 10 May, 8pm, Norwich Cathedral

Broadcaster, DJ and record collector, Gilles Peterson has played a pivotal role in supporting and promoting underground music in the UK and beyond over the past three decades. We welcome him for a unique sit-down evening, especially for

Norwich Cathedral, in which he will join the musical dots, playing and chatting about some of his favourite sounds past, present and future... like a radio programme in front of your eyes.

Tickets £25, £20, £12 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

BOOTWORKS THEATRE CO.

THE NORWICH NINE

Sunday 11 May, 5pm, The Garage

The Norwich Nine is an intergenerational collaboration between Bootworks Theatre Co. and a local group of nine-year-old children born the year the UK voted to leave the European Union and we were all running around the streets trying to catch Pokémon! Created in one week, the show reflects the children's fascinating memories and perspectives at this crucial juncture in their lives – the halfway point between birth and adulthood.

Tickets £15 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Presented in partnership with The Garage

Sponsored by Big Sky Living

IDRÎSÎ ENSEMBLE

LOST HARMONIES: ENDANGERED AND MEDIEVAL TRADITIONS

Sunday 11 May, 7.45pm, Norwich Cathedral

The singers and instrumentalists of Idrîsî Ensemble present a concert of rare music from Corsica, Greece, and Mallorca, alongside other treasures, including Gaelic Psalms and Old

Roman chant. This is a celebration of human imagination and a powerful encounter with sounds on the brink of extinction.

Tickets £22, £17, £12 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Supported by the John Jarrold Trust

LEONKORO QUARTET

Monday 12 May, 7.30pm, Norwich Theatre Playhouse

Leonkoro Quartet performed at Norfolk & Norwich Festival as one of the BBC Radio 3 New Generation artists in 2023. Having garnered numerous accolades, they are rapidly becoming one of the most exciting chamber ensembles on the international scene, with a reputation for technical excellence and thoughtful, impassioned performances.

Haydn String Quartet in F major, Op. 50, No. 5, The Dream

Berg Lyric Suite

Mendelssohn String Quartet No. 4 in F minor, Op. 44, No. 2

Tickets £25 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Presented in partnership with Norwich Theatre

BBC RADIO 3 NEW GENERATION ARTISTS

Our partnership with BBC Radio 3's New Generation Artists scheme brings an exhilarating cross-section of the most exciting young British and international musicians.

10% off when you book all three BBC Radio 3 New Generation concerts

STERLING ELLIOTT & JOSEPH HAVLAT

Tuesday 13 May, 1pm, Octagon Chapel

Young American cellist Sterling Elliott has established an exciting reputation for his effortless, joyous musicianship. Joined by Joseph Havlat, they perform a programme of cello and piano pieces from modern American composers.

Amy Beach Dreaming from Four Sketches, Op. 15

Amy Beach Romance, Op. 23 George Walker Cello Sonata

Kevin Day Cello Sonata

William Grant Still Mother and Child

Tickets £18, £16 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

EMMA RAWICZ

Tuesday 13 May, 7.30pm, Octagon Chapel

At just 23, saxophonist Emma Rawicz's ascent has been meteoric. Her performances are distinct, engaging and full of thrilling interplay and with over 70 international shows in the past year, she has become one of the most sought-after artists of her generation.

Bringing to Norwich a set specially written for her unique quintet line-up, expect an evening of exciting musical collaboration.

'Emma Rawicz is taking admirable risks and continuing her warp-speed evolution' (The Guardian)

Tickets £18, £16 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

CHAOS STRING QUARTET

Wednesday 14 May, 7.30pm, Octagon Chapel

The multi-award-winning Chaos String Quartet return for a second year. Formed of musicians from Germany, Hungary, Italy and the Netherlands: and based on the 'chaos' principles

of art, science and philosophy, they have quickly garnered a reputation for their expressive and boundary-pushing performances. Here they present a blend of classic and contemporary works in the glorious Georgian surrounds of the Octagon Chapel.

Haydn String Quartet in G minor, Op. 20, No. 3

Francesca Verunelli String Quartet No.2

Beethoven String Quartet in G major, Op. 18, No. 2

Tickets £18, £16 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

GANDINI JUGGLING

HEKA

Tuesday 13 & Wednesday 14 May, 7.30pm, Norwich Theatre Playhouse

In a welcome return by Gandini Juggling, their new show, Heka blends juggling, magic, and contemporary choreography to explore the boundaries between reality and illusion. Packed with humour and philosophy, it challenges audience perception through repetition, counterpoint and misdirection. A thrilling show that reimagines magic as a choreographic art form.

‘Heka is a delightful blend of high skill, silliness and surrealism.’
(The Times)

Tickets £22 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Presented in partnership with Norwich Theatre

Sponsored by Howes Percival

COMPLINE BY CANDLELIGHT

Tuesday 13 May, 9pm, Norwich Cathedral Free no booking required

The Senior Girl Choristers, Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars of Norwich Cathedral Choir sing the ancient monastic office of night prayer in the stunning, atmospheric surroundings of Norwich Cathedral.

FESTIVAL GARDENS

The return of the iconic Adnams Spiegeltent heralds the opening of Festival Gardens to welcome in the summer. Enjoy a show, some free entertainment on The Band Stand... or just kick back and relax with good food, beer and friends. See you in the gardens!

THE BAND STAND

Thursday 15 Sunday 18 & Thursday 22 Sunday 25 May,
Festival Gardens

The Band Stand brings you alfresco tunes with some of the best young music makers from across the region.

Times and line ups online from April, Free

Sponsored by Yawn Marketing

UPSWING

SHOWDOWN

Wednesday 14–Sunday 25 May, various times, Adnams Spiegeltent

Daring stunts, sassy attitudes, and fierce competition collide in Showdown. Six contestants battle to the top, blending circus thrills with cheeky humour. Through audience votes and fast-paced games, the show dives into the tricky ways we connect, clash, and compete in today's world.

'A merciless competition... totally over the top and funny!'

(RBB Kultur)

Age 10+

Tickets £28, £26, £25, £23 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Sponsored by Dipple and Conway

SEAN SHIBE

FORGOTTEN DANCES

Thursday 15 May, 7.30pm, Maddermarket Theatre

In the first show of his residency, Sean explores overlooked corners of the guitar repertoire at the venue in which Julian Bream made his final appearance, including Martin's *Quatre pieces breves* – largely neglected until championed by Bream in the 1960s.

