

Third curtain call for Hostry

The third Hostry Festival returns today offering 10 days of arts, music, theatre and more — and a celebration of the Norfolk arts scene. **SIMON PARKIN** reports.

There surely cannot be an arts festival with a more impressive setting than the Hostry Festival, which for 10 days will hold a showcase of musical and theatrical entertainment in Norwich Cathedral's Hostry.

Organised by Stash Kirkbride, Rebecca Chapman and Peter Barrow, with Peter Beck as associate producer, the event, which begins today and runs until November 3, builds on two previous successful events.

Bigger and better this year it will focus on Norfolk talent and include a special production of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, *Starlings on the Green*, a specially commissioned new play by Hamilton Wilson, classical performances from the Chamber Orchestra Anglia and the Kustendyke Quartet, a celebration of Benjamin Britten with soprano Lisa Cassidy as well as numerous other events and performances.

The Norfolk Arts Awards will also return for the second year to highlight some of the county's creative champions, and people will once again have the chance to nominate and vote for their heroes of the arts world with the EDP People's Choice Award.

"For 2013 we have increased the festival events from 12 to 22, and the number of days from nine to 11," said Stash Kirkbride.

"The landscape is really, really exciting. Every project has a strong Norfolk connection. Throughout the whole festival it is all about Norfolk, with Norfolk projects and events being commissioned.

"Last year was all about new work and writing. This year we have returned to classic stories being told."

At the heart of proceedings will be a production of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* — the story of Nora and Torvald's release from the untruthfulness of their married life together — which was originally written by 19th-century Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen and premiered in 1879.

"*A Doll's House* is an all time



FROM LEFT: Rose Tremain; The Hostry Festival organisers; The Dolls House cast; Louis De Bernières; and below, Lisa Cassidy.

Hostry Festival Events

- **My Norfolk Arts Exhibition launch and reception. October 24, 7pm-10pm. The free exhibition is then open daily 9.30am-4pm until November 3 and at all performances.**
- **Chamber Orchestra Anglia Concert. October 25, 7pm. Tickets £15 (£12 cons).**
- **Dinner Jazz with Cyan Traces hosted by Mike King. October 27, 7.30pm. Tickets £25.**
- **Ibsen's A Doll's House. October 29-31, November 1-2, 7pm. Tickets £15 (£12 cons).**
- **Starlings on the Green by Hamilton Wilson. October 31, November 1-2, 6pm. Tickets £5.**
- **The Poet's Echo with Lisa Cassidy in concert. October 30, 1.30pm. Tickets £12 (£10 cons).**
- **BBC Radio Norfolk Live. October 31, 11.30am. Free ticketed event.**
- **Norfolk Authors in Profile event including writers Rose Tremain, Louis de Bernières, Hilton Pashley and Andrew Cowan. November 1, 1pm. Tickets £12 (£10 cons).**



- **A Real Man's Guide To Sainthood. The Garage, in Chapel Field North, October 31, 7.30pm. Tickets £10 (£5 under-25s).**
- **Looking Back and Dropping Names with Moray Watson. The Narthex, at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, November 1, 12.30pm. £12 (£10 cons).**
- **Emil and the Detectives. The Garage, November 1, 2pm. Tickets £10 (£5 under 25s).**
- **The Kustendyke Quartet presented by Roger Rowe. The Narthex at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, November 1, 7pm. Tickets £15 (£12 cons).**
- **Bo Nanafana It's a Wrap Party. Bam Bam in Tomblond, November 2, 9pm-3am. Tickets £10.**

classic about family life, and we have a strong cast for the show including some of our regular actors that people will recognise and also some new faces," said Stash Kirkbride.

"We have also commissioned in association with Jarrold and the UEA a new piece of writing called *Starling on the Green* which is based on the themes of Ibsen's play."

Starlings on the Green has been written by Norwich-based writer Hamilton Wilson who has also created the new translation for *A Doll's House*.

Mr Wilson, who has been involved in the festival since it first began, said *Starlings On The Green* compares modern day life to 1879, and revolves around a chance conversation between two strangers, Alice and Rowley, who meet in a park.

"The idea is to show the difference between how life was in Ibsen's day compared to how

it is today, what has changed and actually what hasn't really changed very much and what should change," Mr Wilson said.

"One of the things that has changed from then to now is people can meet as strangers and talk about serious things which they could not do in the past."

The 40-minute play will be performed on three nights, shortly before *A Doll's House*. "Ibsen is still there the whole way through but now beneath the surface, so I do hope this will give you an extra bit of fun and add to your appreciation and enjoyment of his great play."

The festival also features an expansive new work by Total Ensemble Theatre Company, directed by Rebecca Chapman, as well as many local writers, authors and artists.

"Total Ensemble Theatre Company is back and doing some new devised work called *Dignity* (*The Right To Move*) which is in

four parts. They are also presenting a workshop for people to get involved with," said Stash Kirkbride.

"We are also delighted Jarrold has come on board for the Norfolk authors' event which includes Rose Tremain and Louis de Bernières among the guests.

"BBC Radio Norfolk will be broadcasting live from the festival on one of the days. Our My Norfolk art exhibition has also come together well and it's great to be able to have visual arts in this year's festival. We also have a great musical line-up too."

The Chamber Orchestra Anglia will be performing a programme entitled *From Norfolk To Normandy*, their second collaboration with Norwich HEART Digital Heritage Project following on from their successful concert last year at Norwich's Guildhall. The concert on Friday (7.30pm) will mix classical music with a six short films

focussing on the year's surrounding the Second World War.

The Poet's Echo, featuring soprano Lisa Cassidy and acclaimed Norfolk classical guitarist Georgina Whitehead, will feature mesmerizing music from Britten.

The festival finale will be a party organised by Norwich cabaret experts Bo Nanafana. "We are pleased to have Bo Nanafana as part of the festival with the *It's A Wrap Party*," said Stash Kirkbride. "They are such a cult event programmer and won one of the Norfolk Arts Awards last year, so it's great to have them on board.

"We also have the new satellite events at other venues in Norwich, and we are working with The Garage, the Cathedral of St John the Baptist and Bam Bam."

■ **For full details of events, times, venues and ticket details visit: www.hostryfestival.org**