

# June

## PREVIEW

### Festival Time

#### BEAMINSTER

THE 29th Beaminster Festival brings an enthralling and stimulating programme to one of Dorset's prettiest towns, from 27th June to 5th July. Highlights include scriptwriter, playwright and novelist Chris Chibnall, superstar folk duo Kathryn Roberts and Sean Lakeman, actress and singer Lucy Stevens as the great Kathleen Ferrier and Nigel "Neil the Hippy" Planer.

The festival's first event is actually three weeks earlier, on Sunday 7th June at 3pm at Beaminster Manor, when The Pantaloons perform *The (Almost) Complete History of Britain*. Promising mud, blood and stiff upper-lips, the Pantaloons will take the audience on a breathless race through the centuries—see the life of Henry VIII told as a romantic comedy or the Spanish Armada reimagined as a light operetta. The show features live music, audience interaction and wild historical inaccuracy.

The main festival opening event on Saturday 27th is Yeovil Concert Band playing *Sounds From Stage and Screen*, at 7.30pm at the festival's main venue, St Mary's Church.

On Sunday 28th, there will be a recital by the brilliant young pianist Ariel Lanyi, with a programme he will shortly repeat at London's Wigmore Hall, including works by Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin and Debussy.

Monday 29th has three events, *Flutes and Frets—Dancing Through Time*, at 11.30am, Chris Chibnall at 2.30 and a treat for jazz lovers, the Tim Kliphuis Trio at 7.30.

The Roberts-Wakeman folk duo are on Tuesday at 11.30, followed by journalist John Kampfner at 2.30 and the Fibonacci String Quartet at 7.30.

On Wednesday 1st July, there is a recital at 11.30am by Levi Andreassen, double bass, and Alessio Enea, piano, followed at 7.30pm by the brilliant quintet Connaught Brass, whose repertoire spans from baroque to jazz to specially commissioned music—they will also be giving workshops and sharing their skills and enthusiasm for music with children from seven local schools.

Richard Pinel opens Thursday's programme with an organ recital at 11.30am, with Lucy Stevens as Kathleen Ferrier in *Whattalife!* at 2.30, and violinist Coco Tomita and pianist Simon Callaghan at 7.30.

Friday morning at 11.30, brings violinist Harriet Mackenzie and guitarist Morgan Szymanski with a charismatic programme including works by Vivaldi, Paganini, Sarasate, Faure and De Falla. That evening, St Mary's will resound to the remarkable sounds of the Scott Brothers, a duo playing the unusual combination of piano and organ, including music by Bach, Dvorak, Handel and Gershwin.

For fans of *The Young Ones*, one of the festival highlights will be Friday afternoon's talk by "Neil the Hippy", Nigel Planer. A founding figure of the 80s alternative comedy scene, in his memoir, *Young Once—A Life Less Heavy*, Planer will showcase his dry wit, theatrical flair and knack for finding humour in both disaster and triumph.

Young composer, pianist, songwriter, and producer Jacky Zhang (pictured here) comes to St Mary's Church on Wednesday the 2nd of July at 11.30am with a programme that includes Chopin *Piano Sonata No.2 in B flat minor, Op. 35*.

The festival concludes with a Saturday 8pm gig at Beaminster School by tribute band Not the Rolling Stones, and the finale event on Sunday at 7pm, Bijou Opera in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* at St Mary's. Led by soprano-producer Stefanie Kembell-Read and conductor-director Stephen Anthony Brown, the company reimagines great operas for intimate ensembles and distinctive settings.

For full details of the 2026 Beaminster Festival, pick up a programme or visit [beaminsterfestival.com](http://beaminsterfestival.com)



STEINWAY & SONS



*King Arthur and the Holy Grail is at the Marine Theatre in Lyme Regis in June*

## Inside and out COAST AND VILLAGES

ARTSREACH has been presenting a vast selection of professional productions—plays, jazz, folk music, opera, poetry, comedy and more—for more than 35 years. This summer, Dorset’s touring arts charity has a typically eclectic range of entertainment at venues that range from the spectacular coastal location of Kimmeridge Bay to village pubs.