Frank Martin Quatre pièces brèves pour guitare

Bach Cello Suite No. 6 in D major BWV1012, arranged for guitar

Harrison Birtwistle Oockooing Bird, Sad Song, Berceuse de Jeanne

Thomas Adès Forgotten Dances

Tickets £22 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

With thanks to Director's Circle Supporters, Julia Leach & Patrick Smith

SARAH JANE MORRIS

THE SISTERHOOD

Thursday 15 May, 9.30pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

Sarah Jane Morris presents a work of tender love and utter respect with 12 original songs which pay tribute to some of the world's most iconic female artists – swashbuckling pioneers whose enormous musical footprints trace the sands of time – among them Nina Simone, Patti Smith and Kate Bush.

Tickets £18 (£20 on the day) **U18/YoungNNF** £10

VINCENT GAMBINI

CLOSE-UP

Friday 16 & Saturday 17, Friday 23 & Saturday 24 May, various times, The Yard Coffee

Join magician Vincent Gambini at a café table for 15 minutes. Surrounded by unsuspecting customers, watch as playing cards transform and sugar cubes vanish. Combining sleight-of-hand magic with the dreamlike nature of cinema, Close-up invites us to re-imagine everyday life as an illusion.

Tickets £10

SEAN SHIBE WITH 12 ENSEMBLE & GBSR DUO

Friday 16 May, 7.30pm, St Peter Mancroft

Oliver Leith's recreation of imaginary band Doom and the Dooms' only concert is the centrepiece of this wistful programme, celebrating the porousness of high and low art, from the stylistic magpies of the Scottish Lute Manuscripts to brand new work by genre-hopping composer, violinist and electronic musician Sasha Scott.

Tickets £27, £24, £20, £10 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

With thanks to Director's Circle Supporters, Julia Leach & Patrick Smith

STILL HUNGRY & BRYONY KIMMINGS

SHOW PONY

Friday 16 & Saturday 17 May, 7.30pm, Norwich Theatre Playhouse

Do you know what happens when acrobats hit middle age? In a candid look at a life on the stage and the painful moment when the stage no longer wants you, three women try to decide how they can go on... or if they should go on at all.

Packed full of circus, love, laughter and lunacy, Show Pony is a brutally honest confrontation with childhood conditioning, growing older and the importance of friendship.

Tickets £22 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Presented in partnership with Norwich Theatre

NABIHAH IQBAL

Friday 16 May, 9.30pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

Musician, producer and DJ, Nabihah Iqbal's album, Dreamer, was released to critical acclaim in 2023. The success of which has seen her tour extensively over the past 18 months, building her reputation as one of the most compelling live artists around. Gossamer vocals and melancholy lyrics combine for a memorable dream pop experience.

Tickets £18 (£20 on the day) **U18/YoungNNF** £10

DAN CANHAM

FOUR PORTRAITS FROM AN EDGELAND

Saturday 17 May & Sunday 18 May, 11am-4pm drop-in, The Gallery, The Forum

A moving film, created in collaboration with young people from the Fens, weaves together dance, personal narratives and cinematic artistry to celebrate the young people's creativity, resilience and passion – a testament to the power of community and the vital importance of dancing together.

Free no booking required

SEAN SHIBE

LUTE EPISODES

Saturday 17 May, 15 minute recitals, from 5-8pm, Norwich Castle

For the final act of his residency, Sean Shibe picks up his lute in the quiet of Norwich Castle after hours. With a backdrop provided by The Paston Treasure – a mysterious painting by an unknown Flemish artist depicting objects found at Norfolk's Oxnead Hall – Sean will perform short but exquisite recitals of music that engage with stories found in the painting.

Tickets £10

With thanks to Director's Circle Supporters, Julia Leach & Patrick Smith

GURDJIEFF ENSEMBLE

Saturday 17 May, 7.30pm, St Peter Mancroft

Gurdjieff Ensemble play and preserve music from a variety of ancient folk traditions: Armenian, Greek, Arabic, Assyrian, Kurdish, Persian and Caucasian. Their haunting, mysterious and atmospheric performances reflect a clear contemporary vitality, with one foot firmly planted in the here and now, and resonances echoing through past, present and future.

Tickets £22, £19, £15, £10 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Supported by the John Jarrold Trust

STILL HOUSE PLANTS

Saturday 17 May, 9.30pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

From a bare bones set-up of guitar, drums and vocals, Still House Plants create fractious and sharp music with a melting pop heart. Bridging elements of sampling, slow core, and repetition, they have developed a sound that constantly breaks apart and fuses together again – a mesmerising exploration of texture and mood.

Tickets £18 (£20 on the day) **U18/YoungNNF** £10

RAGROOF TEA DANCE CARMEN'S CANTINA

Sunday 18 May, 10am, Adnams Spiegeltent

A chance for everyone to trip the light fantastic with vintage music, glamorous costumes, glorious dance displays. This year, Carmen's Cantina, is a fabulous fiesta celebrating the sun-fuelled rhythms of the Spanish diaspora – from Paso Doble and Tango to Mambo and Merengue. Enjoy tea and a Jarrolds scone!

Tickets £18 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Sponsored by Jarrolds

LOTTE BETTS-DEAN & JOSEPH HAVLAT

HARAWI

In the first of a trio of performances for her Festival residency, mezzo soprano Lotte Betts-Dean is joined by pianist Joseph Havlat to perform Messiaen's Harawi - Chant d'amour et de mort. Considered his grandest song cycle, Harawi is the first part of Messiaen's Tristan trilogy, a collection of works inspired by the medieval myth of Tristan and Isolde.

Sunday 18 May, 5pm, Octagon Chapel

Tickets £22, £19 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

MARTIN HAYES

Sunday 18 May, 7.30pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

Martin Hayes, a musician with an 'insatiable appetite for adventure', is much celebrated for his innovative, emotive interpretations of traditional Irish music. In 2023, he released his lauded album Peggy's Dream with the Common Ground Ensemble. Expect an evening of superb artistry as Martin showcases his virtuoso mastery of the Irish fiddle.

Tickets £22 (£24 on the day) **U18/YoungNNF** £10

BBC INTRODUCING PRESENTS

BAND NIGHT

Monday 19 May, 7pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

A quartet of the brightest new local music artists. In a night programmed by BBC Introducing, Ledbyher, Leo Lore, Con & Milsky and the genre defying Pleasure Inc take to the stage in the Adnams Spiegel tent.

