

DorchesterArts

SUMMER 2026



Inspired
Entertainment

DorchesterArts Summer 2026

Supported by  Dorchester Town Council  Dorset Council

With thanks to Dorchester Arts Dress Circle for its support this season

BOARD

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Welcome to Summer 2026

Our Summer 2026 programme brings together the best of indoor and outdoor events, with something for everyone to enjoy. We are, of course, hoping for glorious sunshine on outdoor theatre days... but whatever the weather, the performances will go ahead (unless conditions become unsafe). So whether it's blue skies or a classic British drizzle, the show will go on!

This year, we're thrilled to welcome back some familiar favourites. If you've joined us before, you may recognise popular companies such as The HandleBards, Illyria, Quantum, and Rain or Shine all returning with the energy and creativity you know and love.

But there's plenty that's new too. We're excited to host debut performances in Dorchester from The Plandits, bringing their

lively family musical The Big Bad Wolf, and This Is My Theatre, presenting the timeless classic The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Cambridge Touring Productions with The Sword in the Stone.

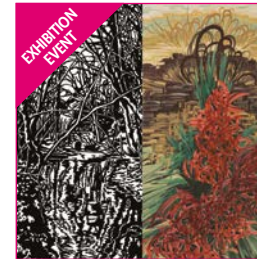
So pack your picnic blankets, chairs, sunscreen and yes, maybe an umbrella too, and join us for a summer of theatre, storytelling, and shared moments under the open sky.

We can't wait to welcome you.



Mark Tattersall *Artistic Director, Dorchester Arts*

Front Cover: Pinocchio, p 17



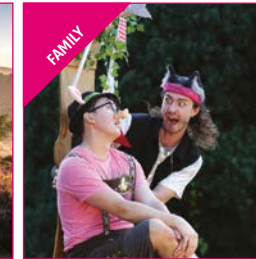
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HAVE YOU VISITED THE NEW DORCHESTER CORN EXCHANGE CAFÉ AND ART GALLERY YET?

Now there's even more to experience at Dorchester Arts

Step into the heart of Dorchester's new café, bar and art gallery inside the historic Corn Exchange. Come in for something to eat, enjoy a drink before a show, and view our latest exhibition of art or photography. Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am - 4pm, we offer delicious coffee and other hot drinks, indulgent cakes and tasty treats, as well as a fully licensed bar. All served in a stylish, welcoming space that's part of our exciting new art gallery. Come and experience Dorchester's newest Arts destination!



LIFE CLASS

by Vince Jones and James Cuthill

Friday 1, Saturday 2, Sunday 3 May

Amateur Theatre – Corn Exchange

Friday, Saturday and Sunday 7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm
Sunday 2.30pm, doors and bar 2pm
£15/£13 members and concessions

From the writers of *Tipping Point* and *This Christmas* comes a new play, *Life Class*. Both amusing and poignant, the story follows artist Julien Valentine who, following the death of his husband, flees London for the tranquility of a Dorset village. Setting up an art class in the village hall, he is joined by four very different women, each looking knowingly and unknowingly for a chance to change their lives. The opportunity to enter a national competition unites the women and slowly they become aware that their art sessions really do have the power for change.



THE BIG DORSET MAY DAY CEILIDH

Friday 1 May

Music/dance – Hardye Theatre

Doors and bar from 5pm

5.30pm Kiddies Keilidh (nine years and under, kids to be accompanied by an adult)

7.30pm Main Ceilidh (all ages welcome but some surefootedness recommended)

£13/£7 under 18s and low waged, Kiddies Keilidh all tickets £5

Come and celebrate May Day with folk music, dancing for everyone, and good company at the Hardye Theatre. Join Tatterdemalion for another of their seasonal family ceilidhs, this time to celebrate the coming of summer. The TatterBand play tunes which were used for dancing in Dorset 200 years ago, and now you can enjoy communal dancing, with the moves taught by experienced caller Angela Laycock. No partner or experience necessary! The early-evening Kiddies' Keilidh is perfect for introducing kids to folk dance, with special dances for those with little legs, before the evening ceilidh gets going in earnest!



DORCHESTER PIANO TRIO

Thursday 7 May

Music (classical) – Corn Exchange

11.30am, doors 11am

FREE – donations welcome

Pasha Willis – viola

Sally Flann – cello

Peter Oakes – piano

Max Bruch is best known for his fine violin concerto, but he also wrote a double concerto, arranged in this concert for viola, cello and piano.

The mellow sound of these two string instruments will also be heard in an arrangement of Mozart's piano trio in E flat.



KATHAKALI DANCE WORKSHOP

The Kala Chethena Company
Saturday 9 May

Dance/Workshop – Corn Exchange

2pm - 4pm

£12/£10 members and concessions

An afternoon of South Indian art, culture, and refreshments. The afternoon starts with a workshop exploring how a Kathakali actor tells a story using facial expressions, emotions, character and a 4,000 year old sign language. This is followed by a Kathakali solo performance - experience a powerful and emotional Kathakali story, performed by a world-class expert, Kalamandalam Vijayakumar. The performance follows the journey of a young woman from the joy of her wedding to the sad loss of her husband. Complete the afternoon with refreshments!



DORSET CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Saturday 9 May

Music (classical) – St Mary's Church

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£21/u18s £2

A fittingly grand finale to Dorset Chamber Orchestra's season. This joint promotion between the Orchestra and Dorchester Arts opens with Borodin's exotic and thrilling *Prince Igor Overture*. The centrepiece is Rachmaninov's romantic and powerful Second Piano Concerto with Dominic Doutney, recent winner of both the Washington D.C and Seattle Piano Competitions. The radiant lyricism of Brahms's *Symphony No. 2* concludes an evening of passion and beauty.



