

What's on Autumn / Winter 2025

OLDHAM
Coliseum
THEATRE



**The show
goes on.**

Welcome to a vibrant season of theatre, bringing together talented artists, sharing powerful stories that reflect who we are and what connects us.

This season marks a significant turning point for Oldham Coliseum Theatre, not just in programming, but in identity. After a difficult period of uncertainty, we're now stepping into a more stable, collaborative future as we prepare to return to our newly refurbished theatre next year. It's an exciting journey of growth, reflection, and transformation.

We're a theatre rooted in a strong legacy, anchored by the stories, people, and values that shaped our past. But more than ever, we're looking ahead. Everything we do is about creating space for future generations: for new audiences, new voices, and new ways of making and sharing theatre.

This season's programme reflects that vision beautifully. Productions like *The Other Neville*, *HELIOS*, and *Mistero Buffo* bring fresh perspectives and bold storytelling to the stage - offering powerful, relatable narratives that spark connection, conversation, and imagination across all generations.

Jessi Howell Photography @jesshowellphoto



Miss Murgitt



Without a permanent venue, we've had the unique opportunity to meet people where they are, whether in a shopping centre, a chapel, or a library. This freedom has sparked our creativity, allowing us to reimagine what theatre can be and how audiences connect with it.

An approach we've brought to life in our new festive show produced in association with Not Too Tame, *A Christmas Fair* by world renowned playwright **Jim Cartwright** (*Rise and Fall of Little Voice*) bursts into town with an immersive, site-specific festive feast for the senses full of mulled wine, mistletoe and mayhem - made by Oldham Coliseum and directed by UK Theatre award nominee and Artistic Director of Not Too Tame, **Jimmy Fairhurst**.

Through this shift, we've grown. We've welcomed new audiences, supported new artists and participants, and deepened the relationships that shape our work. Our vision embraces accessibility, responsiveness, and genuine connection.

Making new friendships with artists through our Artist Development programmes has been a particular strength during this time. We are embracing the personal, collaborative, co-creation approach that's rooted in listening. We hope artists feel part of our organisation, not visitors to it. This season brings Oldham's finest comedian **Mark Newsome's *You're My World*** out for a second outing, where audiences are invited to join once again in the process of making. A heartwarming stand-up tragedy in homage to Cilla Black.

This sense of belonging, of shared ownership, is something we cherish and will carry into our newly refurbished home. We often say we're moving from being a castle to a lighthouse. Castles raise drawbridges in difficult times, whilst lighthouses keep shining, offering guidance, hope, and connection. That's the kind of organisation we're becoming; open, outward-facing, and grounded in collaboration.

Everything we do is in partnership, with artists, with audiences, with our community. We are nothing without these relationships. As we look toward the future, we're holding onto the openness and generosity that has defined this past year, whilst also nurturing the longstanding and much-loved heritage of Oldham Coliseum Theatre. We can't wait to welcome you into what comes next.

Martina Murphy
Chief Executive Officer
Oldham Coliseum Theatre

You're My World – Work in Progress

Sat 27 September

Oldham Theatre Workshop Space

Age: 16+

Tickets from £5

Produced in Oldham

Damien Dunkerly knows he's destined for stardom.

At primary school Suzy Mckenzie called him a 'talentless nobody' and a week later his parents ran off to Faliraki to open a karaoke bar, but he hasn't let that kill his dreams. Nana Doreen has always encouraged him to believe that he can do anything, that fame and fortune await him. He's just got to work out how to get there.

With an Aldi bag full of ideas and his treasured signed photo of Cilla, the sky's the limit for Damien.

Presented as part of Oldham Coliseum's Artist Development programme, supporting local theatre maker Mark Newsome.



Oldham Comedy Club

Wed 8 October

Billingtons

Age 18+

Tickets from £12

Produced in Oldham

After a successful debut earlier in the year, **Comedy in a Van** returns with *Oldham Comedy Club* – a fantastic show celebrating the best of stand-up comedy with a diverse range of acts.

Join **Tom Wigglesworth** (★★★★★ Time Out ★★★★★ Scotsman ★★★★★ The Times), **Stephen Bailey** (*Live at the Apollo, Celebrity Mastermind, Celebrity Weakest Link, Madame Blanc Mysteries etc.*), **Seeta Wrightson** ('Taking the comedy night by storm' Yorkshire Evening Post) and **MC Mick Ferry** ('See him or regret it' John Bishop) up close in Oldham.



Fatherhood

Being a father in the 21st century is complicated. Being the father of a young son of mixed South Indian, Turkish & Austrian heritage, even more so.

Bringing together physical theatre rooted in the Indian performing artform Bharatanatyam and multilingual spoken text and sign languages, *Fatherhood* explores the cultural and gender expectations on fathers and what it means to be responsible for a child navigating an increasingly complex world.

