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Dec/Jan 2025/26

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Welcome...

Well here we are again, the Christmas edition for 2025!

Have you started your Christmas shopping yet? Or are you like me and leave it until the last minute, only to stress and not enjoy the experience at all, promising myself that the next year I will be organised! Here to give a helping hand we have Thorns DIY and Dipples Jewellers with their gift guides to help you find the perfect present. (pages 9 & 21)

Paws Indoors are back with their helpful tips to keep our furry friends safe and happy over

the festive period (page 17). Looking ahead to the New Year, the amazing Science Festival is back at The Forum 14 -21 February. (see page 5 for more info) You can book tickets from 27 Nov at norwichsciencefestival.co.uk Ripples are on hand to help with your 2026 resolutions to get those renovations done that you keep putting off. Have a look at their beautiful bathroom designs now (see page 7 for some inspiration)

Thank you so much to all of our readers, advertisers and contributors for another jam-packed year of local positivity, news and services. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Kellie x



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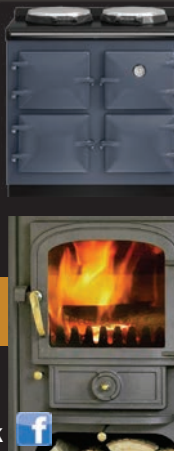
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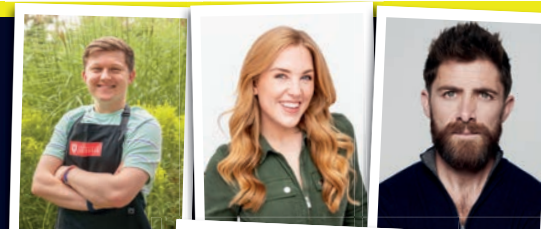
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NORWICH SCIENCE FESTIVAL

14-21 FEBRUARY 2026



NORWICH SCIENCE FESTIVAL RETURNS FOR ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY!



It's official – Norwich Science Festival will be back from Saturday 14 – Saturday 21 February 2026. And this year is a special one, as the Festival celebrates ten years since the very first event in 2016! Presented by The Forum, Norwich Science Festival has grown into a highlight in the city's calendar – and this year is not one to miss!

Headline events for 2026 include an insightful evening with adventurer and best-selling author, **Aldo Kane**, at Norwich Theatre Royal; a pancake-flipping adventure for families with **Great British Bake-Off** finalist **Josh Smalley**; and for adults, a fun and unusual variety mash of comedy, science and music featuring **Robin Ince** and **Dr Helen Czerski**!

Plus, the Festival is delighted to welcome a brand-new Patron for 2026 –

award-winning YouTuber, **Maddie Moate**! Maddie will take to the stage at

Norwich Theatre Playhouse with a fantastic family show exploring the inner workings of everyday machines. For the first time ever, the Festival is opening its hands-on science experience, The Explorium, up after hours, with an adult-only event - **The Explorium Lates**! Grown-ups will get the chance to play, experiment and get stuck into a variety of hands-on science activities throughout the night – including an epic bubble show and the unique **Microbe Zoo** experience.

From comedy and talks for adults, to family shows and interactive workshops, there's something for everyone to enjoy at Norwich Science Festival.



Tickets will go on-sale online at norwichsciencefestival.co.uk on 27 **November**, and early booking is recommended to secure your spot!

Ripples

“Ripples recently redesigned our bathroom, and we are extremely pleased with the finished result. Excellent service from the moment we walked into the showroom and spoke to our designer, through to the choice and quality of products and fittings.”

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An accessible bathroom isn't just a solution for today - it's an investment in long-term comfort, dignity and independence. Whether you're adapting a space for a specific need or future-proofing your home, accessibility-focused design can offer reassurance without sacrificing style. At Ripples, accessibility and elegance go hand in hand. Designer Amy, from Ripples Norwich, has worked with many clients to create bathrooms that offer more than functionality, they bring confidence, ease and joy to daily life.

