

# RIPON Theatre FESTIVAL

5-12  
July  
2026



2026 Festival Guide

[www.ripontheatrefestival.org](http://www.ripontheatrefestival.org)

# Welcome!

We've got a spring in our step for RTF26. It's time to celebrate our 5th Birthday and we're making the most of it!

There's so much to discover with us this summer and we can't wait to share it. From stories in cosy spaces to eye-popping street entertainment, family puppet shows to open-air Shakespeare, there'll be surprises around every corner.

So step right up... with more than 100 events over 8 days and nights to explore, it's time to plan your festival journey. We'll see you there!

*The Festival Team*



Thanks to all our funders, sponsors & supporters



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND**



## LEADING LIGHTS



valentino's



## THEATRE PROPS



delamode  
International Logistics



## WITH SUPPORT FROM



David Hill CBE DL, Dr Frances Cole & Dr Judith Hooper, Ripon Library Action Group, Ripon Rowels Rotary Club, Ripon Rotary Club, Ripon Charity Pantomime Group, Tom Ramsden DL, W W Spooner Trust

## Booking Information

Please book your tickets online at: [www.ripontheatrefestival.org](http://www.ripontheatrefestival.org)

If you have any queries or additional ticketing requirements, please email [boxoffice@ripontheatrefestival.org](mailto:boxoffice@ripontheatrefestival.org).

- We may alter the programme in the event of unforeseen circumstances
- Advance booking is advised for all ticketed events
- Seats are not numbered in any of our venues
- At ticketed events, everyone needs a ticket except infants (under 2)
- Concession eligibility varies – see individual events when booking
- Doors open at least 15 minutes before the start time
- Please either print your ticket or bring it on your phone or tablet
- Tickets may be available at the door, email [boxoffice@ripontheatrefestival.org](mailto:boxoffice@ripontheatrefestival.org) to check
- We cannot offer refunds, so please check your booking carefully before confirming

## New for 2026!

To foster that festival vibe and help audiences take in as many shows as possible, we've set up **MULTI-BUY DEALS** for RTF26.



Buy tickets to 3 or more **EVENING MULTI-BUY** events and save £2 on each ticket.



Buy tickets to 2 or more **MATINEE MULTI-BUY** events and save £1 on each ticket.

Book multiple shows at the same time and **SAVE!**

## We Couldn't Do it without you!

All our events are planned and managed by a tremendous team of volunteers. **THANK YOU!**

If you are interested in joining the team for 2026 – please get in touch. There's fun to be had in a variety of roles throughout the year.

Email [tina@ripontheatrefestival.org](mailto:tina@ripontheatrefestival.org) to find out more about becoming an RTF Volunteer.



# Pre-Festival Event

Saturday 4 July, 4.30pm & 7.30pm |  
Ripon Workhouse Museum

## Tributaries

A celebration of one of Yorkshire's Rivers: the River Yore as told by Fell-Foss Theatre and the people of Ripon and Wensleydale.

The culmination of a project along the river's watercourse, creating theatre from the head of the dales to its cathedral city. Discover the spirit of the river and its importance to those who have lived along its banks through the ages.

Explore history, folklore and environmental challenges in a rich theatrical event with music, poetry, Greek choruses, a giant and a kelpie!

*Running time approximately one hour  
Outdoor seating (chairs provided)*



£5

Age guide 8+

**Fell-Foss** in collaboration with the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust's Rivers4Life project.

Supported by Dales Countryside Museum & Ripon Workhouse Museum.



1.30pm | St Mary Magdalen's (Leper Chapel) then 3pm | Ripon Arts Hub

## Outcast

A fascinating afternoon seeing a new play in process.

Begin at the Leper Chapel with writers Andy and Paul as they share some of the context and history underpinning their new play set in a leper settlement in Medieval Ripon. *Outcast* explores a range of political and social themes that still resonate in the present including poverty, control and environmental collapse.

Moving to the Arts Hub, see selected scenes brought to life in a scratch performance by members of Out of Character Theatre. Your response and reflections will help the writers shape the future direction of the piece.

*Running time approximately 2.5 hours including interval and short walk to the Arts Hub*



£10

Age guide 12+

**Paul Mills, Andy Croft**  
**Out of Character Theatre Company**  
**Director Kate Veysey**

3pm & 6pm | St Mary Magdalen's  
(Leper Chapel)

## Comb

"I saw a banshee once... just outside of Galway..."

When Charlotte was a child her Grandad told her the beginning of a story but refused to tell the full tale. Years later a chance encounter led her to find the rest of his story buried deep within an archive gathered from families in Ireland. Not only did she discover this unbelievable link to her past but also the more startling realisation that she might actually be cursed.

At times chilling, hilarious and moving, *Comb* is a lament for the stories and people we have lost. Through a tangled ride into Celtic, Slavic and Siberian folklore, it is a clarion call for understanding just how interwoven we all are.

*Running time approximately 75 minutes*



£12

Age guide 12+

**Charlotte Mooney**

4.45pm | St Mary Magdalen's  
(Leper Chapel)

## Jord

What happens if we ask for eternal youth? Our bodies and minds turned to stone, preserved in that moment in time?

Jord visits Mother Shipton to request her petrifying abilities to turn her age into stone and preserve her youth. Using live music, poetry and storytelling, this new piece questions and challenges the fascination and obsession with women staying young and delaying ageing.

Presented as a Work in Progress with an informal post-show discussion opportunity, the audience will help feed the development of this show.

