

Fringe40 boasts biggest ever Buxton Fringe programme!

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The biggest and longest ever Buxton Festival Fringe, one of Britain's friendliest festivals, takes place from July 3-24 with close on 220 separate events and over 760 individual performances.

Fringe40 marks 40 years of the arts event which began in 1980 and has become an important part of the Brighton-Buxton-Edinburgh circuit for performers, who come from all over the country and abroad. The Fringe is a great success story having grown over the years to the point where it consistently contributes well over £300,000 to the local economy.

Buxton is a Spa, Festival and University town surrounded by the hills of the Peak District. The highest market town in England, it was cited in The Sunday Times' Best Places to Live Guide in 2018 and is eagerly awaiting the reopening of its historic Crescent as a 5* hotel later this year. The biggest UK Fringe between Edinburgh and Brighton runs parallel with the renowned Buxton International Festival, which started in 1979 and celebrates its own 40th anniversary.

The 40th Buxton Fringe features an explosion in Music (53 events up from 35 in 2018) and Spoken Word (24 up from 9 in 2018). Meanwhile the traditionally large categories of Theatre and Comedy are as massive as ever with 58 and 44 events respectively. Dance, Film, For Families, Street Theatre, Film, Visual Arts and more are featured alongside the major Fringe categories with unusual venues ranging from a train to an ancient cavern!

Traditionally a platform for the stars of tomorrow, Fringe40 is also providing a welcoming space for the celebrities of today including comedian/actor Rob Rouse (BBC Two's Upstart Crow) and Bard of Barnsley Ian McMillan.

Among many Comedy treats are a brand new show from Rob Rouse (also performing with his award-winning actor wife Helen Rutter in Theatre), Radio 4's cop turned comic, Alfie Moore, award-winning sketch troupe The Dead Secrets, Russian stand up Oleg Denisov from Moscow and a Laurel and Hardy Cabaret from popular Lucky Dog Theatre.

Theatre sees new shows from acclaimed theatre outfits Sudden Impulse and Fishhouse Theatre, two productions featuring the multi-award-winning actor and singer Tayo Aluko, an interactive First World War drama called Letters of War, top class youth theatre from REC and Shadow Syndicate and the return of hit performers from 2018 such as James Napier with Old Bones and Debbie Cannon with Green Knight.

A vast and diverse Music section includes a jazzy love story from award-winner Egriega, High Baroque virtuosity from Mr Simpson's Little Consort, music on the move from the Blues Train, City of Manchester Opera, epically ambitious guitarist Chris Woods, acclaimed pianists Jonathan Ellis and Eden Walker and local fun from High Peak Swing Band, High Peak Orchestra, Buxton Studio Choir, Kaleidoscope Choir and many more.

An excitingly big Spoken Word section includes Ian McMillan, PsychicBread and returning award-winning performers Genevieve Carver and Paul Webster. Poetry, guided walks, comedy, storytelling, one-man shows and even photography all stretch the boundaries of this rewarding category.

Visual Arts is dominated by the return of the Buxton Art Trail (with a record-breaking 80 entries) but there is also the prestigious Buxton Spa Prize (coming into the Fringe for the first time), the Great Dome Art Fair, a fascinating performance installation based on sleep and many other artistic must-sees.

There are three managed venues this year - Underground Venues, The Rotunda and The Green Man Gallery - plus a great many events taking place around the town, in Poole's Cavern and in outlying venues from Eyam to Chelmorton.

The massive, free 68-page printed programme (printed on 100% recycled FSC paper) is available from June. Up-to-the-minute information is also available on www.buxtonfringe.org.uk or on the brand new Buxton Fringe App, the Android version of which is now in the Google Play Store. Both friendly and professional, the Fringe also organises a Fringe Information Desk, a unique reviews system and the sought-after Fringe Awards.

Arts for all

Buxton Fringe's philosophy is that art is for all and Fringe organisers spread the word by entering a float in the Buxton Carnival - this year in combination with the Buxton International Festival and with a Carnival of the Animals theme. The Fringe also promotes a free open-air showcase called Fringe Sunday (this year July 7). Fringe @ 5, a busking opportunity for performers, meanwhile takes place at the Bandstand in Buxton's Pavilion Gardens at 5pm from July 8. Many other events are free, including the award-winning Buxton Pride Picnic and most of the Visual Arts section. All free shows are additionally listed on the website's Fringe for Free page.

The Fringe also conducts community initiatives this year including the organisation of a Dementia Friends training session. It provides work experience for local students and encourages entrants to perform in schools, care homes and youth organisations.

A BAFA member, the Fringe has given talks at BAFA Roadshows and belongs to the Derbyshire festivals organisation, Festivity.

Fringe chair Keith Savage adds: *"This July Buxton will be busier than ever with music, theatre, comedy and the full range of visual arts on offer from morning through to late in the evening. The Fringe programme is 20% bigger than last year and we are unashamedly excited about looking forward to celebrating our 40th Festival."*

The Fringe is grateful to its long-term sponsor the University of Derby, and to the Trevor Osborne Charitable Trust and High Peak Borough Council for financial and practical support.

NOTE TO PRESS:

For further information, interviews, press releases and pictures please contact press@buxtonfringe.org.uk or tel: 01298 79351