The programme is an exciting mix of open-air theatre, international folk music, opera, comedy and family-friendly events.

For music lovers, the summer visitors include the acclaimed folk artist Rachael McShane of Bellowhead fame, touring in July and August with her band The Cartographers to Studland, Marshall and Buckland Newton, and Opera in a Box with a witty adaptation of Gilbert and Sullivan’s much-loved comic opera, *The Pirates of Penzance*, brought to life by an ensemble of eight singers and musicians at Lytchett Matravers.

As always, there is plenty of outdoor theatre (fingers crossed, of course, for the weather). Artsreach favourites Miracle Theatre will be at Sandford Orcas and Ibberton, bringing a characteristic magical twist to Ibsen’s classic story, *Peer Gynt*.

Ha Hum Ah Theatre will stage their fast-paced,

comedy-packed retelling of *The Scarlet Pimpernel* at Winterborne Houghton and Halstock in July.

Renowned for their anarchic, musical, family-friendly performances, Three Inch Fools will create Monty Python-inspired mayhem at Kimmeridge Bay with *King Arthur & The Holy Grail* in August. The Fools will also be outside at the National Trust’s Killerton in Devon on 6th June, the Marine Theatre, Lyme Regis, on 9th June and Combeinteignhead in Devon on 14th August.

Thanks to support by Pub is the Hub, the INN Crowd is back, putting spoken word performers and poets into village pubs. On 15th June, Luke Wright makes a welcome Artsreach return, at The Gagle of Geese at Buckland Newton with his razor-sharp, funny and heartfelt show *Pub Grub*.

In July, Jonny Fluffypunk will be at The Royal Oak at Drimpton and Ibberton village hall field, searching for the hero inside in his new show, *If we just keep going, we will get there in the end*.

John Osborne will be at The Gagle of Geese and The Royal Oak in Drimpton in August, with *To Make People Happy*, exploring the humour section of second hand book shops, jokes overheard on market stalls and finding the positives in life.

Full details are available online at [www.artsreach.co.uk](http://www.artsreach.co.uk); printed programmes are available at libraries and tourist information centres.

## Electric Palace at 100

### BRIDPORT

THIS year marks 100 years of Bridport's beautiful and atmospheric Electric Palace. Celebrate the centenary in style at the venue's 1920s themed birthday bash on Saturday 27th June, from 7pm, with live music from The Swingin' Jukebox and The Hot House Combo, plus a fun casino, cocktails and a vintage photobooth.

The seven-piece Swingin' Jukebox are a sensational vintage band, straight outta Liverpool, who play classic and contemporary hits with a post-modern twist.

Exuding a giddy blend of vintage charm and captivating rhythms, The Hot House Combo will transport you to the colourful and carefree foot-tapping era of yesteryear. Inspired by the great musicians of the 1920s, 30s and 40s, this upbeat quartet perform songs they love and create new ones in the same style!

## A new play takes shape

### DORCHESTER

DORCHESTER has a record-breaking history of community plays—starting in 1985 with

*Entertaining Strangers*, local residents, with professional writers including Ann Jellicoe, David Edgar and Stephanie Dale, have created an amazing legacy of seven original plays that explore life and dramatic events in Dorchester over the centuries.

Now the community play association is at the early stages of developing a new community play, and ideas are already starting to spark.

Subjects for research include:

- The history of Dorchester Prison—uncovering the stories, people, and secrets held within its walls from when it was built in 1795 to when it closed in 2013.

- Myths and legends of Dorchester—diving into local folklore, mystery and the unexpected, including the Singing Marys on Bincombe Bumps, the Woodwose in Puddletown woods and the legend of the Mare and her Colts near Kingston Russell.

- Past, present and future—how the area has evolved over time, and how it might continue to change, particularly in response to climate change.