*Running time approximately 50 minutes*



Pay What You Can (PWYC)

Age guide 12+

**Imogen Wood**

6.30pm | The Water Rat

## Service Please

Lara, a hopeful but insecure creative writing graduate, is trying to write the next best-selling fantasy romance novel. There's only one thing standing in her way: her casual waitressing job that keeps the money coming in.

Unprepared for the stressful and chaotic reality of working in the service industry, can Lara keep her sanity and get her big writing break, or will she crumble under the pressure of under-staffed shifts, creepy comments and customers who say their only food allergies are women...?

A sharp and pacy monologue served up with humour and honesty.

"Heart-breaking and unflinchingly relatable"  
*The Nerd Party*

*Running time approximately 50 minutes followed by optional post-show supper*



£12 ticket only  
£35 Show & Supper deal  
for two (includes Yorkshire  
Sharing Platter)

Age guide 14+

**Constance Peel**

2.30pm | Ripon Arts Hub

## The Essence of Audrey

Audrey Hepburn. All she really wanted was to be loved and to find love.

She was, and continues to be, an inspiration. A beautiful, modest actress and Ambassador of UNICEF, living a seemingly idyllic life.

Audrey proved to be one of those rare people who truly deserved 'fashion icon' status, but what made her into the star we think we know?

Writer and performer Helen Anker (*Mamma Mia! Dear Evan Hansen*) shares Audrey's successes and failures, her triumphs and disappointments, confronting her anxieties and fears and finding the truth she's never been able to voice before.

*Running time approximately one hour*

Sponsored by  
**Ripon Rowels Rotary Club**



Mark Macdonald

£12

Matinée  
multi-buy  
deal

Age guide 12+

**Helen Anker**

7.30pm | Ripon Cathedral

## Incidents in the Life of an Anglican Slave

A letter written in 1723 from an anonymous enslaved Virginian to the archbishop of London, asking him and King George, to “releese us out of this cruell bondegg” is thought to be the earliest written plea for freedom from slavery in the British Empire.

This extraordinary letter is the inspiration, three centuries on, for this new mono drama by writer, researcher and performer Desirée Baptiste.

Giving a voice to those whose perspective is often hardest to hear, *Incidents* is both a fictional slave narrative and a ghost story. A moving and challenging piece exploring slavery, resistance, and, of course, religion.

The show will be followed by an audience Q&A with Desirée.

*Running time approximately 65 minutes plus Q&A*



£15

Evening  
multi-buy  
deal

Age guide 14+

**Desirée Baptiste**

Presented in partnership  
with Ripon Cathedral



Doors 7.30pm, Show 8pm | Ripon Arts Hub

## Hilarity Bites Festival Special

Hilarity Bites returns to Ripon Arts Hub with a special Festival show, featuring two stars of *Live at the Apollo, QI* and *Have I Got News For You* – Kiri Pritchard-McLean and Ignacio Lopez.

Kiri: “An increasingly impressive comic, making powerhouse stand-up from the thorniest of subjects” *The Guardian*

Ignacio: “Charming, charismatic, hilarious. Will have you leaving with a smile on your face” *Deadline News*

*Running time approximately two hours including interval*



Drew Forsyth

£15

Age guide 18+

**Hilarity Bites**  
Comedy Club

11am | The Ripon Inn Teepee

## Cosmic Storytime

Launch into space from the teepee at The Ripon Inn with a sensory storytelling session for pre-schoolers and their grown-ups. Explore stories with hands-on activities that spark the imagination and engage the senses.

Get ready for a bit of cosmic creativity with the team from Yorkshire CREATE. Listen, touch, move and discover together.

For thirsty and hungry explorers, there's the chance to refuel at The Ripon Inn after you come back to earth!

*Running time approximately 45 minutes*



£6 per child  
(grown-ups go FREE)

Age guide 0-5

Yorkshire CREATE

7pm | King William IV  
Pub Garden (covered area)

## Pub Tales

Armed with just a guitar, a whole lot of sarcasm and many musical stories, Chris shares his troublesome and hilarious experiences of working in British pubs. Hear stories of compulsive liars, disruptive youths, clinical over-sharers, fruit machine addicts and much more.

A satirical outlook on British pub culture that will leave you thinking, 'I know that person' or maybe... 'I am that person'.

Sometimes silly, often swears, but always sharp and satirical. Enjoy a pint or two in one of our pop-up pub venues.

Event also on Thursday at The Ripon Inn.

*Running time approximately 90 minutes including interval*



£12

Age guide 14+

Chris Sinton-Clark

4pm-8pm | Various Ripon pubs

## The Wakeman Mummers

Formed to celebrate the 1100th anniversary of the Ripon's City Charter, the Wakeman Mummers are celebrating their 40th anniversary in 2026. Reviving a tradition which goes back many centuries, the "St Wilfrid Play" will be repeated around five of Ripon's hosterlies by a colourful band of performers and musicians telling, simply and with humour, the story of King Alfred's granting of the Charter in 886AD.

Come along to your local pub and share the tradition.

**The Magdalens (4pm), One-Eyed Rat (4.45pm), The Unicorn (5.30pm), The Royal Oak/Kirkgate (6.15pm), South Lodge (7.15pm)**

*Performance times approximate*



Helen Tabor

**FREE EVENT**

Age guide 12+

**The Wakeman Mummers**

7.30pm | Ripon Arts Hub

## Red

International cabaret siren Amber Topaz brings you a brand new, classy, sassy, fabulous musical revue, celebrating redheaded musical theatre stars of stage and screen. A delicious cocktail of Old Hollywood glamour, West End and Broadway classics.

Full to the brim with iconic show-stopping numbers, honouring these formidable flame-haired trailblazers that have shaped musical theatre herstory.

