RIDING LIGHTS THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS...

Touring 2015

INFORMATION FOR
PERFORMANCE ORGANISERS
# THE COUNTDOWN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks to go</th>
<th>What to do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Read the technical requirements and fill in the online BOOKING FORM &amp; PUBLICITY ORDER FORM (you can find these at <a href="http://www.ridinglights.org/organisers/roughshod">www.ridinglights.org/organisers/roughshod</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>PLAN: Read the publicity section and recruit someone to oversee publicity for the performance. (pages 5-7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>PLAN: Read the tickets and box office section, recruit any extra help you will need to sell tickets (pages 8-9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Produce TICKETS</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CHECK: Is any more help needed with publicity? Are there any churches or key individuals who could help promote the show?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>HELP: find volunteers to help on the night with refreshments, stewarding and selling merchandise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>HELP: Arrange food for the cast and refreshments for the night.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Read ON THE DAY and complete 1 WEEK TO GO CHECKLIST (page 10-11)</td>
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HOSTING A PERFORMANCE FROM RIDING LIGHTS

Many thanks for booking a performance of ROUGHSHOD IRRESISTIBLE!

This is your information pack, please take a little time to go through it. Follow our suggested timetable for the 10-week countdown to the show, and you should find everything you need to know for a successful and stress-free ride.

The pack is divided into sections, each labelled as to when you need to act on it. To the left of this page is a handy timetable of everything you need to do and where to find more information in this pack.

SHARING OUT THE JOBS

We recommend you ask a couple of people to help you organise the performance. We’ve split the tasks into 2/3 jobs, though you can to divide these up as best suits your volunteers and their availability:

• Someone to organise the practicalities, including stewards and refreshments, food and hosts for the actors, and making sure the cast are met when they arrive at the venue.
• Someone to help with publicity, contacting local churches, giving notices, distributing posters etc.
• Someone to organise tickets, overseeing and reporting sales, and running the box office on the night.

We also encourage you to photocopy the relevant pages from this booking pack and pass them on to those helping you.

Please fill in the 3 online forms at www.ridinglights.org/organisers/roughshod

Venue Questionnaire
Performance Booking Form
Publicity Material Order Form

Please note: we cannot send out your posters or flyers until we have received the forms mentioned above. If you have any problems or questions about the above forms, please get in touch with Bernadette ASAP.

Bernadette Burbridge
Roughshod Tour Manager

Riding Lights Theatre Company
Friargate Theatre, Lower Friargate, York, YO1 9SL
Tel: 01904 655317
E-mail: touring@rltc.org
Web: www.ridinglights.org
WHO ARE RIDING LIGHTS?
Riding Lights Theatre Company was established in York in 1977. Although the company’s main work takes it on tour across the UK, Riding Lights also owns Friargate Theatre, a 100-seat studio theatre space in York. The company presents a wide range of work, all of which is rooted in christian belief and understanding - best described as theatre with a spiritual heart. Further information about Riding Lights can be found at www.ridinglights.org

WHAT AUDIENCE IS THE PRODUCTION AIMED AT?
Roughshod will undoubtedly appeal to christians of any denomination. Vivid, engaging and humorous, it will also appeal to friends and neighbours who may be on the fringes of the church community - young and old, who are looking for an entertaining and surprising evening of theatre. It is aimed at adults and young people aged 12 and older. It is not suitable for primary school aged children.

WHAT’S MY ROLE AS A LOCAL ORGANISER?
We know that an enthusiastic local organiser helps to ensure the success of a performance. Having someone on the ground who shares our vision of what we are trying to achieve is very important. After all, you know your own area far better than we do.

We look forward to working hard with you, and are always happy to help if you need any advice or materials to help promote the event.

HOW MUCH HELP DO WE GIVE OUR LOCAL ORGANISERS?
We will guide you through the necessary steps you need to take. We will supply all the publicity material you need and we will liaise about publicity matters as necessary We may also be able to put you in touch with some of our local members who might be able to help with accommodation or other tasks (please ask if this would be helpful).

