

THE
SCRIPT'S
THE
THING!

DORSET FESTIVAL OF SCRIPTWRITING

Saturday 3rd May 2025

DorchesterArts

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you to The Script's The Thing!

Whether you are here for your first time or were involved with last year's Festival, we are delighted you are joining us for this day of celebration of all things writing for performance.

Stage, TV, film, radio drama, animation, and all types of performance, require great writing. It is fantastic to see so much work - so many ideas, stories, characters - from writers across Dorset and further afield.

This year, we have even more scripts and events for you to enjoy. We are especially pleased to be welcoming David Byrne, Artistic Director of The Royal Court. David's mission to transform playwriting - putting playwrights at the centre of making theatre - is something we wholeheartedly support.

It is brilliant to see the transformational effect of giving writers centre stage and we are thrilled that this Festival is having such an impact; facilitating conversations, making connections and generating more writer-led schemes and initiatives. We are looking forward to the future and the continuing work to widen the offer to audiences across the region, strengthening opportunities for writers to develop their own work and to support each other.

The Script's The Thing!

Ed Viney – Festival Director

Mark Tattersall – Artistic Director, Dorchester Arts



DorchesterArts



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

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WORKING TOGETHER FOR CREATIVE CHANGE

How to Use This Guide

The Festival features 100 scripts at 15 minutes each spread across 5 venues all in one day. Writers take responsibility for the presentation of their work. Scripts are all at different stages of development. We hope you will join us in seeing as many of them as you can.

Scripts in this guide are listed alphabetically by title of work followed by a list of events to inspire, inform and motivate writing for performance. You can also find a digital version of this guide on the Dorchester Arts website together with a downloadable spreadsheet listing all events by time. There is a brief description of each script, plus three words chosen by the writer to give you a little bit more of what the piece is about.

In each description you'll also see the time and which venue the work is being performed in. For a plan of the Corn Exchange see the centre pages, and for a map of the venues see the back of the guide. Some of the Q&As and talks will be longer than 15 minutes. Do make sure you give yourself enough time to arrive at each space. You'll need 2-5 minutes to get from space to space. If you need assistance or information, please ask one of the stewards. Everything will begin and finish promptly, but in most of the spaces you will be able to find standing areas towards the back if you're running a bit late or joining after another performance has just finished.

There'll be seating available in all spaces - there is a lift in the Corn Exchange for wheelchair access to the Town Hall and Council Chamber. A note on feedback: some writers may welcome conversation about their work and this will be indicated by them or by the hosts/stewards in each room. If you have been invited to give feedback on the work or would like to make comment, you can use the QR code or printed questionnaires available in each space. We would love to hear what you've enjoyed about the day and how you would like the Festival to develop and can be contacted at: scripts@dorchesterarts.org.uk



A Midsummer Night in Cerne Abbas by Steve West

In 1580 a youngster from Warwickshire visited a brewery in Dorset. Having sampled much ale he witnessed certain strange events whilst wandering in the local woods and he wrote down the story. He drank too much and lost the manuscript but years later he published the half-remembered story as the play 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Many years later still the original beer-stained writing was found in the old brewery. Experts have restored it so we can now bring you a mystical tale of four lovers, three rude mechanicals and some fairies. This is Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night In Cerne Abbas'

Historical – Theatre – Comedy Time: 10.30am | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

And I Said by Linda Morse

Readings from a collection of monologues, 'And I Said ...' written by playwright Linda Morse. The book covers a wide range of topics from a young woman juggling home schooling and remote working, to a drunken priest at a birthday party, a bride who never does manage to own her own wedding dress and a strange conversation that happened when a train was delayed. They are suitable for personal reading or performance. They also form a useful selection of audition pieces for actors. They vary in length from 3 to 40 minutes and have all been successfully performed. Books will be available for sale in the Writers' Hub.

Drama – Comedy – Theatre Time: 1pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

BEN(d)S by Charlotte East

BEN(d)S is a captivating one-woman show that follows world-record-holding free diver Joan as she attempts her ultimate dive of 132 meters. After a break away from competition, her highly anticipated comeback dive takes an unexpected turn, forcing her to face her deepest fears. With themes of grief, isolation, and the devastating impact of climate change on our oceans, BEN(d)S becomes a poignant metaphor for women's mental health. It's easy to sink into despair, but the fight to the surface is far more difficult—and no one should face it alone.

Drama – Adventure – Science Fiction Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street – please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Beyond the Other Side by Tom Pagett

'Beyond the Other Side' is the development of a previous piece of writing I developed whilst at University, exploring the subjects of loss, moving on and intergenerational bonding through grieving medium Morgan, his elderly client Marjorie and the lingering shadow of Morgan's partner Charlie.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 10.30am | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street – please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Body Parts by Emily MacBean

A young woman's body challenges her to face the unexpected changes happening inside it. Do our bodies always like the way we treat them, and do we think about how they might feel? Her body is the only one who knows the truth, but she's not listening. This poetic flowing story delves into the relationship between the girl's body and herself, and asks how well she truly listens to and treats her body parts. How long does it take her to realise they are trying to tell her something? More goes on in this girl's body than just pumping blood and a beating heart. The question is, what happens when your body has a mind of its own? AGE ADVISORY 15+

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 5pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Breaking Angels by Tim Laycock

Breaking Angels is a theatre piece designed to be performed in churches. It's about what happens to a small community on the day that Cromwell's soldiers come to destroy the images and the wooden angels in the church.

Theatre – Community – Drama Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Breaking News? by Hannah Soulsby-Phillips

An experienced news anchor is placed on the spot when her producer wants her to announce a breaking news story on live TV before any of the facts have been verified. The story is explosive and significant - does it matter if it's true?

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 2.30pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

Chatting Shit by The Writers' Account from 'The Bank of Dreams & Nightmares' (Bridport)

'Chatting Shit' is a play for 6 voices which explores the complex relationships between the teen members of a band as they form, rehearse, fall out, rehearse again and then head for The Battle of the Bands. A riff on Fleetwood Mac's epic album 'Rumours', the band – Beef – come to learn that maybe success comes at too high a price.

Theatre – Comedy – Romance Time: 3pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange

Clarke Andrews Tempest by Charlie Coldfield

Marooned on the island once inhabited by Prospero, washed up silent film star Clarke Andrews (Charlie Coldfield), finds himself enchanted by the residual magic of events long forgotten. But he is not alone... Watched over by the spirit Ariel (Jim Causley), Clarke's memories, dreams, hopes and fears are revealed as Shakespeare's last play unfolds. Clarke Andrews Tempest features original songs written and performed by Jim Causley and additional score from The Dalwood Rocket. Please note this is a feature film extract.

Film – Drama – Romance Time: 1pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange

Comedy by Alan Clark

Comedy is a surreal, existential drama set in a shabby waiting room where time feels distorted. Dan, flustered and disoriented, meets Vincent, a calm, cryptic figure who seems to know more than he lets on. The two discuss the mysterious nature of their surroundings, with Dan questioning his purpose and the strange symbolism around him—broken systems, ticking clocks, and a blank ticket. As Dan navigates anxiety and uncertainty, he uncovers unsettling truths about redemption, self-identity, and fate. The play explores themes of limbo, self-discovery, and the cyclical nature of time, leaving the audience with a sense of haunting ambiguity.

Fantasy – Mystery – Drama Time: 2pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Common People by Alex Tucker

"Common People" is a script by inspired by Pulp's titular 1995 song and Greek mythology. It follows Athena, disillusioned with Olympus, as she sneaks out to the mortal plane to experience life there. She meets Georgios, a student with a passion for history and music, and the two form a bond. Meanwhile, her AWOL behaviour alarms the gods, and her friend Artemis uncovers the big secret. It blends mythology with modern being, humour, and romance, exploring themes of identity and belonging. As Athena navigates love and mortality, she faces the challenge of living like a common person.