The community play team would love to hear ideas from local people as the project develops—[www.dorchestercommunityplay.co.uk](http://www.dorchestercommunityplay.co.uk)



# BEAMINSTER FESTIVAL

27 June – 5 July 2026

FROM MICK  
TO COCO AND  
EVERYTHING  
IN BETWEEN

[beaminsterfestival.com](http://beaminsterfestival.com)

or call 0333 666 33 66

Photo: Coco Tomita © Brett & Lindsey Clarke  
Registered Charity Number 1164346



Coco Tomita violin • Ariel Lanyi piano • Scott Brothers Duo piano and organ  
Tim Kliphuis Trio • Not the Rolling Stones • Nigel Planer *Young Once* • Chris Chibnall  
John Kampfner *Braver New World* • Pantaloons al fresco theatre • Bijou Opera *Le Nozze di Figaro*

MUSIC

THEATRE

ART

LITERATURE



*GreenMatthews come to the Corn Exchange in Dorchester in June*

## [Sumer is icumen in](#) DORCHESTER

MUSICAL duo GreenMatthews bring their *Midsummer Revels* to the Corn Exchange at Dorchester on Sunday 21st June, at 7pm. Chris Green and Sophie Matthews are modern-day balladeers, specialising in telling stories through song, and playing a wide range of instruments.

The new show follows their successful *Midwinter Revels*. Featuring traditional English folksongs, original material and toe-tapping dance tunes, *Midsummer Revels* is a glorious, feel-good evocation of sunny days, blue skies and green fields!

Songs of the land and sea, town and country are brought to life on instruments that include English border bagpipes, mandocello and shawm, all underscored with the duo's trademark wit and humour.

## [Laughing at Doomsday](#) BRIDPORT

THESE are times that almost feel like Armageddon—but never fear, Alfie Moore is here to tackle today's big problems in his new show, *Acocalypse Now*, at Bridport Arts Centre, on Sunday 21st June at 8pm.

Former policeman Alfie, star of BBC Radio 4's *It's a Fair Cop*, has the antidote to the world's breakdown of law and order, fake news and the price of baked beans.

The Four Horsemen of rising crime, global

warming, AI and culture wars are galloping towards us. Are we on the road to hell? And can we avoid the potholes?

Alfie has encountered more than his fair share of egotistical dictators in his policing career and learned when pragmatism, and more than a dash of laughter, can defuse even the most menacing showdown.

Doomsday is no laughing matter, but Alfie's show certainly is.

## [Life is a juggling act](#) LYME REGIS

CONFESSIOAL comedian Suzi Ruffell is coming to the Marine Theatre at Lyme Regis with her new show, *The Juggle*, on Friday 5th June.

It's hard to be good all the time, says Suzi—a good mother, a good daughter, a good partner, a good friend, a good person ... to be ambitious but not ruthless, a success but not a sell-out ... a gentle parent but not a pushover.

How do you smash life and make it look easy? Suzi is exhausted and she hasn't even started. This isn't just a stand-up show—it's a support group!

Suzi is at the Lighthouse, Poole's Centre for the Arts, the following evening, Saturday 6th June.

Back at Lyme Regis, the Marine's comedy club on Friday 26th June promises the usual eclectic mix, funny, not too raucous—but raucous enough to be fun. Headlining this month is Olga Koch, a fan-favourite comedian known for her razor-sharp

wit and masterful storytelling. The evening is hosted by the hilarious Tom Glover.

### [Philip Glass to Piazzolla](#) CONCERTS IN THE WEST

THE June series of Concerts in the West is at Bridport Arts Centre on Friday 26th, with the usual coffee-time recital at 11.30am, Ilminster Arts Centre that evening at 7.30m, and Crewkerne Dance House on Saturday 27th, also at 7.30pm. It features the viola-piano duo, Shiry Rashkovsky and Lana Suran.

Their programme is a sparkling selection, which includes *Café 1930* from *Histoire du Tango* by Astor Piazzolla, *Cherry Ripe* by Fritz Kreisler arranged by Lionel Tertis, and Ravel's *Sonata Opus Posthumous* and Philip Glass's *Violin Sonata*, both arranged by Rashkovsky.

