



One of this country's finest Americana performers, Hannah Scott, comes to Dorset in November

Americana star in Dorset VILLAGES

SINGER and musical storyteller Hannah Scott, acclaimed as one of this country's finest Americana performers, is coming to Dorset for three dates with Artsreach, at the village halls at Sandford Orcas on Tuesday 3rd November, Ibberton on Wednesday 4th and Woodlands on Friday 6th.

In the 15 years she has been performing, Hannah Scott has been recognised as an exceptional musician. Her song *No Gravity* featured on the hit TV series *Grey's Anatomy* and she recorded a live session on BBC Radio 2 with Dermot O'Leary.

Hannah's music is shaped by human connection, with family sitting at the heart of her work. Her lyrics are powerful and poignant, and her contemporary folk songs have a universal appeal that goes beyond the melodies you catch yourself humming after her performance.

She has shared the stage with folk luminaries such as Seth Lakeman, Cara Dillon and Fairport Convention, and performed at folk festivals including Cambridge, Sidmouth and Manchester. Performing on piano and guitar, Hannah is equally at home in intimate venues, where she thrives on the closer connection she builds with audiences.

Poet of modern life BRIDPORT

IF you are a fan of contemporary comic poetry—or even just an occasional Facebook user—you have probably come across the witty and vividly contemporary writing of Brian Bilston. Now the social media star (he apparently has more than 500,000 followers) is on tour, and you can catch him live at the Electric Palace at Bridport on Friday 20th November.

Sardonic, sharp and acutely observant, Bilston is very clever with words and with the formats of poems. Look up his poem *Refugees*, and do what it says when you have read it—read it back again from the bottom up. Makes you think.

Here's a verse from another of his timely poems (called *America is a gun*, and yes, that's the chorus line).

*England is a cup of tea.
France, a wheel of ripened brie.
Greece, a short, squat olive tree.
America is a gun.*

Brian Bilston has published several bestselling collections of poetry, including *You Took the Last Bus Home*, *Alexa, What is There to Know about Love?* and *Days Like These*. The tour takes its name from his latest collection, *How to Lay An Egg with a Horse Inside*.



Ninebarrow playing in Dorchester in November

His novel *Diary of a Somebody* was shortlisted for the Costa First Novel Award, and he has also written collections of poetry for younger readers. In 2025 he released an album of his poetry set to music, *Sounds Made by Humans*, in collaboration with The Catenary Wires.

[Two Js and a Blackbird](#) DORCHESTER

DORSET's critically acclaimed and hugely popular folk duo Ninebarrow come to Dorchester Arts at Thomas Hardy School theatre, on Saturday 14th November, with a show that focuses on their recent studio album, *The Hour of the Blackbird*, a collection of beautiful original songs.

Ninebarrow—Jon Whitley and Jay La Bouchardiere—consistently delight audiences across the country with their innovative and captivating take on the folk tradition. Described by Mark Radcliffe as sounding “like two halves of one voice” and by Mercury Music Prize nominee Kate Rusby as “absolutely amazing”, Jon and Jay combine vocal harmonies and melodies, with their songs that are inspired and rooted in the landscape and history of the British Isles. They also take a wide-range of traditional folk songs and rework them in their own, distinctive way.

Jon and Jay relinquished their respective full-time jobs as a teacher and GP back in 2016 and took a leap of faith into the music business. In 2017, they were nominated for a BBC Radio 2 Folk Award, one of the highest accolades in the world of folk music and recognition for their harmonies, poetic lyricism and magical instrumentation.

Named after *Nine Barrow Down in the Purbecks*, over the course of 12 years and six studio albums, the duo have earned themselves a reputation for their engaging and empathetic song writing, their imaginative reworkings of traditional songs, their deft musicianship and, most of all, their exquisite vocal harmonies.