Tickets £10 (£12 on the day) **U18/YoungNNF** £10

JOANNA HOLLAND WITH LEAH CLEMENTS AND LOUISE KIM SALTER

THE HAUNTED: INSOMNIA & REVERIE – A DREAM OF AUTOIMMUNITY

Monday 19 May, 7pm, St George's Theatre, Great Yarmouth

Strange occurrences at nighttime, dancing illness, listening houses and otherworldly portals... The Haunted is a collection of disabled and non-disabled performances and talks exploring female-led narratives on insomnia and chronic illness.

Access BSL interpreted

Age 14+

Tickets Pay What You Want £15, £12, £9, £6, £3.

Free for people who identify as living with chronic illness, disabled, D/deaf or neurodiverse

Presented by originalprojects;

APARTMENT HOUSE

MUSIC IN FOUR PARTS

Monday 19 May, 7.30pm, Octagon Chapel

Celebrating their 30th anniversary in a concert tailor-made for the Octagon Chapel, the iconic Apartment House meld together a rarely heard work by Philip Glass; John Cage's subtle,

hymnal Harmonies; a new arrangement of Erik Satie's elegant Socrate; and Cassandra Miller's new work – written for Apartment House – featuring founder and cellist Anton Lukoszevieze.

John Cage Harmonies

Cassandra Miller New work for cello and ensemble

Erik Satie Socrate (arranged for ensemble by Apartment House)

Philip Glass Music in Eight Parts

Tickets £22, £19 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

TOAST

TOAST is poetry, but not as you know it. Norfolk's biggest poetry night returns to the Festival Speak Easy for three days of poetry, spoken word, storytelling and performance from some of the UK's best poets and performers.

Tuesday 20 May, Festival Gardens

4pm **GEORGIE JONES** 5.30pm **RACHEL LONG**

Wednesday 21 May, Festival Gardens

4pm **A. F. HARROLD** 5.30pm **KAREEM PARKINS BROWN**

Thursday 22 May, Festival Gardens

4pm **JO BELL** 5.30pm **ELLA FREARS**

Tickets £10

Ages 14+

Strong language and discussion of difficult themes

Sponsored by camtrak

ALEX MCALEER – MIND READER

Tuesday 20 May, 7pm & Wednesday 21 May, 9.30pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

Norwich's own Alex McAleer possesses the uncanny ability to apparently tap into his audiences' minds and read their thoughts at will. This unforgettable show is packed with unbelievable demonstrations of psychological skill as Alex combines contemporary mind reading with sharp wit and a flair for showmanship.

'McAleer has made a career out of those you've-got-to-be-kidding moments' (Boston Globe)

Access BSL interpreted on Tuesday 20 May

Tickets £22, £18 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Tuesday 20 May, 7.30pm, Octagon Chapel

JOSEPH HAVLAT, DENI TEO & BENJAMIN MELLEFONT

NIGHTWEAVE

A focus on the music of Australian composer Lisa Illean, featuring her introspective *février* and the UK premiere of *everweaver* for cello and piano. The programme also includes music evoking the night by Max Bruch and Bent Srensen, presented by a trio of the finest chamber musicians in the UK.

Tickets £22, £19 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

AAKASH ODEDRA COMPANY

SONGS OF THE BULBUL

Tuesday 20 & Wednesday 21 May, 7.30pm, Norwich Theatre Playhouse

This new dance work by Aakash Odedra, with choreography by Rani Khanam and music by Rushil Ranjan, is inspired by the ancient Sufi myth of a bulbul (a nightingale) captured and held in captivity. A sensitive, beautiful dialogue between Sufi Kathak music that seamlessly blends orchestral and Indian classical tradition and Islamic poetry, Songs of the Bulbul asks will we, like the caged bird, remain bound to the material world, or will we soar towards a higher existence of liberation, and the divine?

Tickets £22 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Presented in partnership with Norwich Theatre

ANDREW PEPPER

HOUSE OF PEPPER

Tuesday 20 May, 9.30pm, Adnams Spiegel tent

London's cabaret sensation descends in a hurricane of limbs and a musical repertoire covering everything from Broadway to Barry Manilow. Following sell-out residencies in the West End, singular singing sensation Andrew Pepper brings his show to Norwich for the first time. Brace yourselves!

'A one-off, daring to go further than you ever imagined a performer would' (Musical Theatre Review)

Tickets £22, £18 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Age 14+

Sponsored by Nor-Folk

ANDY FIELD & BECKIE DARLINGTON

MONSTERS

Wednesday 21 May, 11.30am, Cinema City

MONSTERS is a post-apocalyptic fairy tale created by and starring children from East Anglia. In this experimental documentary, they imagine a world after monsters have arrived, exploring survival, change, and uncertainty. The film blends fantasy and reality, reinterpreting disaster tropes through the eyes of a generation familiar with crisis.

Free, booking required

LOTTE BETTS-DEAN & DIMITRIS SOUKARAS

TRAVELS WITH A GUITAR

Wednesday 21 May, 7.30pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Artist in Residence Lotte Betts-Dean joins outstanding Greek guitarist, Dimitris Soukaras, for a diverse programme – spanning Debussy, Britten, Burt Bacharach and Sinead O’Connor – which highlights their exquisite talents in equal measure.

Tickets £22 U18/YoungNNF £10

Sponsored by Ashtons Legal

ST. GEORGE’S THEATRE COMPANY

CROSSING THE LINE

Thursday 22 May, 6pm, St George’s Theatre, Great Yarmouth

A work-in-progress premier of an exciting new stage adaptation of Tia Fisher’s award-winning debut verse novel for teens, based on real-life county lines activity in the area.

Erik’s life has been falling apart since his dad died. Being good, school and homework stop feeling so important when you’re the new man of the house. Erik’s bad behaviour attracts the

wrong crowd and he's sucked into a terrifying new world of drug dealing, trap houses and violence.

Tickets Pay What You Want £10, £5, £3, £0

Age 11+

This is a short sharing of work in progress, developed in consultation with young people from the community. There will be an introduction and post-show Q&A with Tia and the creative team.

LOTTE BETTS-DEAN

VOICE ELECTRIC

LUKE ABBOTT, LOTTE BETTS-DEAN AND JACK WYLIE

ENDLESS JOY

Thursday 22 May, 7.30pm, Duke Street Theatre, Norwich
University of the Arts

Exploring the full, colourful range of the human voice in her residency, Lotte Betts-Dean sings work for solo amplified voice with electronics – from groundbreaking 20th century pieces by Scelsi and Schwitters to contemporary work by Mathis Saunier and Cassandra Miller.

In an exciting addition to the programme, Lotte is joined by Luke and Jack for EndlessJoy – in which electronics, voice and saxophone combine in a suite of music exploring the mystical writing of Julian of Norwich.