WHY DO I NEED TO PROVIDE AN EVENING MEAL FOR THE ACTORS?
We aim to tour as economically as possible. If we were to provide accommodation and food our costs would escalate in a way that would make the tour impossible. Riding Lights has always been rooted in a strong sense of community and hosting actors is an important element in this.

The company arrives at your venue in the afternoon after making the journey from the last performance. They have to set up the stage and prepare for the show. Very often venues can be a long way from somewhere they can find a meal - especially in the brief time that they have available to eat. We therefore ask for a light meal to be provided for them at the venue before the performance.

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE THERE IN THE TOURING COMPANY?
There are 5 actors in our Roughshod company this year. They will travel together in a Mercedes Sprinter van carrying everything that they need for the performance.

IS IT NECESSARY TO GET A PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS LICENCE?
This depends on where the performance is being held. Some venues already hold Public Entertainments Licences and you should check this at the time of booking. Other venues may require an application to be made for a temporary licence. you should always have a discussion with your Local Authority about this matter and follow their advice.
(see page 10 for more info)

WILL THERE BE A PROGRAMME?
The company will bring programmes with them for which a small charge of £1 will be made. We ask that box office staff and ushers help by selling programmes, particularly before the show begins.

CAN WE PROVIDE REFRESHMENTS?
We recommend that, if possible, you provide drinks before the show and during the interval for your audience.

WHAT ABOUT PARKING?
Don’t forget that you’ll need to think about where your audience are going to be able to park their cars. We will also need parking close to the venue for our Mercedes Sprinter van which is 6.5m long and 2m wide.
FROM 10 WEEKS BEFORE

PUBLICITY, MARKETING AND PRESS

It is vitally important to publicise your performance as widely as possible: after all, if people don't know it's happening, they can't come.

We do as much as we can to promote our tours. However, you know your local area and your possible audience far better than we ever could. So your help in promoting your performance is essential.

HERE ARE OUR TOP TIPS ON PROMOTING THE SHOW:

• **Plan:** think about who might be interested in the show, and who might help you with publicity: (other churches, arts organisations, charities, schools & colleges, book shops, CUs and Uni societies...)

• **Be enthusiastic:** More than any plot synopsis or well designed flyer, your enthusiasm tells people that the show is worth seeing.

• **Start telling people now:** You don’t have to say much, but a little bit of information regularly, in the 8 weeks running up to the show is very effective.

• **Tell people in different ways:** e.g A combination of a Facebook event invite, printed flyer, and a notice in church. Be sure to ask people in your church to take flyers and invite friends.

MAKE USE OF EVERY AVAILABLE CHANNEL FOR PUBLICITY, INCLUDING...

1. POSTERS AND FLYERS

Each venue will be provided with printed posters and flyers for your performance. We provide up to 500 A5 flyers, 25 A4 posters and 15 A3 posters (Additional print can be ordered but a charge may have to be made for larger quantities.)

Try putting up posters & leaflets in:  
- schools & colleges
- churches
- community centres
- windows of cars
- restaurants & cafés
- tourist info offices
- libraries & bookshops
- shops & supermarkets
- village halls
- windows of houses
- arts organisations
- basically... all over the place

PLUS - If there are other local events in your community taking place in the month running up to your performance, ask if you can hand out flyers after their event too.

2. CHURCHES AND OTHER LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Past experience has proved the benefit of several organisations teaming up to support one central venue, ensuring wider publicity and a larger audience. Finding others in these organisations who are enthusiastic about the show is very helpful too.

- Local churches - across the denominations (churches together organisations can be very helpful)
- Other community organisations (youth groups/community centres/Guides/Scouts etc.)
- Local Schools (particularly church schools or secondary schools with drama departments)
- Arts centres, book groups, local charities or theatre companies/drama societies.

We find the most effective method is to regularly have someone stand up and give a verbal notice about the show, ideally weekly. Giving out a flyer with this notice is also an excellent idea.

Alternatively if there is a weekly email/notice sheet, web diary or Facebook group, any of these could be used for publicity. If you are selling tickets, giving an allocation to other churches to sell after services can also be an excellent way to reach a wider audience.
FROM 10 WEEKS BEFORE

PRESS AND PR

Please have a think about the local newspapers, radio stations, websites or particular journalists active in your area and add the details to the Publicity Material Order Form. In particular think about those which regularly cover local arts, entertainment or ‘what’s on’ listings.

