

April

PREVIEW



Fusion folk

HONITON

THE India Electric Co, a duo who blend traditional music and electronica, make a welcome return visit to the Beehive Centre at Honiton on Friday 12th April at 7.30pm.

East Devon musicians Cole Stacey and Joseph O’Keefe, who are described as “a veritable musical magpie’s nest” by BBC Radio 3 and a “full musical odyssey”, by BBC Radio 1, blend traditional instruments, folk melodies and subtle electronic influences. The folk radio station FRUK described them as “one of the truly pioneering acts in folk music.”

They have performed widely throughout Europe, Australia and New Zealand, and in this country at many venues and festivals and at the Royal Albert Hall.

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PREVIEW



*Living Spit's new show is their uniquely iconoclastic and hilarious take on *The Passion**

The Passion of Living Spit LYME REGIS

THE iconoclastic Living Spit, led by Stu McLoughlin, now sadly without the late Howard Coggins, tackles one of the greatest stories of all—*The Passion*, in the company's latest show, touring this spring, with local performances at the Marine Theatre, Lyme Regis, on Wednesday 17th April, the Exchange at Sturminster Newton on Friday 19th, and May dates in Devon at Plough Arts at Great Torrington and Exeter's Barnfield Theatre.

The Passion of Living Spit, is the company's hilarious and fearless attempt to recreate "the most divine comedy of all time." They promise "a hilarious theatrical journey through the life and unfortunate death of the bearded, ethnically ambiguous offspring of God, Jesus H Christ."

The show features what they call "a smattering of JC's greatest hits—water into wine! Loaves and fishes! Parables! Miracles! Animals! Vegetables! Minerals! And with a holy host of reimagined Easter hymns,

this is a Sunday school lesson unlike any other."

With a dash of irreverent wit, a sprinkle of divine inspiration and a hearty helping of tasteless biblical buffoonery, *The Passion of Living Spit* promises to give a whole new meaning to the term "cross-dressing."

Perhaps not for the easily religiously offended, but if you've seen Living Spit before and have enjoyed their previous shows, including *The Nativity*, you will be ready to enjoy an evening of unparalleled silliness—and right now, perhaps that's what we all need!

From Devon With Love CALL-OUT FOR ARTISTS

VILLAGES in Action, Devon's rural touring arts organisation, is inviting applications from performers and writers to take part in this year's From Devon With Love, the annual scratch festival in September.

The festival is open to Devon-based artists working in live performance with a new piece they are ready to test out in front of a friendly audience.



Scratchworks arena tour with Hags, a tale of witchcraft

The VIA team wants to hear from performers making original work, including theatre, dance, circus, storytelling, spoken word, puppetry and poetry. Ten artists will receive support including time with the VIA producing team, up to £400 performance fee and a 30-60 minute slot at the festival.

For the first time, the festival organisers are also making additional support available for previously excluded, neurodivergent and global majority artists in the application process.

If this sounds like you, find out more about the From Devon With Love festival on the website <https://villagesinaction.co.uk/fdwl/> Applications close on 9th April.

The last witch trial BRIDPORT

THE energetic and inventive all-female theatre company Scratchworks come to Bridport Arts Centre open Tuesday 9th April with their latest show, *Hags: A Magical Extravaganza*.

The action begins in Bideford in 1682, where the last witch trial in England took place. Three women were accused of witchcraft, tried and hanged. Witches ... magic? Fast forward to the present day and name one female magician—whatever happened?

Join Scratchworks for an evening with three fearless females climbing out of their boxes, shaking off the sequins and investigating what really happened in a

small town in North Devon 340 years ago.

Packed full of magic tricks, physical comedy and live music, the trio explore the witch-hunt mania that swept the country and sent hundreds of innocent women to the gallows. With mind-blowing illusions, stupendous stunts and the occasional disappearing rabbit, Hags sets the record straight for thousands of falsely accused women with all the joy, silliness and spectacle they can muster.