Lauded by The Strad for her "thrilling and exuberant" Royal Festival Hall debut, Shiry Rashkovsky has an international and diverse career. Her recording of Kate Whitley's *Viola Concerto* (dedicated to her) was hailed as "fearless" by The Guardian, while her latest EP, which includes a newly-commissioned duo composed by and recorded with Héloïse Werner, was featured on BBC Radio 3's *New Music Show*.

In demand as a chamber musician, she is frequently invited to international festivals including Prussia Cove Open Chamber Music. She is a founding member of Trio Klein, whose groundbreaking *Trio Klein's 80s Night* programme was featured on BBC Radio 3, and who were Artists in Residence at the University of Surrey in 2023-24.

Lana Suran is an internationally acclaimed Swedish pianist praised for her expressive power, refined tone and deeply personal interpretations. Her repertoire ranges from the classical and romantic eras to the 20th century. Born in Stockholm in 1992 to Russian and Kurdish parents, Lana began performing at age five.

### [To begin at the beginning](#) BRIDPORT

DYLAN Thomas's masterpiece, *Under Milk Wood*, originally written for radio, has had an equally successful life on stage, and the remarkable Guy Masterson comes to Bridport's 100-year old Electric Palace, on Thursday 11th June, at 7.30pm, with his solo version.

The Olivier Award-winning performer is celebrating his own 30th anniversary with this



**CHAMBER  
MUSIC  
MINI-TOURS**


BRIDPORT — CREWKERNE  
ILMINSTER

# Concerts IN THE West 2026

- 13–14 FEBRUARY **Daniel Lehardt** PIANO
- 13–14 MARCH **Geirprúður Guðmundsdóttir** CELLO & **Antoine Préat** PIANO
- 10–11 APRIL **Ensemble Augelletti**  
Olwen Foulkes RECORDERS — Ellen Bundy VIOLIN  
Carina Drury CELLO — Toby Carr LUTES  
Benedict Williams KEYBOARDS
- 15–16 MAY **Greenwich Trio**  
Lana Trotovšek VIOLIN — Heather Tuach CELLO  
Yoko Misumi PIANO
- 26–27 JUNE **Shiry Rashkovsky** VIOLA & **Lana Suran** PIANO
- 10–11 JULY **Ceruleo**  
Jenni Harper & Emily Owen SOPRANOS  
Kinga Gáborjáni VIOLA DA GAMBA  
Satoko Doi-Luck HARPSICHORD
- 18–19 SEPTEMBER **Sophie Rosa** VIOLIN & **Ian Buckle** PIANO
- 16–17 OCTOBER **Lise Vandersmissen** HARP & **Gabriela Opacka-Boccardo** VIOLIN
- 6–7 NOVEMBER **Fenella Humphreys** VIOLIN  
**Sam Armstrong** PIANO — **Gary Pomeroy** VIOLA  
**Cara Berridge** CELLO

ONLINE booking and all details  
[www.concertsinthewest.org](http://www.concertsinthewest.org)  
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poetic drama of “a day in the life of Llareggub”, a fictional Welsh sea-side town.

In an amazing feat of memory and physical virtuosity, Masterson recreates all 69 of Dylan Thomas’ idiosyncratic, memorable inhabitants.

Complemented by a stunning original soundscape by Matt Clifford, this unique solo interpretation makes the words sing. It’s bawdy and beautiful, sad and sensual, creating indelible and moving snapshots of life. The beauty of Thomas’s wordplay and Masterson’s virtuosity will leave you breathless!

There is a very interesting family connection here—Masterson, who is renowned for his solo performances (including *Animal Farm* and *A Christmas Farm*) is the great-nephew of Richard Burton, who was the First Voice in the original 1954 BBC radio production of *Under Milk Wood* (it is unforgettable, if you have been lucky enough to hear it).

As a young man who had only just passed his driving test, Masterson drove his world-famous uncle from Wales to Switzerland in 1981, and has said this trip had a big influence on his subsequent career as a writer-director-performer.