“Accessible design should never feel like a compromise. When done right, it brings freedom, dignity and comfort - wrapped in beautiful, thoughtful design.”

A well-designed accessible bathroom supports more than physical needs; it enhances wellbeing. For those living with reduced mobility, chronic illness or neurodiverse conditions, even small details, like a level-access shower or considered placement of controls, can make a

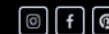
meaningful difference. With bathrooms lasting upwards of a decade, it's worth thinking about how your needs may evolve. Whether designing for today or tomorrow, Ripples ensures every element is approached with both practicality and beauty in mind.

Design-led accessibility might include discreet grab rails that double as towel holders, elegant wall-mounted sanitaryware or non-slip flooring that still feels luxurious. Walk-in wetrooms can be as spa-like as they are safe, while subtle lighting, such as motion-sensor LEDs beneath floating vanity units, enhances both function and ambience.

Smart features, from app-controlled lighting to thermostatic showers, offer intuitive ease without disrupting a contemporary look. Storage can be planned to be accessible yet refined, with soft-close drawers, pull-out shelving and touch-to-open cabinetry.

At Ripples, these choices are intentional. The result is a calm, cohesive space designed to evolve with you — proving that accessibility and luxury can sit beautifully side by side.

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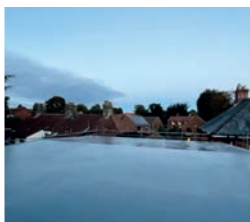
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It's Time to Look After Yourself

The cold weather is approaching and it is time to look after ourselves. Rest and nurture is what our bodies need during the winter months although it very often becomes the time of rushing around and organising.

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A countdown to

2026...

with six shows to make
the year count.

A New Year... again?! There are some fresh and fun ways to get into the swing of 2026, including the fabulous shows coming to Norwich Theatre Royal. From haunting ghost stories to dazzling dance, why not make 2026 the year to try something new?

2:22 A Ghost Story | 26 – 31 Jan

Jenny believes her new home is haunted, but her husband Sam isn't having any of it. They argue with their first dinner guests, old friend Lauren and new partner Ben. Can the dead really walk again? Belief and scepticism clash, but something feels strange and frightening, and that something is getting closer, so they're going to stay up... until 2:22... and then they'll know.

Dear England | 3 - 7 Feb

It is time to change the game... The country that gave the world football has since delivered a painful pattern of loss. The England men's team has the worst track record for penalties in the world, and manager Gareth Southgate knows he needs to open his mind and face up to the years of hurt to take the team and country back to the promised land.

Carlos Acosta's Nutcracker in Havana | 10 - 11 Feb

Join Clara in her humble home in Havana as she prepares to celebrate Christmas with her family. The beer cans are on the tree, and Cuba is suitably

hot. When Clara is gifted a Nutcracker doll, she embarks on the journey of a lifetime to defeat the Rat King and enter the world of the Sugar Plum Fairy, accompanied by her Nutcracker Prince.



Midsomer Murders: The Killings at Badger's Drift | 17 – 21 Mar

When well-loved spinster Emily Simpson is found dead in the picturesque village of Badger's Drift, her friend Lucy Bellringer refuses to accept that it was an accident. DCI Tom Barnaby and Sergeant Gavin Troy are called in to investigate, uncovering a world of hidden passions, long-buried secrets and deadly rivalries.

Here & Now | 14 – 19 Apr

It's Friday night, and the vibe is right as Caz and her fabulous friends dream of the perfect summer of love. But when Caz discovers her 'happy ever after' is a lie, and the gang's attempts at romance are a total tragedy, they wonder – will love ever get a hold on their hearts? Or should they all just take a chance on a happy ending...

Death on the Nile | 5 - 9 May

On board a luxurious cruise under the heat of the Egyptian sun, a couple's idyllic honeymoon is cut short by a brutal murder. As secrets that have been buried in the sands of time finally resurface, can the world-famous detective, Hercule Poirot, untangle the web of lies and solve another crime?

