



October 2025 - January 2026

What's On

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of Durham University Student Performing Arts What's On guide.

Here at Durham, we're passionate about creating a vibrant and exciting student experience – and for thousands of us, that means diving into the world of music, theatre, and performance. Whether we're in the audience, or forging those unforgettable bonds and indelible experiences onstage and off, performing arts are where creativity thrives.

What makes these performances truly special is that almost everything you'll see is student-led and created purely out of love for the arts. None of it is assessed, and that's exactly what makes it so magical – it's all about the joy of performing and creating something together.

All of our performances are open to everyone, and our community is enriched by the thousands of people from all over the region who love to watch our music and theatre as much as we love to create it.

I can't wait to see you at one (or many!) of this term's performances – it's going to be a fantastic season!

Nicola Candlish

Senior Manager of Student Performing Arts

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It's been a very busy summer for the Performing Arts societies, with tours all around the UK and beyond, following a very busy end-of-year season of concerts and shows.

Key musical highlights included our annual Cathedral gala concert which, along with celebrating the breadth of student music at Durham University, also saw us wave a fond farewell to Choral Society conductor John Forsyth MBE, who is making way for their new leader, Musical Director of the Royal Northern Sinfonia Chorus, Tim Burke.

Durham University Orchestral Society also celebrated 60 years in Durham Cathedral with a vibrant premiere by student composer Maxwell Richards-Clarke and a commanding performance of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5. With passionate playing across all sections, DUOS once again proved their exceptional standard and enduring musical spirit across generations.

Another stand-out concert of the season was the Chamber Choir's *Under the Greenwood Tree*. Bringing together sensitive and complex arrangements of English music new and old, the night proved a musically intricate yet intensively moving evening of song.

The summer also brought countless theatrical performances. DULOG's *Rocky Horror Show* was a bold triumph, performing with joyful camp enthusiasm through a heat wave to sold-out houses, capturing the chaotic magic of this cult classic.

Many theatre groups also ventured on tour, not least The Durham Revue, who cemented themselves as the preeminent student sketch group on the scene by winning the Best Sketch Show Derek Award at the internationally-renowned Edinburgh Fringe. Durham Opera Ensemble's production of *Iolanthe* also showed at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Buxton, and swept the awards at UniFest, winning four awards, including Best Show.

Castle Theatre Company also toured their sell-out *Twelfth Night* to dozens of locations across the south of England, bringing their trademark actor-musicianship and comic chops.

With a brand-new year fast approaching at Durham University, we're excited to kick off our year with a thrilling new season of theatre and music. With glorious symphonies, hilarious comedies, black tragedy and jazzy fun, there's a little something for everyone.

And take a look at the exciting projects coming up in the New Year, including DULOG's annual Gala Durham production, *Grease!*, and a 200-musician performance of Verdi's gargantuan *Requiem* in the magnificent Durham Cathedral. We can't wait to see you at our shows this term, and you can always contact the team at theatre.manager@durham.ac.uk.

what's on

Comedy



11 October, 8.30pm

Sketch Marks the Spot

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre
Join the award-winning Durham Revue, one of the UK's most famous student comedy groups, for an hour of hilarious, cutting-edge sketches and raucous laughs for everyone!

Musical Theatre



25 October, 7.30pm

Tone Deaf Theatre Freshers' Showcase

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre
The Freshers Showcase returns for 2025! Join Tone Deaf Theatre as they showcase the newest and brightest talent this year students have to offer in a night of dazzling musical theatre performances.

