



# Jean Cocteau's romantic melodrama returns to the stage at Hostry Festival

**A tale of passion, tragedy and intrigue is taking to the stage at Norwich's Hostry Festival this week.**

French melodrama *The Eagle Has Two Heads* is the autumn arts extravaganza's central show, and the production, which opened on Monday, runs until Saturday.

Set in an Austrian castle in about 1910, the Jean Cocteau play sees a queen's would-be assassin fall hopelessly in love with her.

For a brief moment in time their love blooms – but it is not long before the corridors of power begin to echo with disapproval.

Stash Kirkbride, the director of the show and artistic director of the Hostry Festival, said the production gave audiences a unique chance to see the play which was first performed in Paris in the 1940s.

"It's a revival of a long lost French melodrama, a romantic play not seen in Norfolk since

**EMMA KNIGHTS**  
emma.knights@archant.co.uk

1947 when it was performed at the Maddermarket Theatre," he said.

"We are proud to be returning this play to Norfolk and for the first time at the Hostry Festival we are also doing a play completely in the round.

"Audience members will enter the theatre space at the Hostry and they will be greeted by a huge 20ft by 15ft mural of the eagle with two heads that has been painted by artist Gennadiy V. Ivanov, and they will enjoy a highly charged evening of romantic melodrama.

"I'm very proud and very excited to present an extremely strong cast of actors from Norfolk as well as live music from cellist Ivan McCready."

Actress Tracey Catchpole plays

the queen in the show and Adam Edwards plays Stanislas the assassin.

They are joined by fellow cast members Peter Barrow, Lucy Monaghan, Christopher Neal and Tawa Groombridge.

The show is among a number of events taking place at Norwich Cathedral's Hostry this week as part of the festival.

Other events include a free screening of the 1948 film version of *The Eagle Has Two Heads* today, a musical event inspired by Julian of Norwich on Saturday, and actress Hayley Mills in conversation with Stash Kirkbride on Sunday.

*The Eagle Has Two Heads* is at Norwich Cathedral's Hostry until Saturday, October 28. Tickets £15 (£12 concessions).

**For more information about the show and other Hostry Festival events, visit [www.hostryfestival.org](http://www.hostryfestival.org) or call 01603 598676.**



*The Eagle Has Two Heads* by Jean Cocteau at the 2017 Hostry Festival.

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## Review: *The Eagle Has Two Heads*

**In *The Eagle Has Two Heads*, Jean Cocteau's gripping melodrama that is being performed every evening this week as part of the Hostry Festival at Norwich Cathedral, Tracey Catchpole is the star. The tragic widow of the assassinated king of some vague Balkan country, she appears in black first, then in red, finally in riding breeches. Will she now escape the reclusive life she has made for herself? Will she fall in love with romantic Stanislas (Adam**

**Edwards), who plans to kill her?. She questions her feelings, holding the audience's attention as she expresses her passions and puzzlement in great speeches that tell of her dreams. But tragedy strikes again. In Stash Kirkbride and Peter Barrow's arena-style production that brings the action close to us, the supporting cast adds character while cellist Ivan McCready contributes a musical dimension.**

**Christopher Smith**



Total Ensemble perform *It's a Wonderful Moon, George!* as part of the Hostry Festival.

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## Total Ensemble reaches for the stars

**A Norwich performance group has been reaching for the stars with its performance at this year's Hostry Festival. Total Ensemble Theatre Company performed *It's a Wonderful Moon, George!* at Norwich Cathedral's Hostry on Saturday. Through dance, drama and music, the cast of all ages told the tale of George and Mary, a story described as a moonlit romance with a twist. The production was first performed at the Museum of**

**the Moon at The Forum during this year's Norfolk and Norwich Festival. Saturday's audience was also given a sneak preview of Total Ensemble Theatre Company's next show. Called *Boy in the Lighthouse*, it will be the headline show at the 2018 Hostry Festival. The 2017 Hostry Festival runs until October 29. For more information about Hostry Festival events, visit the Hostry Festival website at visit [www.hostryfestival.org](http://www.hostryfestival.org)**