

**MONDAY 17 MAY 2021**

**Wandsworth Arts Fringe launches London’s first arts festival of 2021 with a hybrid programme of live and digital experiences, from 25 June – 11 July.**

Wandsworth Council’s flagship festival, Wandsworth Arts Fringe (WAF), returns with London’s first arts festival of the year, showcasing street performances, circus, dance, music, theatre, comedy, free family days and more... live and online.

* WAF 2021 will be **the first London arts festival to bring back live events.**
* WAF features **over 130 events**,presented by **75 companies**, happening across **43 Wandsworth** venues and online.
* This hybrid programme includes **98 live events** (including **36 live/digital hybrid projects**) and **34 digital events.**
* Follows the **award-winning** success of 2020’s digital festival, **WAF In Your Living Room.**
* Supported by **Arts Council England** and **Wandsworth Borough Council,** WAF is partnering with contemporary circus company **Lost In Translation** to present the **WAF** **Big Top**, a Covid-safe main stage in King George’s Park.
* **WAF exists to support artists and communities** - 100% of ticket sales go to the presenting companies and WAF offers a package of development support including grants and skill development to artists, cultural organisations and community groups.

WAF 2021 is set to be Wandsworth’s first ever hybrid festival, presenting an exciting mix of digital and live events across the borough of Wandsworth from **25 June - 11 July**.

This year, WAF presents our very own Covid-safe main stage, a big top circus tent in the heart of Wandsworth where internationally renowned artists are set to rub shoulders with Wandsworth’s own creative talent. The **WAF Big Top** will host a 10-day programme of events in **King George’s Park**, in partnership with leading UK contemporary circus company **Lost in Translation**.

Launching the WAF Big Top programme will be a glittering **opening cabaret night** on **25 June**, with a teaser from **Lost In Translation**, pop and prosthetics from **Marcus Megastar**, contemporary aerial with **Maisie Luk**, plus acrobatics and even some family friendly pole-dance from **Serena Ng**.

Featuring high flying aerial stunts, acrobatics, knockabout slapstick and juggling, WAF2021 residents Lost In Translation’s latest show, ***Above (26-27 July)****,*will enchant audiences with a circus fable inspired by Italo Calvino’s novel, *The Baron in the Trees.* On the same dates, **Trajectory Theatre** combine the modern-day magic of augmented reality with live performance in ***The Suitcase Circus,*** and on **29 June**, LiT take over the WAF Big Top once more with ***Cabaret Unlocked***, a night of high thrills from London's finest circus and cabaret talents.

From **30 June – 3 July** WAF celebrates Wandsworth’s local creatives with a 4-day showcase featuring an evening of ballet, breakdance and beatboxing from **Tavaziva Dance**; ***CONGREGO!*** a fiesta of Latin American music and dance from the **World Heart Beat Music Academy**; the **Black Heroes Soul Food Cafe**,celebrating the life of Battersea’s first Black Mayor John Archer, with performances from **David Neita** and **The British Collective**; **Blackshaw Theatre** broadcast their new rollicking radio comedy live on stage, and **Providence House** present a showcase of music, dance and virtual works created in lockdown by young people.

Elsewhere, WAF takes to the streets - discover mobile silent discos with party tour guide **Guru Dudu**, or interface with **S.U.S.A.N.N.** the socially-distanced robot. Go for ***A Wandle Wonder Wander,*** a mixed-reality river walk with a difference from **XAP**, or swap pavements for parks and join ***The Great Pebble Dash,*** a hunt for artworks hidden across Wandsworth Park with digital clues sent to your phone, or discover **Zac Palitsades**’ ***Garden Guests****,* a trio of painted glass celebrities installed in parks across the borough.

