

September

PREVIEW



Belinda Zhani performs sound poetry at the b-side festival launch party

A festival of guitar music CONCERTS IN THE WEST

CONCERTS in the West, the charity which brings rising stars of the chamber music scene to the West Country, opens the autumn season with four recitals by the Mela guitar quartet, bringing a “festival of music” to Bridport Arts Centre on Friday 6th at 11.30am, for the shorter coffee concert, that evening at Ilminster Arts Centre at 7.30pm, Crewkerne Dance House on Saturday 7th at 7.30 and on Sunday 8th at the Church of St Loch at Pendomer near Yeovil at 3pm.

The quartet—Matthew Butten, Zahrah Hutton, Matthew Robinson and George Tarlton—will be playing a wide-ranging programme, including Saint-Saëns’ *Bacchanale*, Debussy’s *Deux Arabesques*, Ravel’s *Pavane pour une Infante Defunte*, Glinka’s *Ruslan* and *Lyudmilla Overture*, Borodin’s *Polovtsian Dances* and works by Holst, Snowden and Gismonti.

Winners of the prestigious Guitar Foundation of America International Ensemble Competition 2023, the Mela guitar quartet is known for imaginative, engaging programmes and original works, and for enthusiastically adding to the guitar quartet repertoire through adventurous

arrangements of much-loved orchestral works and for commissions of new music.

The quartet formed in 2015 as graduates of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Royal Academy of Music. They became International Guitar Festival Young Artists 2015/16, then Park Lane Group young artists 2018/19 and Royal Over-Seas League chamber music finalists 2019. Michael Butten and Zahrah Hutton joined founding members Matthew Robinson and George Tarlton in 2023.

Who do we think we are? PORTLAND

THIS year’s b-side festival, based on Portland from Thursday 5th to Sunday 8th September, has the theme *Who Do We Think We Are?*—explored in many different art forms and media, including visual arts, film, poetry and music.

The theme encourages participants to explore the many stories that make up the lives of Portland’s residents and visitors. The magical place is no stranger to the topics of migration and identity, as the island has been home to the floating asylum containment site, the Bibby Stockholm,

for almost a year. The barge has been docked on Portland since August 2023 and has been at the centre of many conversations around the topic of migration, home and belonging since its controversial arrival. (The new government, in one of its earliest announcements, said the Bibby Stockholm contract would not be renewed at the end of this year).

The 2024 b-side launch event at SALT, a bar on Portland Marina, on Thursday 5th September, will include a film premiere, live spoken word and DJ sets, offering a preview of the eclectic and thought-provoking works that attendees can expect over the weekend.

One of the highlights of the evening will be the premiere of *This Is Us*, a new short film by Hugh Dunford Wood in collaboration with Stephen Clarke of biggerhouse film. The film captures 209 portraits illuminated by the fleeting light of a single match, revealing the diverse faces of Portland's community and emphasising our shared humanity.

This will be followed by a sound poetry performance by Belinda Zhawi—*Vina Voce* delves into themes of displacement and the essential role of water in the narratives of loss and home, weaving together reflections on two historically significant rivers tied by trade and migration.

Rocca Holly-Nambi, the b-side director, emphasises the festival's significance: "Our themes of migration and identity resonate deeply with Portland's residents. The launch event not only celebrates our diverse communities

but also highlights the festival's role in securing the County of Culture title for 2025. We are proud to contribute to this cultural milestone through our commitment to bringing people and art together."

Now in its tenth year, the festival is sponsored for the first time by Portland Marina, which will host a range of events and exhibits from both local residents and international artists. These include a mass kite-making workshop involving hundreds of participants, including local schoolchildren, who will fly their creations over the English Channel, and a unique opening day event on 5th September, highlighting Portland's significance and the festival's theme of unity.