Drama – Rom-Com – Theatre Time: 3pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

Day of the Cliffords by Martin Rogers

It is a comic satire in which a trade union invites two of their members to participate in a prototype Diversity training course the day after a spectacular display of the aurora borealis in the night sky. This leads to increasingly fraught but funny confrontations until a blind gunman enters the room and takes everyone hostage. There then follows a stand-off in which the diversity trainers, union officials and participants try to understand what the enigmatic blind gunman wants. It is a very funny and highly satirical comedy, whose title is derived from 'The Day of the Triffids' - the theme is blindness and how what we see is sometimes only what we are told to see.

TV – Drama – Comedy Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

Displaced by Jan Pain

It is a fictional attempt to portray the anguish caused by the forced displacement of the villagers of Tyneham for the use of their land by the Ministry of Defence during World War 2. The inhabitants were given an undertaking that they would be able to return at the cessation of hostilities but this pledge was never honoured.

Drama – Community Theatre – Historical Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

Do Fish Get the Bends? by Kathryn Robinson

In the blistering heat of Gran Canaria, holidaying pensioners, Clive and Roz, spar over her fascination with the story of an Angler Fish that swam towards the light. But the fish isn't the only thing brought to the surface, as decades-old secrets fuel their hostility until the truth literally hurts. Strong language.

Theatre – Dramedy Time: 4pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Dregs by Nelly Weston

Atop a crumbling cliffside, a house teeters on the edge of collapse. In a bid to prevent the inevitable, its sole occupant Jen hauls it back with boat chains, before her sister and nephew arrive unexpectedly to throw her whole existence out of balance. Meanwhile at the foot of the cliff, a mysterious community of beachcombers gather... A sinister and expressive exploration of the compulsions that shape our grief, taking coastal folklore and the climate crisis and asking if we should hope for better or let go, and what really happens when you let the cliff fall from under you.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 11am | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

Dresses by Dee Hughes

The screenplay "Dresses" by Dee Hughes is a dramatic narrative set in the Shetland Islands in 1995. It interweaves the lives of various characters, including Rachael, a guilt-ridden young woman dressed in a wedding gown, and Elizabeth, an elderly woman living on a remote island with a dark past. The story explores themes of isolation, mental health, family dynamics, and buried secrets. As Rachael's social work leads her to Elizabeth's secluded bungalow, eerie and mysterious elements unfold, including a locked door, a volatile shotgun-wielding Elizabeth, and Rachael's desperate fight for survival. The story culminates in revelations of trauma and resilience.

Film – Drama – Thriller Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

Durex Machine by Deen-Ol Reinard

Gret, heroically fair-minded, filled with hope and love, is frustrated by someone regularly dumping chicken-kebab in her garden. What's the appropriate response? Guard dog? Vigilante retribution? Murder? Will possessing a gun protect home and family? Can Gret be prevented from doing something stupid? 'Durex Machine' explores the relationship of three members of the police struggling with fear, communication and stupidity.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 2pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

Elephant's Breath by Christine Diment

Elephant's Breath is a light-hearted two-hander. It is about a married couple trying to choose a paint colour for their living room. They are a total contrast in character and the comedy derives from this as well as the ridiculous names given to paint colours.

Theatre – Sketch Show – Comedy Time: 10am | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Everything You Hoped It Would Be and More by Hannah Wilkinson

Grace just wants to completely take over the cooking, get through the dinner party without drinking too much, and not let her university friends discover that she's living in her car. But when one of the other guests turns out to be a teacher who she's certain fancied her back when she was hard-working and full of potential, she becomes determined to get him alone and get some answers to the question of where it was that her life went so horribly wrong.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 2.30pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Faces of the Dead by John Foster

Laura is a police artist. Her job involves recreating the dead – imaging faceless corpses for formal identification. Bodies decomposed or disfigured beyond recognition, countenances which have been stolen. She works with the murderers of persons unknown, whose lost identities Laura attempts to revive. Annie walks into a police station and confesses to the killing of a vagrant, whom she had doused with paraffin, set on fire and watched burn to death. As she sits opposite Laura in the police interview room, it seems impossible to believe that Annie is responsible for such a killing. (Produced by the Offshoot Collective, Bournemouth).

Theatre – Drama – Thriller Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Feelings Club by Brook Hopper

Two friends, Terry and Chris, reconnect years after their last meeting at university. Much has changed in their lives since then, and both have come to the realization that they're not quite as equipped to deal with these changes as they once thought. Will their efforts to help guide one another through life bring the peace they seek, or fracture their friendship in a way that can't be undone?

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

From The Cherry to the Cup – Brew with Brad

Coffee is the fuel of writers, so someone once said. Brad from Seventh Seal takes you on a journey to explore what makes great coffee. Taking you from the cherry to the cup, Brad's is a personal journey into how you can find your way into great coffee without all the nonsense. Brad shares personal reflections and confessions of a barista. Come and hear his story and watch him while he brews!

Performance – Real Stories – Coffee Time: 11am | Venue: Bar area of Corn Exchange

Forners by Ingrid Hayes

Involves two school children sitting on a bench during breaktime. Their conversation reveals a lot about their lives and the wider world outside school. They are young and are just on the cusp of learning about the world around them through language used by adults.

Sketch Show – Comedy Time: 10.30am | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

Found in Translation? by Svetlana Fry

A monologue reflecting on identity, immigration, trauma and the peculiarities of language—its quirks, its misunderstandings, and its profound healing power.

Theatre – Monologue – Drama Time: 2.30pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Foul Play by Sally Wills-Heath

Who will unravel the reasons for Derek's demise? And do the right people get their come-uppance in this short, gently comic screenplay intended for television, but adaptable for stage.

TV – Murder Mystery – Comic Time: 1pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Foxglove and the Silver Angel by Simon Elvin

Diggory, a retired war correspondent, sits outside the retirement home where he has been placed against his will, studying a book of poisonous plants and planning his own death. Whilst determined not to communicate with anyone, he cannot shake off new nurse Clara, who brings the home to life and takes a particular interest in him. Nor can he shake off the woman who keeps appearing in his room, trying to make him face a memory he has suppressed for years. As the memories surface in nightmare visions, Diggory must face the haunting past to find his salvation.

TV – Drama Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall

Gregg by Louis Young

A 14-year-old boy and his mum are attending a funeral for a recently diseased and Uncle - Gregg - when things take an unlikely turn.

Radio – Comedy Time: 11am | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Harold's Adventures by Brie Barwell

Harold's Adventures is a family theatre show aimed at young children. The story follows Harold the giraffe and his friends on a heartwarming journey of self-discovery, teamwork, and celebrating what makes us wonderfully unique.

Family – Children – Theatre Time: 10.30am | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall

Heartless by Sue Ashby

Heartless is a female monologue in which 30-year-old widow, Cass, explores and exposes the life she has had married to a successful artist. From being one of his most successful students at the Royal College of Art to a life in his shadow. The play explores the sacrifices she has made and the dramatic act of revenge that will set her free. Cass explores and exposes the life she has had married to a successful artist.

Theatre – Drama Time: 4.30pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Hive Life by 3-She

Set in a collapsing hive where bee numbers are in serious decline, this comedy sketch shines a light on the precarious existence of these essential pollinators. 3-She (Gail Aldwin, Maria Pruden and Sarah Scally) use humour and a bit of silliness to imagine the lives of Stripe, Dither and Queen Bee who have been left behind. 3-She met through a writing course at Bridport Arts Centre and have been working collaboratively for over eight years. Their short plays and comedy sketches have been staged at events in Bridport, Dorchester, Shaftesbury, Salisbury and Brighton.

Theatre – Sketch Show – Comedy Time: 11.30am | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Home Sweet Home by Lyn O'Donnell

A dark satirical comedy set in the world of private rented accommodation in London and worst housing crisis since the end of World War II. A three-storey building - Three women of three different ages and economic class - One Bed Bug infestation. The privileged entitled shop owner Helena on the ground floor refuses to treat - it doesn't affect her. So the infestation keeps recycling. No-one is listening and there's no route to justice. A sleep deprived Laura becomes increasingly demented as the bed bugs come to life. But she won't be beaten - not by this bitch - not this time.