For more information or to book, visit norwichtheatre.org or call the Box Office on 01603 630 000.





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Here are our
top tips to help
everyone enjoy a
peaceful festive
season.



1. Keep festive food out of reach. Chocolate, mince pies/puddings, nuts and cake as well as turkey leftovers and sweets containing artificial sweeteners, can make pets very sick. Keep holiday food and drink well out of reach.

2. Keep your vet's phone number handy, in case of emergencies, and ensure that you have enough of your pet's medication to see them over the holiday period. Make sure microchip details are up to date as pets often slip out during all the comings and goings.

3. Beware tinsel, decorations, electric cords and candles, which can all be attractive to pets but can cause accident and injury. Do not leave your pets unattended.



4. In between all the festivities, try and stick to your pet's

routine as much as possible. Ensure they have enough quiet time and a safe room or space to use as a refuge, so that they can chose whether or not to join in.

5. In cold weather, check under your car and bang the bonnet before starting, as cats often climb onto engines for warmth. Mop up all antifreeze spills. This is sweet tasting to pets and highly toxic.

6. In snow, use coconut oil on paws and fur to avoid snowballs clinging to fur and to protect against salt and grit. Wash paws on returning home.

7. New years resolutions such as losing weight and taking more exercise are great for pets too!



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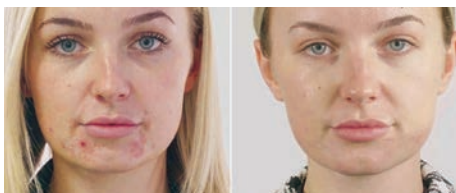
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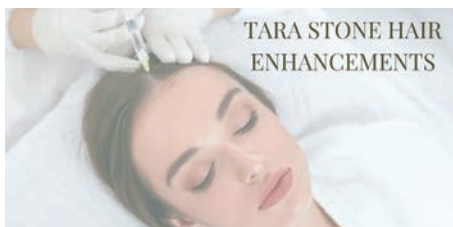


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Apples and Pumpkins

I live near a pumpkin grower whose pumpkin festival lasted one day in its infancy. This year it lasted the whole of October. Consequently, the area given over to growing pumpkins has increased and, looking from the outside, the event was extremely successful. Apparently, we have an enormous need for pumpkins.

I first noticed how many pumpkins were left in the fields *after* the Big Day about ten years ago. At the time the farmer told me that pumpkins are a crop which produces a massive profit per pumpkin, so it didn't matter if a few were left to rot. Nothing seems to have changed in the last ten years.

Call me old fashioned, but I think of pumpkins as food rather than Halloween decoration.

I remember when American Pie was made with a velvety, custard-like pumpkin filling, bakeries made pumpkin muffins and pumpkin soup was a warming winter staple. Maybe I'm cynical but I don't believe that all that bought pumpkin flesh gets eaten after carving, and to my mind that's a massive waste.

On a more positive note, to deal with the year's glut of apples, one of the major supermarkets had a collection point for apples grown by people like you and me outside several shops. They were offered to people for free, despite the usual array of Gala and Braeburn for sale inside. It was the equivalent of the boxes of apples that even in November can still be seen outside private houses, and that's a truly wonderful initiative!

Birgit Griem

Norwich Arts Centre

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Norwich Castle

PAULA REGO Visions of English Literature

At Norwich Castle:
18 October 2025 -
18 January 2026

A Hayward Gallery Touring
Exhibition from Southbank
Centre, London



Little Mermaid, 1992, mixed media on paper, mounted on board.
© Paula Rego Ltd. Paula Rego Estate. Courtesy Ostrich Arts Ltd and Cristea Roberts Gallery.