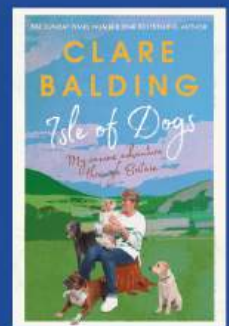
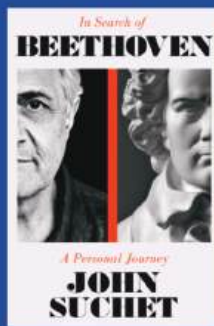
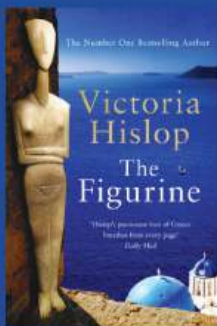
This year's installations include *One Night, One Dream*, *Life in the Lighthouse*, outdoor artworks inspired by Persian myths of migration, created by Mohammad Barrangi, an Iranian-born artist and former Paralympian, Liz Hingley's *SIM Project*, tiny artworks with gigantic meaning in the form of SIM cards, and *Face Value Portland*, the transformation of £5 notes into portraits of festival-goers by German-born Harald Smykla.

b-side will take place across various sites on Portland, offering something for everyone, with many events being free to ensure the celebration is accessible to all. There is also a festival fringe, from Saturday 31st August to Sunday 8th September.

For more information, please visit the b-side website <https://b-side.org.uk/>

10TH ANNIVERSARY DORCHESTER LITERARY FESTIVAL

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September

PREVIEW



Middle-Weight Theatre tells the story of pioneering aviator Harriet Quimby at Honiton's Beehive arts centre.

Flying tonight

HONITON

WHY haven't you heard of Harriet Quimby? Maybe you have—but most likely you haven't. So Middle-Weight Theatre Company's new play tells a story you should hear. *What's Next?*, at Dorchester Corn Exchange on 14th September at 8pm, is a solo show with actress Victoria Lucie, which brings overdue recognition for the life and achievements of Harriet Quimby (1875-1912), trail-blazing aviator, journalist and film screenwriter.

In 1911, she defied societal norms by becoming the first woman to earn a pilot's license in the United States and in 1912 she was the first woman to fly across the English Channel. She died tragically young, at the age of 37, in a flying accident, but she strongly influenced the role of women in aviation.

The big question is: why haven't you heard of her?

Fresh from the success of its critically acclaimed 2023 UK tour, *'amendments: A Play On Words'*, Middle-Weight Theatre is on tour with *What's Next?*, also at the Alma Tavern in Bristol on 19th and 20th September, and at the Barnfield Theatre in Exeter from 24th to 26th October.

Epic adventures on two wheels

DORCHESTER

AFTER all the excitement in the Paris Olympics velodrome and the cycling road races, there is an opportunity to hear about some cycling adventures which are every bit as

remarkable, when the endurance cyclist and adventurer Emily Chappell comes to Dorchester Arts at the Corn Exchange on Thursday 12th September.

In her *Epic Tales of Cycling Adventures*, Emily shares stories from her travels and life. As a child, she was not at all sporty, but when she reached her mid-20s, she began to make up for lost time. First, she gave up her office job to become a London cycle courier. Then, in 2016, she cycled 4000km in 13 days, from Belgium to Turkey, to become the first woman home in the Transcontinental race. Her account of the experience, *Where There's a Will*, part-travelogue, part-open-hearted memoir, was nominated at the 2020 Daily Telegraph *Sports Books of the Year* awards.

Her other long-distance cycling trips include Anchorage (Alaska) to Seattle in midwinter temperatures going down to minus 25, Wales to Japan, and across Iceland. She will be talking about her travels and adventures with former Pro Cycling magazine writer, Duncan Steer. It promises to be an evening for adventurers, armchair adventurers and anyone interested in exactly how someone can so drastically change their path through life.

History's greatest cold case

BRIDPORT

PHILIPPA Langley, who came to national attention with her persistent—and ultimately successful—efforts to locate the remains of King Richard III (under a Leicester car park), comes to the Electric Palace at Bridport on Thursday 19th September with a talk about her latest historical investigations.