From the golden era of Hollywood to the bright lights of Vegas. Embodying legendary artists such as Rita Hayworth, Bette Midler, Bernadette Peters, Shirley MacLaine, Gwen Verdon and many more.

*Running time approximately 100 minutes including interval*



Ceranthie McKenzie & Scott Chalmers

**£15**

Age guide 10+

**Amber Topaz**

**Evening multi-buy deal**

5pm | Harrogate Road  
Methodist Church Hall

## Dancing with Colours

A participatory performance for young people and their grown-ups, blending movement, music and, most importantly, colour! Co-created with learning-disabled people and their families.

Expect a joyful, sensory, (and messy!) experience, as artist JoAnne invites you to transform our blank canvas with stories, movement and art supplies – proving that art is everywhere and for everyone!

"I absolutely loved getting paint everywhere, it was great!"

Refreshments served  
from 4.30pm

*Running time approximately one hour*



Elly Welford

£6

Age guide 4+

**JoAnne Haines**

**Mind the Gap**

7pm – 9pm | Meet in the  
Market Place

## Ripon Ghost Walk

Wander the ancient streets and places of Ripon with expert guides. Expect tales of characters long gone but thought to have left something behind. Discover frightening events in the most unlikely places.



£6 (£4)

Age guide 6+

**Ripon Ghost Walkers**

All timed to enable you to experience  
the Ripon Hornblower at 9pm.

Click to  
book!

8pm | The Ripon Inn

## Pub Tales

Another chance to enjoy sharp and satirical music, comedy and tales from the bar. See page 8.

Event also on Wednesday at the King William IV pub.

*Running time approximately 90 minutes including interval*



£12

Age guide 14+

**Chris Sainton-Clark**

8pm | Ripon Arts Hub

## Batty!

Have you got a wild side?

Batty has: she dreams of running barefoot, wild swimming, of talking trees, strange animals and the scent of the seasons turning. In fact she's starting to wonder if she might be a witch...

Join Batty and her companion Wildthing for gossip, gay abandon, exquisite tenderness and raucous stories (with a side order of ranting), as they explore the magic and power of ageing.

This new production from Victoria Firth & Company explores the wildness – as opposed to madness – of women, and how our feral side can reconnect us to ourselves and our environment.

The show will be followed by an audience Q&A with the company.

*Running time approximately 65 minutes plus Q&A*

Sponsored by  
**Dr Frances Cole and  
Dr Judith Hooper**



Barbora Cetlova



Anonymous Design

£15

Age guide 14+

**Victoria Firth & Company**



BSL interpreted performance

Evening  
multi-buy  
deal

10.30am – 12.30pm | Ripon Library

## Writing a 10-Minute Drama

A practical, confidence-building workshop designed for people who are new to writing for the stage.

Participants will be supported to develop an idea, understand the constraints of a 10-minute structure, and begin writing a piece that could be developed further for submission to short play festivals such as *Short + Sweet* or anywhere else.

Fiona Georgiou Hunt is an award-winning screenwriter, producer and creative communicator with a background spanning theatre, film and the wider creative industries.

*Running time approximately two hours*



£10

Workshop for adults

**Fiona Georgiou Hunt**

2.30pm | Allhallowgate Methodist Church

## Stitch in Time - An Afternoon Knitting Cabaret

Excitement! Drama! Romance! And... knitting? An award-winning hour of lost wartime knitting songs. Bring your knitting (or crochet) and stitch along to toe-tapping, needle-clicking tunes.



During the World Wars, millions of women knitted for the soldiers. Mere days after the first bullet was fired, dozens of knitting-themed songs began to appear.

After the wars, many songs were lost, but Canadian soprano Melanie Gall has rescued these clever, sweet and entertaining footnotes in history and given them a chance to live again.

Come along and have a "ball"!

*Running time approximately one hour*



£12

Matinée  
multi-buy  
deal

Age guide 10+

**Melanie Gall**

Refreshments served after the show  
Donations to Ripon Community  
Poppy Project

5pm | Allhallowgate Methodist Hall

## Little Listeners: Mini Magic Flute

Come with us on a fun, enchanting musical adventure inspired by Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*.

Led by a trio of opera singers and an accordionist, *Mini Magic Flute* follows a Prince's search for a Princess, but nothing is quite as it first appears... Join a host of fantastical characters – from a bird-catcher to a dragon! – on this magical adventure.

The perfect opportunity for all the family to experience and share the charm of opera as a relaxed and welcoming tea-time treat.

*Running time approximately 40 minutes*



£6

Age guide 4-7

**Opera North**

Art activity & refreshments from 4pm  
Donations to Ripon Community Popsy Project

8pm | Ripon Arts Hub

## One Man Poe

A captivating night of terror, guilt, grief and murder most foul.

Renowned as the 'Godfather of Gothic Horror', Edgar Allan Poe was a pioneer in establishing the horror genre. Although his works are nearly 200 years old, his stories have stood the test of time and have inspired a countless number of horror writers.

Using Poe's original text from the 1840s, one actor faithfully brings his words to life on stage, performing four of the most terrifying examples of gothic literature.

"This show literally took my breath away" *Everything Theatre*

"A terrifying horror experience that you will struggle to beat" *North West End*

*Running time approximately 135 minutes including interval*



Alva Sawyer

£15

Evening  
multi-buy  
deal

Age guide 12+

**Thredumb Theatre**

10.30am &amp; 12 noon | Ripon Library

## Astro Norma

A musical comedy that's out of this world!

Blast off on a madcap, musical quest to find Grandpa's lost star. But beware! The sneaky Silencer is hot on her trail, ready to silence the tunes!

Packed with awesome aliens, rib-tickling robots, and interplanetary puppets, this joyful space odyssey will have you reaching for the stars...