WATERCOLOUR NOW

At Norwich Castle:
4 October 2025 - 1 March 2026



Charlotte Verity, CV 4.7, 2025, watercolour monotype.
Image Stephen White and Co. © Charlotte Verity

Both exhibitions are included in admission. Book now at norwichcastle.norfolk.gov.uk

Norwich Castle

**Rediscover the city's most iconic landmark,
with the medieval keep now fully open, and two
exciting new exhibitions on show.**

Visitors can now explore the Castle Keep in all its glory from basement to battlements, with recreated medieval floors and rooms, from the King's Chamber, to the Great Hall, and The Gallery of Medieval Life: A British Museum Partnership, showcasing medieval treasures. Plus, throughout the day, there are spectacular projected displays, telling the story of the Castle's long and fascinating history.

This exhibition, presented by Hayward Gallery Touring, showcases the artist's remarkable printmaking practice, featuring work from Rego's most ambitious series, Nursery Rhymes, Peter Pan and Jane Eyre, and offers the opportunity to step into the world of one of the most important figurative artists of her generation.

Watercolour Now 4 October 25 – 1 March 2026

Artist Simon Carter brings together his own work with that of Christopher Le Brun, Alf Löhr, Barbara Nicholls, Melanie Russell, Mark Stewart, Charlotte Verity and James Faure Walker in a vibrant exploration of contemporary

watercolour. Each of the eight artists shares a fascination with the medium's ability to capture fleeting relationships with light, colour, landscape and history. Alongside their works, they have also selected pieces from Norfolk Museums' collections that resonate with their individual approaches to watercolour.



Paula Rego, The Neverland, 1992, coloured etching and aquatint. © Ostrich Arts Ltd Paula Rego Estate. Courtesy Ostrich Arts Ltd and Cristea Roberts Gallery

Paula Rego: Visions of English Literature 18 October 2025 – 18 January 2026

One of the greatest artists and storytellers of our time, Portuguese-British artist Paula Rego drew inspiration from a range of sources including literature, folklore and nursery rhymes.



Charlotte Verity, CV 4.7, 2025, watercolour monotype. Image Stephen White and Co. © Charlotte Verity

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LODDON ANTIQUES & COLLECTORS FAIR

Jubilee Hall, George Lane
Loddon NR14 6NB

The last Loddon Antiques and Collectors Fair of 2025 will be on Sunday 16th December and returns in the New Year on Sunday January 11th. Fully booked with over forty specialist knowledgeable dealers, selling a range of of good quality antiques and collectables including furniture, silver, china, linen, jewellery, books, clocks, retro and vintage design and decorative items.

Hot and cold home cooked refreshments on offer, including bacon rolls and cakes and their legendary sausage rolls.

£2 entrance for adults, accompanied children are free and dogs on leads are welcome.

Parking on site as well as two large car parks in Loddon which are just a few minutes walk away.

For further details please contact Kate Lee on 01502

711174 and you can follow them on social media @loddonantiquesfair



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LODDON ANTIQUES & COLLECTORS FAIR 2025/26

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Loddon NR14 6NB

2025
Sunday 7th December
2026
Sunday 11th January
Sunday 8th February
Sunday 8th March
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Take Part for Spring 2026 is now open at Norwich Theatre

Norwich Theatre is inviting everyone to explore their creative side with a diverse and exciting Spring 2026 Take Part season, featuring workshops in dance, music, design, and theatre-making for all ages and abilities.

The new season is blooming with opportunities, from open-access dance classes and musical workshops for babies and toddlers, to specialised programmes in collaboration with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC).

Ready to dance your way into spring? Norwich Theatre has a collection of open-access dance classes to help you explore creative, low-impact movement. **Dance Lab** (14 Jan – 11 Feb) is a 5-week programme, perfect for people who are looking to gain new dance and movement skills, in a supportive, accessible format. Designed to enhance wellbeing through exploration and improvisation, this workshop is perfect for taking away new skills and ideas, developing your own dance practices, with no previous experience required.