### [Jeneba returns](#) DORCHESTER

JENEBA Kanneh-Mason, the fifth of the seven remarkable musical siblings, returns to Dorchester Corn Exchange on Tuesday 2nd June at 7.30, welcomed back after her Dorchester Arts debut in 2023.

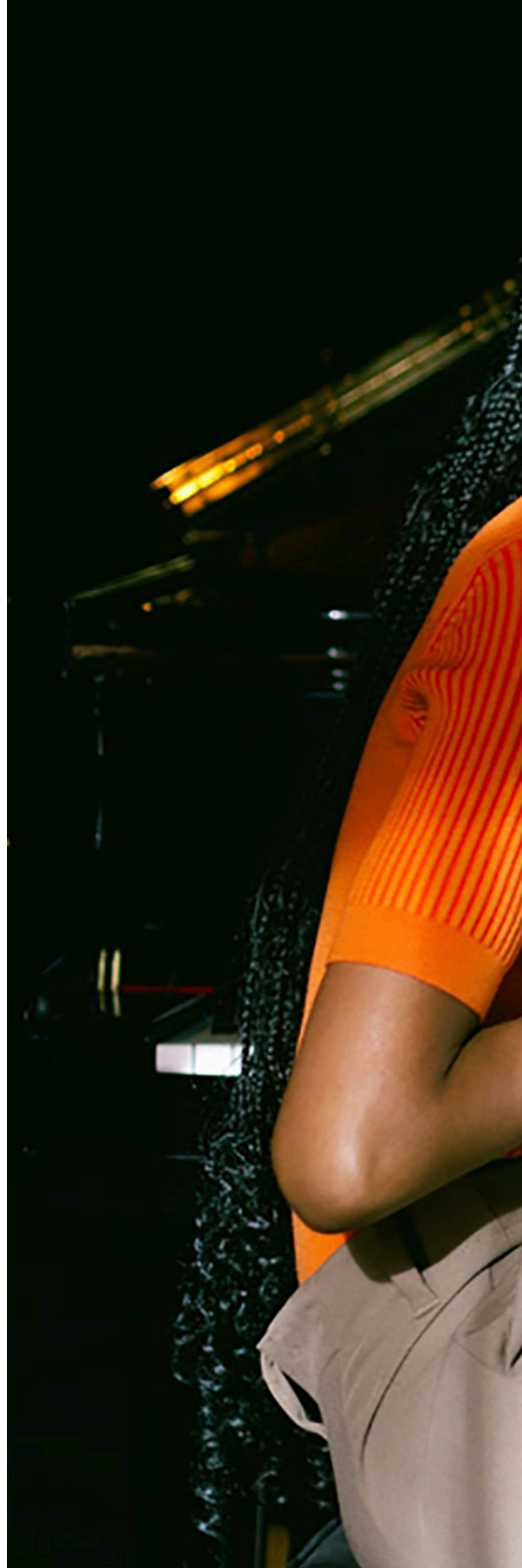
Now an exclusive Sony Classical Artist, Jeneba’s debut solo album *Fantasie* was released in March 2025, to wide acclaim. It was named Classic FM’s Album of the Week and Gramophone praised her as “a pianist of enormous technical resources in service of an uncommonly rich and versatile musical imagination.”

Her programme for this return visit features works by Bach (*Partita No 5*), Beethoven (*Sonata No 17, Tempest*), William Grant Still (*Summerland*), Debussy (*La Fille and Bruyères*), Florence Price (*Fantasie Nègre No 1*) and Chopin (*Ballades Nos 3 and 4*).

### [Afternoon concert](#) AXMINSTER

AXE Vale Orchestra, conducted by Walter Brewster, gives its summer concert at the Minster on Sunday 7th June at 3.30pm.

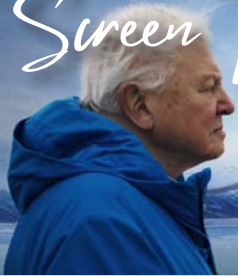
The afternoon programme includes Bizet’s *Petite Suite: Jeux d’enfants*, Dvorak’s *Romance* for violin and orchestra, with soloist Jane Bultz, and Beethoven’s *Seventh Symphony*. The audience can enjoy tea and cake after the concert.