"Imagination, catchy songs and big personality"  
*The Scotsman*

Running time approximately 45 minutes



£6

Age guide 3-10

*Fladam*

FREE  
events

## Pop-Up Events

### Pop-Up Poetry

A new selection of poems in each venue. Informal performances from Ripon Poets. Age guide 14+

### Stories with Liv

Popular professional storyteller with interactive tales – The Mischievous Monkey, Jack and the Flumflum Tree. Age guide 3-7

### 10-Minute Dramas

New short works, written and performed by up-and-coming local artists creating work for the Short + Sweet Yorkshire Festival. Different dramas in each pop-up. Age guide 14+

### Pop-Up Venues:

*The Unicorn – The Portly Pig – Little Ripon Bookshop*  
See centre pages for all Pop-Up timings.

Plus...

## Costa Cabaret Corner

Take the weight off your festival feet. Enjoy favourite showtunes or discover a new musical to fall in love with. Presented by talented performers from local groups.

1.30pm – 2.30pm | Costa Coffee



All Pop-Up events are free to attend with donations welcome at the end. Cosy venues - capacity may be limited.

# 2026 AT A GLANCE

## SATURDAY 4 JULY

<i>Tributaries</i> <b>PRE-FESTIVAL EVENT</b>	4.30pm & 7.30pm	Ripon Workhouse Museum	River Ure community theatre project	
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## SUNDAY 5 JULY

<i>Outcast</i>	1.30pm-2.30pm, then 3pm-4pm	The Leper Chapel / Ripon Arts Hub	Background to new play & workshop performance	
<i>Comb</i>	3pm-4.15pm	The Leper Chapel	Storytelling for grown-ups	
<i>Jord</i>	4.45pm-5.35pm	The Leper Chapel	Mother Shipton-inspired story	 PWYC
<i>Comb</i>	6pm-7.15pm	The Leper Chapel	Storytelling for grown-ups	

## MONDAY 6 JULY

<i>Service Please</i>	6.30pm-7.20pm (plus supper)	The Water Rat	Waitress under pressure in pacy, honest monologue	
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## TUESDAY 7 JULY

<i>The Essence of Audrey</i>	2.30pm-3.30pm	Ripon Arts Hub	Audrey Hepburn – the truth behind an icon	
<i>Incidents in the Life of an Anglican Slave</i>	7.30pm-9pm	Ripon Cathedral	Slave narrative meets ghost story	
<i>Hilarity Bites</i>	8pm-10pm	Ripon Arts Hub	Kiri Pritchard-McLean and Ignacio Lopez	

## WEDNESDAY 8 JULY

<i>Cosmic Storytime</i>	11am-11.45am	The Ripon Inn Teepee	Fun and interactive story-time for 0-5s	
<i>The Wakeman Mummers</i>	4pm-8pm	Various pubs – see page 9	Traditional tale-telling with music	FREE
<i>Pub Tales</i>	7pm-8.30pm	King William IV pub	Satirical and musical look at British pub culture	
<i>Red</i>	7.30pm -9.10pm	Ripon Arts Hub	Red-headed cabaret siren serves up musical cocktail	

 = You'll need a ticket for this event

PWYC = Pay What You Can

# 2026 AT A GLANCE

 = You'll need a ticket for this event  
**PWYC = Pay What You Can**

## THURSDAY 9 JULY

<i>Dancing with Colours</i>	5pm-6pm	Harrogate Rd Methodist Hall	Tea-time dance, music and messy art for families 
<i>Ripon Ghost Walk</i>	7pm-9pm	Market Place	Spooky guided walk 
<i>Batty!</i>	8pm-9.30pm	Ripon Arts Hub	Wild women explore the magical power of ageing 
<i>Pub Tales</i>	8pm-9.30pm	The Ripon Inn	Satirical and musical look at British pub culture 

## FRIDAY 10 JULY

<i>Writing a 10-Minute Drama</i>	10.30am -12.30pm	Ripon Library	Informal and practical writers' workshop 
<i>Stitch in Time</i>	2.30pm-3.30pm	Allhallowgate Methodist Church	Afternoon cabaret – wartime songs, history & knitting 
<i>Little Listeners: Mini Magic Flute</i>	5pm-5.40pm	Allhallowgate Methodist Hall	Teatime family adventure with Opera North 
<i>One Man Poe</i>	8pm-10.15pm	Ripon Arts Hub	Terrifying tales from the Godfather of Gothic 

## SATURDAY 11 JULY

<i>Singing with Flo</i>	9.30am -10.30am	Allhallowgate Methodist Hall	Start the day with a fun vocal workout  PWYC
<i>Poetry for Breakfast</i>	9.30am -10.15am	The Unicorn	Local poets share their work <b>FREE</b>
<i>Street Entertainment</i>	10am-4pm	Multiple City Centre locations	Theatre, circus, dance, music & more <b>FREE</b>
<i>Astro Norma &amp; the Cosmic Piano</i>	10.30am -11.15am	Ripon Library	Interplanetary musical mayhem 
<i>Stories with Liv</i>	10.45am -11.30am	The Unicorn	Interactive story-time from one of the best <b>FREE</b>
<i>Poetry at the Pig</i>	11am -11.45am	The Portly Pig	Informal readings from Ripon Poets <b>FREE</b>
<i>Puppetry for Beginners</i>	11am -12noon	Allhallowgate Methodist Hall	Fun introduction to puppets  PWYC
<i>Astro Norma &amp; the Cosmic Piano</i>	12noon -12.45pm	Ripon Library	Interplanetary musical mayhem 