SATIRE – COMEDY – THEATRE Time: 12pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Hometown Heroes by Will Oakes

Hometown heroes is a dark surreal comedy series. Set in the coastal town of Lakeview, following some sort of unstated disaster. The residents of Lakeview are now imprisoned within the town by enforced quarantine. Due to the absence of all first world amenities and services, a group of friends, led by Liam, attempt to serve their community. Attempt being the word.

Drama – TV – Comedy Time: 11am | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

Hooking Up with a Handsome Devil by Kent Okwesa

This script is a dark, transgressive exploration of desire, violence, and transformation, centering on the twisted encounter between NORN and THE MAN. NORN, a fragile, conflicted figure grappling with self-harm and identity, seeks connection through online interactions, while THE MAN, a commanding and sinister presence, lures NORN into his disturbing world. The narrative unfolds with grotesque, visceral imagery as power dynamics shift from seduction to terror, blurring boundaries between vulnerability and brutality. Through shocking, intense scenes, the script challenges conventional notions of intimacy and control, culminating in a horrifying, surreal confrontation that irreversibly alters both characters in an unrelenting narrative. (*Adult themes*)

Horror – TV – Film Time: 1pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

How Possible by DK Nwosu

This short script is a magical realism story about mental health and the mysterious. It tells the tale of two budding conscious (metaphysical) rap artists TAZ and AFAI who are harbouring a mysterious secret and their studio engineer who unbeknown to the rappers has had a history of mental health issues, particularly hearing voices and depression. The studio engineer, middle aged Anglo Italian man MAURO, loved this hip-hop duo. Unlike other urban collectives of the time, he never had any problems with them. They were fond of him and always so respectful.

Theatre – Drama – Magical Realism Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

How to Build a Wardrobe by Paddy Earle

Constructed like a 1980's infomercial, this short comedy is a step-by-step guide to constructing flat-pack furniture without destroying your relationships in the process.

Comedy – Film Script Time: 2pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

In the Bucket by Tim Poultney

In this drama about the nature of family, tradition and crabs, Ted and Harriet are trying to keep their respective ships from sinking, while their son Ash is trying to sail away on his own for good. Can they all stay afloat as Ted pushes them all further into uncharted waters?

Drama – Theatre Time: 12pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

In the Street by Ella Ritsema

Exes bump into each other in the street. What will they reflect on? And what will they realise?

Theatre – Drama Time: 2pm | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall

Is That You? by Hannah Hewer

A woman pleads to God in a hotel bathroom, but gains no reply. From a promising theology student at Hope University, to living in a cheap ensuite in Merseyside, Eden's life is forever changed after she begins an affair with a cosmetic surgeon 20 years her senior. With the audience as listeners to her private confessional, Eden's perception of morality and faith is thrown into disarray as she recounts their story. From the first meeting in an independent bar, to their guilt-ridden present in a seedy local hotel, she is trapped within their hidden paradise, and her own personal hell.

Radio – Drama – Romance Time: 3pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Just Water by Sheena Dearness

Wadeham village and the surrounding farmland has been flooded yet again. Farmer John Trent has lost animals and income and his meeting with Environment Officer, Jeremy Eldridge, does little to calm his temper.

Radio – Community Theatre – Comedy Time: 10.30am | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Keith's Pick by Laura Sargent-Edney

A lock of blond hair in an old tobacco pouch, a shocking gift from a mystery writer and a string of hit records; a secret that's haunted fading rock star Frank for decades is about to come to the surface.

Theatre – Radio – Drama Time: 11.30am | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

Last Bus to Weston! by Richard George Broadbent

An unlikely romance between the village bus driver and the Lady of the Manor bursts into life when the village bus route is threatened with the axe.

Film – Drama – Rom-Com Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Limbo by Annabel Worsfold

'Limbo', a play about waiting for life to begin. One can become complacent in the mundane normality of life, wanting to become a creative person yet no idea seems adequate, so you wait. Allowing mundane days to become life itself. The two characters represent two sides of a creative; one that wants to dive into what might be, the other representing self-doubt and the excuses that come with it. Although 'Hope' attempts to inspire a start to the creative journey, 'doubt' shuts each possibility down. The cycle must break or the pair will remain in creative limbo. Forever waiting.

Absurdist - Theatre – Comedy Time: 11am | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Malaise by Marie Belsten

The number of people claiming sickness benefits has hit a record high. It seems we all feel sicker than ever. But why? What questions does this raise about our healthcare system? Where have all the GPs gone? Why is it so difficult to get an appointment? Can AI bots make accurate diagnoses? And, if our broken NHS is beyond repair, do we have the government, Big Pharma, corporations, illegal immigrants, or ourselves to blame? During the pandemic, we all vowed to change for the better and do things differently afterwards. But do we ever truly learn from such major crises?

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 11am | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange, Dorchester Arts

Make a Wish by Justyna Green

Struggling to decide whether to try for a baby with Sausage, Womb must face her fears when she encounters the Period Poo Genie. Will she make the right wish? This is a premiere screening of the animation. (Parental guidance advised)

Animation – Comedy Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Missing the Mark by Liz Garland

Liz Garland is a writer and performer, based in Salisbury. Her play 'Becoming Simone' is currently being developed with Mayflower Studios, Forest Forge and Stage Door. Liz has a passion for writing very human stories, making the everyday and ordinary - extraordinary. Her new play 'Missing The Mark' centres around Carol, Mike and Sophie, a family who are not quite connecting for one reason or another. Exploring topics such as aging, generational divide, invisibility and the importance of touch, this play hopes to encourage us to ask, 'Are we truly connecting with each other or are we missing the mark?'

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 10.30am | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

My Bleeping Heart by Rachel Murrell

As newly divorced Sam nervously dips her toe into the world of dating for the first time in over 20 years, she must contend with strange dating apps, the chaos wrought by three kids, her swipe-right addicted best friend, and her own trust issues. In this excerpt from the pilot episode, Sam's attempt to create a dating profile that paints her as calm and in control is up-ended by just the kind of family crisis that would see any self-respecting date head for the hills...

TV – Comedy – Heartwarming Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

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MOVE CLINIC

At Move Clinic, we have a team of 4 osteopaths, 1 sports massage therapist, and 1 Swedish massage therapist. In addition to offering gait analysis and insoles, Move Clinic is now one of the few clinics to offer both focused and radial shockwave therapy in Dorset. Shockwave can treat a number of conditions, including:

- Tendinopathies: Achilles, foot, knee, elbow, shoulder, hamstrings, and more
- Carpal tunnel
- Bones – stress injuries, stress fractures, non-unions
- Osteoarthritis, spinal facet joint pain
- Acute pain and flare-ups
- Wound healing
- Men's health issues

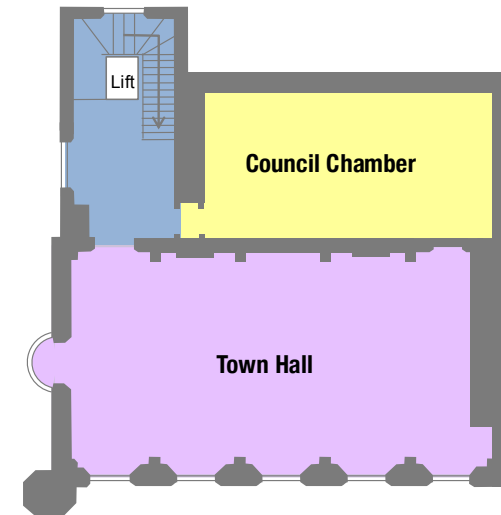
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Corn Exchange guide

GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



Find these and other inspiring resources in the **Writers' Hub** at the Corn Exchange



My Manic Muse by Jasmin Haid

My Manic Muse follows Noa, a struggling writer battling creative block while trying to craft the perfect love story. As she seeks inspiration, she meets Samuel, a mysterious and charismatic man who seems to understand her intimately. Their connection fuels her writing, but as their interactions intensify, Noa starts questioning his presence in her life. Is he a true muse or something more unsettling? As reality and fiction blur, Noa must navigate the fine line between artistic passion and obsession. With psychological tension, romance, and self-discovery, the story explores love, control, and the price of creative genius.