Tickets £17 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

CORTO.ALTO

Thursday 22 May, 9.30pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

The project of remarkable Scottish composer and producer Liam Shortall, corto.alto fuses jazz improvisation, electronic production and bass heavy dub into a heady mix which saw his 2023 debut album, Bad With Names, nominated for the 2024 Mercury Prize. Always pushing sonic boundaries, this performance promises subverted expectations and transcendent grooves.

Tickets £18 (£20 on the day) **U18/YoungNNF** £10

BBC SINGERS

Friday 23 May, 7.30pm, Cathedral of St John the Baptist

Sir James MacMillan directs the BBC Singers in a programme surveying a number of his choral compositions, juxtaposed with a selection of early works. Awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society's prestigious Ensemble Award in March 2024, the Singers celebrate their 100th anniversary with a welcome return to the Festival.

Britten Hymn to the Virgin

John Tavener Hymn to the Mother of God

Judith Weir Ave Regina Caelorum

MacMillan The Culham Motets

MacMillan O Virgo Prudentissima

Palestrina Missa Papae Marcelli

Tickets £30, £20, £15, £10 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

With thanks to Director's Circle Supporter, Lynn Biggs

ALOGTE OHO AND HIS SOUNDS OF JOY

Friday 23 May, 9.30pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

Bringing their vibrant live energy to our Festival for the first time, this Ghanaian Frafra Gospel troupe will thrill you with songs from their acclaimed sophomore album, O Yinne!, recorded deep in the tropical rainforest of Ghana. As Alogte says, expect the band to 'transcend this world for our audience to give them all the joy it can. They are the Sounds of Joy.'

Tickets £18 (£20 on the day) **U18/YoungNNF** £10

YOUR TOWN, MY TOWN, OUR TOWN WORKSHOPS

Saturday 24 May, 9.30am & 12.30pm, Swaffham Museum

In two workshops, as part of our Your Town, My Town, Our Town project, in Swaffham, young people from the town are invited to explore it's history and propose a colourful new future. Visit nnfestival.org.uk for further information.

Free, booking required

Age 12–18yrs

Sponsored by Dipple and Conway

BRITTEN SINFONIA WITH IMOGEN WHITEHEAD

Saturday 24 May, 8pm, Norwich Cathedral

Principal Trumpet Imogen Whitehead is the soloist in Hummel's beloved 1803 concerto in a programme that also includes the haunting Fratres as part of Britten Sinfonia's celebrations of Estonian composer Arvo Pärt's 90th year.

Wagner Siegfried Idyll

Hummel Trumpet Concerto

Arvo Pärt Fratres

Beethoven Symphony No. 1

Tickets £40, £30, £20, £15 **U35** Half-price

Presented by Britten Sinfonia

CLARISSA CONNELLY

Saturday 24 May, 9.30pm, Adnams Spiegeltent

Drawing inspiration from Nordic mythology and Celtic tradition, Clarissa Connelly's immersive sound invites listeners on spiritual and metaphysical journeys, blending the intimate with the cosmic into a distinctive experience that lingers long in the memory.

Tickets £18 (£20 on the day) **U18/YoungNNF** £10

LITTLE 'NN' FEST

We've put together a special programme of events for our littlest Festival-goers this year. Make, play, gasp and laugh with our Little 'nn' Fest!

HOUSE OF BEDLAM WITH LITTLE MESS NORWICH

BABY BEDLAM X MESSY PLAY

Saturday 17 May, 11am, Adnams Spiegeltent

An immersive collaboration between the adventurous music ensemble House of Bedlam and Little Mess Norwich that blends live contemporary music with sensory messy play for babies and their grown-ups. Improvised flute, saxophone, and cello meet playful sensory explorations. Let your baby go full Bedlam in this playful event!

Tickets £10 per child. Up to 2 adults go free

Age 0–3yrs

Sponsored by Hatch Brenner Solicitors

THE PAPER CINEMA

ROCK CHARMER & NIGHT FLYER

Sunday 18 May, 2.30pm and 7.30pm, Norwich Puppet Theatre

The Paper Cinema's unique blend of hand-drawn animation and live performance brings us a double bill of delightful stories.

Set against the backdrop of Dorset's rugged coastline, Rock Charmer delves into the enchanting legends inspired by the area's rich geological history. In Night Flyer our hero crosses abstract landscapes on a bike in pursuit of a mysterious train and a lost girl.

AAKASH ODEDRA COMPANY

LITTLE MURMUR

Tuesday 20 May 7pm & Wednesday 21 May, 1pm & 6pm,
Norwich Theatre Stage Two

Little Murmur explores the warped and exaggerated realities of living in a world you struggle to process. Based on Aakash's own struggles with dyslexia, this dance theatre show for families and schools provides a stunning visual treat with groundbreaking projection, an extraordinary soundscape and a blizzard of paper and confetti.

Tickets £17.50 **U18/YoungNNF** £10

Age 7+

Presented in partnership with Norwich Theatre

POLLY DUNBAR

PUT YOUR SHOES ON

Friday 23 May, 10.30am, Adnams Spiegeltent

Children's author Polly Dunbar delivers a delightful morning of storytelling as she brings her book Put Your Shoes On to life. Further info p39.

Ages Families with children up to 7yrs

Tickets £5 per child, one accompanying adult free

HAYLEY WELLS

THE SPECTACULAR SUIT

Friday 23 May, 1pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Looking for the outfit of your dreams? An interactive storytelling session in which you can colour your own spectacular suit! Further info p39.

Age Families with children up to 7yrs

Tickets £5 per child, one accompanying adult free

M.G. LEONARD

HUNT FOR THE GOLDEN SCARAB

Saturday 24 May, 10am, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

M.G. Leonard's Hunt for the Golden Scarab fuses Indiana Jones with Dr. Who. Join the author to hear all about this time-travelling adventure. Further info p40.

Age 8–13yrs

Tickets £7 per child, one accompanying adult free

NA QIRUOXUAN

MAKE, PLAY & TAKE HOME

Sunday 25 May, 10.30am –12.30pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

A hands-on craft session. Create an origami flower basket or a story from felt. Further info p42.

Tickets £5 per child, one accompanying adult free

Age 4+

CITY OF LITERATURE WEEKEND

Shifts in our environment, culture, politics, and the ways we connect — both online and in person — shape our daily lives.

How do we drive change? How does it affect us? What separates positive change from negative? These questions have taken on new urgency over the past year, inspiring this weekend of exploration and discovery.