## SATURDAY 11 JULY

<i>Short + Sweet Pop-Ups</i>	12.15pm-1pm	The Portly Pig	Four of the best 10-minute new writing works	FREE
<i>Stage Combat for the Fearless</i>	12.30pm-1.30pm	Allhallowgate Methodist Hall	Fake fighting in fun workshop	 PWYC
<i>Stories with Liv</i>	12.45pm-1.30pm	The Little Ripon Bookshop	Interactive story-time from one of the best	FREE
<i>Costa Cabaret Corner</i>	1.30pm-2.30pm	Costa Coffee	Show tunes from local talent	FREE
<i>Pop-Up Poetry</i>	2pm-3pm	The Little Ripon Bookshop	Informal readings from Ripon Poets	FREE
<i>Irish Dance for First-timers</i>	2pm-3pm	Allhallowgate Methodist Hall	Chance to try a new dance style at our pop-up céilí	 PWYC
<i>Short + Sweet Pop-Ups</i>	3.30pm-4.30pm	The Little Ripon Bookshop	Five of the best 10-minute new writing works	FREE
<i>Kirkgate Street Party</i>	4pm-8pm	Kirkgate	Local musicians keep the party rocking	FREE
<i>The Three Musketeers</i>	5.30pm-7.45pm	Ripon Spa Gardens	Thrilling open-air adventure & comedy	
<i>Down to Chance</i>	8pm-9.10pm	Ripon Arts Hub	Action, comedy & radio in true earthquake story	

## SUNDAY 12 JULY

<i>Street Entertainment at Little Bird Artisan Market</i>	10am-3pm	Market Place	Theatre, circus, dance, music and more	FREE
<i>Family Day</i>	10am-4pm	Ripon Spa Gardens	Open-air theatre, music & community fun	FREE
<i>The Poetical Life of Philomena McGuinness</i>	2.30pm-4pm	Ripon Arts Hub	An Irish Nurse in 1939 – touching mono drama	
<i>No Strings Attached – A Puppet Cabaret</i>	8pm-8.55pm	Ripon Arts Hub	Puppets, songs, sketches - fun finish to Festival week	

## FRIDAY 24 JULY

<i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i> <b>POST-FESTIVAL EVENT</b>	7pm-9pm	Ripon Races	Shakespeare's timeless tragedy - open air theatre	
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# Family Weekend: Saturday

featuring...

**FREE  
EVENTS**

The best in street  
theatre, circus, dance,  
magic and fun!

**MARKET PLACE, CITY STREETS,  
CATHEDRAL FORECOURT &  
MINSTER GARDENS**

**10am–4pm**



## Do what Ya Mamma Told Ya!

**Just More Productions**

Comedy, circus and cooking from mother and daughter duo. A joyous journey of plate spinning, food juggling and fire blazing! Will clumsy assistant, Tiny T finally get to taste the food?

## out of the Blue

**Fra Martó**

All the way from Turin! Wash away your troubles and immerse yourself in laundry, laughter and bubbles with Italy's leading female clown. Never has trying to keep the house clean been so much fun.

## The Lost Bus to Ripon

**Ragged Edge Productions**

Hop on board, pop on some headphones and join Gary, the driver who is always getting lost – where on Earth will we end up next?

A fun, interactive audio show for all the family performed inside a stationary vintage bus generously supplied by The Last Stop, Bedale.



## Ye Birdz

### Chicks on Sticks

Magical feathered walkabout with stunning stilt costumes, live percussion and soundtrack by BORG.



## Around the World with Phileas Fogg: Day 79

### Dizzy O'Dare

Hilarious roam-about with the intrepid adventurer and his valet Passepartout as they attempt to circumnavigate the world in 80 days. They just need their hot air balloons to go in the right direction.



*Why not stay all day?*

## The Museum of Memorable Trees

### Harry Pizzey

Miniature exhibition and audio experience on wheels. Discover amazing stories of great trees, listen to evocative tales and calming soundscapes as you explore behind every door. Have you got a tree to add to the museum?

## Tony and Ray Find Their Feet

### Rudkin & Hicks

Friendship, rivalry, work tools, tomfoolery and dance as a pair of workers become distracted from their tasks. Slapstick and clowning inspired by the golden age of silent movies and classic comedy double acts.



Saturday events sponsored by **Ripon Races**

# Family Weekend: Saturday continued...



## Count Ocular

### Tatwood Puppets

A captivating, gothic vaudeville piece, featuring table-top puppetry, close-up magic and enchanting original music to transport audiences back to the bizarre delights of vaudeville and variety.

## Frankie Magilligan

### Tall Paul

With his incredible smile and impeccable fashion sense, Frankie will leave you in stitches with his hilarious antics and incredible juggling skills. And if that wasn't enough, he'll be performing on the tallest unicycle in Ireland.

## Peelers on the Prowl

### Ripon Museums

Watch out for Ripon's overworked Peelers as they deal with drunks and ne'er-do-wells and maybe chase a thief or poacher through the streets.



Helen Tabor



## Hodman and Sally

### The Flying Buttresses

Enchanting and heart-warming puppetry walkabout. Hodman and Sally have lived happily by themselves for hundreds of years, blissfully unaware of the changing world around them. Now they venture out in search of fame, fortune and friendship, with their possessions strapped to their backs.



## Kirkgate Street Party

The festival fun goes on with local musicians from 4pm–8pm. Enjoy a meal or an al fresco drink before taking in another show. Presented in partnership with Ripon Music Open Mic Night.

Supported by **The Portly Pig**

**PLUS TALENTED COMMUNITY PERFORMERS FROM ACROSS THE REGION**

Allhallowgate Methodist Hall

## Saturday Participation Zone

Like the look of what you've seen on the streets?  
Fancy trying something new?