Drama - Thriller – Romance Time: 1pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

Offside by Katharine Jee

It's the Monday morning office meeting. Melissa is convinced she's going to win tickets to see the Lionesses in the Euros 2025 final, but she has a bit of competition on her hands. What does the offside rule mean and why doesn't anyone ever explain it properly? "Offside" is a comedy that hopes to challenge gender roles and de-myth the offside rule once and for all. You don't need to know anything about football to enjoy this play! A big thank you to Martha Earley at Lighthouse Poole for giving us rehearsal space.

Theatre – Comedy Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall

Old Harry by George Reardon

Old Harry is a period drama, set in medieval England. Harry Paye is a legendary pirate from that era. Born in Poole, Harry ruled the waves pirating and tormenting Spanish and French merchant ships. As his reputation grew, so did his following of mercenaries who wanted the drama, and the plunder that came with it. Come with us as we voyage with Harry. We follow him as he evolves from a young tearaway to a Commander at sea. George Reardon is a local writer with a keen interest in drama and espionage. His debut novel Gravelbelly is out on Amazon.

TV – Drama – Adventure Time: 12pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

One Missing Piece by Katy Halliwell

Martina's family was everything to her. She didn't have much in life, but she always had them. The play is based on a true story and follows Martina's journey after her mother's passing when her beliefs about herself came crumbling down with the shocking revelation that her whole family was built on lies. Martina no longer knew who she was and more specifically who her father was. As the story behind Martina's mother, Valentina is revealed, Martina tries to discover who her father really was and what happened to her mother the years before she was born.

Romance – Drama – Theatre Time: 11.30am | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Pheasant Bones by Devina Symes

A true account of a happening in Dorset at the end of the 19th century, which highlights the dire realities of life for the farm labourer and his family, as well as revealing the grit and humour of the labourer as he outwits the local farmer, who is his employer.

Radio – Drama Time: 10.30am | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Pillow Talk by Julie Wood

Based on the true story of a family blighted by a crippling genetic degenerative disease, 'Pillow Talk' is set on a single day, March 31st 2000, following the events of a birthday celebration. Looking forward to spending time with her son Michael on his 42nd birthday, Hazel finds her day taking a shocking and unexpected turn, with life-changing consequences for her and the rest of the family. This story is as relevant today as it was 25 years ago.

Drama – Theatre Time: 1pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

PLAYER by Martin Keady

Being for the first time the remarkable true comedy, history and tragedy of Shakespeare.

Theatre – Drama – Historical Time: 5pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

Pride of Place by Linda Jane Butler

Discovering her local park is set to become a housing estate, Joan, an infuriated widow, handcuffs herself to her deceased husband's commemorative bench. But when two nosy strangers decide to keep Joan company, a series of misunderstandings ensues and it's not long before Joan, and her bench, find themselves unexpectedly relocated to a bizarre new home.

Theatre – Comedy Time: 2.30pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Princess and the Pea by Lola Annesley

Taking inspiration from Hans Christian Anderson's 'Princess and the Pea', this one woman show explores the female psyche and the depths of the imagination when one is left isolated and entrapped- both mentally and physically. The night before her wedding, a woman is left alone and isolated from her husband to be; as her bed gets increasingly uncomfortable, so does her mind as the bed becomes a metaphor of her deep vulnerability - her fears, her desires, and her past trauma. Adult-themed.

Theatre – Drama – Mythical Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Princess Sparkles by Lily Maryon

My script was originally written for TV but I will adapt it to be a sketch/comedy show set at a children's birthday party. Princess Sparkles was the best in the game, she's now delusional and falling apart at the seams. A secret is ready to be revealed at this party.

Theatre – Sketch Show – Comedy Time: 3pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Purple looks nice in the sky by Toby Batt

It's about a guy who keeps having everything bad you could ever imagine happen to him, his dad dies, he is threatened with eviction and insecurity in his job, his friend gets fired in the midst of 1930s England, where the fear of communism is striking deep into the hearts of everybody with that capitalist ideology. He gets into a fight with his friend and ends up face to face in an interrogation room with a police officer. This is where our script begins and it will take you on a 15 min journey into the life and struggles of our main character, Nathan.

Theatre – Comedy – Thriller Time: 10am | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Real Work by Louis Thrift

A neurodivergent teenager attends their first job interview, a nerve-wracking experience even for an average person. This dark comedy showcases the perspectives of both interviewee and interviewer, projecting out their innermost thoughts on the proceedings.

Comedy – Theatre Time: 3pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Rebel Rebel by Callum Murray

Why rebel? Why stick your neck out? Why take the risk? Rebel Rebel is a new play with music that follows the fortunes of three linked characters across two rebellions in London, separated by over 500 years. Climate change is the cause, and a divisive feature, of our times, Jack Cade's Rebellion of 1450 involved a march on the City by about 5,000 rebels, protesting about corruption at the court of King Henry VI. Behind every rebellion, there are rebels. Rebel Rebel asks: who are they, and what could these two rebellions possibly have in common?

Theatre – Historical – Drama Time: 2.30pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

Return of the Local by Non Vaughan-O'Hagan

"Return of the Local" depicts the moment that Gertrude Bugler returned to Dorset after her successful portrayal of Tess on the West End Stage. On the platform station she encounters a young man desperate to spread his wings in journalism.

Historical – Drama Time: 2pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

Rock Choir by Tim Baker

A short comedy drama with song, celebrating the fact that, despite what society wants to tell you, there is life after 60 and you must keep living it. Julie and Amanda are members of the local Rock Choir and during a rehearsal break discuss Song, Doughnuts, Husbands and Hope. A new script from Tim Baker for Bloomin' Good Productions.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 11am | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Rule Zero by Shaun Mendum

Five childhood friends reunite as adults to mourn the death of their sixth group member. They stand over a game of Dungeons & Dragons, which they bonded over as children, but play, make-belief, and D&D are firmly a thing of the past. As they remember more of their time together, their childhood plays out before them, and they lose themselves in the wonderful world they thought they'd left behind. Rule Zero is about grief, mental health, and adults embracing our inner child.

Theatre – Genre Busting – Science Fiction Time: 2pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Safe by James Cole

Inspired by the likes of Victoria Wood and Alan Bennett, Safe is a short comedy monologue following the meeting of Arthur and Aiden at a gay speed dating night in Bournemouth. As they get to know each other, they look at difficult past relationships and how the world is changing for queer people. Safe is a story of finding acceptance of the past, feeling safe in an uncertain world, and learning to love yourself – and maybe someone else – again.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Seed Money by Jonathan Neary

Tom and Janice are flat broke, but their fortunes are reversed when they happen upon a tree stump, within which lives a tiny stockbroker, capable of predicting the markets with unerring accuracy.

TV – Comedy Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Singularity by Matt Grinter

Matt Grinter, multi-award-winning playwright, brings you a story of grief, love and the things that stitch the universe together. When 9-year-old Amalia dies, her parents are left to try and make sense of their grief by answering a list of questions she has left behind. Their lives destroyed, her enquiring mind as a young scientist will open her parents' eyes to the wonders of the world, even after she's left it. Singularity opens a window into the things we can't move past and what that does to love.

Theatre – Drama Time: 2pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

Sisters by Isla Stewart

Four women arrive at an unknown destination; three are dressed as the Marx Brothers, and the fourth looks uncannily like a German revolutionary. Who are they and what is their purpose? This short comic piece explores a possibility.

Theatre – Comedy Time: 5.30pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Skinfluencer by Maria Speight

Maria grew up as one of nine siblings in a counter-culture family all over England, but one of her brothers has settled in Dorset, linking her to this festival. She loves supporting arts and writing outside of bigger cities as she believes in diversity of thought and background being incredibly useful to creativity. Skinfluencer is about a terrified-of-aging social media influencer who hosts one of the biggest Instagram lives of her career, while literally facing her fear amid out-of-touch oblivion, and her mother's prayers, in this comedy, satirical script.

Theatre – Comedy Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Smugglers by Nick Jubber

Taking place halfway through the story and set in a pub in South Dorset, this scene shows Lynn, Bow and Dean dealing with the discovery of a stash of drugs off a buoy whilst trying to keep the pub going. In the meantime, Dean is receiving messages from the owners of the stash, which are becoming increasingly menacing.