We're delighted to welcome nationally acclaimed speakers who are challenging norms and driving change through words, books, and ideas. Patrick Grant will discuss the urgent need to rethink what and how we consume. Val McDermid will explore evolving representations of women in history. Sarah Moss will offer poignant reflections on migration and new beginnings. We'll explore the transformative power of love and how shifting landscapes shape the ways we communicate. Meanwhile, our dynamic creative writing workshops provide opportunities to grow and evolve as a writer.

Join us and this year's stellar lineup of writers and thinkers for a weekend filled with conversation, creativity, and ideas that just might change how you see the world – and yourself.

Holly Ainley, Head of Programmes & Creative Engagement

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

POLLY DUNBAR

PUT YOUR SHOES ON

10.30am, Adnams Spiegel tent

Join children's author Polly Dunbar for a delightful morning of storytelling as she brings her book *Put Your Shoes On* to life. Filled with fun, laughter, and creative crafts, this interactive event invites everyone to join the adventure and 'put on their shoes' too!

Age Families with children up to 7yrs

Tickets £5 per child, one accompanying adult free

HAYLEY WELLS

THE SPECTACULAR SUIT

1pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Frankie dreams of a spectacular suit to wear on her birthday – but can she find the outfit of her dreams? Join Hayley Wells for a vibrant, interactive storytelling session that celebrates identity, individuality, and self-expression. You'll also get the chance to colour your own spectacular suit!

Age Families with children up to 7yrs

Tickets £5 per child, one accompanying adult free

WHAT'S SO HARD ABOUT WRITING?

HATTIE CRISELL & EMMA JANE UNSWORTH

6pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Hattie Crisell, author of *In Writing*, is on a mission to get our most-read authors to spill their secrets. She sits down with Emma Jane Unsworth for an uncensored chat about the creative process behind Emma's new novel, *Slags*, sharing the wisdom and confessions of other literary icons along the way.

Tickets £10

M.G. LEONARD

HUNT FOR THE GOLDEN SCARAB

10am, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Embark on an Egyptian adventure with M.G. Leonard as she reveals how a journey down the Nile inspired her book, *Hunt for the Golden Scarab*.

Unravel the art of mummification and discover heart scarabs, the Book of the Dead, and clues to Nefertiti's lost tomb. Perfect for adventure lovers and budding historians!

Age 8–13yrs

Tickets £7 per child, one accompanying adult free

PATRICK GRANT

THE COST OF EXCESS: A FASHION REVOLUTION

10am, Adnams Spiegeltent

Our wardrobes are filled with clothes we never wear — so why do we keep buying more? Patrick Grant, fashion designer, businessman, and star of The Great British Sewing Bee, explores the crisis of overconsumption in fashion. Learn how quality over quantity and valuing what we truly need can lead to greater happiness.

Tickets £12 **U18/Young NNF** £10

Books available to purchase at all events courtesy of The Book Hive

VAL McDERMID

THE HARRIET MARTINEAU LECTURE

12pm, St Peter Mancroft

This year's Harriet Martineau Lecture will be delivered by acclaimed novelist Val McDermid. Val will examine the misrepresentation and erasure of women in history and literature, the lasting impact of overlooked female writers, and the transformative power of literature to inspire fresh perspectives.

Tickets £14 **U18/Young NNF** £10

Supported by The Martineau Society

THE BOOK HIVE PRESENTS

PAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

2.30pm, St Peter Hungate

Our shared reading event returns! Pick a book, bring a cool drink and turn off your phone for a well-deserved detox read in the beautiful surroundings of St Peter Hungate. Simultaneous

events will be taking place in UNESCO Cities of Literature across the world.

Free, booking essential

In partnership with The Book Hive

DANIELLE GILES & NOREEN MASUD

FLATLANDS

3pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

From the haunting East Anglian Fens to the enigmatic Orford Ness, the flatlands teem with hidden truths and lingering memories, etched into their stark beauty. Join Danielle Giles and Noreen Masud on a journey through these evocative terrains, exploring how landscapes shape us and how the past informs the present.

Tickets £10

SEÁN HEWITT & MONIQUE ROFFEY

DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME?

6pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

First love has the power to change us forever. Join Seán Hewitt as he explores themes of possibility and sacrifice in his debut novel, *Open, Heaven*, the poignant story of two teenage boys falling in love in the English countryside. Seán will be in conversation with Costa Book Award-winning author Monique Roffey.

Age 14+ Tickets £10

CITY OF LITERATURE PUBLISHING FAIR

10am–4pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Explore our region's vibrant publishing culture at our popular fair! From hardbacks to zines, meet publishers, browse and purchase their work, and enjoy lightning talks

throughout the day. The perfect Sunday event for writers, readers, editors, and creators of all kinds.

Free, no booking required

SARAH MOSS

RIPENESS

10.30am, Adnams Spiegeltent

Start your Sunday in the company of Sarah Moss, the extraordinary author of *Summerwater*, *Ghost Wall*, and *The Fell*. Her sweeping new novel, *Ripeness*, will transport you from Italy to Ireland, weaving a rich tapestry of familial love, the communities we create, migration, new beginnings, and what it truly means to belong.

Tickets £10

PICTURE THIS: WRITING WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

WITH EMMANUEL IDUMA

Friday 23 May, 10.30am–12.30pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

How do we articulate what we see, feel, and imagine when we look at images from the past? In this creative non-fiction workshop, Emmanuel Iduma will teach you how to bridge the gap between observation and storytelling, transforming visual memories into compelling writing.

Age 18+

Tickets £40 Concessions £30

HATTIE CRISELL

UNLOCK THE ART OF STORYTELLING IN PODCASTING

Friday 23 May, 2–4pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Journalist and In Writing podcast host Hattie Crisell delivers a dynamic and creative workshop designed to elevate your interviewing skills. Discover proven techniques to draw out the best stories from your podcast guests, uncovering their unique perspectives and insights.

Age 16+

Tickets £30 Concessions £20

NICOLA STREETEN

DRAWING FOR CHANGE: GRAPHIC NOVELS

Saturday 24 May, 10.30am–12.30pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Multi-award-winning graphic novelist and comics scholar Dr Nicola Streeten delivers an illustrated introduction to graphic novels, packed with fun and easy drawing exercises. Create your own mini graphic novel around the topic of ‘change’. No drawing experience is required.