For theatre fans, WAF offers a rich menu of exciting new work including **Leoni Amandin**'s ***Happy Mortalday***, a joyous performance lecture on celebrating death (featuring arts and crafts), political satire ***Game of Governments*** by **Geoffrey Williams**,and***Furrow*** by **Vocal Point**, a new outdoor play about forgiveness, reconciliation and the mistakes made by fathers and sons, created in lockdown by actual father and son, Abraham and Simon Parker. Debate the issues of the day with ‘live’ journalists in **The News Cabaret**, go on a virtual adventure to ***The Most Northernly House in Britain*** with **Lozlo Theatre**, or time travel to the birth of **The FABULOUS King James Bible**, and ask: ‘why can't religion be a bit more fabulous?’ in a hilariously historically inaccurate play from **New Generation Theatrical**.

Gigs resume at legendary music venue The Magic Garden, with shows from internationally celebrated vocal adventurers **The** **Beatbox Collective** and **Festival Friday**, featuring digi-dub and reggae producer **Mad Professor**, surf rock trio **Los Dedos**, and vintage remix review show, **Freakeasy**. Elsewhere, the **London Mozart Players** perform a child-friendly programme featuring *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Ferdinand the Bull*, plus a red-hot tango concert for grown-ups. Blues pianist **Marc Harris** used lockdown to write his first symphony, and will perform it live for the very first time, supported by an orchestra and choir assembled mainly from the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall.

With the return of **WAF In Your Living Room**, WAF also presents exciting new projects from many of Wandsworth’s disabled and disability-led artists and organisations, beamed straight into homes across Wandsworth, London and beyond. **Oily Cart’s** ***Space to Be***, a sensory show sent to homes through a series of packages, is created for and with disabled young people and their families, while **The Baked Bean Company** returns to WAF with a documentary exploring how people with learning disabilities have been impacted by Covid-19. **CoDa Dance** invite the curious to explore new worlds without leaving the spot, with a programme of on-demand dance performances, live discussion events, workshops and interactive virtual reality experiences, with a special invitation to everyone that has experience of neurological conditions like MS, acquired brain injury and Parkinson's.

Representing **youth talent**, our 2021 festival features performances from **London Children’s Ballet**, the world’s most talented emerging artists and designers at the **Royal College of Art’s graduate show**, and over **2,500 postcards** created by Wandsworth’s children which capture their memories of 2020, displayed across Wandsworth libraries.

For the hands-on, there are loads of opportunities to get involved and learn new skills, with workshops from ballet to street dance, calligraphy to martial arts, circus to photography and much more.

As part of WAF’s commitment to open up arts and culture to all Wandsworth residents, WAF will host **free family days** in parks and public spaces across the borough. These include the **WAF Family Day** at Furzedown Recreation Ground (26 June), **Hazelfest** on the Hazelhurst Estate (3 July), **Trees at the Woodfield Pavilion** (3-4 July), **Roehampton Community Week** across Roehampton and West Putney (5 – 11 July), **Hidden Heathbrook** at Heathbrook Park and **Happy Streets** on Thessaly Road in Nine Elms (10 July), plus **Free-Up Festival** at Battersea Arts Centre (11 July).

**WHAT IS WAF?**

**Every year, WAF showcases the rich mix of places, artists and communities in Wandsworth borough through an inclusive, open-access programme that anyone can be part of – be it as a performer, a participant or as an audience member.**

Launched in 2010, WAF now attracts close to 25,000 people every year to Wandsworth’s streets, parks, and venues with its bold and boundary pushing line-ups. In 2020, WAF was one of the first festivals to go digital, running from 8-24 May. With just 6 weeks to prepare, ***WAF In Your Living Room*** showcased **250 artists** across **130 digital events** that reached over **30,000 homes**, and 2,100 local families received a physical activity pack through schools and food banks.

