

A Viking Theatre for York

[Michael Maitland-Jones](#) takes a look at an ambitious new Viking theatre experience coming to York

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In the wake of the successful pop-up Rose Shakespeare theatre over the Summer, a new type of Viking-themed theatrical experience is coming to York over Winter. A Viking Great Hall is being built on the same site as the previous Rose theatre (First Castle Car Park), the idea being to give an audience the unique experience of seeing a play in an authentic 16th Century setting.

Put together by Bifrost Entertainments, plans are for the hall to be built between January 18th and May 3rd 2019 with the venue being open to the public for a total of 11 weeks and bringing in peak crowds for the February and Easter half-term. Bifrost has reimbursed York council for the car park space they plan to take up and ambitious plans are in place for the actual theatrical experience itself.

For one, the designers are aiming to push the theatre-going experience into the modern age with 360 degree sets, live visual effects and everything kept live; a pre-recorded experience this is not. With a seating capacity of 100 people per show, the performances will be intimate and contained but not lacking for scope overall. The Viking Hall project will bring in a variety of performance styles with a demonstration stage being erected and a number of food and drink outlets.

An estimate on attendance over the course of the project has been placed at a mighty 44,800 patrons with the aim of the project being to provide theatre that innovates; not merely in the 'pop-up' nature of the theatre but also in the nature of shows themselves, which are estimated to run for several hours and bear the print of all being 'immersive' theatre experiences. Bifrost are combining with the FatRascal theatre company for the shows and violence and gore are being highlighted as staples of the productions; it's being billed as immersive theatre for adults with a serious historical setting (there will however be multiple attractions for younger patrons).

In addition to the Viking Theatre project the council is also deliberating on whether or not to return the Rose theatre to York, and it is likely that the outcome of the Viking Theatre Project will heavily impact this decision.



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