Theatre – Drama Time: 12pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

SPUDULIKE by Sally Whyte

A family sit around a table in Van Gogh's masterpiece 'The Potato Eaters'. Who are they and what are they thinking? What are their stories and aspirations? A burst of music and song brings them alive so they can at last react to one another. How will their story end? A drama with lots of comedy and physical surprises up its sleeve. This piece is part of a larger body of work currently in development which explores the potential relationship between modern fine art, and practice and performance in contemporary theatre.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 2.30pm | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall

Stains and Spillages by Tracy Bryant

Brenda is judgmental, intolerant and isolated. Her sharp comments about people make her feel more important. Can a chance meeting with a stranger in a cafe change Brenda's outlook - and her life? A poignant tragicomedy exploring family and relationships.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 3pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

TALOS by Bethan Thomas

Attending this job interview is the number one item on Riley's to-do list. Attempting to dismantle the domineering patriarchal opinions of the companies' employees? Well, that wasn't even in the top 10.

Theatre – Drama – Science Fiction Time: 4pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Tess by Olivia Gagan

17-year-old Tess Durbeyfield craves freedom from her family's poverty and an education. She is instead sent to make her fortune at her family's ancestral seat, with disastrous consequences. A modern-day TV drama adaptation of Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles.

Drama – TV Time: 12pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

The Dancing Club by Mark Jardine

The Dancing Club tells how Frank fell in love twice on the same night. Once with Liliana, the cultural exchange student visiting his 1960's Nottingham home, and once with HER greatest love - Ballroom Dancing. They become professional dancers and start a dance school. But the pressure of running the school causes them to drift apart. Maybe the only thing holding them together is dance? Then there's the new TV show looking for a judge on a celebrity/professional dance show. So now Frank has a choice to make. Stick with The Dancing Club or Twist the night away on TV.

Theatre – Drama – Comedy Time: 12pm | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall

The Deal by Hannah Deen

In return for fame and fortune, the lead singer of a disco funk band agrees to become the human host for an ancient demon

TV – Comedy – Supernatural Time: 5pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

The Deep by Hattie Smith

A sweet deep dive into the performativity of masculinity. Two friends discover more about themselves and each other. Set in the 1930s.

Theatre – Drama Time: 2pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street – please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

The Little Things by Lee Cooper

Lee moved to North Dorset as we came out of lockdown, where he settled down to start writing. His writing draws not only on previous life experiences, but also on the goals and ambitions and hopes he still has. In this piece the author aims to explore, albeit very briefly, how the collision of grief and longing may feel. It is loosely based on an incident from the author's life - a friend died of cancer - his wife, of a broken heart, four months later...

Theatre – Drama Time: 1pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

The Mexico Mission by Brave Bold Drama

Full of adventure, intrigue and mind-bending plot twists, 'The Mexico Mission!' is an energetic, witty and highly-interactive show for audiences aged 7 to adult (including just adult audiences). Set in the world of the Company of International Artists, a top-secret detective agency specialising in art investigations, audiences are thrown headlong into a forgery case, requiring them not only to actively investigate the art of Frida Kahlo, Tina Modotti and Diego Rivera, but also to spot clues and crack codes. The story also supports audiences to investigate the nature of friendship and how capitalism impacts on art.

Family Drama – Thriller – Adventure Time: 10am | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange

The Red Shoes by Sinead Gannon

17-year-old Eileen lives in a small town on the west coast of Ireland. An only child, she lives with her strict, conservative mother. She longs to escape to New York and join her glamorous aunt Roisin. Roisin, however, is secretly living in Weymouth, Dorset. A body is discovered on the Sligo bay, the only part visible, a pair of red shoes trapped between two rocks. These women are drawn to the sea, a desire to sail to the future and the tides of the past that pull them back.

Drama – Theatre Time: 4pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street – please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

The Simple Life of Hank Taneja by Lucky Azad

A man by the name of Hank Taneja discovers and accepts that he's a reality TV figure, only for the hunt for stardom and money make him want to escape from life altogether.

Radio – Drama – Comedy Time: 12pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

The Sisters: Rough Justice by Katy Wall

It's 2024, people pleaser Gretch is a stay-at-home Mum of two. She leads a well ordered and comfortable life in rural Dorset. That is until her younger sister Mayb is released from prison. Ex-con Mayb's first job is proving challenging. Being continuously harassed by an abhorrent boss eventually takes its toll and she is pushed back on to the wrong side of the law. With every bad decision Mayb makes, older sister Gretch finds her principles and sanity being tested like never before.

Drama – Theatre – Crime Time: 2.30pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

The Supply Chain by Maya Pieris

Takes the story of the 1912 Bridport Gundry Rope Workers strike by women netters protesting about the plan to reduce the pay of more skilled workers to make up the pay of the less skilled. The strike was led by Annie Follett and involved the National Federation of Women Workers. The strike ended after a week with no result in the women's favour but happened at a time of growing socioeconomic awareness. The middle act is book-ended with a Punch & Judy 1912 history lesson and a 2016 one person show type programme, both pure panto.

Drama – Community – Historical Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

The Weight of Words by The Jawbone Collective

Prize winning poets Peter Roe and Molly Dunne of The Jawbone Collective will introduce the concept of 'Gravitas Verbatim' a scripting and layout methodology for performance poetry. "Poetry?" you ask... "Well yes... A poem is in fact a performance script!". This event will include performances, a demonstration and guide to formatting your own writing. Come and ask us questions after the event in the Writers' Hub to find out more.

Performance – Poetry Time: 11.30am | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Thicker Than Water by Rohan Gotobed

"This is not normal. Let me be clear. We are looking at a biohazard". What governs us, fact or emotion? Just as Councillor Petra Stockmann is about to launch Bournemouth's new luxury spa, worth millions to the local economy, Dr. Thora appears at her office door, bitterly decrying apparent chemicals in the water. The two have previous. Is there really something in the water, or is it all in Thora's head? A resonant local reimagining of Ibsen's 'An Enemy of the People', originally performed at Lighthouse's Remix in February. It's time to drink up.

Drama – Political – Thriller Time: 11am | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange

Things She Never Said by Sally Lewis

Nora has a secret. She has many. Secrets that were meant to stay in the past, that's why she moved into the nursing home. Life here is quiet. She enjoys the calm of the garden, perched on the wooden bench. But her daughter is about to stir up the past. While clearing out Nora's house, she'll uncover her secrets—the life Nora never speaks of, her actions during the Second World War. She'll no longer be able to shield her daughter from what's to come, and their relationship will change forever. There are so many things Nora should have said.

Theatre – Drama – Espionage Time: 10am | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Tomorrow The Fox by Dan Gaisford

A Somerset tavern, 1669: Meg discovers her brother, John; hiding out after sabotaging the enclosure of moorland on which his livelihood depends. John wants to utilise his sister's special talent to spread his proclamation of dissent against the landed class. But has Meg's time in London quelled her renegade ways? A high rise flat, a modern city: A man and woman are locked into an ever-deepening struggle; with their employers, with their landlord, and with each other. At risk of eviction, both think they know what to do; providing, of course, they can get out of the building... Based on an idea by Dan Gaisford and Leela Bunce. Age guidance 14+

Theatre – Historical – Comedy Time: 10.30am | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange

Two Cars One Family by Aileen Gonsalves

A story of an extended multi-generational Indian family living in the UK as they drive in two cars to various family engagements - a christening, a wedding and a funeral.

Theatre – Comedy Time: 3pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Tyranny of Time by Wendy Maggs

Set in the 'near' dystopian future, most of humankind are living with the consequences of their decision to eradicate the biggest environmental threat to the world. Greed and power are the central themes of the story. Not suitable for young children.

Drama – Thriller – Theatre Time: 4.30pm | Venue: Kings Arms, High East Street- please note this is a first-floor venue with no lift

Unscheduled by Stacie Bates

Unscheduled is a play that explores the ways in which we often alter ourselves when faced with societal pressures. Two seemingly anonymous characters, 'The Hairdresser' and 'The Student' meet by chance under the clock at Waterloo Station. These two characters meet under that same clock every few years. Unscheduled is a comedy drama that follows two very different people at pivotal moments in their lives and reveals how societal pressures can shape their decisions, job roles and even the fundamentals of who they are.