### Singing with Flo - Morning Chorus for Early Birds

Start your day the feelgood way with a jolly good sing!  
Led by dynamic Rock Choir conductor, Florence Glen.

9.30am – 10.30am

### Puppetry for Beginners

Meet some puppets and learn some basic techniques with Mark Edwards from Puppet Power North. Create a simple puppet and learn how to make it move.

11am – 12 noon

### Stage Combat for the Fearless

Inspired by the swashbuckling *Three Musketeers* or the street fights in *Romeo and Juliet*? Learn the secrets behind the action in a fun and active session including safe techniques for punches, slaps and falls.

12.30pm – 1.30pm

### Irish Dance for First-timers

Come and join St Aelred's Irish Dancers for a fun, relaxed céilí! Led by Una O'Connor and with experienced dancers in the mix, you'll quickly learn some moves and pick up the rhythm. Bring a pair of trainers and plenty of enthusiasm.

2pm – 3pm

 **PWYC** All Participation Zone events are **Pay What You Can** events. You can just turn up, but places are limited so advance booking is recommended.

All workshops are Age guide 8+ except Stage Combat (11+)



A fantastic family day out!  
[www.ripon-races.co.uk](http://www.ripon-races.co.uk)



**RIPON RACES**  
Yorkshire's Garden Racecourse

5.30pm | Ripon Spa  
Gardens

## The Three Musketeers



All for One - and One for All! Young D'Artagnan is desperate to join Athos, Porthos and Aramis as an elite Musketeer of the King's Guard. To prove himself he plunges headlong into a breathlessly thrilling adventure to retrieve the Queen's jewels, restore Her Majesty's honour, survive the machinations of scheming Cardinal Richelieu, and cross swords with the deadliest of *femmes fatales* Milady de Winter.

Set against a sweeping panorama of 17th-century France at war, this production is a whirlwind of excitement, broad comedy and ingenious storytelling.

Romance! Swashbuckling! Intrigue! Murder! Betrayal! Revenge...! Dumas's classic has got the lot!

Sponsored by  
**Elstob Auctioneers**

Circle above: Illyria performing 'Robin Hood' at Fountains Abbey, Ripon Theatre Festival 2023. Photo: Helen Tabor



**£18 (£14), under 16s £11;  
family ticket £58**

Age guide 8+

**Illyria | By Alexandre Dumas, adapted by Oliver Gray**

Running time approximately 135 minutes including interval



- Free market appraisals
- Monthly auction of Fine Art & Antiques
- Valuations prepared for probate and insurance



t: 01765 699200 e: [info@elstob.co.uk](mailto:info@elstob.co.uk) [www.elstob.co.uk](http://www.elstob.co.uk)

8pm | Ripon Arts Hub

# Down to Chance



One woman, a radio, and the largest earthquake in US History.

Anchorage, Alaska. 1964. A part-time radio reporter, her teenage intern, a general on leave and a local hobbyist find themselves at the centre of a remarkable relief effort. *Genie Chance*, live on air, must take unimaginable risks to save her community and family from chaos.

Based on an incredible true story, this "deftly staged thriller" (*The Stage*) combines frenetic action, frantic multi-roling, and immersive live sound in this "love letter to the golden age of radio" (*The Scotsman*).

"Simply the best show I've seen this year" *UK Theatre Web*



£15

Evening multi-buy deal

Age guide 12+

**Maybe You Like It**

*Running time approximately 70 minutes*



## Helen Tabor Photography.com

Ripon Theatre Festival  
Official Photographer



Providing impactful events, food and property images to help businesses stand out from the crowd, build their brand, raise their visibility and attract new clients.

# Family Weekend: Sunday featuring...

**FREE  
EVENTS**

Children's theatre,  
circus, dance, music  
and more

**RIPON SPA GARDENS  
& MARKET PLACE**

**10am-4pm**



## The Crow House

Circo Rumbaba

A derelict house appears in the middle of the street. Three captivating and multiskilled performers use aerial, acrobatics, live music and slap-stick comedy to battle the furious crow who has taken up residency. Who will win?

## Frankie Magilligan

Tall Paul

Another chance to catch Frankie with his hilarious antics, incredible juggling skills and the tallest unicycle in Ireland!



## The Soapsud Sisters

Rhubarb Theatre

Join our bubbly beauties with mime, mischief and laughter as they take you for a spin through a washing cycle like no other.



## Punch and Judy

Jolly Good Productions

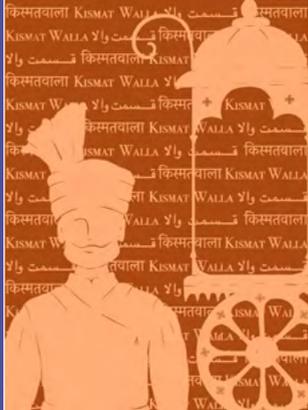
Traditional show with beautiful hand-carved wooden puppets. Fast-moving and funny.

Refreshments  
available

## Kismet Walla

### Thingumajig Theatre

A street theatre puppet show from the company that brought us *Kit and Caboodle*. Capturing the bustle of South Asian street markets with tales of fate, fortune and serendipity.



## Romeo and Juliet

### The Rubbish Shakespeare Company

Enemies. Balconies. Kissing... SAUSAGE ROLLS!???

Three hapless idiots perform Shakespeare's famous tragedy using nothing but tatty wigs and a burst airbed they found by the bins. 60 frenetic minutes of clowning, slapstick and mischievous storytelling, ensuring everyone from 5 to 105 knows what's going on!