FOSSIL MARY

Thursday 14 May

Theatre – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£15/£13 members and concessions

Age guidance 12+

Meet Mary Anning, pioneering palaeontologist and the world's greatest fossil hunter. Born in Lyme Regis in 1799, Mary's discoveries revolutionised the way people thought about the evolution of life on earth; but as a poor, working class woman she was patronised by the men of science who took the credit for her extraordinary work. She is now recognised as one of the ten most influential female scientists and her finds, now attributed to her, can be seen in museums around the world.

Ignored in her time, celebrated in ours, this new play finally gives Mary the spotlight she deserves!



LA VIE EN ROSE

Friday 15 May

Music (gypsy jazz) – Corn Exchange

8pm, doors and bar 7.30pm

£16/£14 members and concessions

These Exeter-based musicians have wide-ranging individual backgrounds in classical music, traditional jazz, rock, blues, country, ragtime and roots, all drawn together by the shared pleasure of playing gypsy jazz and hot swing. Performing to sell-out audiences at numerous festivals and arts centres they have built a reputation for their mix of 'Hotclub' favourites, jazz standards, soulful ballads, Latin swing, plus the occasional film theme and classical score! Toe-tapping rhythms and virtuoso melody lines combine in a performance with all the verve and joy that makes this music so irresistible.



TANNAHILL WEAVERS

Saturday 16 May

Music (folk) – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£20/£18 members and concessions

A big welcome back to the Tannahill Weavers - traditional Celtic music at its best! With fire-driven instrumentals and songs, haunting ballads and a good dose of humour, the variety and range of the material they perform is matched only by their enthusiasm and lively Celtic spirits. Members of the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame, in recent years they have been joined by piper Iain MacGillivray, who has worked on such exciting productions as *Outlander* and *Men in Kilts*, and fiddle player extraordinaire Alistair McCulloch.

"The music may be pure old time Celtic, but the drive and enthusiasm are akin to straight ahead rock and roll."

Winnipeg Free Press



FRIDA KAHLO: THE MAKING OF AN ICON

Tuesday 19 May

Film – Corn Exchange

7pm, doors and bar 6.30pm

£12/£10 members and concessions



Who was Frida Kahlo? Everyone knows her face, but who was the woman behind the bright colours, the big brows and the floral crowns?

Take a journey through the life of a true icon, discover her art, and uncover the true story of her rebellious, passionate and turbulent life.

Making use of the latest technology to deliver previously unimaginable quality, Exhibition on Screen takes an in-depth look at key works throughout her career. Using letters Kahlo wrote to guide us, this definitive film reveals her deepest emotions and unlocks the secrets and symbolism contained within her art.



LESSONS FROM TEACHER x

Thursday 21 May

Theatre – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£15/£13 members and concessions/£5 aged 14-25

Age guidance 14+

Cam is a hopeless romantic, a secondary school teacher falling for a handsome stranger. Crystal is an online model, punishing men for money. One has pupils, the other only fans. But they share a shameful secret...

Barbara Smith (EastEnders) brings 15 unique characters to life in a gripping new play from Erin De Frias and Dorsetborn. *Lessons from Teacher x* is a romcom-thriller about love, suspicion, and the warring roles we play in adult life. Who do you trust to see the real you?



THE MUSIC OF CLAPTON, HENDRIX AND CREAM

Voodoo Room

Saturday 23 May

Music – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£20/£18 members and concessions

A warm welcome to this stunning power trio featuring some of the UK's finest musicians who present an incredible live show in the true spirit of these legendary superstars. No wigs, no gimmicks - simply great music played by great musicians! Hear classics such as: *Watchtower, Cocaine, Hey Joe, Sunshine Of Your Love, Purple Haze, Layla* etc.

Members of Voodoo Room have recorded and toured with Stevie Winwood, Massive Attack, Arthur Brown, Fish, Thunder and many other high profile artists.

With standing ovations the norm, the word on the street is, Voodoo Room are NOT TO BE MISSED!

'STUNNING!' - Time Out



DANNY BYRNE: LOOKING BACK

Saturday 23 May – Saturday 6 June

Exhibition - Corn Exchange Gallery

Tuesday – Saturday, 10am to 4pm
FREE

*Dorset Art Weeks: Winner of the 2025
Dorset Open Exhibition Prize*



Danny Byrne is a dynamic, portrait painter whose bold, expressive style grew from his early days as a political cartoonist for National Newspapers and caricaturist. Winner of the Dorchester Museum & Art Gallery Open Exhibition and a three time Dorset Artist Prize champion, he has also appeared on Sky Portrait Artist of the Year. Known for vivid, character rich work, Danny has exhibited with all major art societies and at the Royal Academy, establishing himself as a striking, contemporary voice shaped by satire and fine art flair.



BALLOONATIC MAGIC SHOW Magic Gareth

Wednesday 27 May

Family – Corn Exchange

11am, doors 10.30am

£12/£10 members/concessions and under U18s/£40 family ticket
Age guidance 5+

Mind-blowing magic and the Biggest Balloon in the World - LIVE on stage! And a whole load of other things that you really shouldn't try at home!

Look forward to a show jammed full of amazing magic, bonkers balloons and fun for all the family. With over 10 million online views, Magic Gareth is a pro and his show will have you believing magic really DOES exist!

*'Children's magic doesn't get much better than this!' – World
Magic Review*

'My daughter actually smiled for two hours straight after that show!' – Russell Kane



THE SILENCE OF SNOW: THE LIFE OF PATRICK HAMILTON

Mark Farrelly

Thursday 28 May

Theatre – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£16/£14 members and concessions

Mark Farrelly presents his riveting, kinetic solo show portraying one of the great English writers of the inter-war years. Patrick Hamilton was a dazzling success in his twenties, producing hit plays *Rope* (filmed by Hitchcock) *Gaslight* (which gave us the modern term 'gaslighting'), and classic novels *Hangover Square* and *The Slaves of Solitude*. But Hamilton was also an alcoholic, whose wit darkened as his inner and outer worlds collapsed. Covering the entire sweep of Hamilton's thrilling life and writing, *The Silence of Snow* entertains and challenges, asking why do so many of us get through life without feeling we ever truly knew another person?