Theatre – Drama Time: 4pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

UPROOTED by Archie Rowell

Originally an Almeida Theatre seed-commission in 2024, UPROOTED explores a young man's relationship between Dorset and his Absent Father. He's watched his friends move on and go to uni, his mother's still just down the road, and he has a constant sense that there's more out there for him but he can't move on from the past that shaped him. In March 2025, Archie was awarded an Arts Council England 'Developing Your Creative Practice Grant' to develop the Almeida film into a one-man show. This will be the first time any part of the piece has been performed live.

Theatre – Poetry – Monologue Time: 12pm | Venue: Green Room, Corn Exchange

Vigil of Arms by Reed Gyorkey

After losing his father at the age of six, Arthur Blackwood battles to keep his memory alive by training to become a knight and stepping into those vacant shoes. During his Vigil of Arms, Blackwood repents for his sins, cleanses his body and mind but he must also defeat some demons of his past. Demons which, until now, he has never sought to face. A performance shedding light on men's mental health and the struggle of masculinity.

Drama – Historical – Theatre Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

Watching Mothers and Daughters by Holly Bacon

Eliza has to believe her father. There is no other choice. He is dead, and her mother is the murderer. Eliza knows that her father is a good man, but a court trial that tries to prove him to be a domestic abuser threatens everything that Eliza believes. Inspired by the Greek mythology of Clytemnestra, this modern courtroom drama explores complicated family structures thrust into the spectacle of the courtroom.

Crime – Drama – Theatre Time: 11.30am | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum

We Already Saved the World by Willow Locke

Thirty years ago, six of the greatest heroes saved the great city of Vintston from an unstoppable evil known as 'The Static'. After many years, he and his endless armies of mechanical terrors were defeated and a new dawn of prosperity began. The city of Vintston is now thriving more than ever, until the day that all of the old heroes go missing with no clue left behind apart from a ticking stopwatch in all of their homes. Now it's up to their kids to track them down, but what they find out along the way might change everything.

Urban Fantasy – TV – Thriller Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

Weymouth College Scripts

Weymouth College hosts one of the South West's most exciting centres for professional industry experience and study in the performing arts. Second-year Performing Arts students present work they have devised for their course.

Theatre – Student Drama – Performance Time: 11.30am | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

What Happens When You Are Most Expecting It? by James Thornton

What do we do when we find out the world will end that day? Take our own lives? Cash in on fence protector? Go fishing? This play is based on the true story of what one Dorchester local did one day during the Cuban missile crisis, reimagined in the world that has given us Trump, Putin and Netanyahu. Spend the day with Sean, Angry Ken and Tracy, as they unwittingly explore human resilience, blessed ignorance, religion, greed, humour, love and, ultimately, what is the point of life?

Theatre – Drama Time: 1pm | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall

What's in the Beer? - A Short Folklore Story by Oliver Hickey

Albert (61) a travelling Demonologist finds himself in a medieval town which finds itself on top of a very old reservoir with a mystical past. He finds that not all is as it should be, as he and his protege Mary (26) find the local pub holds a dark secret and an evil which needs to be stopped. Oliver Hickey, the writer of this short piece, has been developing the character and story of Albert for some years. He is currently undergoing an Online Screenwriting Masters at Central Film School while working and living in Dorchester.

Horror – Theatre – Film Time: 3pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

when i woke up in the morning, the feeling was still there by Millie Haldane

Three women. One room. A tree that grows, changes and moves all by itself. Together they rise in power and fall into the abyss.

Theatre – Drama Time: 2.30pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

When We Arrive by Muniba Mahmud

When We Arrive is a poetic and evocative exploration of migration, identity, and reconciliation. Through the intertwined stories of two migrants—Dounia (the world) and Iman (faith), hailing from opposing communities—the play delves into the tensions and connections that shape their lives. Amidst chaos and conflict, they confront the pain and hope that define their journeys, drawing on echoes of spirituality and mysticism. Years later, they reunite in a fragile moment of reflection, grappling with the scars of the past and the possibility of healing. A spiritual and social narrative, When We Arrive invites us to reflect on the universal search for belonging, faith, and understanding in a fractured world. Themes: Migration, faith, conflict, reconciliation, mysticism.

Theatre – Drama Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

Wool by Alastair Braidwood

A man knitting in public is an unusual sight, and this knitting man with a big beard has something to say. Something important, about wool, its history, its environmental impact today. Be astonished by his words, be astounded by his prowess with the knitting needle, observe the work it takes to make something from wool while hearing this thought-provoking piece.

Theatre – Performance Piece – Historical Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

You Can Call Me AI by Rich Austin

Musician Rich Austin and filmmaker Chris Watney offer a personal perspective on the dangers of artificial intelligence. This is screening of their parody of one of the world's most beloved pop songs, You Can Call Me AI. Rich's song shows how artificial intelligence (AI) is coming for ALL OUR ARTS!

Film – Performance – Creativity Time: 1pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Events

Acting Out: Create a Scene! Ages 7-11 (event workshop 45mins)

Join Acting Out for a fun drama workshop for ages 7-11. Using a single line from a play, children will create a mini script in three snapshots - like pressing pause on an action-packed movie! In 30 minutes through drama games, movement, and teamwork, they'll build a scene filled with drama, mystery, or comedy. No experience needed—just big ideas and creative energy! Acting Out has been running inspiring drama workshops across the South West for over 10 years, helping young people step into new roles and tell amazing stories. Come play, create, and perform! Limited number of places.

Time: 11am | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall

A Pocket Guide to Structure with David Lane: Playwright and Dramaturg (talk 30mins)

How do you create structures that express the human experiences in your play? What does it mean to think about structure as a force in the play, rather than just a framework? What's the difference between structure and style? Come and join an illustrated whistle-stop tour through some playwriting fundamentals that you can pocket and apply to your scripts today - and find out about the weekly Lane's List, 'the lightning conductor for all that is happening currently in the world of plays, scripts and dramatic writing'.

Time: 11am | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Writing for the mid-scale (talk and Q&A 30 mins) – Gareth Machin

Gareth Machin, Artistic Director of Wiltshire Creative, considers the particular challenge of making the leap from writing for a small studio space to writing for a mid-scale venue. What are the opportunities and what are the challenges? What considerations do writers need to have in mind when pitching stories and ideas to potential producers? Formerly Artistic Director of Southwark Playhouse, NT Studio Associate, and Bristol Old Vic Associate, Gareth has directed a range of new work from writers such as Chris Chibnall, Howard Brenton, Timberlake Wertenbaker and Peter Tinniswood as well as a diverse mix of classical and contemporary work at various scales.

Time: 11.30am | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange



Dorset History Centre: How Local History Can Inspire Your Stories (talk 15mins) – Maria Gayton

Dorset History Centre cares for 1000 years' of records which contain a million stories. Pop along to this session to see how smugglers, servants, patients, lawmakers, law-breakers, brewers, farmers, children, paupers and all of Dorset life can be tapped for inspiration. We'll look at a couple of local documents as a taster and allow our imaginations to run riot. Are you intrigued by Fanny Vincent – an 8-year-old sent to Dorset's Asylum? Or perhaps you'd like to meet a General from the Civil War? We will ensure you know how to get started in your quest for the untold tales of history and can discuss your own interests.

Time: 11.30am | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

Everything You Don't Know (And Possibly Don't Want to Know) About Running a Theatre (talk and Q&A 30mins) – Elspeth McBain

If you want to write for theatre, you need to understand the environment in which theatres are operating. Join Elspeth McBain, Chief Executive of the Lighthouse Poole, Dorset's biggest theatre, for an insight into the running of a multi auditorium mixed programme venue. Everything from ticketing systems to programming, security, catering, staffing and running water (or not!), Elspeth explains the story behind the scenes.