Later in the tour, Scratchworks are bringing Hags to the Barnfield Theatre at Exeter on Friday and Saturday 17th and 18th May, and Poole's Lighthouse arts centre on Thursday 23rd May.

Poll dancing LYME REGIS

TIMES Radio presenter and political columnist Matt Chorley is looking forward to the general election and he wants to share his thoughts and expertise with audiences across the country, including the Marine Theatre at Lyme Regis, where he will perform his show, *Poll Dancer*, on Friday 26th April.

Drawing on his own two decades of reporting from Westminster and two centuries of history, he will deliver his hilarious guide to winning and losing at the polls. The *Have I Got News For You* regular is back with his third stand-up tour, ready to focus-group the audience and compile his own manifesto, which he is sure is guaranteed to get him the keys to No10.



Matt Chorley is poll dancing for his latest tour

Matt has been a Westminster-based political journalist since 2005, when politics was boring, and it has gradually got madder as he worked his way through the Press Association, Western Morning News, Independent on Sunday, MailOnline and The Times. Since June 2020, he has presented the weekday mid-morning show on Times Radio, including features like *PMQs Unpacked*, *If I Ruled The World* and the popular quiz, *Can You Get To No10?*

Poll Dancer will also be at Taunton's Brewhouse arts centre on Friday 19th April.

Award-winning quartet CONCERTS IN THE WEST

FOUR musicians who have won prizes for their commitment to encouraging audiences for chamber music as well as their accomplished playing, the Gildas Quartet will give a Concerts in the West series at Bridport, Ilminster, Crewkerne and, for the first time, Shaftesbury, over the weekend 19th to 21st April.

Tom Aldren and Gemma Sharples, violins, Christine Anderson, viola, and Anna Menzies, cello, who are praised for their “energy, verve and refreshing approach,” have performed to critical acclaim at major venues including the Bridgewater Hall, Purcell Room, Wigmore Hall and live on BBC Radio 3. Their

bold approach to performance was recognised at the International Franz Schubert and Modern Music Competition at Graz, Austria, where they won first prize in the Audience Engagement Award 2018.

Determined to bring the visceral experience of string quartet performance to audiences at close quarters, the Gildas launched their immersive “Surround Sound Sessions” project in winter 2019. The series ranged from one-work pop-up concerts in unusual settings to full-length recitals, with the audience literally in the midst of the players, in surround sound.

Their programme for the April tour includes works by Montgomery, Haydn, Puccini and Debussy. The concerts are at Bridport Arts Centre on Friday 19th at 11.30am, Ilminster Arts Centre, Friday 19th at 7.30pm, Crewkerne Dance House on Saturday 20th at 7.30, and Shaftesbury's St Peter's Church on Sunday 21st at 3pm.

Crossing folk genres BRIDPORT

THE Urban Folk Quartet—four musicians who have played with many of the biggest names on the contemporary folk scene—comes to Bridport Arts Centre on Saturday 13th April.

Sometimes known as UFQ, this exciting group



UFQ share open attitude to the many musical influences they encounter.

has a repertoire which has much less to do with the traditional idea of genre than an open attitude to the many musical influences they encounter.

With two outstanding fiddlers in the line-up, their music is fiddle-led and draws heavily on Celtic dance forms and traditional song, but from there on in it is unlike any folk band you have ever heard. The UFQ's approach to the folk ethos is to embrace any and every influence that genuinely makes sense of their time and place and makes sense in their music, from funk grooves to middle-eastern melodies, Afrobeat to north Indian rhythms.

The quartet is Galician fiddler Paloma Trigás, who has played with The Chieftains, Sharon Shannon and Altan, fiddler Joe Broughton (Albion Band, Bellowhead), Dan Walsh, one of the country's finest banjo players and a gifted singer and guitarist, who has played with the Seth Lakeman Band, and The Levellers, and percussionist Tom Chapman, (Jacqui McShee's Circle, While & Matthews, Russell & Algar) who is widely considered to be the most accomplished and innovative player of the South American percussion instrument, the cajon.