Play

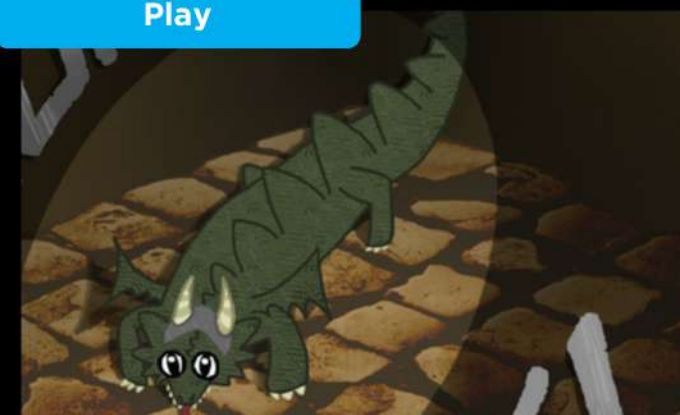


30 October - 1 November, 7.30pm

Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre
Delve into the scariest monster of all for the Halloween season - oneself. Delight in the scandalous Victorian classic of innocence lost and the power of art.

Play



11 - 12 November, 7.30pm

12 November, 2.30pm

Guards! Guards!

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre
Join us for a night of magical hilarity as the rag-tag City Watch must defend the infamous city Ankh-Morpork from a 60-foot fire-breathing dragon, summoned by a secret society of malcontented tradesmen.

Play



8 - 8 November, 7.30pm

Noël Coward's Blithe Spirit

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre
Blithe Spirit is Durham Student Theatre's 2025 Freshers Play, a witty farce where novelist Charles Condomine's séance summons his mischievous first wife's ghost, unleashing chaos as his current wife joins the haunting. Noël Coward's classic sparkles with sharp humour and supernatural twists.

18 - 22 NOVEMBER | 7.30PM
22 NOVEMBER | 2.30PM
SIR THOMAS ALLEN ASSEMBLY ROOMS THEATRE

Musical Theatre

DULOG Musical Theatre

Sweeney Todd

Striking, darkly hilarious, musically brilliant

Attend the dark, witty and Tony Award-winning tale of love, murder and revenge set against the backdrop of 19th century London.

An infamous tale, Sweeney Todd, an unjustly exiled barber, returns to nineteenth century London, seeking vengeance against the lecherous judge who framed him and ravaged his young wife. The road to revenge leads Todd to Mrs. Lovett, a resourceful proprietress of a failing pie shop, above which, he opens a new barber practice. Mrs. Lovett's luck sharply shifts when Todd's thirst for blood inspires the integration of an ingredient into her meat pies that has the people of London lining up... and the carnage has only just begun!

Extremely popular with opera companies and in concert presentation, Sweeney Todd is equally effective as an intimate chamber musical. Featuring two unforgettable star turns and some of the most chilling music ever written for the stage, this masterpiece is sure both to thrill and delight audiences.

Classical Music



21 November, 7.30pm

Midsummer's Soundscape

St Oswald's Church

Join our chamber orchestra in an evening of enchanting music including Mozart's dramatic overture to *The Magic Flute*, Mendelssohn's incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Poulenc's playful *Sinfonietta*.

Play



27 - 29 November, 7.30pm

29 November, 2.30pm

Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre

A Trivial Comedy for Serious People, Wilde's most beloved work follows a cast of ridiculous characters as they navigate love and deceit in Victorian society.

Contemporary Music



28 November, 7.30pm

Foot Notes & Gospel Choir

Elvet Methodist Church

Join two of our best-loved and dynamic vocal groups as they bring an evening of fun and winter cheer with a programme of their best-loved favourites and bold new repertoire in the welcoming surroundings of Elvet Methodist Church.

Classical Music



29 November, 7.30pm

Enigma Variations

Elvet Methodist Church

The symphony orchestra tackle Elgar's masterwork *The Enigma Variations*, featuring the ever-popular ninth variation *Nimrod*. Alongside this, Mussorgsky's *Night on a Bald Mountain*, Durham alumna Ruth Gipps' *Knight in Armour* and Gershwin's *Cuban Overture* make up an evening of varied and electric music-making.

19 NOVEMBER | 7.45PM | NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL

Classical Music

Durham University Choral Society

with orchestral players from across Durham University

Dona Nobis Pacem

Twisting. Shocking.

A cry for humanity in a time of war.