If you are keen on the traditional techniques, then come along to the **Ballet** sessions (9 Jan – 20 Mar). For anyone over 50, these sessions are designed to support you at any stage of your journey. Open to all, regardless of experience and ability; all you need is enthusiasm and curiosity for the joyful world of dance.

And the little ones don't need to miss out on the excitement either! **Sing, Dance, Play** for both babies and toddlers (16 Jan – 27 Mar) are specially designed, and professionally run musical sessions for parents and their children. Built for you to have fun and move together, this class uses a range of musical instruments and multi-sensory props.

Theatre Cares – A Life in Music (8 Jan – 9 Apr) brings together individuals with mild to moderate dementia and their carers/partners for engaging

and participatory music workshops that spark joy, curiosity and new friendships. You will explore music in all its forms, from singing and songwriting to getting hands-

on with drums, chimes, and stringed and small percussion instruments.

If you are more into the practical side of theatre, from what it takes to put a piece of work together, or the performance side, the new term has an engaging a collection of creative workshops to lean into the behind-the-scenes of theatre making.

If you are interested in how a piece of work goes from concept to reality? **Page to Stage** (22 Jan – 12 Mar) takes a draft script and explores the transition from script to performance. The first workshops will look at scene work, building tension and streamlining pacing to ensure the final draft captures the essence of the story being told. This project is part of our Creative Ageing programme offering a safe, creative space to celebrate artistic journeys of growth, reinvention and wisdom.

In response to the Royal Shakespeare Company's tour of Hamlet arriving in Norwich between 10 – 14 Mar, **Maritime Hamlet** is bringing a workshop to dive into Traditional Folk Song: Sea Shanties (6 Jan – 10 Mar). This is a dive into sharing the joy and camaraderie of song. A chorus of voices, in the genre of traditional folk song, continuing our partnership with the Royal Shakespeare Company's Shakespeare Nation.

Also part, we are working with costume designer Amanda Harold to create **Ophelia's Dress** (17, 21, 23 Jan), inspired by personal interpretations, and we are inviting you to come along and stitch, sew or embroider your design with us. Bring along a piece of A5 fabric and use any textile techniques you enjoy – embroidery or cross-stitch, crochet or knitting, applique or a combination! We recommend you use plain, pale fabric, and would encourage you to use upcycled or repurposed materials to help reduce environmental impact.

To book or to find out more, visit norwichtheatre.org or call the Box Office at 01603 630 000.



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Richard Penguin's Musical Triangle

Psychedelic Circus- Now every 3 months their recent evening's musical content came in the form of Scratch Anna and Citizen Smith. Both bands feature an array of musicians with roots going back to 90s Norwich with their current projects being worthy of your attention. Scratch Anna led and fronted by former Steerpike singer Anna musically embraced dance based genres, most notably Trip Hop and Reggae, melded with her thought provoking and occasionally political lyrics making them a band for both the head and feet. Thoroughly recommended. Citizen Smith, for those with long memories include 2 former members of Colourform. They have gone down the route of late 60s garage and jangly guitar influences notably on 'Dogma'. More recent comparisons would perhaps be to early R E M and 90s Teenage Fan Club. If you are a fan of guitar driven alternative pop go see them.

This years Psychedelic circus Xmas party will be at The Brickmakers on the 17th December and while I have no confirmations as yet expect circus acts, magicians, poets, stand up comedians, bands and solo artists aplenty, and all for free. In early November storytelling songwriter and former Oysterband man Ray Cooper stopped off in Beccles as part of his UK tour. Alternating between instruments the themes of his songs range from the personal 'Little Flame', written for his daughter and played on the mandolin to the piano centred 'Going Underground' about retreating from the world, something that he regularly does living as he does now in northern Sweden. Historical themes pervade many of his songs with 'The Unknown Soldier' on guitar being based on a true story of a soldier who despite apparently being reliable in battle often drank heavily and absconded for which he was eventually executed. He concluded the night with traditional songs in as he describes his rockabilly rendition of 'Sir Patrick Spens' and a delightful totally acoustic encore and sing-along of 'Wayfaring Stranger'. The evening had begun with his song about the perils of life on the road in the form of the title song from his 'Even for a Shadow' album. What the audience didn't know was that Ray and Tom his tour manager had unfortunately been caught up in a huge tailback of traffic heading east due to 2 horrendous accidents en route which must have