In the new album, those harmonies have been fused with more than 40 other voices from Hampshire's Hart Voices and Surrey's Chantry Singers to create new versions of 13 of Ninebarrow's finest back catalogue songs, with musical director Roy Rashbrook, a member of the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral. *The Hour of the Blackbird* received four and five star reviews in the folk and mainstream media and Ninebarrow were named Best Band in FATEA Magazine's 2025 Awards.

[A milestone anniversary.](#)

LYME REGIS

THIS year marks a landmark date for Lyme Regis—the 200th anniversary of the seaside town’s Royal National Lifeboat Institution connection. This important event is being celebrated at the (appropriately-named) Marine Theatre with a special edition of the monthly Comedy Club.

The RNLI had its national 200th anniversary in 2024, and Lyme Regis was an early supporter of the commitment to “save lives at sea”. On 22nd February 1826, a letter was sent from the London headquarters of the Royal National Institution for the Preservation from Shipwreck (later renamed the RNLI) advancing a sum of £18 4s to help with the conversion of two Lyme Regis vessels for use as lifeboats. This is the earliest known connection of the RNLI to Lyme Regis. Now in 2026, Lyme Regis RNLI marks this milestone.

Headlining the Comedy Club on Friday 27th November will be Tom Ward, with support from Jamie Allerton and Rich Spalding, and hosted by Tom Glover—£2 from every ticket bought for this event will go towards the RNLI to help fund their lifesaving work.

Now on his third national tour, Tom has appeared on *Live at The Apollo*, *QI* and *Roast Battle*, and has also supported Ricky Gervais, Jack Whitehall and Joe Lycett on tour. He is a frequent headliner at clubs across the country, including

A regular at comedy clubs like Backyard, Up The Creek, and Hot Water Comedy Club, Jamie Allerton has taken his northern charm to Vienna, Budapest and Barcelona. His impressive resume includes being a finalist in the Liverpool Echo New Comedian and SYTYF competitions.

Rich Spalding is a London-based, Birmingham-born, stand-up comedian who has lived in Doncaster and been to France. Rich performed his Edinburgh debut, *Gather Your Skeletons*, at the Pleasance in 2024. He won the Beat The Frog Panel Prize in 2022 and was runner-up in Get Up, Stand Up 2018. He was twice shortlisted for the Pleasance Reserve, in 2020 and 2023.

West Country comedian and compere Tom Glover has a razor-sharp wit and effortless charm that have made him sought-after across the comedy scene. His natural ability to connect with audiences ensures every show is packed with laughter from start to finish.

[The tourism trap.](#)

POWERSTOCK

MASS tourism has become a hot political issue with some major cities—including Barcelona—taking drastic steps to curb it and many popular destinations

looking at taxing tourist accommodation. Jack Brownridge-Kelly has another and more radical plan—find out how this imaginative performer does it in his show, *The No 1 Holiday Destination*, coming to Powerstock Hut, with Artsreach, on Saturday 7th November.

The show is also at Briantspuddle village hall on Sunday 8th and the Mowlem Theatre, Swanage, on Monday 9th.

Building a nation is like going on holiday: it never turns out how you expect... *The No 1 Holiday Destination* is a bold, fast-paced comedy, set in a freshly independent country with a big idea and absolutely no plan for what comes next.

A nation decides to solve the problem of mass tourism once and for all by nationalising it. What starts as an idealistic attempt to protect culture, community and coastline quickly snowballs into a spectacular experiment, complete with absurd rules, escalating chaos and consequences nobody saw coming.

Rooted in the South West, this new play promises a smart, silly and uncomfortably familiar night at the theatre.

[A WWI chaplain's story.](#)

BRIDPORT

EXETER-born Theodore Bayley Hardy went to the First World War as a Chaplain in 1916—at the age of 52. “It’s only me, boys!” he would whisper in the dark as he reached the trenches at the front of the allied lines. Now Theo’s story is told in *It’s Only Me, Boys!* at Bridport Arts Centre on Sunday 1st November at 7.30pm.

He would bring supplies (most importantly, cigarettes) to these young men and he would sit with them, talk with them, read with them and sometimes pray with them. If they were injured he would stay with them until help arrived. If they were killed he would remain with them until their bodies could be retrieved.