If you have any local news associated with putting on the performance (e.g. a refurbished venue, member of the cast is local, subject matter of the show has a particular relevance) then this will raise interest even further. Please let us know!

We would also encourage you to contact local press, radio and online sites yourselves - direct contact from local residents organising the Riding Lights performance can help to catch the attention of local media. We will write and send you a press release for your venue.

Local monthly magazines and free-sheets that run ‘What’s On?’ guides often need information 8 - 10 weeks before publication in order to meet their printing schedule. (This can also be the case for monthly e-magazines – giving time for design and allocation of space.) Therefore these need identifying and contacting as soon as your booking is confirmed – ideally 10 weeks prior to your performance date.

ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

There will be a dedicated section of the Riding Lights website for this tour (www.ridinglights.org/irresistable). We will also be using Twitter (@ridinglights) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/ridinglights) to promote the show.

You can then use all of these materials to promote your performance by:

• Directing people towards the website
• Posting links on Twitter/Facebook/blogs/church websites to spread the word about the show
  ...and encouraging others to do the same
• We’ll create a Facebook event for your performance, but don’t forget to share this/invite contacts.
• Asking other churches to add it to their websites / events calendars / Facebook pages & groups
• Finding relevant local ‘What’s On?’ websites on the internet and uploading the details of your show.

ONLINE PUBLICITY IS ESSENTIAL FOR REACHING A WIDER AUDIENCE - if you’re unsure on how to do any of this, we’re very happy to help - JUST ASK US.

and finally... WORD OF MOUTH

Often there’s nothing better than a friend recommending a show to encourage someone to come along. When talking about the show be enthusiastic (particularly if you’re giving a church notice etc.) and make sure you tell people why they should come and see the show...

Please complete the online PUBLICITY MATERIAL ORDER FORM and return it to the Riding Lights office ASAP. Don’t forget to add the name of the person who is in charge of publicity to this form.

Peter Birkinshaw
Marketing Manager - marketing@rltc.org
## FROM 10 WEEKS BEFORE

### PUBLICITY COUNTDOWN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks to go</th>
<th>Publicity</th>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Read Publicity info: Send back PUBLICITY FORM inc. PRESS &amp; RADIO CONTACTS <a href="http://www.ridinglights.org/organisers/roughshod">www.ridinglights.org/organisers/roughshod</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>PLAN: which people and groups might enjoy the show? Who are the key people to tell about the show?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Send the PRESS RELEASE to local contacts. Start distributing POSTERS/FLYERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ask other LOCAL CHURCHES to promote the show.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Distribute posters and flyers. Post the show on church websites etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ask local charities/arts orgs/bookshops to promote the show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Create a FACEBOOK EVENT - invite friends and ask local churches to share/invite people to the performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Make sure churches are promoting the show - can they put flyers in their pews / notice sheet / give a spoken notice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Check - anywhere you’ve missed or people still to talk to? Last round of postering and flyering?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Last minute notices and reminders - email/facebook/twitter etc.</td>
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</tbody>
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FROM 8 WEEKS BEFORE

TICKETS AND PROGRAMMES

TICKETS

We recommend that you ticket your show, though you will need to produce your own tickets. It’s up to you how grand an affair you want to make them: you could go to a printer if you wanted to, or produce something yourself and photocopy it.

However the quickest option is to use our ticket template which you can download at from www.ridinglights.org/organisers

If you do create your own tickets, we advise that you put the following information on them:

• The name of the company:
  RIDING LIGHTS ROUGHSHOD THEATRE COMPANY
• The name of the show:
  The date and time of the show
• The venue
• The admission price(s)

You may also like to use the Roughshod logo, which you can also be downloaded from the organisers page (www.ridinglights.org/organisers) or request it by e-mail as a JPG from touring@rltc.org.

PROGRAMMES

The company will bring programmes with them. These will be available to the audience from the ‘Box Office’ table (see page 8.)
FROM 8 WEEKS BEFORE

RUNNING A BOX OFFICE

We will help publicise your performance widely – to our supporters in your area, who might be anything up to an hour and a half’s drive away from you, to groups which might have a particular interest in the content of the show, to other churches and schools which have had previous visits from Riding Lights, and to the local media…

This means that there will be people who want tickets but who cannot come in advance to pick them up in person so you will need to organise a box office.