Age 16+

Tickets £30 Concessions £20

NICOLA DINAN

A CHANGE OF CHARACTER

Saturday 24 May, 2.00pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Join Nicola Dinan, celebrated author of *Disappoint Me*, for a dynamic workshop on creating compelling characters by understanding their evolution throughout a story. Through engaging discussions and hands-on exercises, you'll master the art of observing and portraying meaningful change in your characters.

Tickets £40 **Concessions** £30

NA QIRUOXUAN

MAKE, PLAY & TAKE HOME

Sunday 25 May, 10.30am–12.30pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Create a unique gift for someone special or take home a handmade treasure! This hands-on craft session is a wonderful chance to play, experience, and let your imagination shine. Choose to make an origami flower basket or a story from felt.

Age 4+

Tickets £5 per child, one accompanying adult free

ERICA HESKETH

THE POETRY OF MOTHERHOOD

Saturday 24 May, 2–4pm, National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall

Motherhood brings profound change – offering immense joy and fulfilment, as well as many challenges. In this welcoming poetry workshop for mothers of all kinds, Erica Hesketh will

share inspiring poems and offer prompts to spark new writing, helping you express your unique experiences of motherhood.

Age 18+

Tickets £40 Concessions £30

VISUAL ARTS

PLANT POWER

Saturday 8 March–Friday 13 June GroundWork Gallery, King's Lynn

Explore how plant lives and ours interconnect. Artists, concerned about plants in a time of climate change, are finding ways to give us new intense images. Through the power of art, this exhibition aims to consider the plant's point of view. Plants are not merely a backdrop but take centre stage.

Free, no booking required

Presented by GroundWork Gallery

ANNA DUMITRIU, WITH CHRIS RIDOUT & COLLEAGUES

ART AND SCIENCE OF THE FABA BEAN

Tuesday 13 May, 6pm GroundWork Gallery, King's Lynn

Anna Dumitriu's Uninhibited Faba is a series of artworks exploring the history and future of the humble faba bean and how it can help us mitigate climate change and improve food security. View the work and join in conversation about the history, research and potential future of this sustainable food source with Anna and a panel of scientific experts.

Tickets £15 to include a gathering afterwards with a drink

HARRIET TARLO & STEVIE WISHART

RESILIENT PLANTS, THROUGH POETRY AND MUSIC

Poet Harriet Tarlo and artist Judith Tucker, whose work is at the centre of Plant Power, were working on longitudinal projects with the pioneer plants on the salt marshes of the North Lincolnshire coast, before Judith's sudden death. Here Harriet collaborates with composer Stevie Wishart to explore new ways to interpret ecology, using voice and musical instruments.

Friday 23 May, 6pm GroundWork Gallery, King's Lynn

Tickets £15 followed by a pot-luck afterparty in which Stevie opens her historic building, Greenland Fishery. Bring some refreshments.

THE SAINSBURY CENTRE

CAN THE SEAS SURVIVE US? SEASON

The future of our oceans is explored in the Sainsbury Centre's extensive 2025 exhibition programme.

A WORLD OF WATER

Saturday 15 March–Sunday 3 August, Sainsbury Centre

This exhibition encourages us to understand the complexity of the sea, mitigate the impacts of climate change and support action to restore marine ecosystems. It brings together works by British and international artists from the last 250 years, including Maggi Hambling, Eva Rothschild, John Crome and Olafur Eliasson.

DARWIN IN PARADISE CAMP: YUKI KIHARA

Saturday 15 March–Sunday 3 August, Sainsbury Centre

Explore the UK premiere of Paradise Camp, the celebrated work by Yuki Kihara, an interdisciplinary artist of Samoan and Japanese descent, alongside the new commission Darwin Drag. Paradise Camp upcycles the works of French painter Paul Gauguin, recasting past narratives by using Fa'afafine models – a third gender community in Samoa - in colourful, hyperreal photographs.

The show also features original works by Gauguin for the very first time.

For ticket information see sainsburycentre.ac.uk

Presented by the Sainsbury Centre

ONE SELF: THE CREATIVE LIFE OF COLIN SELF

Saturday 29 March–Sunday 21 September, Norwich Castle

Born in Norfolk in 1941, Colin Self first came to international prominence as a Pop artist in the 1960s. He has since created an extensive body of work spanning painting, drawing, printmaking, collage, sculpture and ceramics. This major exhibition contains over 130 works of art from the 1960s to the present day.

Norwich Castle Tickets included with museum admission

Presented by Norwich Castle

STEPHEN COX

Sunday 4 May–Sunday 28 September, Houghton Hall

A major exhibition by the acclaimed British sculptor Stephen Cox is being shown at Houghton Hall. Around 20 monumental sculptures in marble and stone will be placed in the landscape,

while smaller works are displayed on the State Floor. This will represent the largest, most comprehensive group of work the artist has ever shown.

For ticket information see houghtonhall.com

Presented by Houghton Hall

**EAST GALLERY FELLOWSHIP: ARIEH FROSH AND ED
COMPSON**

**THE NEW SCROBY SANDS OFFSHORE WIND FARM
INFORMATION CENTRE**

Friday 14 March–Saturday 7 June, East Gallery

An exhibition that looks at the relationship between offshore wind energy and Doggerland, the submerged landmass that used to connect the UK to mainland Europe. The exhibition uses the meeting of wind turbine and seabed as a narrative starting point and presents a mix of collected and adapted material from marine archaeological research and wind energy construction.

Free, no booking required

Presented by Norwich University of the Arts

IMMERSED IN CHANGING LANDSCAPES

Dates TBC, Norwich University of the Arts Immersive Lab.

A series of live performances and immersive video installations featuring works from An-Ting, Chris Allen, Meitao-Qu, Kate Flurrie, Louis Nixon, Kirk Woolford, Collusion and the Broads Authority exploring lost and changing landscapes, inaccessible and sensitive sites and urban memories.

Visit nnfestival.org.uk for more information

Presented by Norwich University of the Arts

DUAL NARRATIVES AN EXHIBITION BY TAKEOVER

Thursday 1 May–Sunday 1 June, OUTPOST Gallery

Takeover is an artist-led project space in Beirut. This exhibition documents Takeover's journey since its inception in 2022, highlighting the duality of creativity and socio-political reality and emphasising the resilience and importance of art spaces such as this.

On Thursday 15 May, 6.30pm there will be a film screening of selected artists' films curated by Takeover.