He became one of the most highly decorated non-combatants in the war, recognised with the three most prestigious awards for bravery: Military Cross, Distinguished Service Order and Victoria Cross, the latter of which was presented to him in person by King George V, a few miles behind the lines.

Despite many offers to come home (as Chaplain to the King), Hardy stayed with his men. He was wounded on 11th October 1918 and died from his wounds one week later, just three weeks before the Armistice.

This is his story. Writer and performer David Balcombe brings this special fundraising performance to BAC in support of the Come Together



The Improvised Shakespeare Show comes to Bridport in November

Campaign—all profits will help secure the building for the community and future generations.

[Shaking Shakespeare.](#) **BRIDPORT**

A THEATRE company with a mission to shake up our expectations of Shakespeare, ShakeItUp comes to Bridport Arts Centre on Saturday 28th November at 7.30, with the *Improvised Shakespeare Show*,

Shakespeare hasn't written anything new for an age, so these travelling actors thought they would give him a hand ... Using his language, audience suggestions, and their own overactive imaginations, ShakeItUp creates a new Shakespeare play on stage, complete with live music, songs and plenty of laughs.

Pick your authentic Shakespearean genre: Epic History, Romantic Comedy, or Gruesome Tragedy! Pen your wittiest Shakespearean line for these brave actors to pull from their suitably-Shakespearean breeches when they need a helping hand – the twist? They'll have no idea what the line will be before they say it!

Then sit back and watch the hilarity unfold in a totally bonkers play that Willy Shakes himself would be proud of ... expect big laughs, high drama and plenty of Bard-based Bedlam!

ShakeItUp Theatre launched *The Improvised Shakespeare Show* in 2018. Since then the company has performed more than 100 totally improvised Shakespeare plays to audiences across the UK, from

the Minack Theatre in Cornwall to The Other Palace in London and the Edinburgh Fringe. Internationally they have improvised the Bard in Italy, Poland, and Germany.

[Telling the original story.](#) **BURTON BRADSTOCK**

MOST people have heard of Robert Louis Stevenson's Gothic horror story, usually known as *Jekyll and Hyde* ... one good, one bad, same person. But do you even know which is which—and do you actually know the story? Ropetackle Storytellers come to Burton Bradstock village hall on Saturday 21st November as part of a three date tour with Artsreach.

Award-winning performers Amelia Ace Armande and Joshua Crisp will also bring their show to the village halls at Child Okeford on Thursday 18th and Winfrith Newburgh on Friday 19th, all at 7.30pm.

Utterson the Lawyer has a strange case on his hands—one involving blackmail, murder and his close friend Dr Henry Jekyll. Bit by bit, Utterson uncovers the grisly facts that link the celebrated doctor to the monstrous Mr Hyde. But the more he learns, the stranger the case becomes...

Ropetackle Storytellers bring Stevenson's classic Gothic thriller to life, blending the original text with sinuous physicality, mesmerising puppetry and dark humour. With its intimate, conversational style this tense production draws audiences deeper into the unfolding mystery.



Fenella Humphreys & Friends have three local dates in November

Cornish bluegrass VILLAGES

BLUEGRASS may be most associated with the Appalachian Mountains, but its origins lie deep in the remote Celtic and ancient traditions of Britain—Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall ... and the far West Country county is the home of Flats & Sharps, the internationally popular bluegrass band which is coming to Dorset for three dates with Artsreach, starting at the Jubilee Hall at Yetminster on Friday 27th November, Sturminster Marshall's Memorial Hall on Saturday 28th, and Drimpton village hall on Sunday 29th, all at 7.30pm.

The band—regular favourites at Honiton's Beehive Centre—are back with a powerful new chapter and an expanded lineup, playing high energy music that's punchy, precise and impossible to ignore.

