



# Getting to know Theatre Royal Wakefield

We are the jewel in Wakefield's crown, built in 1894 our theatre is the design and vision of famous architect Frank Matcham.

Our Grade II\* listed building is the smallest surviving Matcham theatre, the beautiful and ornate auditorium holds 499 people.

Our Walker Studio is the newest part of Theatre Royal Wakefield and is a fully accessible space.

Our Creative programme on and off the stage engages our local community, and develops local talent.



Supporting people to reach their potential



Weekly training opportunities



Engaging our local community



Showcasing local talent

Here at Theatre Royal Wakefield we have a busy Participation programme, using the performing arts to enhance the lives of people across the district. We create training programmes and targeted participation projects for different communities. These activities encourage diverse engagement in the arts. This work goes beyond providing theatrical training and technical skills – participants build and develop self-confidence, wellbeing, aspirations and social engagement. All our activities are either free to access or include bursaries to ensure all can participate.



*‘For young people with learning disabilities who have a talent for music making, there is absolutely nothing else like this in the district. They have really grown in confidence so much and really thrived through both the online and in-person sessions.’* – Parent of Participant

**Chime** is Musical Theatre training for learning-disabled young people, which provides a sociable, fun environment. Participants take part in a range of activities to develop skills in performing arts as well as transferrable life skills at a key transitional period in many of these young people’s lives. Our Chime students take to the stage in the Matcham Auditorium as part of Performance Academy Showcases.

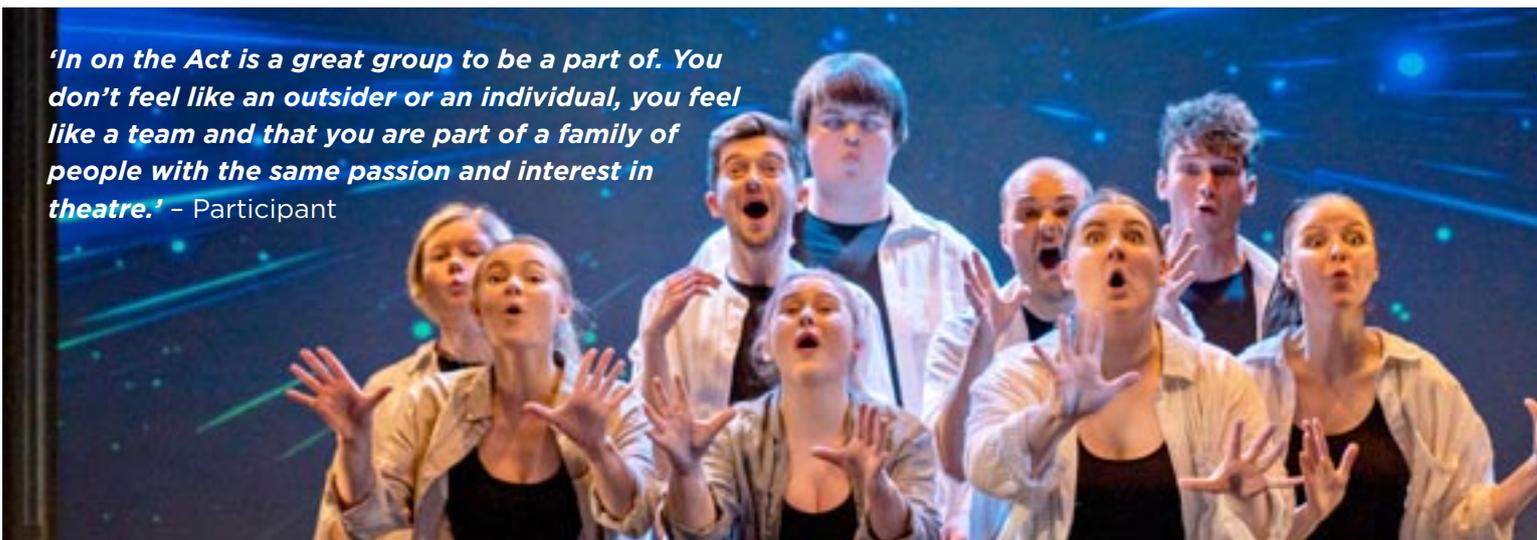
**In on the Act** is Theatre Royal Wakefield’s training programme for young theatre-makers aged 18-30. They meet to devise and create new theatre, develop performance skills and perform scripted work led by a professional director and facilitator. In on the Act supports participants to meet other like-minded theatre makers to share stories and ideas.