Durham University Choral Society, described as possessing "a warm and finely balanced" sound (The Guardian, 2024), join forces with the players of Durham University's leading Orchestras to bring a vibrant programme of choral and symphonic music to Newcastle Cathedral.

Conducted by Tim Burke (Chorus Director for Royal Northern Sinfonia Chorus and Musical Director of Tête à Tête Opera), our evening of music begins with the rousing "Gloria" by Francis Poulenc, a radiant work by the French 20th century composer that spreads joyous praise with a modern twist.

Our second half takes the audience on an extended journey influenced by the First World War from Vaughan Williams' perspective, with a choral-symphonic work entitled "Dona Nobis Pacem" (give us peace). With introspective slower movements and the haunting fanfares of "Beat! Beat! Drums" Williams brings these tragic memories to life and depicts the light of peace emerging through the darkness.

Play



2-3 December, 7.30pm

Bram Stoker's Dracula

Collingwood Arts Centre

Dr. Van Helsing, a specialist, believes that a girl attacked by a mysterious illness is the victim of a vampire, a sort of ghost that goes about at night sucking blood from its victims. The vampire is at last found to be a certain Count Dracula!

Play



3 - 6 December, 7.30pm

Arthur Miller's The Crucible

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre

Winner of the 1953 Tony Award for Best Play. This exciting drama about the Puritan purge of witchcraft in old Salem is both a gripping historical play and a timely parable of our contemporary society.

Showcase



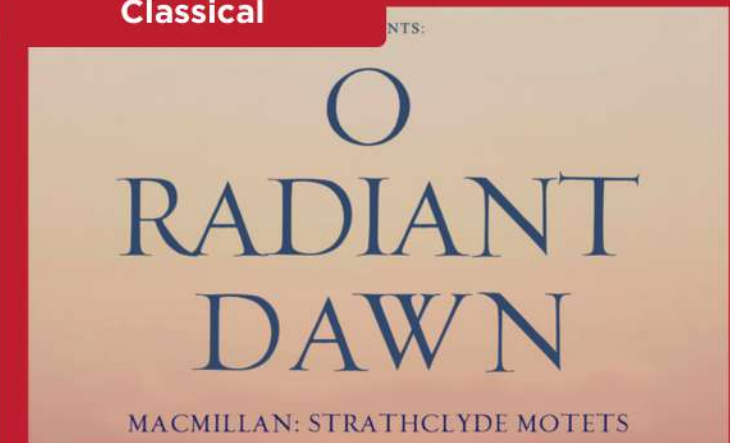
4 December, 7.30pm

Intercollegiate Showcase

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre

From quiet acts of courage to epic failures, this showcase asks: what does it mean to save—or try to save—someone? What does it mean to save yourself?

Classical



5 December, 7.30pm

'O Radiant Dawn'

St Godric's Church, Castle Chare

Join Durham University Chamber Choir in an evening which explores the expectation and preparation for light and celebrates its glory and power in an array of exciting and reflective choral music, sung by the University's most celebrated choral ensemble.

What's On Calendar

Sketch Marks the Spot

11 October 8.30 pm

Tone Deaf Theatre: The Freshers' Showcase

25 October 7.30 pm

The Picture of Dorian Gray

29 - 31 October 7.30 pm

29 - 31 October 6.30 pm

Noël Coward's Blithe Spirit

6 - 8 November 7.30 pm

Terry Pratchett's Discworld: Guards! Guards!