Born on the coast and raised on the road, Flats & Sharps have built a reputation for lightning-fast picking, pristine vocal harmonies and electrifying live shows. From their humble beginnings busking in Penzance, they now play sell-out shows around the world and in venues such as the Royal Albert Hall and festivals across the UK, Europe, Australia and the USA.

Star violinist on tour CONCERTS IN THE WEST

IT's a rare young musician, even in these days of social media-inspired hyperbole, whose playing is described as revelatory, but violinist Fenella Humphreys's playing of Sibelius solo works was

praised by BBC Magazine as “a genuine revelation in the way it brings out the music's dark and introspective qualities.” No Sibelius but plenty of opportunities to enjoy her virtuoso performances when she comes with three musician friends to Bridport Arts Centre on Friday 6th November for the coffee concert at 11.30am.

That evening, this November series of Concerts in the West brings them to Ilminster Arts Centre and on Saturday 7th, Fenella Humphreys & Friends repeat the programme at Crewkerne's Dance House.

The music includes Mozart's *Piano Quartet in G minor KV 478*, Sally Beamish's *Spell piano quartet (2023)* and Richard Strauss's *Piano Quartet in C minor op 13*.

Fenella Humphreys, winner of BBC Music Magazine Awards in 2025, 2023 and 2018, has attracted critical admiration and audience acclaim with the grace and intensity of her remarkable performances. She performs widely as a soloist.

The “friends” are violist Gary Pomeroy, a founder member of the Heath Quartet, Cara Berridge, a member of the Sacconi Quartet and cellist in London Bridge Piano Trio and Ensemble Perpetuo, and pianist Sam Armstrong, who is senior tutor in keyboard chamber music and Professor of Piano at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

Bossa Nova with a French flavour LYME REGIS

THE next Jazz by the Sea at the Marine Theatre, Lyme Regis, on Sunday 8th November, is Bossa

Definitiva, a trio led by Paris-born vocalist Véronique Joly, with Canadian saxophonist Terry Quinney and guitarist Rob Palmer.

The musicians celebrate the cool Bossa Nova sounds of Stan Getz and Astrud and João Gilberto, drawing inspiration from their classic recordings. Their repertoire also includes songs by artists such as James Taylor and Sting, as featured on their recent eponymous debut album.

Véronique was the featured vocalist on the BBC series *Rick Stein: French Odyssey* and sings in English, French and Portuguese. Canadian saxophonist Terry Quinney has performed with leading UK jazz musicians including Nigel Price, Ian Shaw, Alan Barnes and Jim Mullen. Guitarist Rob Palmer has toured and recorded with Soft Machine saxophonist Theo Travis and Jamiroquai keyboardist Matt Johnson, among many others.

Together, the trio brings warmth, lyricism and understated virtuosity. Their repertoire moves effortlessly between classic Bossa Nova and contemporary song, capturing the intimate, timeless appeal of Brazil's most enduring musical style.

From the Scottish play to scrambled egg TOURING

EARLIER this year, the ever-inventive and multi-talented Stu McLoughlin impressed audiences at Bristol's Tobacco Factory Theatre with a powerful performance in the title role of Shakespeare's Scottish play.

Now, Stu—one of the founders of the West Country's favourite comedy theatre company Living Spit—is back giving another of the Bard's tragic heroes an outing, with performances of *Omlet, Prince of Hen-mark* in November at Sturminster Exchange on 7th November, Dorchester Arts at the Corn Exchange on 12th, Bridport Arts Centre on 13th, Portland's Royal Manor Theatre on 18th, the Moine at Lyme Regis on 19th and Chetnole village hall on 20th. The Portland and Chetnole dates are with Artsreach.

This time it's the Danish play, given a very Living Spit twist. Taking his clue from one of Hamlet's famous soliloquies ... "O that this too too solid shell would melt, Thaw and resolve itself into a dew" ... *Omlet, Prince of Hen-mark* finds our hero rehatched, fragile and brooding, on the brink of cracking under the pressure of his own egg-sistential angst, with a supporting cast of vegetables and other foodstuffs.

