

READING ARTS & VENUES WHAT'S ON

JAN-MAR 2010

Large Print Brochure

JANUARY

Museum of Reading

Saturday 5 December – Sunday 18 April

Museum of Reading

Reading A to Z

The New Exhibition in the John Madejski Art Gallery

Free Admission

An A to Z of our fascinating town in objects and artworks selected from the Museum's collection. The exhibition covers a thousand years of Reading's history, from Abbey and Austen to Zaandam and Zinzan. Explore the people, places and products that have influenced how Reading is today. What would you include? What have we left out? Come and share your own ideas!

Call 0118 939 9800

www.readingmuseum.org.uk

South Street

Friday 15 January, 8.30pm

South Street Comedy Club

£12, Concessions £10

Lucy Porter – Diminutive stand-up comedian who's made a big name for herself. Within seconds of appearing on stage, her flirty, gossipy, effervescent style charms everybody!

The Raymond & Mr Timpkins Revue – Rammed full of prop-assisted material and serial wordplay that would put Stephen Fry to shame, this charismatically-challenged uncle and mute nephew co-operative simply have to be seen to be believed!

Josh Howie – His mother was the inspiration behind Absolutely Fabulous. Is it any wonder Josh turned to comedy. “Excellent, intelligent stand-up” – Time Out

Strictly Adults Only

** Line-ups subject to change*

Concert Hall

Sunday 17 January, 7.30pm

Classical Music Alive

Angela Hewitt, Piano

Isabelle Faust, Violin

Stephen Stirling, Horn

£22-£11, Concessions & Student Standby tickets available

Brahms

Violin Sonata No.2 in A Major

Schumann

Violin Sonata No.1 in A minor

Schumann

Adagio & Allegro for Horn & Piano

Brahms

Trio for Horn, Violin & Piano in Eb Major

Each with their own world-wide reputation as both solo and chamber musicians, Hewitt, Faust and Stirling make a phenomenal ensemble. Here these award-winning musicians combine Brahms and Schumann duos and culminate all together for Brahms Horn Trio, composed in 1865 commemorating the death of his mother earlier that year.

Pre-concert talk 6.15pm – 7pm. The Town Hall (FREE)

The Hexagon

Monday 18 January, 8pm

The Day of the Dead

The Brand New Xtravaganza from The Circus of Horrors

£22, £18, £12, Concessions (not U16) & Groups £3 off top two prices

Following on from the huge success of 'The Asylum', The Circus of Horrors has had a major revamp and is back rocking and shocking with a brand new show.

Set in the early 1900's, the cast of chaos-mongers transport the body of their master, Doktor Haze to a remote area of Mexico where they join in with the locals rituals to try and revive their esteemed leader... with disastrous consequences!

Once revived, The Undead Ringmaster Doktor Haze will guide you through one hell of a tale with the help of the live rock n' roll beats of 'The Interceptors From Hell' and a huge uncontrollable cast of Witch-doctors, Voodoo Acrobats, Pickled People, Bendy Bodies, Demon Dwarfs, Curvaceous Creatures, Aztec Warriors and some of the worlds greatest, most daring and bizarre Circus acts.

Please note the show contains some nudity, occasional swearing and is not suitable for children or the easily offended.

Reading Central Library
Wednesday 20 January, 7pm
Patrick Lennon
£3, Library Members £2

Join Reading-based author Patrick Lennon for a lively evening as he talks about his new book, *Cut Out* - the latest in his internationally acclaimed trilogy of thrillers featuring Tom Fletcher. Patrick has many stories to tell about the background to his books and the process of writing itself.

For tickets email info@readinglibraries.org.uk or call 0118 901 5950

The Hexagon
Wednesday 20 January, 8pm
Jimmy Carr – Rapier Wit
All tickets £22.50

A heady mix of artistic integrity, loyalty and a Carr-hungry Reading audience brings Jimmy back to town for a fourth chance to see his new show, Rapier Wit!

A 'rapier' is the long sword of a gentleman. 'Rapier Wit' is defined as clever, quick, intelligent humour. Please note. Jimmy Carr doesn't have 'the long sword of a gentleman' and even if you like him, 'clever, quick and intelligent' is a bit of a stretch.

Strictly Adults Only

Concert Hall

Friday 22 January, 7.30pm

The Imagined Village

All tickets £18.50

The Imagined Village is a stunning project spearheaded by Grammy Award winning musician and producer Simon Emmerson. On stage will be an outstanding cast including Martin Carthy, Eliza Carthy and Chris Wood backed by a band featuring Simon Emmerson, Johnny Kalsi, Ali Friend, Andy Gangadeen, Simon Richmond, Sheema Mukherjee and Barney Morse Brown.

