The Rude Mechanical Theatre Company announce summer 2026 tour of The Wife

Wednesday 8 April, 2026

The Rude Mechanical Theatre Company will tour southern England this summer with *The Wife*, a newly reimagined version of their original musical play inspired by Chaucer's Wife of Bath, running from 11 June to 9 August 2026.

First performed in 2003 and later transferred to London, *The Wife* returns in a new version with an expanded musical score. The production blends live music, verse and physical comedy to create a vivid and magical piece of storytelling.

Set on the spring roads from Southwark to Canterbury, the play centres on Alyson of Bath, a woman who has survived by wit, appetite and sheer force of character in a world stacked against her. Before telling her tale, she reflects on her five husbands, a life shaped as much by necessity as desire. Her story then unfolds into a fable of love, power and transformation, as a young knight is sent in search of the answer to a question that refuses to settle: what do women most desire?

Performed by a small ensemble of actor-musicians, *The Wife* brings together song, humour and bold physical storytelling. Laughter, music and tenderness sit alongside sharper questions about relationships, power and endurance.

The Rude Mechanical Theatre Company have been touring original outdoor theatre to towns and villages across southern England since 1999. Known for their distinctive style, the company blends mime, white face make-up, slapstick comedy and live music to create engaging, accessible performances in gardens, village greens and public spaces.

Performances take place outdoors unless otherwise stated. Audiences are advised to bring warm clothing and a low-backed chair. Sites open in advance for picnics.

"Highly entertaining" – Time Out - 'The Wife'

National Press on The Rude Mechanical Theatre Company

"A delight" – The Independent on Sunday
"Superbly done" – The Stage
"Such a good night" – The Times

The tour runs from Thursday 11 June to Sunday 9 August 2026.

For full tour dates and ticket information, visit www.therudes.co.uk.

Media:











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