Her talk, *The Princes in the Tower*, which will be followed by a Q&A and book signing, follows the Channel 4 documentary she made with the judge and barrister-turned-broadcaster Rob Rinder, investigating what has been called "history's greatest cold case." The Princes, whose supposed murder has for centuries been laid at Richard III's door, were the deposed King Edward V of England and his younger brother Prince Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York, heirs to the throne of King Edward IV. Their story is one of the blackest incidents in the bloody Wars of the Roses.

Continuing her interest in how history—and William Shakespeare—have portrayed Richard III, Langley reveals new research which she believes shows that the Princes were not murdered on the orders of their uncle (Richard) in 1483 but did in fact survive.

The talk covers her astonishing discoveries and the fascinating detective work she undertook to challenge 500 years of accepted views about the fate of the young Princes.



Sabra Halgan brings her band and the music of Somaliland to Lyme Regis

A global music month LYME REGIS

FROM Somaliland to Brazil via Ireland and Yorkshire, September is a month of music from around the world at the Marine Theatre, Lyme Regis, starting on Sunday 8th at 8pm, with Sahra “Halgan”, an artist from who earned her nickname “the Fighter” in the 1980s when she was involved in a terrible war against the then dictatorship.

Somaliland, in the Horn of Africa, has been independent since 1991, but is as yet unrecognised by the international community. Sahra’s campaigning earned her respect and admiration, but it is her music that has made her an icon of her country’s spirit. Uplifting yet reverent, her music is filled with soul and courage and love, encapsulating the hope and strength of her community.

Exiled to France, she started her group in Lyon with Aymeric Krol, Maël Salètes and Régis Monte. The sounds they create are music to dance to, with nods to Afrobeat, Tuareg and Ethio(Ethiopian)-jazz. Her third album, *Hiddo Dhawr (Preserve Culture)* is also the name of the cultural centre that Sahra founded in 2013 in Hargeisa, the capital of her homeland.

The music turns Celtic on Thursday 12th, when the multi-award-winning Irish folk singer Cara Dillon, and her husband, the acclaimed musician and producer Sam Lakeman (one of the three musical Lakeman brothers), bring their exquisite and enthralling live performance to Lyme Regis—every note and word is sung with a passion and confidence earned through a life of experience singing traditional songs.

A week later, on Thursday 19th, two members of one of English folk music’s greatest dynasties, Martin Carthy and Eliza Carthy, come to the Marine. Now in his 80s, Martin Carthy has been a major figure on the folk scene for more than 60 years, playing solo and with many of the leading folk musicians of the 20th and 21st century. His late wife Norma Waterson, was one of the uniquely talented

Waterson family of traditional folk singers. Their daughter, Eliza, an award-winning musician in her own right, has led her own bands and regularly plays with some of the most adventurous and genre-pushing folk musicians working today. Martin and Eliza will perform an eclectic range of songs and tunes from their vast family repertoire, drawing from the traditional canon as well as selections from a more contemporary songbook.

For the month’s last gig, on Sunday 29th, the focus at the Marine moves to South America, when *Jazz by the Sea* welcomes Alvorada. The Brazilian instrumental quintet will be presenting their latest album, *Faz Tempo*, a bold and rich tapestry of artfully arranged original compositions. *Faz Tempo* explores Brazilian rhythms such as choro, samba, bossa nova and baião, with jazz and improvisation peppering their sound.

Jurassic goes global BRIDPORT

AS if being hundreds of millions of years old isn’t enough, Dorset’s famed Jurassic coast is going global this year, with a multi-cultural event at Bridport Arts Centre on Saturday 14th September, with activities all day and a film and dancing in the evening.

The theme of the event is “*Small World – The world’s on your doorstep*” promising “a day of fun celebrating the diverse cultures that make our community so vibrant.”

During the day, there will be activities for all ages at the Community Orchard, and delicious free food from around the world (just bring your picnic blanket, plate and cutlery), live performances, art, demonstrations and drumming workshops, as well as displays by Bridport and Dorset-based community groups and businesses.

At the arts centre, there will be a food court where you can enjoy world foods, while making new friends, and opportunities to learn more about the town’s multicultural population.