COSI FAN TUTTE Opera Anywhere Friday 29 May

Opera – Corn Exchange
7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm
£24/£22 members and concessions

A welcome return for Opera Anywhere with a new, vibrant production of Mozart's classic comedy. This hilarious farce, edited and adapted in English, is performed in just two hours, bringing Mozart's timeless story to life with a unique twist. Set in early 20th-century Gibraltar, the plot revolves around a bold bet between Don Alfonso, Ferrando, and Guglielmo. Don Alfonso wagers that he can prove their girlfriends, Fiordiligi and Dorabella, are unfaithful, like "all women." What follows is a comedic exploration of love, fidelity, and deception. Join us for an evening of stunning music, clever wit, and engaging performances that reveal the heart and humour of this beloved opera.



DRESS CIRCLE

Could you be part of our Dress Circle?

Dorchester Arts' Dress Circle donors have helped us bring new and exciting performances to Dorset – from high-profile artists such as The Tallis Scholars and the Kanneh-Mason family, to family shows and art exhibitions. Without them several wonderful events would not have happened!

Dress Circlers help us bring the best to Dorchester by giving support when we need it - could you do the same? In return we can thank you in several ways, from priority booking for your supported event; acknowledgement (unless you prefer to be anonymous); and an invitation to join us for drinks before the performance. And of course, our grateful thanks!

If you would like to know more about this initiative, please contact Jacky Thorne
development@dorchesterarts.org.uk

JENEBA KANNEH-MASON

Tuesday 2 June

Music (classical) – Corn Exchange
7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm
£28/£26 members and concessions

BACH: Partita No. 5
BEETHOVEN: Sonata No. 17 'Tempest'
STILL: Summerland
DEBUSSY : La Fille and Bruyères
PRICE: Fantasia Nègre No. 1
CHOPIN: Ballade No. 3
CHOPIN: Ballade No. 4

We are delighted to welcome Jeneba Kanneh-Mason back following her Dorchester Arts debut in 2023. Now an exclusive Sony Classical Artist, Jeneba's debut solo album *Fantasia* was released in March 2025 to wide acclaim. It was named Classic FM's Album of the Week and Gramophone praised Jeneba as 'a pianist of enormous technical resources in service of an uncommonly rich and versatile musical imagination'.

Supported by





BEFORE IT OVERTAKES US

Mark Watson

Friday 5 June

Comedy – Hardye Theatre

7.30pm, doors 7pm (bar from 6.30pm)

£25/£23 members and concessions

Age guidance 14+

Twenty years in stand-up for the 'Taskmaster' cheeky texts icon, multi-award-winner, YouTube cult figure, Radio 4

favourite and recently 'Baby Reindeer' actor! Watson returns after seasons at the Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Edinburgh comedy festivals.

A recent encounter with a stranger caused Mark to spend some time pondering the uncertain future facing humanity. He explores this - along with equally pressing matters like the worst word he has ever said in public, the current state of the UK sausage industry, and much more - in a typically frantic and fun-packed new show.



AN EVENING OF ACOUSTIC GUITAR

with Robbie McIntosh and Andy Grant

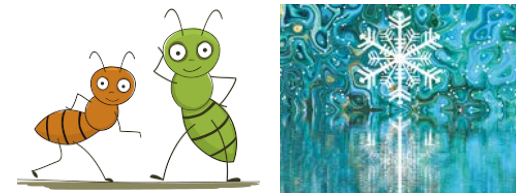
Saturday 6 June

Music – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£18/£16 members and concessions

Widely regarded as a legend of the music world, Robbie McIntosh has enjoyed a career shaped by collaborations with icons including Paul McCartney, Tom Jones, John Mayer, and Norah Jones. Sharing the stage with him tonight is Andy Grant, a highly-respected local guitarist and educator celebrated for his versatility. Together, they present an intimate evening of acoustic guitar brilliance, blending original compositions with well-loved favourites. Expect exceptional musicianship and a rare opportunity to experience two master guitarists in captivating, close-up performance.



GREEN FOR EVER AND LONGER

by Raymond Blakesley

THE SNOW QUEEN

by Sheila Laughton adapted from the classic story by Hans Christian Andersen
DYT JUNIOR AND YOUNG COMPANIES

Thursday 11 and Friday 12th June

Youth theatre – Corn Exchange

6.30pm, doors and bar 6pm

£8 /£4 Under 18s

As Queen Bee Honey and her Minibeast subjects celebrate in memory of Sir Turnham Green, who saved their wood from developers, two strangers arrive. They have a strange request, but unknown to everyone they've also brought danger into the woods... Dorchester Youth Theatre Juniors present *Green for Ever and Longer*, while the Young Company step into a world of ice, courage and unbreakable friendship in *The Snow Queen*. When Kay's heart is frozen by a shard of magic, it's up to Gerda to cross forests, palaces and winter kingdoms to bring him home. A magical adventure about bravery, loyalty and the power of love.



DORCHESTER COMEDY CLUB MARCUS BRIGSTOCKE AND PAUL FOOT

Friday 12 June

Comedy – Hardye Theatre

7.30pm, doors and bar 6.30pm

£25/£23 members and concessions

Age guidance 16+

Dorchester Comedy Club returns with TWO headline acts: Marcus Brigstocke and Paul Foot, hosted by award-winning MC Rich Wilson.

Marcus Brigstocke is one of the UK's most recognised comedians, known for appearances on *Live at the Apollo*, *Have I Got News For You*, *Mock the Week*, and *The Now Show*; Paul Foot is celebrated for his surreal, inventive style that has earned him a cult following on the international comedy circuit. Guiding the evening is Rich Wilson, renowned for his quick wit and high energy.

Expect a packed theatre, huge laughs, and the electric atmosphere only live comedy can deliver.

Line-up subject to change.



THE CURTAIN CALLS In a Pickle (Circomedia BA Graduate Show)

Saturday 13 June

Circus – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£12

Age guidance 8+

Have you heard the nattering and clattering? The circus is in town!