Fatherhood is presented by Altered Skin, supported by Arts Council England, In Good Company, The Sir Barry Jackson Trust and FABRIC.

Thu 16 October

Oldham Library Performance Space

Age: 12+

Tickets from £12

Visiting Oldham



Mistero Buffo

Rhum + Clay present Dario Fo's devilishly funny masterpiece, *Mistero Buffo*, a darkly comic look at the absurdities and inequalities of everyday life, as seen through the eyes and tales of a travelling storyteller.

Banned as blasphemous for many years, but perhaps even more relevant now, *Mistero Buffo* takes an unflinching but humorous aim at those who manipulate truth and belief for power and control. A tour-de-force that won Julian Spooner *The Stage Award* for Best Performance, this is an extraordinary, virtuosic romp through a hundred characters and locations in the person of one man.

Produced by Rhum + Clay Theatre Company.

Tue 21 October

Oldham Library Performance Space

Age: 12+

Tickets from £12

Visiting Oldham



Shlomo's Beatbox Adventure for Kids

Thu 30 October

Billingtons

Age: 0+

Tickets from £12

Visiting Oldham

Join world record-breaking beatboxer **SK Shlomo** (they/ them) who makes amazing music with just a mouth and a mic, and has performed around the world with legends like Bjork, Ed Sheeran and Rudimental.

Their 5-star sell-out show **Shlomo's Beatbox Adventure for Kids** shows that anyone can become one of this sonic superhero's sidekicks in a world of funny sounds, brilliant noises, and cool music!

Half term fun for all the family



The Other Neville

Wed 5 – Thu 6 November

Oldham Library Performance Space

Age: 14+

Tickets from £12

Visiting Oldham

The Other Neville is a bold one-woman play inspired by England netball legend Tracey Neville. Born into a sporting family, Tracey carved her path in a game often overlooked - netball - leaving a legacy impossible to ignore.

Set in the 'locker room of her memories', torn between ambition, grief, and pride, she takes us from Northern courts to the world stage. Told with raw honesty and sharp humour, this is women's sport exposed: the pressure, the power, and the personal cost.

Written and performed by Rochdale born actor Imogen Greenwood, in collaboration with Shared Experience – Local.

Image generated by AI



Macbeth Retold

Come and be pulled deep into the world of The Bard's darkest tragedy with this alchemic solo performance from theatre artist and storyteller **Debs Newbold**.

From worthy warrior to marked man, from hero to murderer; Macbeth's fate is set from the start in this tense and gripping re-telling of Macbeth, the third in Debs Newbold's trilogy of re-imagined Shakespeare stories.

Originally commissioned by the Hay Literary Festival, a sell-out at Shakespeare's Globe and the talk of festivals both in the UK and abroad, this is an unforgettable, shimmering work of performance storytelling that will haunt you for a very long time to come.

Thu 20 November

George Street Chapel

Age: 14+

Tickets from £12

Visiting Oldham



HELIOS

A lad lives halfway up a historic hill. A teenager is on a road trip to the city in a stolen car. A boy is driving a chariot, pulling the sun across the sky.

A story about the son of the god of the sun, **HELIOS** transplants the Ancient Greek tale into a modern-day myth wound round the winding roads of rural England - and into the everyday living of a towering city.

It's a story about life, the invisible monuments we build to it, and the little things that leave big marks.

From the 'Masters of Storytelling' (Fourthwall) Wright&Grainger.

Thu 27 November

George Street Chapel

Age: 12+

Tickets from £12

Visiting Oldham



Hansel & Gretel

Tue 2 – Wed 24 December

Oldham Library & Lifelong Learning Centre

Age 4+

Tickets from £8

Produced in Oldham

After the huge success of last year's *Tales of the Toymender* Oldham Coliseum is working with **Oldham Theatre Workshop's** professional company and **Live@thelibrary** to present one of the world's best beloved fairytales.

Join *Hansel & Gretel* this Christmas at the library theatre for some inventive storytelling, song, and laughter.

Produced by Oldham Theatre Workshop's professional company in association with Oldham Coliseum theatre and Live@thelibrary



How to book

You can book tickets securely 24/7 via our website – coliseum.org.uk

You can also call us on [0161 624 1731](tel:01616241731) (Tuesdays to Thursdays between 12pm and 2pm) and email us on boxoffice@coliseum.org.uk

Tickets for *Hansel and Gretel* need to be booked directly with Live@TheLibrary.



How to find us

As we prepare to welcome you back to our wonderful building, you can enjoy our exciting programme at fantastic venues across Oldham, including:

- Billingtons
- Chadderton Town Hall
- George Street Chapel
- Oldham Library and Lifelong Learning Centre
- Oldham Theatre Workshop Space

We're deeply grateful to Oldham Council and each of these venues for opening their doors and helping us share the magic of live theatre with local communities.