**Performance Academy** and **Performance Academy Kidz** are our Saturday performance training programmes for young people aged 5-18. Performance Academy strives to be as inclusive as possible; there are no auditions to join and we offer assisted places and full bursaries for those who may be unable to pay the full fees. The delivery team boast a wealth of industry experience from both professional and community theatre settings, they inspire and share their expertise with the next generation of performers. Participants develop skills, confidence, and an enjoyment of live performance.

*‘The tutors always give you new opportunities and make you feel special. You are free to really express yourself, no matter what you’re good at.’* – Participant



*‘In on the Act is a great group to be a part of. You don’t feel like an outsider or an individual, you feel like a team and that you are part of a family of people with the same passion and interest in theatre.’* – Participant





*‘When I’ve been here it’s not just been to speak English, I play in the games. The Theatre is like my home and the people, they are like my family. I feel better about myself when I improve my English’ - Participant*

We are proud to be a **Theatre of Sanctuary** offering opportunities to our local Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Migrant communities.

Our weekly **Conversation Café** is a friendly space where participants can drop-in, meet new people and practice English over a cup of tea and a biscuit. Raise Your Voice workshops offer role-playing activities to help develop the confidence, support wellbeing and allow people to explore cultural differences. This is alongside supported theatre visits to performances.

On Saturday mornings we run storytelling sessions, **Wakey! Wakey!**, for pre-school aged children and their families. The young participants and their families are invited to engage in the fun and creative story time to support integration and language skills allowing us to target those for whom English is not their first language.



Theatre Royal Wakefield works with **older people** in the community at risk of social isolation by offering workshops and classes that enable participants to express themselves creatively, encouraging new friendships and offering new opportunities. Working with local partners in the community, older people are supported to attend the Theatre as both audience members and participants.



*‘I’ve been caring for my husband for 20 years; my confidence had gone. I’ve been meeting new people and looking forward to sessions. If anyone had told me two weeks ago that I would stand and talk in front of people I wouldn’t have believed them’ - Participant*

Theatre Royal Wakefield is a proud member of **Theatre Nations Partnerships**, a three year strategic audience development initiative by the National Theatre. Each year productions will tour to Wakefield Secondary Schools and a National Theatre production will visit Wakefield. Alongside this project **Speak Up** is an intensive co-creation programme taking place weekly in five Secondary Schools in the Wakefield district.



We have a Creative Programme both on and off stage, which is engaging and accessible to our local community. Our stage is occupied year-round, featuring drama, dance, musical theatre, comedy and live music. We cater for the tallest to the smallest with shows to excite young and old alike. We are also proud to present work from our local community, amateur societies and groups on our stages.

Our own produced work includes our annual Pantomime featuring a young chorus and our annual Wakefield Youth Music Theatre production. Both showcase local talent by providing opportunities on and off stage for those looking to start careers in the performing arts. Our Pantomime is a 'must see' event, performed to over 31,000 audience members annually.

The Pantomime and our Wakefield Youth Music Theatre productions also include signed performances and our Pantomime supports a relaxed performance to widen access to our work and the performing arts. We also offer reduced price tickets



for schools, supporting this important first step for children on their journey in the Performing Arts.

Our Creative Director is John Godber, the award winning writer of *Bouncers*, *Teachers* and *Up 'n' Under*, and together with the John Godber Company we have co-produced many of his plays, even having an extended run in London's West End in 2019 with *Scary Bikers*.



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We are embedded in our local community and have a brilliant team of local volunteers, who loyally support our work across the organisation giving excellent service to our audiences and participants.

Our amazing Members support the work of the Theatre and take part in exclusive events. We host regular fundraising events such as our Afternoon Teas, Gala and Golf Day, which support our year-round fundraising.



To find out more about our work and how you can support us either visit [theatreroyalwakefield.co.uk](http://theatreroyalwakefield.co.uk)

Or contact the Development Team at [development@theatreroyalwakefield.co.uk](mailto:development@theatreroyalwakefield.co.uk)  
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Photography: Paul White

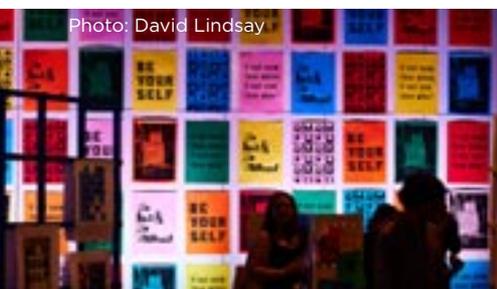


Photo: David Lindsay



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