The Curtain Calls is a brand-new show that explores the world of traditional circus and life on the road brought to you by In A Pickle. This newly formed circus company is an eclectic mix of performers, blending technical skill with humour, creativity and human connection.

Featuring a bold ensemble of emerging artists who have trained at Circomedia, one of Europe's leading schools of Circus and Physical Theatre, *The Curtain Calls* is packed with riveting acrobatics, rambunctious aerialists, remarkable jugglers and raucous clowns.

Perfect for families who love a bit of silliness and a lot of skill!



PINOCCHIO Illyria Theatre Company

Sunday 14 June

Outdoor theatre (family) – Maumbury Rings

2pm, gates open 1pm

£16/£14 members and concessions/£52 family

Ages 5+ (younger children also welcome)

Childless toymaker Geppetto makes a wooden puppet, little realising the chaos he is about to unleash. The puppet yearns for adventure and runs away, but instead of excitement only finds glorious attractions containing hidden dangers. He returns home hoping to be showered with sympathy and learns his tribulations are just beginning. Running away hasn't worked; lying won't work; he must become a real boy to achieve the belonging he craves. Collodi's classic has been translated into at least 260 languages since it was first published in 1883. Illyria celebrates this magical coming-of-age tale in a thrilling musical outdoor show.



AS YOU LIKE IT HandleBards

Wednesday 17 June

Outdoor theatre – Maumbury Rings

7pm, gates open 6pm

£20/£18 members and concessions/£64 family ticket

Peddalling from venue to venue with their set, props and costumes on the back of their bikes, the HandleBards are a four-strong troupe of actors who are spending the summer bringing environmentally sustainable Shakespeare to venues across the UK. Join them at Maumbury Rings for fantastically funny bicycle-powered production of Shakespeare's comedy *As You Like It*. Rosalind and her cousin Celia flee to the Forest of Arden, where they bump into Rosalind's love interest Orlando. However, Rosalind is disguised as a young man... Cue some local shepherds getting involved and the stage is set for a wild ride of wooing, hilarious mistaken identity and the odd wrestling match.



MURDERED TO DEATH

Somerleigh Players

Thursday 18 – Saturday 20 June

Amateur Theatre – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£15/£13 members and concessions

We invite you to Mildred's country manor for dinner, an unexpected murder and a mess of mysteries and red herrings, magnified by an investigation run by the inept Inspector Pratt and his unfortunate assistant Thomkins (no, not Thompson - definitely Thomkins!). Miss Maple, who is put in mind of a certain Belgian gentleman, attempts to bring sanity to the situation with her tea and cakes! Will this Agatha Christie-esque spoof reach a satisfactory conclusion?

Come and join the incredible Somerleigh Players for a ridiculously, hilarious evening to find out!

We Know How to Entertain!



MIDSUMMER REVELS

GreenMatthews

Sunday 21 June

Music – Corn Exchange

7pm, doors and bar 6.30pm

£18/£16 members and concessions

Following on from GreenMatthews highly successful Midwinter Revels, they present their new show Midsummer Revels. Featuring traditional English folksongs, self-written material and toe-tapping dance tunes, Midsummer Revels is a glorious feel-good evocation of sunny days, blue skies and green fields! Songs of the land and sea, town and country are brought to life on a plethora of instruments such as English border bagpipes, mandocello and shawm, all underscored with GreenMatthews' trademark wit and humour.

"You guys are awesome!" **Bill Barclay, Director of Music at Shakespeare's Globe**



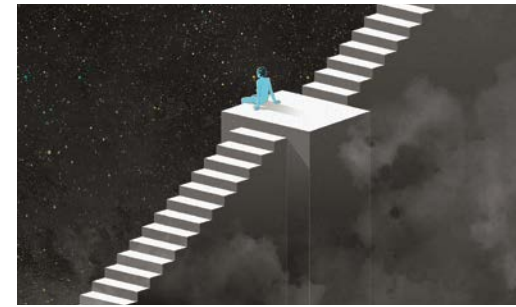
CONSTABLE - GENERATIONS

Tuesday 23 June – Saturday 8 August

Exhibition - Corn Exchange Gallery

Tuesday – Saturday, 10am to 4pm. FREE

2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of John Constable RA, inspiring exhibitions nationwide celebrating one of Britain's most beloved landscape painters. In 1816, Constable and his wife Maria Bicknell spent part of their honeymoon in Osmington, Dorset, establishing a lasting family connection with the county. *Generations* brings together works by John Constable's descendants: the late Richard Constable, his daughter Sasha Constable and her son Valya Constable, alongside selected pieces by other family members. The exhibition celebrates a remarkable artistic lineage, their Dorset connections and the enduring creativity of the Constable family across generations.



WHEN THIS IS OVER

**Dorchester Youth Theatre
Performance Company**

Thursday 25 and Friday 26 June

Youth Theatre – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£10/£4 under 18s

A message sent. An opportunity missed. A choice made in a heartbeat.

Inspired by the innovative work of Company Three, this devised performance weaves together the lived experiences of our company to explore the moments that shift our direction forever. Stories of risk, courage, doubt and hope. At its heart, this is a piece about time: how quickly it moves, how deeply it marks us, and how the smallest decisions can redraw our futures.

These are their stories. Their turning points. Their futures in the making.

From a Blueprint by Ned Glasier and Company Three. An amateur production by arrangement with Nick Hern Books.



BUDDY HOLLY AND THE CRICKETERS

The Rock 'n' Roll Legends Show

Saturday 27 June

Music (tribute) – Hardye Theatre
 7.30pm, doors and bar 6.30pm
 £25/23 members and concessions

All Holly's hits alongside the biggest hits from fellow 50s icons – Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard, Chuck Berry and many more! All played live on stage by these five amazing young actor-musicians, who always delight crowds with this fabulous show. Raw rock 'n' roll, beautifully haunting ballads, energetic performances – and some genuinely hilarious moments – there is no live event that delivers a better Buddy experience. So, whether you're young in years or young at heart, you'll be singing along to the music and dancing in the aisles. Every day is a Holly Day with Buddy Holly and The Crickets!



THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

Hotbuckle Theatre

Thursday 2 July and Friday 3 July

Theatre – Corn Exchange
 7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm
 £16/£14 members and concessions

An exploration of fate, society, and nature. Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native* is a profound exploration of human desires and the indomitable forces that shape destiny. Set against the haunting backdrop of Egdon Heath, the novel tells the story of Eustacia Vye, a young woman whose passionate longing for escape and fulfilment drives the narrative inevitably towards its tragic conclusion. With live music, high energy, multi role playing, humour and inventiveness, yet another English classic novel is brought wonderfully to life, Hotbuckle style!



THE BIG BAD WOLF

The Plandits

Sunday 5 July

Outdoor Theatre (family) – Maumbury Rings
 3pm, doors 2pm
 £16/£14 members and concessions/£52 family ticket
 Age guidance 4+

Come on a madcap, rock 'n' roll musical journey of plotting and scheming with folklore's most notorious villain - The Big Bad Wolf. Exiled to the Deep Dark Wood, he parties hard and rocks out every night with his cronies, far away from the goody-goody townspeople of Fairytaleville. But whatever happened to Little Red Riding Hood? Did the Three Little Pigs go on to have a successful career in techno music? Does his Fairy Godmother have what it takes to change the ways of a hardened carnivore? The Plandits are back on the road with this original, high-energy show bursting with live music, punk attitude, and plenty of laughs.

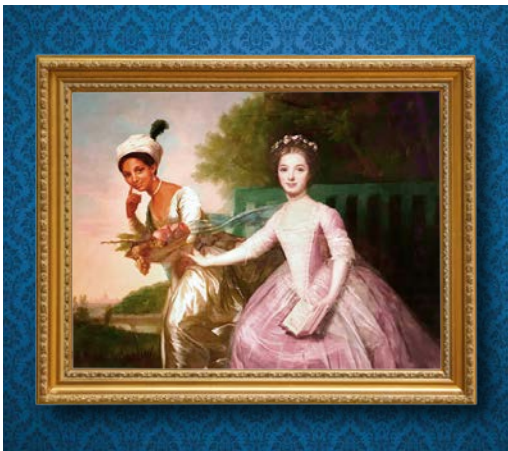


MILLY RIQUELME

Wednesday 8 July

Music – Corn Exchange
 7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm
 £20/£18 members and concessions

Join us for an evening of classical and Cuban piano music with Milly Riquelme, a Cuban pianist, composer and singer, who began her musical journey at the age of two showcasing her skills on a television programme featuring child prodigies. She earned a Musicology degree with Honours from the High Institute of Arts in Havana and has since worked as a pianist for various Cuban bands including the popular *Conexión Salsera*. She frequently collaborates with her husband, Tom Toomey of *The Zombies*, as well as working with renowned musicians such as the Cuban violinist Omar Puente, most recently, with the prestigious Piano Tampa Academy in the USA, providing special piano arrangements and compositions.



I, DIDO Non Vaughan O'Hagan

Thursday 9 July

Theatre - rehearsed reading- Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£10/£8 members and concessions

After her recent hit *Across the Square*, Non Vaughan-O'Hagan returns to Dorchester Arts with *I, Dido* - a newly-revised version of her acclaimed play about the life of Dido Elizabeth Belle. This lively rehearsed reading explores the life of a young woman - the mixed-race daughter of a British Navy Captain and an enslaved woman - navigating privilege, prejudice and the tangled bonds of family in Georgian England. Expect an evening of drama and discovery as this powerful play takes its next steps toward full production. Come and be part of the process!



BOILER ROOM SIX: A TITANIC STORY

Tom Foreman

Tuesday 14 July

Theatre – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm

£16/£14 members and concessions

Age guidance 12+

Witness the impossible true survival story of Titanic stoker Frederick Barrett. Working in the boiler rooms of the maiden voyage, Barrett's fight for survival is one of the most devastating accounts of the last few hours of Titanic. Boiler Room Six gives a voice to the sacrifice of the working men below deck who kept the ship afloat for as long as possible, saving hundreds of lives, whilst knowingly giving up on their own.

The production joins Dorchester Arts as part of a national tour, following a sold-out Edinburgh Fringe run.

'A spectacular piece of theatre' ★★★★★ **British Theatre Guide**

'Historical theatre done right' ★★★★★ **The Independent**



DORCHESTER PIANO QUARTET

Thursday 16 July

Music (classical) – Corn Exchange

11.30am, doors 11am

FREE – donations welcome

Suk - Piano Quartet in A minor

Mozart - Piano Quartet in G minor

Josef Suk wrote his piano quartet under the guidance of his teacher, Dvorak, who allowed his pupil to be true to his own emotions. Dvorak oversaw the writing of ultra-romantic, even turbulent music, that he would never have written himself. Mozart's G minor piano quartet was written just a few months after Haydn famously remarked to Mozart's father: 'Before God and as an honest man, I tell you that your son is the greatest composer known to me either in person or by name.' This work, the first true piano quartet, came about when Mozart added a viola – the instrument he loved to play in chamber music – to the piano trio.



THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE Illyria Theatre Company

Saturday 18 July

Outdoor operetta – Maumbury Rings

7pm, gates open 6pm

£20/£18 members and concessions, £12 under 18s

Frederick, apprenticed to pirates as a child, is indentured to the Pirate King until his 21st birthday. The Pirate King learns that Frederick was born in a leap year on 29th February, checks the contract's small print – and realises he has only had four birthdays. Will Frederick be forced to serve the pirates until he is 84? And will his sweetheart, Mabel, wait for him that long? Gilbert and Sullivan's most popular operetta is performed by a six-strong cast of actor/singers with a fully orchestrated accompaniment. Join Illyria for an evening of glittering wit, razor sharp satire and glorious music.



