



IN THE LOOP!

This newsletter brings you the latest Playhouse news, developments and offerings. A bi-weekly update to help keep you In The Loop until we can welcome you back into the building.

INDUSTRY UPDATE



It is no secret that Covid-19 is having a devastating impact on the theatre industry, especially for organisations like Alnwick Playhouse, where 92% of our income comes from tickets and related sales, this revenue stopped overnight.

Since our closure, most of the Playhouse core staff team have been furloughed. It continues to be a hugely challenging time for venues, artists and creative communities.

Latest Government plans

Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden has announced a five-stage "roadmap" for theatres, concert halls and arts centres in England to re-open. The roadmap moves from rehearsal and training (with no audiences and adhering to social distancing guidelines) to stage five, which would see performances allowed indoors. The first two phases of the roadmap are already allowable: physically distanced rehearsal and

training with no audiences; and physically distanced performances for broadcast and recording purposes. However there are no dates or timelines for the progression through the roadmap to stage five which will eventually open Theatres to the public for live performances.

The Government have announced that Cinemas, Galleries and Museums can reopen from 4th July if they can prove they can do so, safely, by implementing social distancing measures.

What does this mean for the Playhouse?

The Playhouse is a multi-arts venue presenting a diverse mix of live events including film and streamed performances with a Gallery space upstairs allowing free entry to the public. We also have a café offer to patrons provided by McKenna's on the ground floor.

For the Playhouse to operate as a Theatre for Live performance, we remain closed until the Government adds dates and details to the five-stage "roadmap" for theatres, concert halls and arts centres in England.

For the Playhouse to operate as a Cinema, we are currently planning and observing the information from the film industry sector. It is clear that there will be a phased re-opening of cinemas across the UK. It is evident that social distancing is easier to implement for the larger purpose built, multi-screen cinemas than the smaller independent cinemas. There is no 'one size fits all' in terms of social distancing for an organisation, a lot depends on the physical layout of the building, such as how wide and how many entrances, exits, staircases and toilets the building has.

Some multi-screen cinemas shall be opening from July 4th, with other multi-screens opening later in July and August. Smaller independent cinemas are reviewing the situation but not planning to open until September onwards.

The Playhouse has one cinema screen and so it falls into the category of a small independent cinema. Like other smaller independent cinemas the Playhouse shall be considering a later opening date and tentatively planning in October for a November film programme.

The Playhouse Gallery has adapted well since closure and moved all exhibitions online with an independent Facebook page. The online Gallery has allowed artists to continue to exhibit and sell their work online. The Gallery shall continue online until we can re-open the Playhouse fully with a cinema and/or live programme.



Part of the new and improved offer of the Playhouse now includes McKenna's Café on the ground floor. The Playhouse staff, volunteers and patrons have all been delighted with McKenna's wonderful food offer and welcoming staff. McKenna's play an important role at the Playhouse and are very much part of the Playhouse team. McKenna's will also re-open when the Playhouse can operate with a cinema and live programme offer.

Northumberland Venues

The Playhouse along with other Northumberland Arts Centres including The Maltings, Berwick and Queens Hall Arts, Hexham all operate with a dedicated, small, core staff team working alongside an incredible group of Volunteers. We are communicating regularly during this crisis and making tentative plans towards the re-opening of all three venues, as soon as it is safe to do so.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART

82%

are looking forward to
supporting their local
venue

Keeping in touch with our audiences is difficult when the building is closed and most of our staff have been furloughed. Customer Surveys are a very helpful forum to keep us in touch with your views and opinions.

Over 800 of you got involved with *After The Interval (Act One)* Survey. The results will help us in our planning over the coming months.

The Playhouse results for *After the Interval (Act One)* is available [here](#).

The national results from over 300 organisations for *After the Interval (Act One)* is also available [here](#).

69%

are looking forward to the
'buzz' of being at a live event

After The Interval (Act Two) Survey is currently available to participate in, the results will help us further understand your views on booking tickets, returning to live cultural events and experiencing culture in different formats.

To take part in *After The Interval (Act Two)* click [here](#).

THIS WEEKS WATCHLIST



Jonny Tull (pictured left) works with the Playhouse team on film programming. Jonny is based in the north east and works with venues around the country on [programming and audience development projects](#).

Whilst cinemas are closed we asked Jonny to share some of the films available right now online on Netflix, Amazon Prime, All4 and BBC iPlayer for you to explore over the next two weeks.

Click [here](#) to view this weeks Watchlist.

SUMMER OPEN EXHIBITION

The Playhouse Gallery delivers an average of nine exhibitions each year and includes both professional and community based work. The exhibitions showcase a range of artwork from established artists to new emerging talent within the North East of England

In response to Covid-19 at the end of March the Playhouse Gallery was able to move it's exhibition programme online, work can now be browsed through the Playhouse website. On the 1st April we launched the Playhouse Gallery's own [facebook page](#) to help support our network of visual artists.

This week we launched our SUMMER OPEN EXHIBITION

This summer's exhibition is our first Summer Online Open Exhibition, showcasing both professional and amateur artists based in Northumberland. We are excited to bring you this wonderful selection of chosen artworks.

Click [here](#) to view the gallery online.



OUTDOOR CULTURAL EVENTS



It is a very frustrating time for the Playhouse and other indoor venues who cannot currently welcome audiences back safely. The slightly good news, is that we live in a beautiful part of the country and the weather is improving and restrictions on allowing outdoor activities are lifting for the summer.

We would like to encourage everyone to enjoy as many cultural events in the great outdoors until it is safe for the Playhouse to re-open. Running outdoor events and/or festivals is not something the Playhouse is considering over the summer. Outdoor event production does require organisations and staff with specific outdoor event experience and insurances to ensure the safety of both performers and audiences.

[Alnwick Castle](#) (pictured above) grounds are planning to reopen for the summer with allocated time slots, social distancing and reduced ticket prices. The Castle have chosen the Playhouse as one of their charities to support and we are very grateful.

[The Alnwick Garden](#) has recently opened its gates and are taking online bookings.

[Culture Northumberland](#) is a brilliant resource for keeping up to date with cultural and creative offerings across Northumberland.

We hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter and we shall be in touch again in two weeks.

Thank you for reading In The Loop



Alnwick Playhouse
Bondgate Without
Alnwick
Northumberland
NE66 1PQ

Tel: 01665 660550
www.alnwickplayhouse.co.uk

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