Top Six at the Flix

Plaza Cinema Dorchester

Lee (2023)

Lee is beautiful, daring, and elusive, as all great art should be. It's a fitting tribute to a woman whose work exhibited the same qualities. Film Threat. Andy Howell.

Bridport Electric Palace

Fly me to the Moon. (2024)

'Tatum and Johansson are the stars of the show, oftentimes conveying with a mere look what entire monologues couldn't have accomplished. These are the two engines propelling the movie into the stratosphere, taking what could've been a disposable, forgettable effort and transforming it into an experience that'll have you floating on air out of the theater ... likely as you hum a very apt Frank Sinatra tune to yourself.' Slash Film. Jeremy Mathai.

BBC iPlayer

The Commitments (1991)

'Alan Parker's sexy, hilarious, exuberantly energetic new film, *The Commitments*, has so much rhythmic juice that it's nearly impossible to stay in your seat.' Washington Post. Hal Hinson.

The Queen of Versailles (2012)

'A succulently entertaining movie that invites you to splash around in the dreams and follies of folks so rich they're the 1 percent of the 1 percent. It's like a champagne bath laced with arsenic.' Entertainment Weekly. Owen Gleiberman.

Amazon

Musica (2024)

'Música heralds the arrival of a filmmaker, an actor, and a musician worth paying attention to, while also delivering a winning and visually inventive musical comedy.' Indiewire. Rafael Motomayor.

Netflix

His Three Daughters (2023)

'The heartbreaking plunge into sisterhood and grief that is *His Three Daughters* is an intensely composed elegy about the devastating effect of saying goodbye to a parent.' Screen Daily.



Welsh comedian Kiri Pritchard-McLean brings her new show to the Marine Theatre at Lyme Regis and Dorchester Arts

In the evening the arts centre will have a screening of the film *Can I Live?*, directed by and starring Fehinti Balogun, a member of the renowned theatre company Complicité. The film captures a musical performance that explores Balogun's experience as a black man involved in environmental activism. Starting with his personal relationship with his mother, who can be indifferent to actions such as recycling, he investigates why some people of colour might feel disconnected to climate change activism and what can be done to make this a more inclusive and representative space. The film will be followed by dancing to *Around the World in 80 Beats*, an auditory global journey through music and its cultural influences.

Sequins and social commentary DORCHESTER AND LYME REGIS

BEING a foster parent doesn't sound like an obvious opening for comedy, but in the hands of the whip-smart and very funny Welsh comedian Kiri Pritchard-McLean it provides some unexpected laughs. Kiri, well-known from many radio and television comedy shows, is currently on a lengthy national tour with the show, *Peacock*, with local dates in September at Salisbury Arts Centre on 11th,

Dorchester Corn Exchange on 13th, the Marine Theatre at Lyme Regis on 18th, Taunton Brewhouse on 19th, and Exeter Phoenix arts centre on 22nd.

As a star of *8 out of 10 Cats Does Countdown*, *Have I Got News For You* and *QI*, Kiri Pritchard-McLean has had a busy few years. As well as hosting *Live at the Apollo*, fronting the Radio 4 panel show *Best Medicine* and starting a comedy school, she's become a foster parent. Until now she hasn't been able to talk about it on stage—she hasn't even told the kids in her care that she's a comedian. (And she uses a different name).

However, this year something changed and now she has made a show about becoming a foster carer—so, come and join “Louise” as she lifts the lid on social workers, first aid training and what not to do when a vicar searches for you on YouTube.

A regular on the radio, with her own weekly show on BBC Radio Wales, Kiri also regularly co-hosts *Loose Ends*, has guest hosted *The News Quiz*, and has now become the host of her own Radio 4 panel show, *Best Medicine*, which has recently been commissioned for a second series.

A reviewer for the legendary rock and popular culture magazine Rolling Stone said of her: “Expect sequins, social commentary and massive laughs from the renaissance woman of UK comedy.”