This is what is sometimes described as the greatest play of all, retold by one man, one egg and a trolley-full of comestibles



Stu McLoughlin brings Omlet, Prince of Hen-mark to local stages in November

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Screen Time with Nic Jeune

Top Six at the Flix

Bridport Arts Centre

War Paint – Women at War (2025)

5th November @ 7.30pm. From quilting in Japanese prisoner camps to graffiti in Sudan via Rachel Whiteread, Maggi Hambling and Lee Miller, this documentary covers myriad artistic responses to conflict. The Guardian. Leslie Felperin.

Kinaesthesia (2026)

26th November @ 19.30pm. What Kinaesthesia restores is the shock of invention. Fox lets the danger breathe again: comic, grotesque, erotic, childish, death-haunted. Gazettely. Naser Nahandian.

Bridport Electric Palace

Heart of The Beast. (2026)

4th November @ 19.30pm. Presumably, only humans can be nominated for Oscars. Otherwise, the four German Shepherds who play Odin mostly one named Uber, along with his offspring Seeka, Ryker, and Hondo would be best-actor shoo-ins. At the very least, the dog wrangler should get best-casting consideration. Boston Globe. Mark Feeney.

Sense and Sensibility (2026)

6th November 6th @ 19.30 and 11th November @ 12.00. By doing so much work to give Jane Austen's characters a more contemporary feel, Oakley has made a *Sense and Sensibility* that feels timeless, one that will endear the author to a whole new generation of women learning how to balance their own needs with what society expects from them. Next Best Picture. Dan Bayer.

The Yellow Tie (2026)

18th November @ 14.00 and @ 19.30
The film is stunningly gorgeous, Spoiler Free Reviews. Jami Losurdo.

Weymouth Pavillion

Trainspotting (1996) – 30th Anniversary

1st November @ 19.00. 4K Restoration. A must-see. Chicago Reader. Jonathan Rosenbaum.

The question of suitability to play the Danish prince has preoccupied theatre makers for centuries. Scholars have long debated age, physique, gender and temperament—yet all have overlooked the perfect candidate—an egg.

[Dorset in autumn](#)

DORCHESTER

“BEECH leaves, that yellow the noon-time, Float past like specks in the eye; I set every tree in my June time, And now they obscure the sky ...” wrote Thomas Hardy in his poem, *Beech Leaves*. Join folk singers and actors Tim Laycock and Alastair Braidwood at Dorchester Corn Exchange on Sunday, 15th November, for a Dorset Autumn Afternoon.

Celebrate the beauty of the changing seasons with a golden afternoon of delicious food, traditional entertainment and warm Dorset hospitality. Inspired by the spirit of a rural Dorset harvest home, this special event promises an unforgettable taste of autumn.

To add to the atmosphere, Dorchester Arts is joined for the event by the two artists who live and breathe the music and folk traditions of the county.

The ticket price includes a hearty ploughman's lunch, accompanied by plenty of liquid refreshment, with live traditional entertainment and charming country fair stalls. The event is a fund-raiser for Dorchester Arts.

[Ibsen reimaged.](#)

DORCHESTER

ONE of the masterpieces of the great Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen is reimaged in the autumn production of Dorchester Drama, at the Corn Exchange on Friday 20th November and Saturday 21st at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

An Enemy of the People is moved forward from its late 19th century setting to 2009 and a spa-tourism town that is struggling to keep afloat in the wake of the financial crash.

The medical officer at the baths thinks the waters might be toxic—but should they go public with this knowledge which could have devastating economic consequences?

How would family, friends and the town react? Personal relations are tested to breaking point as idealism, pragmatism and ambition clash.

Ibsen's timeless play resonates loudly with issues today: toxic water, toxic cancel culture ...

[Intoxicating noirish jazz.](#)

HONITON

IMAGINE a blend of Tom Waits, Leonard Cohen, Jacques Brel and Eartha Kitt, perhaps in an Eastern European jazz club, a few decades ago, in the period after the Second World War and the dark years of the Cold War ... That's the aura created by the brilliant Moscow Drug Club, who come to the Beehive Centre at Honiton on Thursday 12th November, during their autumn tour.