[The enduring magic of Alice](#) [DORCHESTER AND TAUNTON](#)

BOX Tale Soup are bringing their charming

adaptation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to Dorchester Arts at the Corn Exchange on Tuesday 2nd April and Taunton's Brewhouse arts centre on Wednesday 3rd, both at 2pm.

Follow Alice on her remarkable journey, from her fleeting encounters with the White Rabbit to her eventual showdown with the bloodthirsty Queen of Hearts. A confrontational caterpillar, ukelele-twangling Tweedle twins and an array of other crazy characters pop up along the way, before Alice comes face to face with her own imagination and perhaps the author of her dreams.

The show, which runs for just under an hour (a sensible length for young audiences), features a dozen colourful handmade puppets, a beautiful set that unfolds from a vintage trunk and magical original music. Lewis Carroll's enduring masterpiece is brought to the stage in an inventive new production sure to delight anyone of any age with a vivid imagination and an appetite for adventure!

[Coracle paddles a new wave](#) [SOUTH PETHERTON](#)

THREE musicians with very different backgrounds who perform together as Coracle come to the David Hall at South Petherton, on Saturday 13th April at 8pm, for a concert that brings together both

traditional and contemporary music.

The trio are Paul Hutchinson, accordion, well-known for his work with Belshazzar's Feast, among others, Anna Tam, singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, who draws particularly on traditional and historic song, and Karen Wimhurst, clarinettist, composer and choral director.

Their musical approach is flexible, built on trusted traditional foundations, yet uniquely tuned to respond to and embrace the ebbs and flows, squalls and flurries of each musical current which carries them.

At its heart, Coracle represents the British folk tradition, interwoven with contemporary classical and splashes of early music. The three artists draw on very different musical experiences and have come together through their love of experimentation, boldness, humour and risk.

BBC Young Musician returns DORCHESTER



Martin James Bartlett

MARTIN James Bartlett, the 2014 winner of the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition, makes a return visit to Dorchester Corn Exchange on Friday 5th April, with a wide-ranging programme that includes jewels of the baroque period through to 20th century favourites.

He first came to Dorchester in 2016, just two years after his BBC triumph. Since then, his career has gone from strength to strength, and this April programme will be a powerful showcase of his prodigious talent.

His performances are critically acclaimed—"astonishing delicacy and punch," said the Daily Telegraph and the Times called him "thrilling." Martin possesses a fearless technique and plays with a maturity and elegance far beyond his years.

His Corn Exchange programme includes music by Rameau, Couperin, Debussy, Ravel, Granados, Ginastera and Gershwin (including *Rhapsody in Blue*).

Rosie is a triple threat
BRIDPORT

THE extraordinary comedian Rosie Jones is excited to be on the road for a UK tour and is bringing her new show, *Triple Threat*, to Bridport's Electric Palace on Friday 5th April.

Join Rosie as she ponders whether she is a national treasure, a little prick—or somewhere in between! This show is guaranteed to be full of unapologetic cheekiness, nonsensical fun and unadulterated JOY from the triple threat herself.

Rosie is best known for her hit travel series, *Trip Hazard* and *Mission: Accessible*, and for appearances on shows including *The Last Leg*, *8 Out of 10 Cats*, *Mock the Week* and *The Ranganation*. Earlier this year, she also demonstrated her dramatic acting skills in a nail-biting and poignant episode of the BBC 1 hit series, *Call the Midwife*. Is there no end to her talent?







Exploring climate change DORCHESTER

DORSET-based cellist Emily Burrige and composer and clarinettist Karen Wimhurst come to Dorchester Corn Exchange on Sunday 21st April for an afternoon live music and multi-media event, *All Trees are Clocks*, exploring the environmental impacts of climate change through music.

The concert is the second performance this season at Dorchester responding to environmental issues. The two musicians will accompany a presentation of field recordings and video created by ecologist and sound artist Adrian Newton, documenting how ancient woodlands change through the seasons and over longer timescales.