Free, no booking required

Dual Narratives

RIVER OF HOPE

Friday 9–Sunday 25 May, usual Forum opening hours, The Forum

River of Hope brings together the work of over a dozen Norfolk schools in this fabulous installation. Under the guidance of artist Ali Atkins and supported by river visits with the Norfolk Rivers Trust and Norfolk Wildlife Trust, pupils have created artworks, inspired by local rivers, in the form of boating sails. Some of the older pupils have also worked alongside poet, Lewis Buxton to create written pieces for the project.

The project has enabled around 500 young people to express their concerns about the climate crisis through the design of their artworks and has seen them partnered with counterparts in Rouen, France who have also created their own artworks.

Free, no booking required

The programme in Norfolk is supported by the Ellerdale Trust, the Bacon Charitable Trust, the Arts Society Norwich, Historic England, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and Norfolk Rivers Trust.

SEA LIKE A MIRROR

Sea Like a Mirror is an ambitious national partnership programme commissioned to mark the 200th anniversary of the RNLI. At the heart of the project is White Horses, a new artwork by Ivan Morison. Accompanying this will be two works commissioned and produced by Norfolk & Norwich Festival and created by local artists and communities.

IVAN MORISON

WHITE HORSES

Thursday 15 – Sunday 18 May, see website for times. North Lodge Park, Cromer

A newly commissioned artwork by Ivan Morison, White Horses, combines sculpture, 16mm film and music to explore our complex relationship with the sea through its innate duality as a place of both wonder and peril, and the myriad roles it holds for coastal communities.

This travelling work will be created through shadowing RNLI crew and local people with a deep connection to the water and will present a multifaceted portrait of the sea and Britain's coastal towns.

Free, no booking required.

KATE MUNRO

THE EDGE OF THE LAND

Wednesday 14 – Monday 26 May, 11am–4pm, Cromer
Artspace

Artist and crew member on Sheringham Lifeboat, Kate Munro has been working with children to explore themes of the sea and local maritime culture through research and interviews with local people.

The children created a series of artworks inspired by the place they live and the notion of rescue.

Free, no booking required.

NEIL PARIS

SOS: SUPERHEROES OF THE SEA

Saturday 17 May, see website for times. North Lodge Park, Cromer.

In a collaborative process, dance and theatre artist Neil Paris has been working with children from Sidestrand Hall School to create a short piece of dance theatre inspired by the RNLI's 200 year anniversary. The resultant piece will incorporate drama, movement and music devised and composed by the young people themselves.

Free, no booking required.

Sea Like a Mirror is a partnership project led by Cement Fields, with Art Gene, Norfolk & Norwich Festival, Create North East Lincolnshire working with East Marsh United, and Super Culture. Delivered in collaboration with the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI), and supported with public funding from Arts Council England.

SHORTWAVE COLLECTIVE

GREAT WAVES

Friday 9– Sunday 25 May, Open Wednesdays and Friday– Sunday, 12-4pm PrimeYarc, Great Yarmouth

Shortwave Collective are an international, feminist radio art group. They present new work produced in Great Yarmouth through DIY radio workshops, listening to the electromagnetic landscape and discussions with local people. Shortwave Collective ask ‘how might Great Yarmouth be interpreted as a radio circuit?’

Free, no booking required.

Presented by originalprojects; Co-produced by YARMONICS, Eastern Ear and originalprojects;

ACTION HERO

REBEL RESISTORS RADIO CLUB

Wednesday 21 – Saturday 24 May, 12–4pm, PrimeYarc, Great Yarmouth

Twelve girls from Great Yarmouth have been working with Action Hero, to create their own manifestos for their futures and in this installation, they broadcast them, asking profound questions in a playful and accessible way.

Free, no booking required

Extraordinary Art for Everyone!

Our vision is to use the power of the arts to make our part of the world a truly great place to live, work, learn and play.

We do this through both the annual Festival, and through our participation and engagement programme, Festival Connect & Create where we work year-round across the region to bring exciting creative opportunities to children, young people and their communities.

Creativity builds cognitive complexity, helps us navigate our world and communicate what we experience. It drives change, motivates us and makes learning memorable, yet not all of us have equal access to creative opportunities. Through three interlinked strands we are helping bring creativity to those who need it.

With Creative Schools we co-create artist residencies that bring opportunities direct to the schools with least provision. Over the past year, we've worked with around 20 schools and 550 pupils to deliver projects like MONSTERS and River of Hope.

Creative Places supports artists and communities, often in those areas with least cultural provision, to work collaboratively on creative projects. We're building place-based partnerships across the region and have eight projects underway in locations from Great Yarmouth to the Fens. Check out Dan Canham's Four Portraits from an Edgeland.

Our Creative Leaders programme underpins the other two strands, helping develop the skills of educators, artists and emerging arts professionals to deliver projects in these schools and communities. It does this through a series of networks, professional development opportunities and a bursary scheme that supports project delivery.

BURSARY RECIPIENTS

Our second year of bursary awards saw £40,000 shared between 16 artists and young people looking to develop projects to support schools and communities with creative projects.

We're delighted to be supporting:

Bursaries for Young Creatives – Beth Parlett, Ruby Pinner, Jack Stevens (Norfolk); Katie Evans, Reuben van Tankeren, Isiah Jordan (Suffolk); Chloe Coles-Smith (Cambridgeshire) and Peterborough Collective (Peterborough),

Bursaries for Artists – Kaitlin Ferguson, The Nest Project, Dougie Evans, Sara Moreira (Norfolk); Danny Braverman, Amy Wragg (Suffolk); Tom Roden and Moira Millman (Cambridgeshire).

Keep an eye on socials for news of these projects. Next bursary applications open in September 2025.

A LOOK AHEAD

A couple of projects we are working on...

THICK & TIGHT

This year, queer dance theatre company Thick & Tight have linked up with Queer Birders Norfolk in the research of their new show Natural Behaviour, exploring how queerness is essential to life. Through a series of workshops and bird walks, they've shared each others inspirations and practices to create a new piece of performance. We are delighted this co-commission will be performed at Battersea Arts Centre and The Lowry this summer.

UNLIMITED

We're thrilled to have partnered with disabled-led commissioning body UNLIMITED for one of their UK Partner Awards. From June 2025, we will be working closely with a disabled East Anglian artist to support the development of their

chosen project. A sharing of this development will be presented as part of Festival 2026.

CREATIVE LEADERS NETWORK EVENTS

Our Creative Leaders programme supports networks to develop, support and advocate for those who help bring creativity into our lives. We're hosting a trio of events over the Festival. Join us!

CREATIVE EDUCATORS EVENT

Thursday 15 May, 5.15pm, Speak Easy, Festival Gardens

A networking event for teachers and arts educators. Hear about our school residency programme, Spaces and Places; the role creative engagement can play in mental health, wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem; and develop confidence as a teacher to deliver creative engagement.

