

Arts Council England grant awarded for exciting forest theatre experiences

The Arts Council has awarded £139,000 to the Forestry Commission and theatre partner **Burn the Curtain** to develop their outdoor theatre experiences. The substantial grant will enable Burn the Curtain to tour their sell-out evening theatre show, *The Company of Wolves*, based on the stories by Angela Carter, to three more forest locations this autumn.

In addition, a new theatre show will be developed around the nonsense poem by Lewis Carroll, ‘The Hunting of the Snark’. The experience will tour across seven forests in 2018 and will be accompanied by ‘Snark Hunter’, an innovative app which will bring the poem to life for forest visitors across the country.

Burn the Curtain have been delivering interactive theatre experiences for over a decade, taking their audiences on unforgettable journeys through promenade theatre.

Hayley Skipper, National Arts Programme Development Manager commented, “It’s fantastic to have secured this grant which enables us to take outdoor theatre to more forests and develop an exciting new show, while developing seven forest venues as hubs for arts programming. Promenade theatre has been hugely popular with our visitors and we are keen to continue offering new experiences in forests around the country as part of our ‘Forest Art Works’ programme resulting from our Memorandum of Understanding with Arts Council England.”

Joe Hancock, Artistic Director at Burn the Curtain said, “We are thrilled to be working with Forestry Commission England again on delivering this new programme of events. It’s a partnership that works harmoniously, bringing beautiful landscapes and interactive theatre together. We are looking forward to offering new experiences to all forest visitors and introducing new audiences along the way.”

Phil Gibby, Area Director, South West Arts Council added, “Our Memorandum of Understanding with the Forestry Commission is based on a shared belief that arts and culture have an inspirational and transformational effect. So we are really pleased to be supporting them through our National Lottery-funded Strategic Touring programme to work with south west theatre company Burn the Curtain and bring exciting promenade theatre experiences to forests across England. By combining digital technology and theatre, the project will open England’s forests to new audiences and engage a range of people with arts and culture in public spaces.”

The *Company of Wolves* will be touring to High Lodge, Thetford Forest, Hamsterley Forest and Sutton Manor in Autumn 2017.

The Hunting of the Snark will begin touring in spring 2018. For more information please visit www.forestry.gov.uk/forestartworks

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