This isn't *boring* Shakespeare - it's *bonkers!*



## Events at Little Bird Artisan Market

Who will be popping up or performing at the market on Sunday?

Browse the stalls from 10am–3pm whilst the entertainment goes on.



Why not stay all day?

## Participation Zone

### Yorkshire CREATE

Dive into a vibrant day of theatre-inspired creativity for families, including mask-making, myths and more. Explore hands-on crafts inside or alongside our dedicated tent space in the Spa Gardens. Runs 10am–3.30pm. Sign up for sessions on-site.

## PLUS TALENTED COMMUNITY PERFORMERS FROM ACROSS THE REGION

Sunday events sponsored by **Specsavers Ripon**

# Showcasing Local Talent



## — A LINE-UP OF COMMUNITY PERFORMERS FROM ACROSS THE REGION —

### ★ Saturday

400 Roses  
All for One Choir  
Calle Oche  
Grace Hughes  
Hampsthwaite  
Primary School  
HG33 band  
Janice Hopkinson  
Lily Worth  
Ripon Dance Academy  
Ripon Youth Theatre  
Skellsiders  
Slubbing Billy's Morris  
Somewhere Road  
St Aelred's Irish Dance  
The Music Bank,  
Knaresborough  
Yorkshire CREATE  
Yorkshire Voices



### ★ Sunday

Cricket on the Hearth  
Ripon Goes to Bollywood  
Open the Book  
Orb Community Arts  
Medusa Gothic Morris  
Ripon Dance Academy  
Ripon Trinity Singers  
Ripon Walled Garden  
Slubbing Billy's Morris  
St Aelred's Irish Dance



## Thanks for taking part!

See website for full running orders and location details.

2.30pm | Ripon Arts Hub

## The Poetical Life of Philomena McQuinness

It's 1939 and Philomena, an Irish nurse and poet, has been newly recruited for the British war effort.

But can one live a life true to the poetry inside them when they are constantly being defined by their role in the war?

"If you leave this play feeling anything other than touched and inspired, then you are probably not breathing" – *Broadway Baby*

*Running time approximately 90 minutes including interval*

Sponsored by  
**Specsavers Ripon**



£12

Matinée  
multi-buy  
deal

Age guide 12+

**Moon Rabbit Theatre**

8pm | Ripon Arts Hub

## No Strings Attached - A Puppet Cabaret

An evening of song and sketches and some surprises, all performed by our talented puppets with help from local community performers and Puppet Power North. Join the Festival Team, friends and volunteers for a fun finish to Festival week.

*Running time approximately 55 minutes*



£10

Age guide 10+

**Puppet Power North / community performers**

### Specsavers Ripon

proudly sponsors

## Ripon Theatre Festival 2026

Five years of working together to bring colour and culture to the Ripon community

28-29 Market Square  
Tel 01765 694 777

Specsavers

# Post-Festival Season Finale

Friday 24 July, 7pm | Ripon Races

SHAKESPEARE'S

# ROMEO & JULIET



Two hearts. One fate. A timeless love reborn.

A bold reimagining of the iconic tragedy. Blending dynamic staging, evocative sound, and the enduring power of Shakespeare's verse, this retelling illuminates the passion, peril, and youthful intensity at the play's core, inviting audiences to rediscover the world's most famous star-crossed lovers.

Known for bold, high-energy productions in spectacular outdoor settings, The Duke's Theatre Company sets the benchmark for quality and ambition. Working with industry-leading directors, composers and designers, it showcases an ensemble of eight exceptional performers and technicians trained at the nation's finest drama schools.

Touring nationally throughout summer 2026. Visiting three venues in July, in partnership with North Yorkshire Council – Prince of Wales Terrace, Scarborough (Wed 22), Valley Gardens, Harrogate (Thurs 23) & Ripon Races (Fri 24).

For all venues & tickets see:  
[www.thedukestheatrecompany.co.uk](http://www.thedukestheatrecompany.co.uk)

*Running time approximately two hours  
including interval*

Age guide 7+

£20; 16 & under  
£18.50, plus  
booking fees

The  
Duke's  
Theatre Company

# Reach Out! 2026

Making memories with every generation...

RTF stretches wider and reaches deeper every year with imaginative projects; bringing people together, developing skills and widening horizons.



## From the youngest...

- Live schools' performances with **Opera North's Little Listeners**
- Shakespeare workshops in schools from the **Rubbish Shakespeare Company**
- Intergenerational sessions with Bryony Harris from **Music Moves**

## To the oldest...

- Songs, silliness and storytelling in care homes from Handmade Theatre Company, diving into the past with **Life at the Lido**
- Gentle bedside performances from Spiltmilk Dance, bringing joy and nature with **Bloom**



## Hands-on Activities

### Best Foot Forward

Artists Sharon Hockin and Douglas Black from The Art Guild will be "stepping out" and getting creative with learning-disabled adults at Ripon Walled Garden and Jennyruth Workshops; making, playing and performing around the theme of The Big Red Shoes.

### Puppet Power with Dementia Forward

Puppeteer Mark Edwards will be meeting Young Onset Dementia groups across the region, using puppets for creativity, communication and fun.

Want to know more about RTF's Community Outreach Programme? Email [hannah@ripontheatrefestival.org](mailto:hannah@ripontheatrefestival.org)



## Venues & Access

RTF brings events to a range of venues, some quirky and historic. Our website gives full details about access at each venue.

There's also info about parking, toilets and other facilities – helping us make RTF as accessible as possible.



## Where to Stay, Eat and Drink

Festival-goers are spoilt for choice when it comes to eating and drinking. Ripon has a thriving scene full of independent restaurants, bars and cafés, perfect for pre- and post-show enjoyment.