This is a unique opportunity to attend a performance of this collaborative piece, which was recently featured on the Cerys Matthews show on BBC Radio 6.

Top Six at the Flix

From Page to Screen Film Festival 2024.

Hard to choose from this year's excellent line up. However top of my list goes to one of the greatest films of all time.

The Passion of Joan of Arc (1929)

One of the greatest of all movies...Falconetti's Joan may be the finest performance ever recorded on film. Pauline Kael. New York Times

Metropolis (1927)

Does what many great films do, creating a time, place and characters so striking that they become part of our arsenal of images for imagining the world. Chicago-Sun Times. Roger Ebert.

Kes (1969)

Kes is Loach at his best. He shot it on a very low budget, on location, using most local non-professionals as his leads...The film has a heart-breaking humanity. Chicago-Sun Times. Roger Ebert.

Stalker (1979)

Stalker is a movie to be watched as many times as physically possible, to be picked apart, discussed, argued over, written about, to inspire music, books, poetry, other movies, teachers, philosophers, historians, governments, even the way an individual might choose to live their life. It really is that astounding. Little White Lies. David Jenkins.

Tish (2023)

There's passion in this heartrending documentary from film-maker Paul Sng, comparable to his excellent earlier film about Poly Strene, of X-Ray Spex. It is about the Tyneside photographer Tish Murtha who chronicled working-class lives in the northeast in the 70s and 80s (and also those of Soho sex workers in London), earning for herself the nickname "Demon Snapper" in the papers. The Guardian. Peter Bradshaw.

The Beast (2024)

Across each twist in time and place that can rush together without warning, the grounding force to it all is Seydoux. Collider. Chase Hutchinson.



Martin Maudsley Photograph by Robin Mills

Spring is sprung BRIDPORT

STORYTELLER Martin Maudsley and musician Lucy Roberts welcome spring with *Sing Spring Sprung*, a delightful programme of music and folklore, at Bridport Arts Centre on Saturday 20th April.

Spring is the season of new life and old friends. From the spring-tide of bright flowers to the growing crescendo of birdsong, the wild world is awash with sights and sounds to be sensed and savoured.

To celebrate this keenly anticipated season, Martin and Lucy weave together an evening of spellbinding stories and magical music full of the joys of spring. The performance draws on the March, April and May chapters of Martin's latest book *Telling the Seasons*, bringing to life the folklore, folksongs and traditions of spring.



Vanessa Williams in the musical of *The Devil Wears Prada*

The high cost of high fashion PLYMOUTH

ONE of the most popular and critically successful films ever made about the world of high fashion, *The Devil Wears Prada* has been adapted into a musical, with a score by Sir Elton John. It makes its debut with a six-week, pre-West End season, from 6th July to 17th August, at Plymouth Theatre Royal.

The iconic leading role of Miranda Priestly, the formidable and feared editor-in-chief of the prestigious Runway magazine (played by Meryl Streep in the film), will be sung by multi-award-winner Vanessa Williams. Her musical theatre credits include *Into the Woods* (Tony nominee), *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *Show Boat* and *Anyone Can Whistle*. Directed and choreographed by three-time Tony Award-winner Jerry Mitchell, the musical has lyrics by Shaina Taub and book by Kate Wetherhead.

Fresh out of college, aspiring journalist Andy scores a job at Runway working for fashion's most powerful and terrifying icon. Sacrificing her personal life to meet Miranda's impossible demands, Andy finds herself seduced by the glamorous world she once despised. How far will she go to succeed... and will it be worth selling her soul to get what she's always wanted?

GPW

The Young Lit Fix



***Murray and Bun (1),
Murray the Viking***
By Ben Stower
Published by Harper
Collins. £6.99 paperback
**Reviewed by Nicky
Mathewson**

MURRAY is a cat, an ordinary cat. He likes ordinary cat things like sleeping and eating.