All at sea

DORCHESTER

FANS of the clever Mischief Theatre productions (*The Play That Goes Wrong*, etc) should head to Dorchester Corn Exchange on Thursday 19th September, when Our Star Theatre will perform a new comedy murder mystery, *Deaths At Sea*, which is very much in the tradition of well-meaning-but-chaotic theatre productions.

A small theatre company is performing a new murder-mystery play *Death at Sea*—but despite their best efforts, everything goes wrong! The play is supposed to be a thrilling murder mystery set on a small ship carrying just five passengers and its captain. When one of the passengers is found dead, the remaining passengers speculate and turn on each other until the real murderer is caught ...

That's the plan—but it's not quite how things work out.

In *Death(s) at Sea*, props fail, the set falls down, actors get drunk and concussed ... and conversations in the wings reveal too much. Can they make it to the end of the play before one of them really kills someone? The performance begins at 7.30pm.

Quartet of comics

LYME REGIS

A COMEDIAN who made his name as one of the youngest on the circuit headlines at Lyme Regis Comedy Club on Sunday 15th September. Matt Richardson—well-known for his appearances on *Never Mind The Buzzcocks*—will be supported by rising star Andrew White, Bristol-based Jessie Nixon and comper Tom Glover.

Having made his debut as a stand-up in 2009 at 18 years old, Matt soon made it through to the finals of two national stand-up competitions—the prestigious *So You Think You're Funny* and the *Chortle Student Comedy Award*. He was also runner up in the Reading Comedy Festival *New Act of the Year* and won the new act competitions at the Newbury and Bath Comedy Festivals—all while still in his teens.

He quickly established himself in the major UK comedy club chains and has appeared on many TV shows, including *Comedy Game Night*, *Roast Battle & Drunk History (Comedy Central)*, *Celebrity Juice*, *CelebAbility*, *The Stand Up Sketch Show series 2 and 3*, *Hey Tracey*, *The Chase: Celebrity Christmas Special*, *The Chris Ramsey Show*, *Top Gear: Extra Gear* and pretty much any spin-off show you can name.

GPW

The Young Lit Fix



Arkspire

By Jamie Littler

Published by Puffin Books at

Penguin Random House

Paperback £7.99

Review by Nicky Mathewson

THE great city of Arkspire is made up of five districts led by five Arcanists:

Invention district, home of The Maker

Iris district, home of The Watcher

Midnight district, home of The Shrouded

Gateway district, home of The Enigma

Radiant district, home of The Tempest

Since the evil Betrayers ruined the world with war and misery, the Arcanists' ancestors created Arkspire as a place of peace and learning and a message to The Betrayers that they would stand strong against the curse they left behind.

The Arcanists are the only people in the world to possess magic and it is their job to protect the people of Arkspire from the constant danger of Shades: life sucking shadows which were left behind by The Betrayers.

As each Arcanist dies, their power must be passed to another to continue the line of magic and protection. Therefore, Arkspire's five districts need willing candidates who are prepared to take on the role of Arcanist.

Juniper and Elodie are sisters who were once close, but life in the slums of Arkspire has dealt them a rough hand and pointed them in different directions. While Elodie is in training to become a Candidate for the Iris District, Juniper is a relic thief and a huge disappointment to her sister. One of the relics stolen by Juniper opens up a whole heap of trouble for her and her loyal friend Thea, by bringing a shadow creature through a hidden door. In a world of deadly Shades, the presence of such a creature would be disastrous.

Juniper gets caught up in a web of lies to cover up what she has done and has to pretend she is someone she is not, but in doing so she uncovers some dark secrets about the Arcanists which suggests they are definitely not what they seem.

This is a wonderful fantasy adventure by the author of *Frostheart*. Illustrated throughout with Jamie's dynamic style, this is the start of an amazing series which is perfect for confident readers age 8+. *Arkspire 2: The Order of Misfits*, has just been published and I cannot wait to continue the adventure!

10% off for Marshwood Vale readers at The Bookshop on South Street, Bridport. 01308 422964 www.dorsetbooks.com