Time: 12pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange



Artistic Director of the Royal Court Theatre (talk 30mins) – David Byrne

Join David Byrne, Artistic Director of the Royal Court Theatre, for conversation about playwriting and his mission to transform the culture of playwriting in Britain. Previously part of the founding team at New Diorama Theatre, David has brought new energy to the Royal Court with his two seasons of programming. Things have always been tough for playwrights but, in recent years, the relationship between them and theatres feels like it has come undone. Through leading a team committed to new work, conversation, and practical support, David and the Royal Court are encouraging new artistic adventures for both playwrights and audiences.

Time: 12.30pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange



Comedy Sketch Writing: the discipline of writing a mini script (event workshop 30mins) – Richard Law and Gavin Egan

Following the success of last year's comedy sketch writing workshop, Richard Law and Gavin Egan will be returning to TSTT with another session of helpful advice and mayhem. Join them for tips, performances and a repeat of that crazy mind map! Richard and Gavin have been writing sketches together for six years, performing at comedy shows around the South of England. Amazingly, they are still friends. Both perform their own stand-up comedy, and Richard has previously written for the BBC.

Time: 1.30pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange

Developing Your Feature Idea (talk and Q&A 45 mins) – BFI NETWORK South West

We welcome BFI NETWORK Talent Executive Nadia Attia to discuss the funding and support the BFI offers to writers – in particular the Early Development Fund, which is set to re-open in the autumn. She'll be joined by a guest screenwriter Sophie Mair, who will provide valuable insights into getting your idea onto the page, working with notes to find the heart of your story, and how to create a great treatment, followed by time for you to ask your questions.

Time: 2pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange



Mayflower Theatre Southampton (talk and Q&A 30mins) – Josh Whatsize

Josh Whatsize, Artist Development Programme Leader from Mayflower Theatre Southampton, talks about the PROPEL Artist Development programme, the projects and programmes on offer for local artists as well as wider support for the development of new work. They'll be an opportunity to ask questions and meet with Josh to discuss creative ideas.

Time: 3pm | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall



Building Creativity (talk and Q&A 30mins) – Martin Berry

Where do writers fit into theatres? Martin Berry, Creative Director and Joint CEO of Exeter Northcott Theatres, speaks about combining the running of a building with the creative vision required to ensure exciting programming. What can writers learn about the running of buildings, marketing and audience behaviour? Does this help writers and artists to make theatre? Martin's background in theatre directing and in leading participatory programmes offers insight for writers in the South West - how to create stories that really connect with theatres and audiences.

Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange



The Big Juggle! Family & Writing Life (talk and Q&A 30 mins) – James Henry

Screenwriter and author James Henry talks about balancing family life with writing some of the best comedy television shows in recent years, everything from Green Wing to classic British animated shows like Shaun The Sheep and Hey Duggee. How can you get everything written and still make sure the kids get picked up from school and there's food on the table!? What are the constraints for a writing career outside of London? And how has he found the time (and energy!) to get his first book written, Pagans, a darkly comic novel.

Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

Story MOT – What Does a Writer Do With Feedback? (talk 45mins) – Jemma Kennedy with Max Kyte

We all know feedback is essential for redrafting and improving work, but how does a writer take criticism? And what is needed to ensure work really improves? Playwright and screenwriter Jemma Kennedy is the author of *The Playwright's Journey: From First Spark to First Night* (Nick Hern Books). In this session, she offers guidance and support to writer Max Kyte. A writing coach and script consultant herself, Jemma offers support and practical advice to Max about his work in a 1-to-1 session. You'll be able to observe it all – as a fly-on-the-wall! – to see how Jemma's advice and insight is both given and received. The session lifts the curtain on feedback and dramaturgical advice, showing just how important and significant feedback is to developing new work – and how feedback delivered skilfully leads to robust writers and better writing.

Time: 3.30pm | Venue: Meeting Room, Shire Hall



Making Brilliant Drama for Radio (talk and Q&A 30mins) – Carl Prekopp

Writer, drama director, producer and actor, Carl Prekopp talks about the craft of writing, directing and performing audio drama. Having voiced characters for audio drama and video games, Carl shares his insight and experience of working with scripts for audio. What needs to be there on the page to create a world that connects with its audience? Carl explores the role of a drama director in creating enthralling and entertaining audio drama, including most recently *Kramer versus Kramer* for BBC Radio 4.

Time: 4pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Starting Out in Screenwriting (talk and Q&A 30mins) – Sophie McVeigh

How do you start screenwriting? The simple answer is with a story. Sophie McVeigh is a screenwriter and screenwriting lecturer who offers a personal perspective on how to make it – and keep making it – in screenwriting. She is currently working on a diverse slate of projects, including feature films and comedy-drama series. Sophie teaches Screenwriting at The University of East London and has also taught at the University of Manchester. She is a mentor to MA Screenwriting students at London Film School, and she sits on its Industry Advisory Panel. She occasionally translates screenplays from French and Spanish and has worked as a script doctor and reader for a variety of European producers.

Time: 4pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street

The Script's Not the Thing! (workshop 30mins) – Teatro Vivo

With their brand new show 'Orpheus and the Underworld', hitting Nothe Fort in Weymouth this September, Kas Darley and Mark Stevenson, Artistic Directors of devising company Teatro Vivo, bring an example "skeleton document" (outline narrative) from one of their recent shows to explain how they use this as a launchpad for creating their work. Be prepared to get involved in this practical session.

Time: 4pm | Venue: Victorian Hall, Dorset Museum



Bringing New Work to the Stage (talk 30mins) – Jessy Roberts, Senior Reader, National Theatre

What makes a great script and how does the NT develop new writing for the stage? The NT is one of the only theatres who accept unsolicited scripts from writers across the UK and Ireland all year round, as one of the ways they develop awareness of artists' work. So what happens when you do send in a script? And what should you know? Jessy Roberts, Senior Reader at the NT, explains how the National Theatre works with new and established writers.

Time: 4pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange



How to Fix Problems With Your Scripts (talk and Q&A 30mins) – Ashley Pharoah

Drawing on experience from a career in screenwriting and producing, Ashley Pharoah offers practical support and insight for how to fix problems with your scripts. How do you approach problems with structure and character? When do you know your story isn't working? And what can you do about it? Ashley offers thoughts from his work over 30 years including hits *The Living and the Dead*, *Ashes to Ashes*, *Life on Mars* and *Around the World in 80 Days*. He is currently writing a play about rugby for Exeter Northcott Theatres.

Time: 4.30pm | Venue: Tom Browns, High East Street



BBC Writers: Who We Are and What We Do (talk 30mins) – Simon Nelson

Simon Nelson from BBC Writers talks about the work of the BBC and how it discovers, develops and champions new and experienced writing talent across the whole of the UK.

Time: 4.30pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange



Commercial Producing (Q&A 30mins) – Josh Beaumont

What are the risks in producing new work? And how can that risk be managed? Join producer Josh Beaumont for an informal discussion about the challenges of bringing new work to audiences. How do projects get off the ground? What can commercial theatre learn from the subsidised sector? And who has the magic formula for success? Josh is the founder of The Production Garden a multi-award-winning commercial theatre and event production company. His producing credits cover everything from West End plays, international tours spanning commissioning new plays and fresh takes on classic revivals.

Time: 4.30pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

Being A Playwright with Papatango (talk and Q&A 30mins) – George Turvey

Writing a great play is only part of making it as a successful playwright. George Turvey, Artistic Director at Papatango, answers your questions about all the things that playwrights need to know about how to succeed with writing plays. Drawing on Papatango's long success in discovering and launching new writers, George's practical approach and insight has helped writers have their plays win prizes and be performed on the country's most prestigious stages. What's the secret?! For those without connections or the know-how to get work on stage, Being A Playwright is the place to start.

Time: 4.30pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange



Playing with Language – Theatre Translation Workshop (30 mins) – Rachel Toogood

Freelance producer and translator, Rachel Toogood has worked for several internationally renowned organisations such as the Royal Court Theatre, the Southbank Centre and Guildhall School of Music & Drama. She is currently working with Modern Culture producing the Flip Through Flanders project, running translation workshops in schools with Performing International Plays and translating a few plays. In this session, she'll look at how and why translations of plays can differ so greatly, and get you involved translating a few lines yourself! (No language skills necessary). She'll also answer your questions about how best to approach a translation. Rachel is part of the Out of the Wings collective (Next Festival: 15-19 July 2025).