Named after the BB Gabor song about an underground jazz club during the Cold War, Moscow Drug Club capture that black and white film noir atmosphere, with French chanson and musette, Latin grooves, a hint of New Orleans swing and a dash

of sharp black humour.

The band, with their glamorous blonde vocalist, has been selling out venues for more than a decade, with their intoxicating and intimate performances.

Moscow Drug Club's autumn tour also includes Poole Lighthouse arts centre on 3rd December and Bridport Arts Centre on 4th December.

[From Canada to Dorset](#) **SHIPTON GORGE**



PREPARE for an afternoon of infectious, high energy folk music from Canada's eastern edge, Prince Edward Island, when Artsreach brings Inn Echo to Dorset for a three date tour, that ends at Shipton Gorge village hall with a lively gig at 3pm.

The trio are also at the village halls at Cranborne on Friday 13th and Langton Matravers on Saturday 14th, both at 7.30pm.

The three Inn Echo musicians create a cinematic, vibrant sound rooted in Celtic traditions, blending fierce fiddle, grooving guitar and soaring cello with undeniable chemistry.

After six remarkable years touring worldwide and earning several awards and other nominations, Inn Echo have plenty to reflect on, but it's the future that excites them most.

Their 2023 album *Hemispheres* captures the spirit of their journey, drawing inspiration from festivals around the world, including Shetland Folk Festival, while pushing the boundaries of what three traditional instrumentalists can achieve.

Whether evoking an Acadian kitchen party or the night sky over Queensland, Inn Echo invite you to pull up a chair, but keep your dancing shoes firmly on...

[A seasonal celebration](#) **BRIDPORT AND MORE**

WEST Dorset's Ridgeway Singers and Band, led by Phil Humphries, begin their festive series of concerts early in December, with the first of their Christmastide in Wessex events at St Mary's Church, Bridport, on Sunday 6th at 4pm.

The Ridgeways have performed to packed audiences in Bridport for the last couple of years and aim to make a cheerful, very local noise on a gloomy day, to get people in the mood for Christmas in Dorset.

The programme, as always, will be a combination of West Gallery carols, gathered from parishes around Dorset, local folk songs, a few originals (often by members or Tim Laycock), toe-tapping tunes, stories and poetry.

The concerts continue at the Priory Church of Lady St Mary at Wareham on Sunday 13th December at 4pm, St Peter and St Paul's at Blandford Forum on Thursday 17th at 7.30pm, and the Dorford Centre in Dorchester on Friday 18th also at 7.30.

GPW

The Young Lit Fix

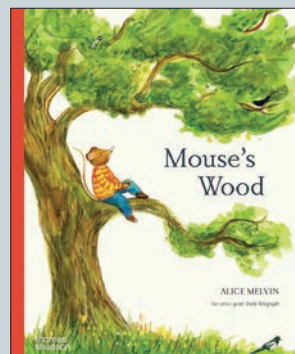
***Mouse's Wood: A Year in Nature* By Alice Melvin**

Published by Thames & Hudson

Paperback £8.99

Age 3+

Review by Nicky Mathewson



MOUSE lives in a gorgeous wood surrounded by wonderful friends and together in this story they show us the beauty of the seasons month by month throughout the year.

It is exquisitely illustrated and the many different textures of the living things in the wood are captured perfectly.

Small amounts of rhyming text and big pictures to explore make every page a feast for the eyes and as if that wasn't enough, there are flaps to open on every page revealing even more detail.

Whimsical and informative, it begins with a map of the wood which is joyous, and then finishes with more information about what makes each month unique. And last but not least we have a list of all the characters, with illustrations, telling us who lives in the woods and what their habits are.

Top to bottom this is simply the perfect book for young and old people alike. Beautifully produced by Thames & Hudson.

Also in the series: *Mouse on the River*, *Mouse by the Sea*.



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