11 - 12 November 7.30pm

12 November 2.30pm

Sweeney Todd

18 - 22 November 7.30pm

22 November 2.30pm

Dona Nobis Pacem

19 November 7.30 pm

Midsummer's Soundscape

21 November 7.30 pm

Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest

27 - 29 November 7.30pm

29 November 2.30pm

Foot Notes and Gospel Choir

28 November 7.30 pm

Enigma Variations

29 November 7.30 pm

Dracula

2 - 3 December 7 pm

The Crucible

3 - 6 December (no performance 4 Dec) 7.30 pm

Heroes & Villains: Intercollegiate Showcase

4 December 7 pm

O Radiant Dawn

5 December 7.30pm

Jazzy Christmas

5 December 7.30pm

Voices of the New Era

6 December 7.30 pm

DU Musical Theatre Troupe: Rewind

7 December 7.30 pm

Elijah

8 December 7.30 pm

Lizst's Rhapsody and Other Legends

10 December 7.30 pm

Brontë

11 - 13 December 7.30 pm

[title of show]

11 - 13 December 7.30 pm

Lemons, Lemons, Lemons, Lemons, Lemons

11 - 12 December 7.30 pm

Jane Eyre

15 - 17 January 7.30 pm

The Seagull

29 - 31 January 7.30 pm

Verdi Requiem

30 January 7.30 pm

Grease

27 - 31 January 7.30pm

28 & 31 January 2.30pm

5 DECEMBER | 7.30PM | REDHILLS DURHAM MINERS HALL

Jazz

Durham University Big Band
Durham University Jazz Orchestra

Jazzy Christmas

Talented young jazz musicians bring together a night of Christmas fun and toe-tapping tunes.

Join Durham University's Big Band and Jazz Orchestra for an evening of jazz in the name of Christmas: bop to Bublé, sway to Sinatra, marvel at Mingus!

With a programme of Christmas classics and highlights from their respective national tour repertoires, Jazzy Christmas is one of the most popular gigs in the Michaelmas musical calendar. Each band's set will include well-known tunes as well as showcasing student arranging, original writing and, of course, blazing solos. Come along Redhills Durham Miners Hall on Friday to celebrate Christmas cheer!

Classical



6 December, 7.30pm

Voices of the New Era

St Oswald's Church

Join the Palatinate Ensemble for their first concert of the year, bringing together some of the best-loved pieces of chamber repertoire. Heading up the concert is the St Paul's Suite. Enriched by Holst's lifelong love affair with folk music, this joyful depiction of London life remains one of the most beloved English compositions.

Classical



8 December, 7.30pm

Mendelssohn's Elijah

St Oswald's Church

Mendelssohn's most-beloved oratorio depicts the extraordinary life of the Old Testament prophet Elijah, his battles both religious and political, and his ultimate ascension to the divine realm. The University Classical Ensemble is joined by members of the college chapel choirs.

Musical Theatre



7 Decemberr, 7.30pm

DU Musical Theatre Troupe Rewind

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre

Rewind is a time-travelling musical theatre adventure, leaping through history with iconic show tunes from Six, Les Misérables, Dear Evan Hansen and more. With dazzling design and a playful narrative twist, it's a whirlwind journey not to be missed!

Classical



10 December, 7.30pm

Liszt's Rhapsody

Elvet Methodist Church

Durham University Palatinate Orchestra's Symphony Orchestra presents an evening of brilliant rhapsodies and legends, including Liszt's 'Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2', Sibelius's 'Lemminkäinen Suite' and music by Rossini and Glazunov.

Musical Theatre



10 - 13 December, 7.30pm
13 December, 2.30pm

[title of show]

The Dowrick Suite, Trevelyan College

Jeff and Hunter, two struggling writers, hear about a new musical theatre festival. However, the deadline for submissions is a mere three weeks away. With nothing to lose, the pair decides to try to create something new with the help of their friends Susan, Heidi and Larry on the eighty-eights.

Play



11 - 13 December, 7.30pm

Brontë

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre

Everyone knows the Brontë name. Yet few know their own story. Brontë blurs reality and fiction in haunting exploration into the twisted minds of Britain's most iconic authors as they write to escape their dreary lives...

Play



11 - 13 December, 7.30pm

Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons

The City Theatre, Fowler's Yard

Imagine a world where we're forced to say less. This is a play about what we say and how we say it; about the things we can only hear in the silence; about dead cats, activism, eye contact and lemons, lemons, lemons, lemons, lemons.

Castle Theatre Company's *The Watsons*, summer 2025.