Fumblethumb is a wizard, not an ordinary wizard because he is not very wizardy at all, in fact his magic is awful and goes wrong more than it goes right.

Bun is a bun, sticky and delicious with a cherry on top, but thanks to Fumblethumb's magic, Bun is now a rabbit, still sticky and very bouncy with a cherry for a tail.

All Murray wants is a simple life free of magic and full of peace and quiet, but unfortunately, Fumblethumb has enchanted the cat flap, so now each time Murray slips through it he has no idea where he will end up! On this particular morning, the kitchen is full of pink smoke and Fumblethumb is running around with his hat on fire, so Murray and Bun make a quick exit through the enchanted cat flap. Unfortunately they have not landed in the back garden but find themselves in a huge wooden hall surrounded by Vikings of various sizes and hairiness.

The largest and hairiest Viking appears to have mistaken Murray and Bun for Troll hunters and demands for them to help on an enormous troll hunt and to find their missing friend Eggrik. The tiny fluffy and sticky duo have no choice but to armour up and embark on a crazy adventure. Will they find any trolls? Will they find Eggrik? Most importantly, will they find their way back home?

This is the start of a brand new series and it is terrific! Instantly engaging and full to the brim with illustrations. Funny and exciting, it is the perfect way to help new readers gain confidence to read independently. Perfect for ages 6 and up.

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Memories of Greenham Common

Directing a play inspired by the protests at Greenham Common in the 80s, **Margie Barbour** highlights some of the comments from Briport residents who were there.



Members of the cast for 'A Common Woman Reimagined' and a photo from Annette Atkinson showing Marian Simmonds holding the tray and Jill Gallop on the far right

A letter in the Bridport News has brought a host of interesting stories and photos about how Bridport women were affected and took part in the protests at Greenham Common. These stories will be included in the programme for the upcoming production of *A Common Woman Reimagined*, which focuses on what would have made an ordinary woman go to Greenham.

The letters tell of how some mothers were active supporters of CND and led protests here in Bridport as well as going to Greenham itself.

I remember feeling like I was part of something really big and what we were doing made a difference'

Annette Atkinson sent a photo of her mother Jill Gallop leading a protest in Bucky Doo and explained: 'My mother was a mother of 4 and a teacher at Colfox at the time, she definitely went to Greenham Common several times, between 1981 - 83. On one occasion she apparently wore a skeleton costume and was told what to do if arrested (fortunately for us she wasn't!). She also regularly ran a CND stall on Bucky Doo.'

Rebecca Hilton, who is taking part in the production as one of the Greenham singers told how 'When Greenham did the "Embrace the Base" day of action my CND friends and I got a coach from Weymouth up to Greenham, I remember feeling like I was part of something really big and what we were doing made a difference. I felt like I had found my

tribe and this was what I was meant to be doing in my life, rebelling and fighting for change. I remember the feeling that together women could be strong and face any oppression or adversity.'

Many other women who have made Bridport their home wrote, including Deborah Legge, and she told how 'I remember going to Greenham Common with my friend and her mum to take supplies to the amazing women there and forming a human chain around the fence. I came from a very boring provincial place and seeing their strength and courage helped to shape my already growing interest in the peace and environmental movements! I have met many wonderful and inspirational people taking part in walks, marches and other actions to ensure a peaceful, fair and green world.'

Anna Sullock got in touch and remembered 'A few of us students borrowed a windowless transit and arrived at a muddy venue. There was a powerful sense of purpose. All I felt I could offer, apart from being another marching presence, was a plait of my hair that I cut and tied to the fence. I admired those who were living there, the hard core group..It was a momentous time.'

Directed by Margie Barbour the play will be performed at the Lyric Theatre, Bridport on Saturday 6th April at 7.30 and on Sunday 7th April at 2.30 and 7.30, tickets are £12 and £6 concessions for Job seekers and Universal credit. Tickets are on sale at Bridport's Tourist Information Centre, 01308 424901 www.bridportandwestbay.co.uk/tickets