

Excitement is building for Hostry Festival

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With sets being designed, costumes being created, and performances being rehearsed, excitement is building for Norfolk's annual autumn arts extravaganza at Norwich Cathedral.

Music, theatre and champagne filled the historic venue's Hostry building last night, as a celebration looking ahead to this year's Hostry Festival took place.

The event will take to the stage from October 24 to November 3, and last night many of the festival's volunteers, performers, patrons and sponsors gathered for the official launch.

It was also a chance for audience members and potential volunteers to find out more about the 2013 programme and meet the people behind the festival.

Hostry Festival artistic director Stash Kirkbride said he was

delighted by the great turnout of people at the launch.

"There was a cross section of people from last year as well as new friends, and it showed the growing partnerships that help make the festival possible," he said.

"We look forward to sharing the 2013 festival with the county. We have 22 projects all made from Norfolk, celebrating Norfolk.

"We have a great programme representing lots of different art forms and we have entertainment for people from age five to 100."

He added: "I am very proud that we are in the fortunate position to turn, in my opinion, one of Norfolk's most extraordinary venues into a theatre for the festival each year.

"I would also like to say a big thank you to our 100 volunteers. The festival is based on all these people's enthusiasm for the arts, and that's why it is so special."

Festival patron and Theatre Royal chief executive Peter Wilson said: "The festival is a grand event, it



■ The launch of the 2013 Hostry Festival. Organisers from left, Stash Kirkbride, Rebecca Chapman, Peter Beck, and Peter Barrow, with the model of the set for the main play, Ibsen's A Doll's House.

Picture: DENISE BRADLEY

really is. It is a way of celebrating all of the arts in Norfolk."

Among last night's festivities, a short film about the festival was screened, and the model of the set for this year's headline production - Ibsen's A Doll's House - was on display along with costumes for the cast.

Total Ensemble Theatre Company gave a preview of one of the shows they are preparing to perform, and

classical pianist Veronica Haro played throughout the night.

Alongside A Doll's House and Total Ensemble's performances, other Hostry Festival highlights include: the Norfolk Arts Awards celebrating the stars of the arts world; Starlings on the Green, a new piece of writing by Hamilton Wilson based on the themes of Ibsen's A Doll's House; a Norfolk Authors in Profile

event with Rose Tremain and Louis de Bernières among the guests; a My Norfolk exhibition celebrating the county in visual art; and a Chamber Orchestra Anglia concert featuring footage from Normandy and Norfolk during the Second World War.

→ For more information about the Hostry Festival and how to book tickets visit www.hostryfestival.org


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