A SUMMER SUNDAY WITH LIZA PULMAN

Sunday 19 July

Fundraiser - Whitcombe Manor

Event begins 12 noon

£40 to include a welcome glass of bubbly and picnic lunch

We are thrilled to welcome acclaimed vocalist Liza Pulman to the beautiful setting of Whitcombe Manor for our popular annual Summer Sunday event.

Following her sold-out appearance earlier this year at Dorchester Corn Exchange, audiences will again be able to enjoy Liza's effortless vocals and distinctive musicianship. She is joined by award-winning jazz pianist, guitarist and composer Gareth Williams, for what will be a relaxed and elegant summer experience in beautiful surroundings.

As always, your ticket includes a complimentary glass of bubbly and a delicious picnic lunch - everything you need for a perfect Sunday afternoon of food and music!

A fundraising event in support of Dorchester Arts, hosted with the kind invitation of Minette and Alec Walters.



UNEARTHED - WOMEN OF DORSET

Friday 24 and Saturday 25 July

Community Theatre – Corn Exchange

7.30pm, doors and bar 7pm, Sat matinee 2.30pm, doors 2pm

£16/£14 members and concessions. Age guidance 12+

Sam is on edge, but an extraordinary party shows her there is more to life... Unearthed is a fierce and celebratory new play, created by hundreds of women from across Dorset who worked together to unearth eleven incredible historical women who survived and thrived across our county. The key facts of their lives are true; the rest is a delicious, riotous imagining.

Unearthed will be performed by thirty Dorset women, written by Stephanie Dale (*Salt, Spinning the Moon*) and directed by Penny Levick (*Spinning the Moon, Six Men of Dorset*). Images and scenography by Jayne Jackson. www.womenofdorset.com



SUMMER MUSICAL THEATRE 2026

Dorchester Arts/Dorchester Youth Theatre

SUMMER MUSICAL THEATRE COURSE

Monday 27 July – Friday 31 July

Youth theatre – Corn Exchange

9am – 5pm

£135/£175 with hot lunch/FREE with

HAF passcode

Ages 10 – 18

Calling all aspiring performers!

Dorchester Arts and Dorchester Youth Theatre present a weeklong musical theatre course which gives young people aged 10 – 18 the opportunity to work together to create and perform a full length performance of 'Peter Pan Junior'. To be involved you must be available for all dates, including the performance which will take place on the Friday night. A full commitment is required for all sessions. For further details about the sessions and performance contact dyt@dorchesterarts.org.uk

A Musical Based on the Play by SIR J.M. BARRIE. Lyrics by CAROLYN LEIGH Music by MORRIS (MOOSE) CHARLAP. Additional Lyrics by BETTY COMDEN and ADOLPH GREEN Additional Music by JULE STYNE. Originally directed, choreographed and adapted by JEROME ROBBINS. This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International. All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI www.mtishows.co.uk

PETER PAN JUNIOR

Friday 31 July

7pm, doors and bar 6.30pm

£5 adults/ under 18s free



Peter and his mischievous fairy sidekick, Tinkerbell, visit the nursery of the Darling children late one night and, with a sprinkle of pixie dust, begin a magical journey across the stars that none of them will ever forget. In the adventure of a lifetime, the travellers come face to face with a ticking crocodile, a fierce Indian tribe, a band of bungling pirates and, of course, the villainous Captain Hook.



THE GREAT GATSBY

This Is My Theatre

Thursday 30 July

Outdoor theatre – Maumbury Rings

7pm, gates open 6pm

£20/£18 members and concessions

Step into the roaring 1920s, where the champagne flows, the jazz trumpet blows, and the American Dream gleams with irresistible allure. This electrifying stage adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's timeless novel brings Jay Gatsby's glittering world to life, a place of opulence, obsession, and heartbreak. As Nick Carraway is drawn into the orbit of his mysterious neighbour, the secrets behind Gatsby's lavish parties begin to unravel, revealing a story of love lost and illusion pursued.

Featuring live music and a dynamic ensemble, This Is My Theatre's adaptation invites audiences to experience one of literature's best-loved stories like never before – glamorous, grandiose and undeniably... Great.



THE SWORD IN THE STONE

Cambridge Touring Productions

Saturday 1 August

Outdoor theatre - Maumbury Rings

2.30pm, gates open 1pm

£16/£14 members and concessions/£52 family ticket

Age guidance 5+

Young Wart dreams of becoming a squire, while his childhood friend Morgan sets her sights on fame and fortune. On the way to the Tournament in London, they meet a host of colourful characters who guide them through adventures and teach them lasting lessons about friendship, courage, and finding their way in the world.

★★★★ "... lashings of audience participation."

Eastern Daily Press

★★★★ "... a quintessential experience."

Broadway Baby



WHAT SURVIVES

Iryna Yermolova

Tuesday 11 August –

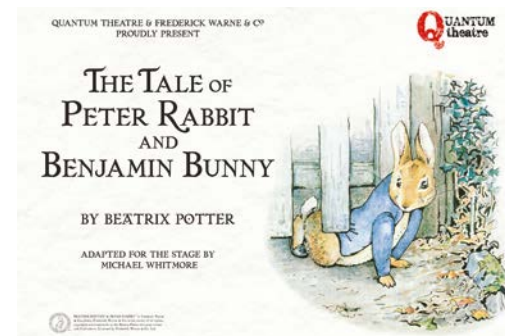
Saturday 19 September

Exhibition - Corn Exchange Gallery

Tuesday – Saturday, 10am to 4pm

FREE

"I paint to understand what words cannot express. Rooted in figurative oil painting, my work exists between realism and abstraction, where emotion, memory, and identity blur. Faces emerge and dissolve through layered texture and light. I paint not sadness, but happiness that has been tested - joy shaped by loss, love, and resilience. Painting is tactile and intuitive, a physical dialogue with the canvas. For me, it is a process of becoming - and of choosing - joy."



THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT AND BENJAMIN BUNNY

Quantum Theatre

Friday 14 August

Outdoor family theatre – Maumbury Rings

2.30pm, gates open 1.30pm

£16/£14 members and concessions/£52 family ticket

Suitable for all ages

Peter and his naughty cousin Benjamin know very well that they are not to go into Mr McGregor's garden, but they cannot resist and soon they find themselves in all sorts of scrapes, caught in a net, trapped by a snarling cat and face to face with Mr McGregor himself! How will they ever escape? Can Old Mr Bunny come to the rescue in time? And whatever will Mr McGregor make of all those footprints in the flower beds? Michael Whitmore's charming adaptation will have you spellbound so why not grab the kids, a blanket and a picnic and join Peter and Benjamin on their hair-raising adventures - a magical afternoon of fun for all the family.



THE PICKWICK PAPERS

Rain Or Shine

Sunday 16 August

Outdoor theatre – Maumbury Rings

6pm, gates open 5pm

£20/members and concessions £18/family £64

Come into the delightfully chaotic Victorian world of *The Pickwick Papers*, where misadventure and merriment collide in a whirlwind of Dickensian absurdity! Join the lovable Mr. Pickwick and his eccentric band of companions as they

bumble their way through confusing courtships, courtroom shenanigans, questionable duels, and carriage rides gone terribly wrong.

Expect fast-paced wit, slapstick, multi-rolling mayhem, and a cast of larger-than-life characters in this brand-new adaptation. Dickens has never been this delightfully unpredictable. Secure your seat and prepare for an uproarious adventure with the Pickwick Society - where the only certainty is a thoroughly good time to be had by all!

YOUNG PEOPLE



Ignite a Passion for Theatre with Dorchester Youth Theatre!

Do you know someone aged 6–19+ who loves performing? Dorchester Youth Theatre (DYT) is the perfect place to develop creativity, build confidence, and have fun performing on stage! Led by Youth Theatre Director, Jo Simons, DYT offers a welcoming and inclusive space where young people can explore theatre through improvisation, drama games, and devising techniques—all leading to exciting performances throughout the year.

No auditions are required—just bring enthusiasm! So whether you're looking to sharpen your acting skills, express yourself, or simply make new friends, DYT will help you shine.

Our sessions:

Mondays (Ages 6–16) – Four sessions between 3:30pm – 9pm at Damers First School

Thursdays (Ages 16–19+) 7pm – 9pm at the Town Hall, Dorchester Corn Exchange

Contact at dyt@dorchesterarts.org.uk, or find out more at dorchesterarts.org.uk

Our Creative Health programme complements our performance programme and is an increasingly important part of our work. Our creative projects are for people living with chronic physical conditions as well as those experiencing low level mental health issues - please enquire about or book onto any of our Creative Health programmes by contacting us on **01305 266926**, or through engage@dorchesterarts.org.uk or take a look at dorchesterarts.org.uk/join-in

Funding for this is always needed and there are several ways you can help from donating to leaving a legacy. Thank you for your support – we could not do it without you!

With grateful thanks to **Wessex Water Foundation Community Fund, The Deacon Foundation, Dorchester Beerex, The Mayor of Dorchester, The Friends of Yeatman Hospital** and other donors who wish to remain anonymous for support of our Creative Health projects this season.

Dorchester Community Orchestra

Dorchester is a welcoming community orchestra for those who are learning an instrument or brushing up on existing skills. Meeting once a fortnight on Sunday afternoons, conductor Jo Wolff guides players through a vast array of notes working towards public concerts each year. Dorchester convenes at the United Church Hall (Charles Street entrance). Rehearsal times are 2.45pm - 5pm with a tea break and the cost is £25 per term. For more information, please contact the Membership Secretary at info.dorchester@gmail.com

Connect

Connect is a weekly drama group accessible to all. This is a fully inclusive session for adults and is aimed at those who want to have fun in a creative and supportive environment using drama games and activities. The sessions are led by experienced drama practitioner Penny Levick. No experience is needed, just an open mind and a willingness to participate in movement-led, improvised and collaboratively devised work. Perfect for those seeking something new which has proved to boost confidence and tap into creative potential.

Classes take place in Dorchester, £5 (carers free)



Art for Memory

Art for Memory is a creative class for adults experiencing the early stages of memory loss. Each week we will explore different themes and materials in a fun and supportive group. Inspired by nature, we will try out a different techniques including printmaking, painting, drawing, collage and mosaics. This is a gentle session with time for tea, coffee, biscuits and a chat!

Classes take place in Dorchester, £5 (carers free)



Parkinson's Dance

Parkinson's Dance is a fun class with therapeutic benefits and movement specifically designed for the symptoms of Parkinson's. Specially developed to be fun, stimulating, motivating, and challenging, these sessions support the improvement of balance, coordination, and suppleness.

Sessions are led by trained specialists and will be taught in a comfortable and safe environment.

Classes take place in both Dorchester and Sherborne, £8 (carers free)

"This class has great benefits physically and mentally"
Parkinson's Dance participant

DORCHESTER CORN EXCHANGE VENUE HIRE



Our home is the historic Dorchester Corn Exchange, recently refurbished to include a stylish art gallery, bar, and café, making it ideal for events of any size. We offer three flexible spaces:

The Corn Exchange (Auditorium) – A versatile venue with or without 150 raked seats, full lighting and sound, large cinema screen, and kitchen-equipped side room. Perfect for theatre, weddings, conferences, or parties, hosting up to 120 seated at tables or 275 standing.

Dorchester Town Hall – A bright, elegant room with natural light, seating up to 60 at tables or 100 theatre-style. A popular choice for weddings and celebrations.

The Corn Exchange Gallery and Bar – A light-filled space surrounded by art, ideal for meetings or smaller gatherings (up to 30 people), adjacent to the bar and café.

For details visit dorchesterarts.org.uk/venue-and-room-hire or call Sam Wood on 01305 266926.



Booking Information

We are based at Dorchester Corn Exchange. Our reception desk in the cafe/bar area is open Tuesday to Saturday 10am – 3pm. On Mondays you can purchase tickets from our offices at the back of the building.