Interweaving traditional considerations with the sounds and voices of today's era, the project brings together an array of brilliant and challenging voices. Fiddles and squeezebox breathe easily alongside electronica and ambient effects in a musical framework that honours the past while updating it with breathtaking confidence.

Berkshire Record Office

January 2010 onwards

Archive Stories

The Berkshire Lunatic Asylum

Free Admission

The old Fair Mile Hospital at Cholsey closed in 2003, ending a 130 year period of mental health care in Berkshire. But the hospital

lives on through its archive, which contains many patients' stories from the Victorian and Edwardian eras. This fascinating collection is now available for research at the Berkshire Record Office.

www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk

Concert Hall

Saturday 23 January, 7.30pm

Aldworth Philharmonic Orchestra

£15, £12, Concessions £10

Concert Virgins FREE: See www.aldworthphilharmonic.org.uk for details.

Virgil Thomson 'Louisiana Story' Suite

Copland Quiet City

Barber Adagio for Strings

Max Charles Davies The Mysterious Kiss (World Premiere)

APO performances are known for their drama and passion, with audiences really connecting with the players to feel the power of the music. This dramatic programme gives APO full licence to explore the widest range of orchestral colours and textures. Contrasting works of three American composers precede a show-stopping commission from Max Charles Davies (APO Young Composers Award winner).

The Hexagon

Saturday 23 January, 7.30pm

Reading Rock Academy

Battle of the School Bands

Grand Final

All tickets £5

Witness the best 8 school rock bands in the Thames Valley battle it out for the first ever Reading Rock Academy Battle of the School Bands Competition. Celebrity judges and prizes for the winning band.

Plus special guest performances, see the website for details.

www.readingrockacademy.com

The Hexagon

Sunday 24 January, 7.30pm

Classical Music Alive

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

£31-£15, Concessions & Student Standby tickets available

Conductor	Garry Walker
Soloist	Emma Johnson, Clarinet

Mendelssohn	A Midsummer Night's Dream: Overture, Nocturne & Wedding March
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Mozart	Clarinet Concerto in A Major
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Dvořák	Symphony No.8 in G Major
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The Hexagon's resident orchestra, the RPO return for their first performance of the 09/10 season in a mixed programme of Mendelssohn, Mozart and Dvořák. Performing Mozart's ever-popular Clarinet Concerto, Emma Johnson is one of few clarinetists to have established an international career as a soloist.

Pre-concert talk 6.15pm-7pm. The Hexagon Auditorium (FREE)

South Street

Saturday 23 January, doors 8pm

My Luminaries + Support

£5 in advance, £7 on the door

My Luminaries return to South Street Arts Centre with a new line up and a debut album 'Order From The Chaos', as part of their January UK tour. Revered for their often intense live show and exemplary songwriting, Reading born front man James Ewers and

band are set to make 2010 a memorable year, beginning with this hometown show.

South Street

Sunday 24 January, 11.30am & 2pm

Indigo Moon Theatre present

The Lost Forest

£6.50, Group of Four (min 1 adult, 1 child): £22

There's magic and mayhem in the Rainforest! Animals homes are at risk as bulldozers and diggers crash their way through trees and foliage. Who will come to the rescue and fight the evil Endorro? Can we save the Rainforest?

The Lost Forest by Indigo Moon takes a vital concern and turns it into a fun and dynamic show. Using colourful Wayang Golek rod puppets from West Java, stunning rainforest projections, shadow theatre and original music.

Puppet theatre for ages 5+
Supporting Education in the Arts

Active Parks

January - March 2010

Make better use of Reading's beautiful open spaces this spring!

Reading is blessed with some glorious park's and open spaces, the perfect location to visit with friends or family, or take an afternoon stroll. Make sure you get out and make the most of them this spring.

Reading Borough Council's Active Parks team also arrange activities at Prospect Park (West Reading) from 5-side football, hockey and jogging groups, to buggyfit and walking groups. So get out in the crisp spring air and get active in 2010.

For more details on the activities organised by the Active Parks team contact 0118 937 3848 or see www.sportreading.co.uk

The Hexagon

Wednesday 27 January, 7.30pm

Chris Dean's Syd Lawrence Orchestra

The Best of Big Bands

£18, Concessions & YRP £16.50, Groups £16

Having just been voted the 'Best Big Band in the Land' for the 12th consecutive year, The Syd Lawrence Orchestra's popularity continues to go from strength to strength.