Time: 4.30pm | Venue: Community Space, Dorset Museum

David Mynne: Making Work (30mins including 15 min performance)

Veteran actor and a founder member of Kneehigh, David Mynne, gives an insight into how to create solo shows. With nearly forty years in the business, (it all started with the question "Do you want to be in a play?" ... "Yeah, ok" - it was oh, so much simpler back then!), David has a wealth of experience to take into creating his own solo shows. Now - having toured Charles Dickens' 'Great Expectations', Bram Stoker's 'Dracula', Homer's 'The Odyssey', and another Charles Dickens classic, 'A Christmas Carol' - not forgetting the 'The Canterbury Tales', David has learnt a thousand things about touring and how best to craft a story to play in the most unlikely of places. He'll share stories from his extensive touring experience and perform an extract from one of his touring shows.



Time: 5pm | Venue: Council Chamber, Corn Exchange

Being a Writer in the South West (talk and Q&A 30mins) – Sam Parker

What do you need to be a writer in the South West? From being a writer-in-the-room creating work with Theatre Royal Plymouth, to working extensively across a range of community and education settings, including in universities, schools and all three of Devon's prisons, Sam has developed a huge range of skills. He was the Pathways Producer for Doorstep Arts CIC and co-led Doorstep Youth Theatre from 2021 to 2025. Sam has also worked as a script reader and dramaturg for a range of theatres and prizes, and was the co-founder of Down Stage Write CIC. Sam is part of the incoming BBC Writersroom Voices cohort for 2025 and is one of three writers to join Winsome Pinnock as part of BOV's Five Year Commitment residency. He'll also be taking your questions in his role as Artist Development Producer at Exeter Northcott and Barnfield Theatres - if you haven't already had opportunity to ask him in the Writers' Hub earlier in the day!

Time: 5pm | Venue: Town Hall, Corn Exchange

Building Writers' Networks (talk and Q&A 30mins) - Sarah Swords

We all know writing scripts for stage, screen and audio requires collaboration. How can writers support each other and create a trusted network to give feedback and encouragement? Sarah Swords has worked extensively in the film and television industry and with the Writers' Guild of Great Britain. She has produced and directed several documentaries for Channel 4 and ITV. As well as her own writing work, Sarah now offers mentorship. She is working with students at drama schools and has established The Writers' Block, which is a model for how writers anywhere can establish their own drop-in writers' surgery to bring their own work to talk about, or just talk all things writing. Sarah actively encourages people to start their own writers' journey in whatever way suits them, and she is producing work from first-time scriptwriters and graduates

Time: 5pm | Venue: Tom Browns

The Craft of Writing a Pantomime (talk and Q&A 30mins) – Chris Jarvis

How do you bring an audience together, make them laugh, and tell them a story? Actor, writer and director Chris Jarvis has appeared in pantomimes every year since 1995... oh yes, he has! Over the last few years, Chris has established the pantomime at the Lighthouse Poole as one of the best in the region. With its traditional mix of silliness and family fun, pantomimes are often the biggest event in a theatre's calendar. Chris will answer all your questions about how the craft of pantomime has evolved, and the skill and craft behind telling stories with wide appeal.

Time: 5pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange

The Closing Ceremony

Join our panel of speakers for some final thoughts on the day's celebration of scriptwriting, possibilities for the future, and what could be next for The Script's The Thing! Then join us for a drink. [And if you're looking to party late then Fluke will play at Tom Browns 9pm - free entry].

Time: 5.45pm | Venue: Auditorium, Corn Exchange

Writers' Hub

You can find the Writers' Hub in the new bar and gallery area of the Corn Exchange. Many of the individuals, venues and organisations involved in today's events will have further information available there. You can ask further questions about their work with writers and get contact details for follow-up conversations.

Special thanks to:

Artsreach
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WGGB (Writers' Guild of Great Britain)

Thank you to all the writers for bringing their work; the actors, readers and performers involved in presenting work; all the hosts and volunteer stewards; and all the staff at each of the venues.

Live music during the day provided by: The Flaming Cactus Band

For The Script's The Thing:

Festival Director – Ed Viney
Festival Producer – Mark Tattersall
Volunteer Steward Coordinator – Helen Hutchinson
Development & Press – Jacky Thorne
Marketing – Dan Thomas
Image design – Zoe Barnish

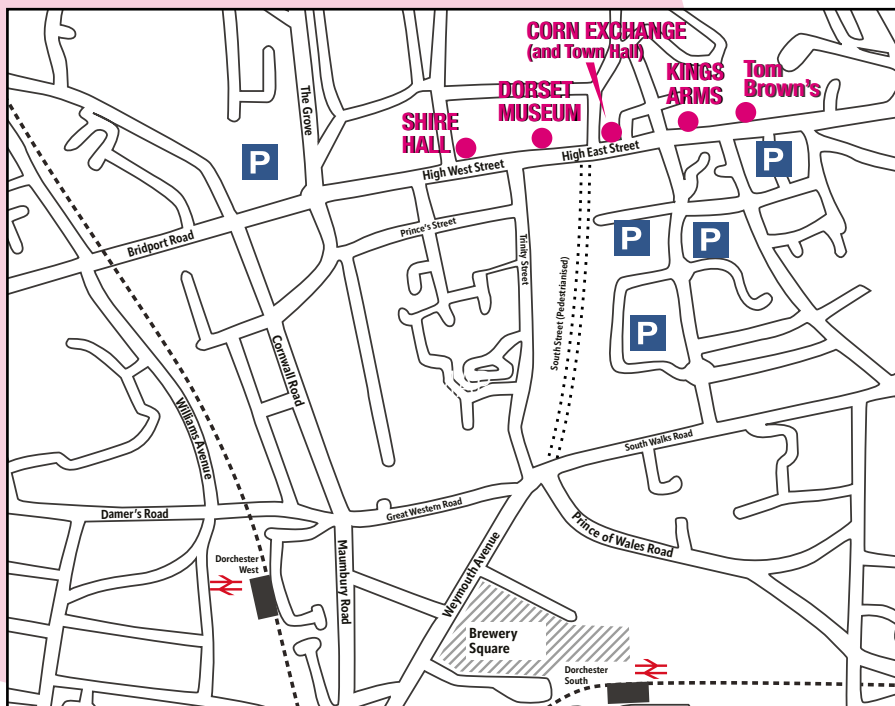
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Plan your visit:

The Festival is taking place across five venues, all on High West Street or High East Street and easily accessible by public transport.

Arriving by bus:

There are lots of bus stops dotted all around the town and good routes that link Dorchester to local towns such as Weymouth, Bridport and Blandford. The best place to plan your bus route is with the First Bus Journey Planner.

Arriving by train:

Dorchester has two mainline railway stations within easy reach of the Festival venues.

Dorchester South has regular services by South Western Railway along the South Western Main Line. Dorchester West has regular services by Great Western Railway along the Heart of Wessex Line between Castle Cary and Weymouth.

Arriving by bike:

Dorchester hosts a number of cycle routes out of or into the town. There are off road cycle paths as well as on road routes. Dorchester is part of the Sustrans National Cycle networks route 2 and route 26.

Arriving by car:

Nearby parking can be found in the various town centre car parks. Unfortunately there is no parking available on site. For comprehensive travel, accommodation and amenity information, visit www.discoverdorchester.co.uk

Accessibility

Dorchester Corn Exchange has wheelchair access and toilet facilities for wheelchair users. If you have any specific requirements, then please contact enquiries@dorchesterarts.org.uk for more information. Dorset Museum and Shire Hall are fully accessible. For accessibility at the King's Arms please refer to their website; note the performance space is on the first-floor and is not accessible by wheelchair. Tom Browns has one step to the main entrance and two for entry to the performance space; there are ramps available for both. Toilets are on the ground floor but there is no accessible toilet. For further information please email townbrowns@oaktaverns.co.uk and we'll be happy to help.

All information correct at time of going to press. Check website for latest updates.