Free, booking required.

ARTIST EVENT

Saturday 17 May, 3.15pm, Speak Easy, Festival Gardens

Do you work, or are you interested in working in, socially engaged and community arts? Join our Festival Connect & Create team and leading artists showcasing work in this year's Festival, for an event that offers peer support, knowledge exchange and plenty of inspiration.

Free, booking required.

WHERE THE FLOCK AM I NOW?

Monday 19 May, 6pm, Speak Easy, Festival Gardens

FLOCK brings together Young Creatives (18-25yrs)

from across the region. At our special Festival event, hear about projects delivered by some of our Young Creative Bursary recipients and the opportunities and connections this has opened up for them. There'll also be advice on how to build a career in the creative sector.

Free, booking required.

Creative Leaders is supported by Chadwicks

From bold new work to creativity in classroom...

Through our annual Festival and year-round schools and community work, we bring culture and creativity to over 100,000 people each year. Our funding has been at near standstill for over a decade while costs continue to escalate. The pressure on our organisation is considerable but our ambition has not diminished. You can help us do more.

Donate

Make an immediate impact with a donation to support the Festival's work with schools and young people. You can make a donation when you buy a ticket, at the Festival, or online.

Supporters scheme

Make a big difference from as little as £15 per month and get unique insights into our Festival, schools and community work.

Corporate partnerships

Join our corporate community and associate your organisation with our artistic, community and environmental initiatives. Our

packages offer brand visibility, access to audiences and unique hospitality moments.

Leave a Legacy

Remembering Norfolk & Norwich Festival in your will can leave a lasting legacy for future generations and build on our work nurturing artists and supporting young people.

Trusts & Foundations

We regularly seek grant support for our work, but are always delighted to hear from potential partners who share our vision. Please get in touch if our work can help you achieve your aims.

Donate or find out more at nffestival.org.uk/support-us

Norfolk & Norwich Festival is a registered charity, number 1164424

GREEN NEWS!

At Norfolk & Norwich Festival we believe the arts have an important role to play in exploring, communicating and taking practical action against issues around climate change and the environment. Last year's Festival saw us:

- Send 0% of the Festival waste to landfill
- Turn 20% of waste into refuse derived fuel
- Use mains power in Festival Gardens, reducing Co2 emissions by 96%, compared to diesel generators
- Saves 15,000 cups from landfill by using reusable cups at the Festival Bar

Check out our Sustainability Policy at nffestival.org.uk

VOLUNTEER!

Want to meet new people, learn new skills, learn all about what goes on behind the scenes at a major Festival?

Over 100 people join us every year as part of our volunteer team. There's all kinds of roles from Event Stewards, Assistant Event Managers, Office Assistants, Festival Drivers and much, much more.

Sponsored by Birketts

YOUNG NNF

Aged 18-25?

You can gain access to almost all Festival shows for just £10 and some of you can even access for FREE! Just sign up to our FREE YoungNNF membership.

By becoming a YoungNNF member, you will get access to:

- Reduced ticket prices
- Receive emails and offers about handpicked events
- Find out about creative opportunities to get involved with the Festival, such as FLOCK, our network for Young Creatives

Sign up for free at nnfestival.org.uk

ACCESS

We are dedicated to making Festival events accessible for everyone. We have a variety of initiatives in place to remove barriers to attendance and enable more people to enjoy our work, including:

TICKETS

- Free essential companion tickets for anyone that requires a carer/companion to facilitate their attendance of an event
- Concession discounts – 10% off most tickets for jobseekers, full-time students, D/deaf or disabled people & Go4Less card holders
- £10 tickets for Under 26s
- Free events for everyone to enjoy

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

- Large print brochure
- Audio format brochure

Both available at nnfestival.org.uk/your-visit/access

To request a large print brochure, or audio brochure, you can also email access@nnfestival.org.uk or call 01603 877750

VENUES

- Videos with instructions of how to get to venues and what to expect when you're inside
- 360° photos inside venues and venue guides
- Step free access to most venues
- Volunteers at every event to lend a hand

Find more information on our venues on page 59, contact us or visit our website at nnfestival.org.uk/your-visit/venues

CONTACT US

We understand everyone has different requirements. Our staff are happy to talk to you about any of our events, providing additional information to make your visit comfortable and enjoyable.

Email: access@nnfestival.org.uk

Phone: 01603 877750

Find our access resources online at

nnfestival.org.uk/access

Many of our events are currently in development. Additional access information will be available before May and will be added to the access page on our website.

EVENTS

THE HAUNTED: INSOMNIA & REVERIE – A DREAM OF AUTOIMMUNITY

Monday 19 May, 7pm

The Haunted is a collection of disabled and non-disabled performances and talks investigating female-led narratives exploring insomnia and chronic illness.

St George's Theatre, Great Yarmouth Tickets Pay What You Want £15, £12, £9, £6, £3

Free for people who identify as living with chronic illness, disabled, D/deaf or neurodiverse & Essential Companions

BSL Interpreted

ALEX MCALEER

MIND READER

Tuesday 20 May, 7pm Adnams Spiegel tent

An unforgettable show is packed with unbelievable demonstrations of psychological skill as Alex combines

contemporary mind reading with sharp wit and a flair for showmanship.

Tickets £22, £18 **U18/YoungNNF** £10 **Jobseekers, full-time students, D/deaf or disabled people & Go4Less card holders** £19.80/£16.20 **Essential Companions** Free

BSL Interpreted

WELCOME WEEKEND

Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 May, throughout the day Various locations across Norwich City Centre

A free weekend of performances popping up across the City, from dance and circus to storytelling.

Some shows will have additional access provision, details available on the website from mid-April.

Free, no ticket required

If you have any questions on the content or accessibility of any events please don't hesitate to get in touch on 01603 531800 or access@nnfestival.org.uk

STAFF & BOARD

ABOUT US

Norfolk & Norwich Festival is a charity delivering one of the country's longest running arts festivals and a year-round programme of creativity and culture for children, young people and their communities.

The Festival takes place in Norwich and around Norfolk for 17 days each May and is distinctive because we collaborate with artists to explore our unique physical and cultural identities and make art which is meaningful to the lives of our audiences.

Festival Connect & Create is the Festival's participation initiative, working across the region on projects that support and collaborate with educators, artists, young people and their communities.

Board

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Thanks

With special thanks to all our volunteers, without whom the Festival could not happen.