*Jeneba Kanneb-Mason  
returns to Dorchester in June*

# Screen Time



## Top Six at the Flix

### **Bridport Electric Palace**

***The Christophers***, Friday 19 June

‘Terrifically exhilarating and funny, as bracing as a large vodka and tonic before lunch: fast, literate and funny with a key plot progression elliptically and unsentimentally managed.’

Peter Bradshaw *The Guardian*.

### **Bridport Arts Centre**

***Empire of Lies***, Saturday 13 June

‘Matthew Hope’s low budget thriller is a exercise in what can be achieved with just two actors, a caravan and a field.’ Jennie Kermode, *Eye for Film*.

### **Odeon, Dorchester,**

***Ocean with David Attenborough***

‘So while this is environmental film-making at its most powerful—at times, it comes at you like a sledgehammer blow—crucially, it finds cause for optimism.’ James Jackson, *The Times*.

### **Pavillion Weymouth**

***Normal***, Monday 15 and Wednesday 17

June. ‘I thought it was riotously entertaining.’ Mark Kermode, *Kermode and Mayo’s Take*.

### **BBC IPlayer**

***Aftersun***

‘Charlotte Wells’s debut feature is a stylistically daring, emotionally piercing and beautifully understated tale of love and loss Wells knows exactly what she’s doing, and her storytelling is as precise as it is piercing.’ Mark Kermode, *Observer*.

### ***Kidnapped***

‘A historical drama about conflicting faiths might sound daunting, but this is immaculately paced and emotionally driven, making the story’s fraught nature tremendously watchable... *Kidnapped* taps into something deeper than a simple tale of faith; even non-believers will get swept up in its power. This is a feast for the eyes, but it’s the effect on your heart that stays with you long after the film is through.’ Barry Levitt *Empire Magazine*.

The Axe Vale Orchestra was founded in 2005 and brings together amateur and professional players from East Devon, West Dorset and South Somerset. It performs three concerts a year in East Devon.

### [Carmen at the Beehive](#)

#### HONITON

UKRAINIAN mezzo-soprano Iryna Ilyntska sings the title role in Bizet’s *Carmen* with Exeter Opera Group at the Beehive Centre at Honiton on Saturday 6th June, at 7.30pm.

The company was founded by Ilyntska in 2024. With 25 singers from across Devon, it gave its first performance in August that year, with a staging of Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

Ilyntska, who also co-directs *Carmen* with Nick Lawrence, plays one of the greatest female roles in opera, famously performed by Maria Callas. First staged in 1875, *Carmen* is one of the most frequently performed operas in the classical canon. Set in southern Spain, it recounts the downfall of Don José, an honourable soldier who is lured into an obsessive passion by the fiery gypsy Carmen, who is also loved by a successful bull-fighter.

The other singers are Robert Felstead, Thomas Wood, Nick Young, Ian Spackman, John Burgoyne, Lee Andreae and Anna Townhill. The musical director is Stephen Moseley.

Since its founding in 2024, Exeter Opera Group has performed works by Mozart, Rossini and Saint-Saëns at venues including Exeter Library and St Nicholas Priory. In January last year it staged Purcell’s *Dido & Aeneas* and in July gave a fairy-tale themed concert for children.

### [Everywhere at Once](#)

#### PLYMOUTH, BRIDPORT

A NEW nationwide music festival, *Everywhere At Once*, organised by UK charity Music Venue Trust (MVT) with the National Lottery, will take place across the country on what would have been the Glastonbury Festival weekend, 26th to 28th June.

More than 400 grassroots venues from Falmouth to Aberdeen will stage hundreds of live music events under the banner of *Everywhere At Once*, celebrating the grassroots network that British music is built on.