Make the most of the Festival... there are plenty of comfortable and unique places to stay.



Check out all the options at [www.visitripon.co.uk](http://www.visitripon.co.uk) and watch out for Festival deals and discounts on the Offers page.

## RTF recommends...

Our hospitality partners:

**Crescent Lodge • The Black-a-Moor Inn • The Old Coach House •  
The Portly Pig • The Ripon Inn • The Unicorn Hotel • The Water Rat • Valentino's**

A Big Thank You to all those who help us look after our artists, audiences and volunteers!



**Proud Supporters of Ripon Theatre Festival**

Opening Hours

Wednesday to Saturday

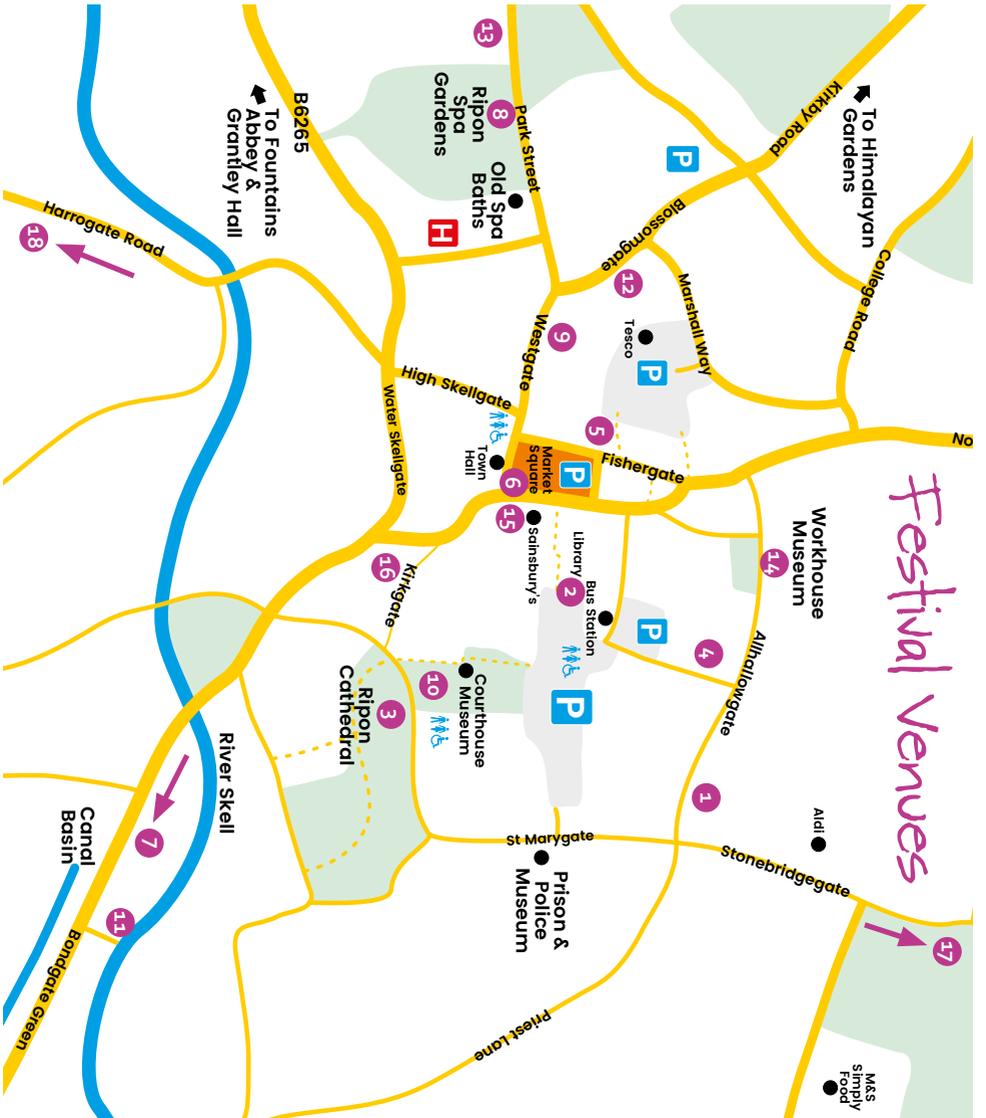
9.00am to 2.00pm, 5.00pm to 10.00pm

Sunday

5.00pm to 10.00pm



01765 604201 | [info@valentinorioson.co.uk](mailto:info@valentinorioson.co.uk) | [www.valentinorioson.co.uk](http://www.valentinorioson.co.uk)



# Festival Venues

- 1 Ripon Arts Hub
- 2 Ripon Library
- 3 Ripon Cathedral
- 4 Allhallowgate Methodist Church
- 5 Costa Coffee
- 6 Market Place
- 7 Ripon Races
- 8 Spa Gardens
- 9 Little Ripon Bookshop
- 10 Minster Gardens
- 11 The Water Rat
- 12 King William IV Pub
- 13 The Ripon Inn
- 14 Workhouse Museum
- 15 The Unicorn
- 16 The Portly Pig
- 17 Leper Chapel
- 18 Harrogate Road Methodist Church

Based on Google Map data as of March 2026 - Rendered by Colour It In Ltd



# HARROGATE FLOWER SHOWS

*Autumn*

**BOOK  
EARLY AND  
SAVE  
£5**

Tickets on sale from  
6 May 2026

**18-20 SEPTEMBER**

**Newby Hall & Gardens**

*A blooming great day out!*

[www.flowershow.org.uk](http://www.flowershow.org.uk)