WAF In Your Living Room was one of five online festivals, including the BBC’s Lockdown Theatre, to receive a **OneOff award** from **OffWestEnd.com,** granted to festivals that either emerged during lockdown or were adapted to entertain audiences online, recognising the achievements of independent and fringe theatre organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Wandsworth Council’s Cabinet Member for Community Services and Open Spaces, Councillor Steffi Sutters says:** *"I am delighted that WAF will be returning in 2021 with Wandsworth's first ever hybrid digital and live festival, following a year of uncertainty during the Covid-19 pandemic. After transforming the festival into WAF In Your Living Room in 2020, we are thrilled to be returning with both live events and activities and online projects to continue to celebrate the rich mix of places, artists and communities in our borough with an inclusive, open access programme that anyone can be part of."*

WAF’s commitment to inclusion and diversity, to supporting and platforming creative talent and arts organisations in the Borough, and to promoting a thriving cultural economy, by working in partnership with our communities, is at the heart of Wandsworth Council’s new [Arts and Culture Strategy 2021-31](http://bit.ly/wandsworthartsstrategy).

**To find out more about the 2021 festival, please visit** [**www.wandsworthartsfringe.com**](http://www.wandsworthartsfringe.com)

**Press requests**

For more information, further images, or press tickets please contact

Hannah Hiett: hannah.hiett@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

**Images:** [https://we.tl/t-7I71LhXpZM](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwe.tl%2Ft-7I71LhXpZM&data=04%7C01%7CHannah.Hiett%40richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk%7C193ff862d4d24673375a08d919219e16%7Cd9d3f5acf80349be949f14a7074d74a7%7C0%7C0%7C637568455303287235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=gfv0Z1kjspfM%2BwEV0CeXZmQ1MeYYOE9XMi51WWXOoSo%3D&reserved=0)

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**BOOK TICKETS**

Book tickets online: [**wandsworthartsfringe.com**](https://euc-word-edit.officeapps.live.com/we/wandsworthartsfringe.com) Or phone: 033 3344 8515

**ACCESS**

For information about access performances or venue accessibility, please go to [**wandsworthartsfringe.com/access**](https://euc-word-edit.officeapps.live.com/we/wandsworthartsfringe.com/access)

For any access related question or to request a free carer ticket, please email [**arts@wandsworth.gov.uk**](https://euc-word-edit.officeapps.live.com/we/arts%40wandsworth.gov.uk)

**About Wandsworth Arts Fringe**

Wandsworth Arts Fringe is brought to you by Wandsworth Council, supporting the arts and culture industries across the borough. Part of Wandsworth Council’s arts and culture programme, WAF brings together hundreds of creatives in an nooks and crannies throughout the borough - indoor, outdoor online and in unexpected places - revealing a Wandsworth you never knew existed. [www.wandsworthartsfringe.com](http://www.wandsworthfringe.com/).

**Follow us for the latest updates on local arts and culture:**

Facebook: [@wandsworthartsfringe](https://www.facebook.com/wandsworthartsfringe/)  | Twitter: [@WAFfringe](https://twitter.com/WAFfringe)

Instagram: [@wandsworthartsfringe](https://www.instagram.com/wandsworthartsfringe)  | YouTube: [Wandsworth Arts Fringe](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwqN6i2CBZB7l1Jht6AMTYw)

**About Wandsworth Council**

Wandsworth Council is proud to support the borough’s cultural infrastructure and ensure that all residents, businesses and visitors have access to quality creative activities.

Wandsworth Council arts service’s mission is for culture to thrive in Wandsworth. We seek to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in and celebrate culture through a variety of means and activities. Alongside Wandsworth Arts Fringe, the arts service are behind **Wandsworth Artists' Open House,** a free annual event inviting visitors to explore over 100 artists’ works as they open their homes and studios to visitors, and **Creative Wandsworth,** an education programme working with schools to inspire, involve and educate young people about the creative opportunities in Wandsworth, including creative careers and future skills. [wandsworthart.com](https://wandsworthart.com/) | [wandsworth.gov.uk/arts](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/arts)

Wandsworth Council’s new Arts and Culture Strategy 2021-2031 is now open for public consultation. Find out more: [wandsworth arts strategy.](http://bit.ly/wandsworthartsstrategy)