A Christmas Fair

By Jim Cartright
Directed by Jimmy Fairhurst

17 December – 3 January

Chadderton Town Hall

Age: 12+

Tickets from £10

Produced in Oldham

Christmas isn't cancelled – it's bursting out of Oldham Coliseum and into town!

Theatre powerhouse, **Jim Cartright's A Christmas Fair** is a love letter to village life featuring the hilarious and heart-wrenching stories of five characters as they prepare for a real community fair.

Young love might be in the air, the vicar's distracted, Veronica is rallying her troops to keep things on track, and the caretaker, played by Manchester legend **John Henshaw** (*Early Doors, The Keeper, Downton Abbey, Coronation Street, The Cops*), just wants to go home.

Directed by **Jimmy Fairhurst** of *Not Too Tame*, *A Christmas Fair* is an immersive, site-specific festive feast for the senses with stalls full of mulled wine, mistletoe and mayhem!

Produced by Oldham Coliseum Theatre in association with *Not Too Tame*.



Artist Development

If you think you know Oldham's artistic community - think again. It's growing fast. We've been busy investing energy and resources into loads of new projects, and the creative leaders here are cooking up bold new work. Watch this space for world premieres that'll open your eyes and bend your mind a bit.

Oldham Coliseum Theatre's artist development programme is supercharged—focussing on meaningful connections and a commitment to investing in talent right here in Oldham. It's about showing up, backing creative people and place, and putting energy into making things happen. Blending quick-fix solutions with long-term support.

We've spent this year making friends, building trust, and one thing's for sure: Oldham is brilliant. There's so much going on. These are exciting times, with plenty of creative irons in the fire. Oldham's a hotbed of new work, inspiring stories and big ambitions. People graft, they innovate, and they make seriously cool stuff happen.

We're starting to see the impact of our efforts.

Crafted supported 100% Oldham-based artists who hadn't worked with the Coliseum before to create new work and share it with audiences. The response was amazing—audiences are engaged, insightful, and they care.

Mash Up brought together eleven young creatives to collaborate, learn, and play. Mentored by Oldham artists, they made bold, high-quality work that pushes boundaries.

We've also worked with over 55 independent artists so far—and the list gets longer every week. Support has come in all shapes and sizes: bespoke, arms-length producing sessions and a good dose of cheerleading. One brilliant example is Mark Newsome, who wrote his first ever funding bid with our support. It took blood, sweat, and a few swear words—but he did it! His new piece, *You're My World*, is a brilliantly funny and lovable story, and you'll see it in this season. Mark was also part of our *Go-See* programme, heading up to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe to learn, connect, and bring that experience into his work. He was joined by fellow Oldham writer, Elle Warsop, who also soaked up the festival atmosphere and brought back fresh inspiration.

It's been a joy to see their journeys unfold. If you're making new work here in Oldham and you fancy a brew and a chat, please get in touch. Let's be friends!

Helen Goodman
Senior Producer Artist Development
Oldham Coliseum Theatre
HelenGoodman@coliseum.org.uk



Investing in Oldham's Future – Support the Coliseum

As Oldham Coliseum prepares for its exciting building reopening, we are working hard behind the scenes to secure the support needed to bring this new chapter to life. At the heart of our plans is a belief that the Coliseum should be a space that truly belongs to everyone in Oldham: a theatre that celebrates our town's rich diversity, tells local stories, and creates opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds.

To make this vision a reality, we have launched an ambitious fundraising programme. Over the past few months, we have built a strategy that includes applications to charitable trusts and foundations, conversations with national partners, and the development of new ways for individuals and businesses to play their part. Every contribution, large or small, will directly support the people of Oldham, helping us deliver performances, workshops, training opportunities, and community projects that make a difference.

We are now reaching out to local businesses to join us on this journey. By investing in the Oldham Coliseum Theatre, you will not only help us reopen our doors but also invest in the future of our town. Your support will create

opportunities for young people, champion diverse voices, and strengthen Oldham's reputation as a place of creativity and culture. When friends visit from out of town and ask you 'Where is good to go in Oldham?' The Coliseum will soon be your answer!

Oldham Coliseum Theatre will be the place you go with your whole family, on date night, to do work experience, to grow your creative ideas, to make friends, to connect with the community, to learn, to laugh, to celebrate Oldham and all that's great about it.

Together, we can build a theatre that reflects and serves our whole community. If you'd like to learn more about how your business can get involved, whether through sponsorship, donations, or partnership, please get in touch.

Thank you for standing with us. With your support, the Coliseum will once again become a vibrant home for creativity, belonging, and pride in Oldham.

Jon McGrath
Development Manager
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Find out more and book your tickets
coliseum.org.uk

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