left quite an impression upon them. To be able to get up and put on a performance as good as this took some courage. Superb. Meanwhile I only went to the opening night of this years HRH Prog in Yarmouth in which the stars of the night were most definitely Hawklords. Led by the guitarist and newly crowned legend of prog Jerry Richards their set mostly featured new material including the space rock drenched 'Transmission' with its pulsating bass and drums, oscillating synths, frenetic guitar lines and powerful vocals, and the raucous Rock N Roll of 'Deadzone'. The Hawkwind links and comparisons abound of course and it was perhaps only fitting that they should conclude their set with a superb rendition of Nik Turner's epic track 'Brainstorm' that left a packed out prog audience wanting more. Opening act on the night Seventh Station's mix of rap and metal and final band Head Space's metal meet prog sets sadly did little for me. Ebb meanwhile were for me one of last years great discoveries. However they chose to play the bulk of their new album on the night which while it may grow on me left little impression on the night. They seem to have gone in a far more epic, serious and more dramatic direction both musically and lyrically, and while I may prove to be wrong in the long run, it felt like something was missing, and lacking in comparison to what I heard in 2024.

My own personal 2025- Mostly reclusive, and as I gave up drinking at the start of the year not going out very much. Too expensive to sadly as well. A busy year promoting artists and bands albums and tours. Creatively almost finished writing my first novel (18 of 20 chapters written) + 10 of 18 songs for an album to accompany it begun / completed. More news about that in the next issue. My Favourite gigs and albums by artists and bands that I didn't work with- Merry Hell at Folk on the Pier and their album Rising of the Bold, and Melin Melyn at Norwich Arts centre and their album Mill on the Hill were my 2 favourite gigs and albums with Penguin Café at Folk East my 3rd favourite live set, and Jordsjo and Breidablik's joint album 'Kontraster' my 3rd favourite album. From the past- I can't stop listening to The Moody Blues albums from 1967-70.

Some concerts in December and January (check websites for more concerts).

Norwich- BRICKMAKERS- 2nd + 4th Thursday's- Open mic night. December- 6th Thin Lizzish, 10th Black Dog music project, 17th Psychedelic Circus (acts tbc), 18th Punk Rock Charity Xmas sing along, 19th Roxoff Xmas special, 20th Roddy Radiation (Specials), 27th Collapse The Sky + 6 other bands, 31st Dirty Havana. January- 9th Rush tribute act, 10th NR Ska, 18th Addictive Mix, 28th Blues Society, 30th A Saucerful Of Floyd. EPIC- December 7th Stereo MC's, 9th Wheatus. THE HOLLOWAY- December- 1st Joy Formidable, 10th Believe in Nothing, 16th Dave Malkin and Louis Campbell + Moya Sweeney and Archie Churchill-Moss, 17th Tommy Jonson + Joe Potter, 20th Guranfoe + Fools Moon. January- 8th Emma Tricca, + Pete Greenwood + Taryn Everdeen, 10th Will Carruthers (Spacemen 3), 24th Black Market Karma. NORWICH ARTS CENTRE December- 2nd Talisk, 5th Divorce, 6th Skinny Lister, 12th Black Magick Caravan. January- 8th Otway and Barrett, 28th- Round Midnight 6161 + Jesse Barrett trio, 29th The Orielles. NORWICH FOLK CLUB- December 5th Jim Causley + Miranda Sykes, 19th Xmas party, January- 9th Pete Morton. UEA- December 8th Dizzee Rascal. VOODOO DADDY'S- December- 19th Magnolia + Toast, + KiraKira, 20th NMG presents (4 bands), January- 10th Louder Than Silence festival, 23rd Eades, 29th Matt Storm. WATERFRONT- December 3rd Bill Ryder-Jones (Ex Coral), 10th Big Country, 12th Dr Feelgood, 18th Black Grape. OUTSIDE NORWICH- BECCLES- Canopy theatre- December- 13th Janice Burns and Jon Doran. BUNGAY- Fisher Theatre- January 10th- An evening of Pink Floyd. LOWESTOFT- The Slounge- December- 5th- The Shackleton Trio, 20th- The Vagaband, 26th- Fools Moon. The Reindeer- Every Thursday- The Old Timers String Band.

