

# Chichester Festival Theatre

OSBORNE



## Overview

2012 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chichester Festival Theatre (CFT) and their ambition was to rejuvenate this historic building through a contract of improvement works. We carried out essential repairs to the Grade II\* listed theatre, plus a new extension, enhanced seating, improved access and public facilities, improved backstage facilities and necessary changes to make the building more energy efficient.



## A Union of Past and Present

The original theatre was designed as a temporary building and not to operate on the scale it does today. The combination of the original concrete building with a new extension clad in Cor-Ten steel has achieved a union between past and present and the new thrust stage (the first in the UK) has increased the connection between audience and performer, akin to the era of Shakespeare. In addition, the previously redundant side galleries have been brought back into use.

Internally, we have carried out essential repairs, constructed a new extension at the rear of the theatre containing the back-of-house facilities, offices, and dressing rooms, re-modelled the auditorium and improved public and performer facilities.



Externally, the cantilevered, hexagonal, concrete building with its lightweight cable tied roof has been enhanced through slender strips of glazing integrated into timber boxes providing stunning views of the park from the staircases. We have transformed the theatre into a "pavilion in the park".

An independent structure has also been built to carry the stage, lighting and engineering equipment, avoiding adding additional loads onto the lightweight roof.



Continuation of the theatre's summer programme was essential for the local community and Chichester theatregoers. A 1,400 seat temporary state-of-the-art auditorium 'Theatre in the Park' was installed and positioned a football pitch away from the site to ensure the theatre experience was enjoyed with minimal disruption from ongoing refurbishment works.