1. **CHOOSE A BOX OFFICE NUMBER**
   Your box office number will feature on all the publicity for the show and appear on all news releases for the tour.

   This could be your own number, a church or school office, a nominated friend’s number, or anywhere that is convenient for you. **If it is not constantly manned** (eg. the person goes out to work) **it will need to have an answerphone**, as it is very frustrating to keep calling a box office where there is no reply, and no way of leaving a message.

2. **TAKE BOOKINGS**
   Note each caller’s name and phone number (in case of a later query); the number of tickets they want; how many of those are full-price and how many concessions; and whether they want to collect tickets from you in advance, or expect to pick them up on the door. If people are travelling to the show from a distance, they will probably want to reserve tickets and pick them up at the door on the evening of the performance.

3. **ON THE DOOR**
   Have a table at the venue where people can pick up and for pay for reserved tickets, and where people without reservations can buy tickets. Mark reserved tickets clearly with the customer’s name, or put them in a named envelope ready for collection. We suggest you organise a float of £30 for the box office.

If you have any queries about running a box office **please phone us on 01904 655317**
In the week before the performance we suggest you take some time to make sure everything is ready for the show. Here’s a checklist for the jobs that need to be covered...

**Audience Seating:**
- Seating plan ready
- Helpers to set out seats
- Someone to meet the actors on the day

- Meal for actors

- Tickets

**Front of House staff:**
- Welcomers/Stewards
- Box Office staff
- Programme sellers
- Compere to welcome audience and request they turn of their phones

- Audience refreshments
ON THE DAY

ARRIVAL
The company will need access to the venue 2 hours before the performance is due to start. Please ensure that the initial meeting point, if different from the venue, is clearly marked on the map. They will assume that they are to be met by the contact at the venue unless told otherwise.

SEATING
Please set out seating you may be using before the company arrives. If you would like to confer with them about the best way to do it, please do, but as they will be setting up their own equipment they will not be able to help put out seating.

MEALS
Please provide a light, hot meal for the actors at the venue about one and a half hours before the show. They would also appreciate tea or coffee and some water at the interval.

TICKETS
You will need a couple of people on the door to sell tickets, give out programmes, and be generally welcoming. (Don’t forget the float)

MEMBERSHIP & MERCHANDISE STALL
The company will bring a selection of merchandise with them with a stand to present it on. It will be manned by the actors at the interval and immediately after the performance.

‘CURTAIN UP’ AND INTERVAL
It is very importance that the performance starts at the time it is advertised. Late-comers can be admitted once the performance starts. Please also ensure that the interval lasts no longer than 15 minutes, and use a bell (or similar) to get the audience back to their seats. Please let Roughshod know that you are about to signal the end of the interval.
ON THE DAY

ON THE DAY - TIMETABLE

Roughshod will be working to the following *approximate* timetable. This is based on a 7.30pm performance.

5.30 Roughshod arrive at venue. Look at performance area with local organiser and discuss any alterations that need to be made to the layout of the venue (eg. chairs etc).

5.40 Unload van.

6.00 Put up the set and Membership stand.

6.15 Food - a light, hot meal provided by at the venue.

6.45 Company prepares for performance - getting changed, warming up, praying etc.

7.00 House opens and the audience begins to arrive.

7.28 Organiser confirms Roughshod are ready to begin, and asks them to “stand by”.

7.30 Showtime

At the end of the first half, one of the company will give a short talk about Riding Lights Membership.

The interval should last 15 minutes. Please make sure the actors have a cold drink brought to them. 5 minutes before you wish to re-start, begin to ask people to take their seats. **Ringing a loud bell can help!**

Organiser should put Roughshod on “standby” again, but there is no need to re-introduce them.

10.00 At the end of the show, as the audience Leaves, Roughshod will be at the door and at the Membership stand. They will then get changed, take down the set, pack up the Membership stand. **(Help loading the van is always welcome)**.

11.00 Load the van and hit the road…