Merry Xmas and happy new year.

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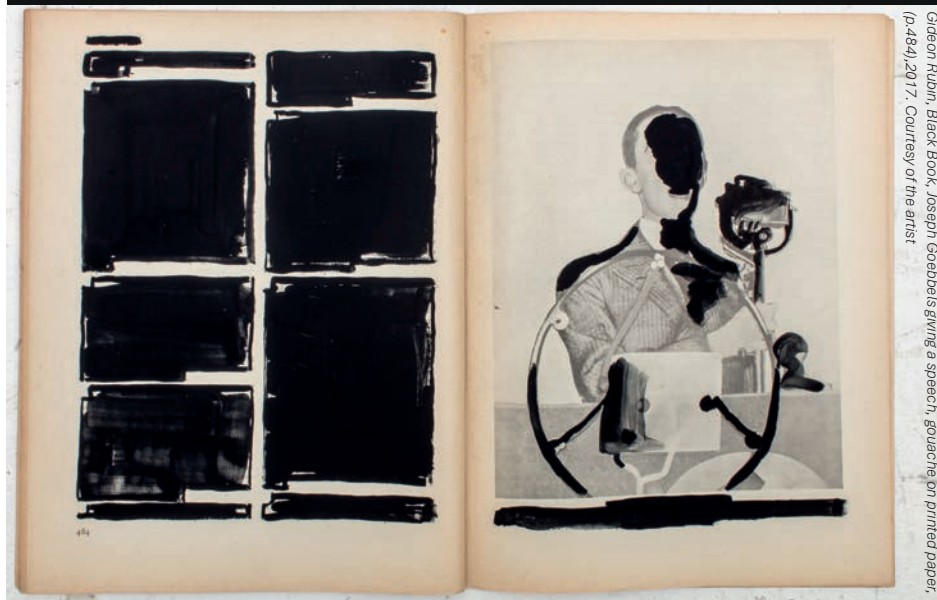
Seeds of Hate and Hope (28 November 2025 – 17 May 2026) presents personal artistic responses to global mass atrocities, such as genocides, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The exhibition explores how artists have witnessed, experienced and responded to atrocity crimes and conflicts with powerful and compelling artworks.

The show highlights artistic responses to such devastating events with creativity and courage. It features artworks which are reflections of, rather than images of, violence or victims; and which challenge the typical depictions of war and conflict often shown in the media.

Through its diverse body of work, *Seeds of Hate and Hope* explores how both

individual and collective acts of resistance and resilience often take root in times of conflict. The exhibition emphasises the vital role that human empathy and respect play in safeguarding society against the destructive forces of prejudice, hate speech, discrimination and dehumanisation. Each artwork becomes a catalyst for healing – promoting tolerance and understanding across cultures, religions and identities.

Seeds of Hate and Hope is part of the autumn season of five exhibitions at the Sainsbury Centre asking *Can We Stop Killing Each Other?* explores the nature of violence and conflict in theatre, film and culture. How can art help us build compassion, understanding, dialogue and healing?



Gideon Rubin, *Black Book*, Joseph Goebbels giving a speech, gouache on printed paper, (p.484), 2017. Courtesy of the artist



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