

Interior of the Georgian Theatre Royal in Richmond

Theatre scenery can be spectacular, transporting you to a different world. At the Georgian Theatre Royal (GTR) in Richmond you can be transported back in time with their original 19th-century ‘woodland scene’.

Over the coming year, with an HLF grant of £71,000, the GTR will be cleaning and restoring Britain’s oldest scenery so that it can be on show for visitors and theatre-goers.

The scenery, which dates between 1818 and 1836, is made up of eight wooden wing flats over nine feet high, five canvas borders and a forest back-drop scene. It was painted in Hertfordshire in a scene painting shop set up by former travelling actor George Rivers Higgins. The woodland scene is not imaginary as all of the trees depicted in the scene can be identified as specific types of trees so avid nature lovers can test their knowledge - a great example of how nature influences our wider lives.

Beyond conservation

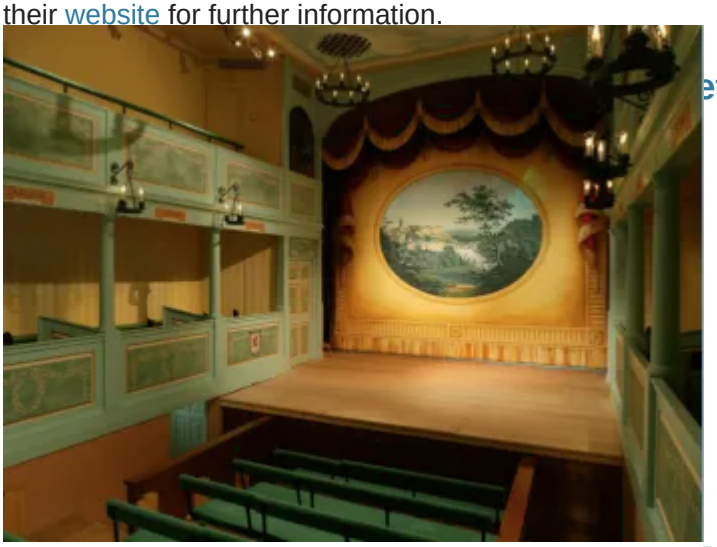
Once conserved, the scenery will be digitised and the original displayed in pride of place in the exhibition. New exhibitions will help visitors to understand the importance of the scenery in history of theatre and scene making to help visitors appreciate the complexities of travelling theatre scenery in its Georgian setting.

[quote=Mirren Hunter, Project Director]"Thanks to National Lottery players we will be able to conserve and share this unique piece of theatre history with all our visitors."[/quote]

here will be lots of opportunities for volunteers to get involved in the documenting the conservation process, training for guides so that they can tell visitors more about how the scenery has been conserved and its importance.

Feeling inspired?

If you are feeling inspired to find out more about their events or want to follow their progress through their blog then visit their website for further information.



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The show will go on, thanks to HLF