More than 2000 artists will be performing across the weekend, spanning a wide range of genres and representing the diversity of the UK’s music scene. Some established artists taking part include Becky Hill, playing a hometown show at The Marris Bar in Worcester, Tinie Tempah in Newcastle, Norwich and Southampton, The Lathums, Rizzle Kicks, The Divine Comedy and many more, alongside a host of local and up-and-coming artists.

West Country venues on Friday 26th include The Junction at Plymouth, when Green Haze will be topping the bill and Exeter Cavern Club with Black Parade. Lucy Spraggan will be at The Sub Rooms in Stroud, Wasabi and Eachother at the Barrel House Ballroom, Totnes, and Bob Gallie, Darren Hodge, Mark Buster Mcadam and Sarah Yeo at the Creative Innovation Centre, Taunton.

On Saturday 27th, CoVid21, The Spoils Collective and Kill The Gun will be at Underground, Plymouth, and The Hot House Combo will be at the Electric Palace at Bridport, Immortal

Disfigurement and Gutrectomy will be at The Junction, Plymouth, Adam and The Hellcats at The Anvil, Bournemouth, and Sheelanagig at the David Hall, South Petherton.

Sunday's gigs include Reality Check, Monolithian and Urzah at Torquay Arena.

## [Cycling around the world](#) DORCHESTER AND LYME REGIS



WHEN Shakespeare wrote the famous *Seven Ages of Man* speech for the melancholy Jacques in *As You Like It*, he probably didn't imagine that in the 21st century a company of actors would take his delightful rural romance from venue to venue on bicycles!

All the world's a stage ... and the HandleBards are bringing *As You Like It* to two open air locations, Maumbury Rings at Dorchester on Wednesday 17th June, and the sea front by the Marine Theatre at Lyme Regis, the following evening, both starting at 7pm.

Peddalling from venue to venue with all of their set, props and costumes on the back of their bikes, the HandleBards are a four-strong troupe of actors who spend the summer taking environmentally sustainable Shakespeare productions across the UK.

In case you don't know the play—one of Shakespeare's sunniest and best-loved—it is the story of Rosalind and her cousin Celia who flee to the Forest of Arden to escape Celia's vicious father, Duke Frederick. Here they unexpectedly meet Orlando, who won Rosalind's heart as well as a wrestling match at the Duke's court. However, Rosalind is disguised as a young man. Cue some hilarious rustic fun—and some of the Bard's most brilliant speeches.

This is an outdoor production, so please bring a chair or blanket to sit on, a picnic to dig into, and dress for the weather!

GPW

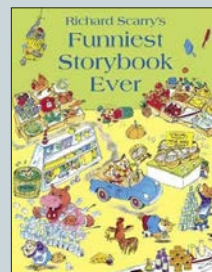
## The Young Lit Fix

I was spoilt for choice this month, so here are two picture books that I recommend.

### ***Richard Scarry's Funniest Storybook Ever***

Published by Harper Collins Children's Books.

Paperback £8.99



FIRST published in the UK in 1972, this is a children's classic that many of us grew up with.

Harper Collins have just reissued it and I couldn't be happier that

Richard's beloved books are still bringing joy to new readers.

In this hilarious book there are eleven stories about different Busytown characters and the crazy mishaps and adventures they have. Ranging from Humperdink the baker's talking loaf of bread to Ma Pig's New Car which is my personal favourite!

Perfect for sharing with children from 3 years old.

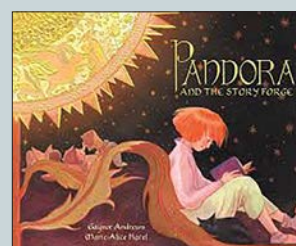
### ***Pandora and the Story Forge***

**By Gaynor Andrews**

*Illustrated by Marie-Alice Harel*

Published by Rocket Bird Books

Paperback £7.99



Wow, what a gorgeous book! Full of sumptuous illustrations in beautiful muted tones, Pandora takes us to the source of imagination and storytelling. She pulls words from the air and from the ground and with her magical alchemy, forges them into stories. An exquisite rhyming story to share with children from 4 years old and far beyond! I love it.

***Reviewed by Nicky Mathewson***

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