Tickets to all venues can be purchased online at any time or by telephone (01305 266926) between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday. At all other times please leave your name, telephone number and ticket requirements and we will call you back.

The Hardy Theatre is the theatre on the Thomas Hardy School campus. Following a £1.35m refit, the theatre is now a professional-quality venue, allowing us to stage larger-scale events seating up to 400 people.

Concessionary prices are available for the majority of performances promoted by Dorchester Arts and offered to under 18s, students and those in receipt of benefits/income support regardless of age.

A £1 booking fee and £1 Future Fund levy (to support our work) are included in most published ticket prices.

We operate a ticketless system – on arrival please have your booking reference email to hand, either printed or on your mobile device, we will scan the QR code. For selected events, we provide wrist bands to allow you to move freely.

All our venues have wheelchair access and toilet facilities for wheelchair users. Dorchester Corn Exchange is now equipped with a Sennheiser MobileConnect system that will help those with hearing impairment to enjoy all of the events taking place there. If you would like to take advantage of this, please let us know by emailing enquiries@dorchesterarts.org.uk and we will send you full details. If you have any specific requirements, such as being seated near to the front should you be partially sighted, then please let us know when booking tickets as we are more than happy to help.

Scan the code to see what's on and book online



MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT MAGIC
COMEDY THEATRE COMMUNITY
CLASSICAL MUSIC CHRISTMAS ART

Phone
enquiries
and booking:
01305 266926

DIARY: SUMMER 2026

Box Office 01305 266926 www.dorchesterarts.org.uk

May

Friday 1 – Sunday 3	Amateur theatre	Life Class (Vince Jones and James Cuthill)	7:30pm and 2.30pm (Sunday)	CE
Friday 1	Music/dance	The Big Dorset May Day Ceilidh	5.30pm and 7.30pm	HT
Thursday 7	Classical music	Dorchester Piano Trio	11.30am	CE
Saturday 9	Dance/workshop	Kathakali Dance Workshop	2pm	CE
Saturday 9	Classical music	Dorset Chamber Orchestra	7.30pm	SM
Thursday 14	Theatre	Fossil Mary	7.30pm	CE
Friday 15	Music	La Vie En Rose - Gypsy Jazz	8pm	CE
Saturday 16	Folk	Tannahill Weavers	7.30pm	CE
Tuesday 19	Film	Frida Kahl: the Making of an Icon (EOS)	7pm	CE
Thursday 21	Theatre	Lessons From Teacher x (Dorsetborn)	7.30pm	CE
Saturday 23	Music	The Music of Clapton, Hendrix and Cream (Voodoo Room)	7.30pm	CE
Wednesday 27	Family	Balloonicat Magic Show (Magic Gareth)	11am	CE
Thursday 28	Theatre	The Silence of Snow (Mark Farrelly)	7.30pm	CE
Friday 29	Opera	Cosi Fan Tutte (Opera Anywhere)	7.30pm	CE

June

Tuesday 2	Classical music	Jeneba Kanneh-Mason	7.30pm	CE
Friday 5	Comedy	Mark Watson: Before It Overtakes Us	7.30pm	HT
Saturday 6	Music	An Evening of Acoustic Guitar (Robbie McIntosh and Andy Grant)	7.30pm	CE
Thursday 11 and Friday 12	Youth theatre	DYT Junior and Young Companies	6.30pm	HT
Friday 12	Comedy	Dorchester Comedy Club (Marcus Brigstocke and Paul Foot)	7.30pm	CE
Saturday 13	Circus	The Curtain Calls (In A Pickle)	7.30pm	CE
Sunday 14	Outdoor theatre	Pinocchio (Illyria)	2pm	MR
Wednesday 17	Outdoor theatre	As You Like It (HandleBards)	7pm	MR
Thurs 18 – Sat 20	Amateur theatre	Murdered to Death (Somersleigh Players)	7.30pm	CE
Sunday 21	Music	Midsummer Revels (GreenMatthews)	7pm	CE
Thursday 25 and Friday 26	Youth theatre	DYT Performance Company	7.30pm	CE
Saturday 27	Tribute	Buddy Holly and The Cricketers	7.30pm	HT

July

Thursday 2 and Friday 3	Theatre	The Return of The Native (Hotbuckle)	7.30pm	CE
Sunday 5	Outdoor theatre	The Big Bad Wolf (The Plandits)	3pm	MR
Wednesday 8	Music	Milly Riquelme	7.30pm	CE
Thursday 9	Rehearsed reading	I, Dido (Non Vaughan O'Hagan)	7.30pm	CE
Tuesday 14	Theatre	Boiler Room Six: A Titanic Story	7.30pm	CE
Thursday 16	Classical music	Dorchester Piano Quartet	11.30am	CE
Saturday 18	Operetta	The Pirates Of Penzance (Illyria)	7pm	MR
Sunday 19	Fundraiser	A Summer Sunday with Liza Pulman	12 noon	WM
Friday 24 and Saturday 25	Community theatre	Unearthed (Women of Dorset)	7.30pm and 2.30pm (Saturday)	CE
Monday 27 to Friday 31	Youth theatre	Summer Musical Theatre Course	all day	CE
Thursday 30	Outdoor theatre	The Great Gatsby (This Is My Theatre)	7pm	MR
Friday 31	Youth theatre	Peter Pan Junior (Summer Musical Theatre Performance)	7pm	CE

August

Friday 1	Outdoor theatre	The Sword in the Stone (Cambridge Touring Productions)	2.30pm	MR
Friday 14	Outdoor theatre	The Tale of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny (Quantum Theatre)	2.30pm	MR
Sunday 16	Outdoor theatre	The Pickwick Papers (Rain or Shine)	6pm	MR

CE=Corn Exchange DT11HF SM=St Mary's Church DT12LH HT=Hardye Theatre DT12ET WM=Whitcombe Manor DT18NY MR=Maumbury Rings DT11QZ