30 JANUARY | 7.30PM | DURHAM CATHEDRAL

Classical Music

Durham University Orchestral Society &
Durham University Choral Society

Verdi Requiem

Enormous sound, blazing drama, extreme emotion.

Join the amassed power of Durham University Orchestral Society and Choral Society, led by Tim Burke, for an epic performance by 200 young musicians in the awe-inspiring surroundings of Durham Cathedral.

Judgement Day is here. The trumpets are blaring, the chorus cry in fear, and the drums rumble the very ground we stand on. One of the true "blockbusters" of the classical world, join us for some of the most iconic orchestral and choral movements on an enormous operatic scale, combining the theatrical with his personal faith to create dramatic devotion in its unflinching and devastating depiction of Revelation.

Play



15 -17 January, 7.30pm

Jane Eyre

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre

Focusing on the love story between Jane and Rochester, the play begins as Jane arrives in 1846 to take up the post of governess to Rochester's ward, Adele, at Thornfield Hall. Jane and Rochester fall in love but their happiness is jeopardized by the discovery of the terrible secret from Rochester's past.

Play



22 - 24 January, 7.30pm

The Seagull

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre

Chekov's gripping tragicomedy presents the human struggle between ambition and human connection; the desire for innovative creative success versus the comfort of tradition and family ties.

Play



29 - 31 January, 7.30pm

Four Zhangji

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre

The play tells the story of three Peking University professors with different natures, Gu Hezhen, Lu Bo'an and Qiu Sanyue, who were responsible for presiding over the Peking University liberal arts enrollment conference that year, and four unexpected answers were placed in front of them 'Admission or not admission?'. The three professors were caught in a debate about learning in the world and adulthood in troubled times.

Chinese Mandarin with English subtitles.

27 - 31 JANUARY | 7.30PM
28 & 31 JANUARY | 2.30PM
GALA DURHAM

Musical Theatre

DULOG Theatre presents

Grease

Systematic, hydromatic, cinematic fun!

Since its electric Broadway and West End debut in the early 1970's, GREASE has remained one of the world's most popular and enduring musicals. Funny, frank and featuring the hit songs "Greased Lightnin'," "Hopelessly Devoted to You," "You're The One That I Want," and "Summer Nights," GREASE follows the journey of Danny and Sandy, alongside the Burger Palace Boys and the Pink Ladies, as they navigate high school to the unforgettable rock n' roll soundtrack that defined generations.

Come to a show

How to book

Scan here to book your tickets



durhamstudenttheatre.org/whats-on/
durhamstudentmusic.org/whats-on/

Box Office

The Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre is open to all from 9 AM - 5 PM during University term time, as well as 30 minutes before performances.

*Booking fees apply

Tickets for everyone

Where we are able to offer concessions at performances, this applies to children under 18, those over 65, full-time students, those with a registered disability and those who are unemployed. Where family tickets are available, these constitute 1 adult and 3 children, or 2 adults and 2 children.

Group discounts

If you are looking to book as a group, school or community organisation, please contact our team at theatre.manager@durham.ac.uk. We will do our best to accommodate groups of any size.

Open to all

At Durham University Student Performing Arts, we are proud to be open to all audience members from the wider community around the City and beyond.

Using our spaces

If you are a local community group, school or touring production, looking to utilise the Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre outside of University term time, please get in touch by emailing theatre.manager@durham.ac.uk. There are sliding scales on offer to meet the needs of your organisation.

Membership

If you are a Durham University student looking to get involved with the making of the incredible range of student productions, please visit the organisations' websites for more information:
durhamstudentmusic.org/join
durhamstudenttheatre.org




DU Gospel Choir perform at *Never Give Up*, Summer 2023.


DURHAM UNIVERSITY STUDENT PERFORMING ARTS

Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre, 40 North Bailey,
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0191 334 1419

durhamstudenttheatre.org/whats-on

durhamstudentmusic.org/whats-on

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Tone Deaf Theatre perform *Alice by Heart*, June 2025.