

# WATFORD PALACE THEATRE



**Reflecting on Success:  
Looking to the Future**

PRODUCING  
PRESENTING  
PARTICIPATING  
PARTNERING

## A year in numbers...

- Reaching a total of 180,000 people
- Over 16,000 participatory sessions
- 177,000 unique website visits
- A pantomime attended by over 25,000 visitors
- More than 330 artists supported
- Visits generate over £1.2m of spending in the local economy
- Over 300 performances and 250 film screenings
- More than a dozen productions produced or co-produced
- Productions seen in more than 60 towns and cities across the UK



# Watford Palace Theatre...

## is a local theatre with a national reputation

The creative hub at the heart of Watford, the Palace engages people through commissioning, creating and presenting high-quality theatre, and developing audiences, artists and communities through exciting opportunities to participate. Contributing to the identity of Watford and Hertfordshire, the Palace enriches people's lives, increases pride in the town, and raises the profile of the area. The beautiful 600-seat Edwardian Palace Theatre is a Grade II listed building, busy with live performances and film screenings seven days a week, offering world-class art to the tens of thousands of people visiting the Theatre each year.

The quality of work on stage and beyond is central to the Theatre's ethos. Recently, the Palace has enjoyed critical acclaim for its productions of Alan Ayckbourn's **Time Of My Life** (2011), Gary Owen's **Mrs Reynolds and the Ruffian** (2010, TMA Best New Play nomination) and Neil Simon's **Brighton Beach Memoirs** (2010, TMA Best Supporting Performance in a Play nomination).

Work created at Watford Palace Theatre regularly tours nationally. Recent co-productions include Tanika Gupta's **Great Expectations** with English Touring Theatre, **The Human Comedy** with the Opera Group and the Young Vic (nominated for the Evening Standard award for Best Musical), Marks and Gran's **Von Ribbentrop's Watch** with Oxford Playhouse, Jack Thorne's **Bunny** with nabokov (Edinburgh Fringe First 2010) and **Stick Man** with Scamp which continues to tour nationally and internationally.

The Palace has commissioned and is producing new plays with a range of exciting writers including Julian Mitchell's **Family Business** (2011) and Charlotte Keatley's **Our Father** (2012).

Projects such as **Windrush** (2010), **Hello, Mister Capello** (2010) and **Milestones** (2008) have brought together the creativity of Watford's diverse communities. These build on the regular programme of Palace and Hertfordshire County Youth Theatres, adult workshops, backstage tours, community choir and extensive work with schools.



# During the next three years Watford Palace Theatre will...

- extend its reach regionally, nationally and internationally, ensuring its work is seen by as many people as possible
- commission and develop more new plays, particularly encouraging and supporting Asian writers
- engage with the diverse communities of Watford and beyond, through producing more projects in and with the community
- develop new audiences, in particular families, culturally diverse communities and young people
- strengthen its reputation as a key presenting venue for theatre and dance within the developing national framework

- work in unconventional spaces, in the building and outdoors, to reach audiences who might never have bought a ticket for traditional theatre
- increase its role in developing creativity and nurturing talent in Watford and the region
- deepen and extend its relationship with existing and new Resident Companies and Creative Associates
- further explore the opportunities offered by new technologies and digitalisation
- increase its engagement with the local business community
- develop a national and international reputation for diverse theatre



# Watford Palace Theatre...

**A 21st Century Producing Theatre – open to ideas,  
collaborative in approach, imaginative with resources**

- produces high quality work that is distinctive, ambitious and embraces different styles of theatre
- commissions new plays with challenging roles for actors
- creates opportunities for participation for people of all ages and backgrounds in Watford, Hertfordshire and the surrounding region
- attracts artists of stature to Watford as well as nurturing new and emerging talent
- presents the work of high quality companies and artists on its stage and screen
- works in partnership with artists, producers, community groups and businesses
- is at the heart of the Watford community



**Quality theatre on your doorstep...**

**“It’s a jewel... just 17 minutes from Euston”**

THE INDEPENDENT

# Creative Associates

Watford Palace Theatre extends the ambition and reach of its work through partnership projects and by offering developmental resources to the following Resident Companies and Creative Associates:

## RESIDENT COMPANIES

**Rifco Arts**, a theatre company producing new writing celebrating British Asian culture

**nabokov**, a new writing theatre company from the Eastern region

## CREATIVE ASSOCIATES

**Charlotte Keatley**, an internationally acclaimed playwright best known for her hit play *My Mother Said I Never Should*

**Gary Owen**, an award-winning playwright whose work has been successfully produced nationally

**Kate Flatt**, an acclaimed international choreographer living in Watford and working around the world

**The Opera Group**, producing and touring quality music theatre and opera

**Scamp Theatre**, producers for the Eastern region specialising in work for young people

**Stacey Gregg**, an emerging young playwright with a distinctive voice

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