Leader, Chris Dean packs a real punch with this dazzling new show offering an evening, filled with the most distinctive music ever to grace the turntable, seamlessly combined with audience banter, producing a unique fusion of music and humour.

Featuring the music of Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Billy May, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and played for you by performers with a real passion for their music, this show is bound to leave you dazzled from the very first number.

South Street

Wednesday 27 January, doors 8pm

The Hamsters

£13, Concessions £11.50

This guitar, bass and drums trio have long been established as one of our premier live attractions, having performed over 4000 concerts in 23 years. Although primarily playing their own brand of rootsy Rock, Blues and Americana, they are also widely regarded as the UK's leading interpreters of the music of Jimi Hendrix and ZZ Top, and will no doubt be featuring plenty tonight.

"The Hamsters are fabulous - one of Britain's very best live bands" -
Radio 2

South Street

Thursday 28 January, 8pm

Keith James & Rick Foot

Celebrate the music of

John Martyn

Together with songs by Davy Graham, Sandy Denny and Nick
Drake

All tickets £12

Keith James and Rick Foot are active musicians on today's arts centre circuit, having garnered much acclaim for their 'Songs of Nick Drake' shows throughout the UK. After the loss of another of folk's great voices, John Martyn, countless people encouraged them to put together a show for his music too. Martyn's powerful yet often lamenting songs, his seductive guitar style and enigmatic voice have drawn together and embodied a devoted audience spanning two generations. All performances by Keith and Rick are a much cared for and personal affair.

www.keithjamesandrickfoot.com

South Street

Friday 29 January, doors 8pm

Limehouse Lizzy

The Greatest Hits of Phil Lynott and Thin Lizzy

£13 advance, £15 on the door

Renowned for an action-packed explosion of a show, Limehouse Lizzy continue to keep the spirit of Celtic rock icon Philip Lynott and his band Thin Lizzy alive, well and dominating stages worldwide.

Attention to detail, playful audience interaction and that all important X-factor leaves you with the feeling of witnessing the real thing, leading to their performance being described as 'beyond tribute', by

both audience and critics alike. Expect the usual razzamatazz and classic tracks like Whisky in the Jar, Black Rose, The Boys are Back in Town, Sarah and many more.

The Hexagon

Saturday 30 January, 7.30pm

Reading Phoenix Choir

With Special Guest, Megan Henwood

£15-£6, U16s £13-£6

Riding the wave of popular interest in choral singing and following a highly successful 40th season, the renowned Reading Phoenix Choir continues to wow audiences far and wide. The choir's expertly delivered repertoire ranges from complex 16th century choral masterpieces, to stunning modern compositions.

Singing mostly unaccompanied and always without music, Reading Phoenix share a deep connection with their audience and showcase the very best in choral music.

Joining the choir as their guest artist is Henley-based singer-songwriter Megan Henwood, BBC Radio 2's Young Folk Musician of the Year.

FEBRUARY

CANCELLED

The Hexagon

Monday 8 February, 7.30pm

Pasión de Buena Vista

£23, £20, Concessions £2 off, Groups £3 off

Pasión de Buena Vista is a music and dance extravaganza that is taking Europe by storm. Filled with hot rhythms, delicate dances, and beautiful melodies, Pasión de Buena Vista will take you on a

tour through the streets of the Pearl of the Caribbean on an exciting Cuban night, allowing you to experience the unspoiled rawness and joy of Cuban life. The show features three top Cuban singers, dancers from the world famous Tropicana Club in Havana and an eight piece live band, as well as beautiful costumes, stage-backdrop and breathtaking projections which will infect you with the heat and passion of Cuba.

Berkshire Record Office
Tuesday 2 February, 6pm-8pm

Your Family Tree

Meet the Experts at the Berkshire Record Office

Free Admission

Want to start your family tree but not sure how best to go about it? Or have you started your research but hit a brick wall? Every quarter the Berkshire Record Office hosts a special evening, together with the Berkshire Family History Society, where you can come along and chat about your family tree. No need to book, just turn up.

Call 0118 901 5132 or email arch@reading.gov.uk

The Hexagon

Friday 5 February, 7pm

Little Howard and the Magic Pencil of Life and Death

£10.50, Concessions £8.50, Family £34

Following the success of their BBC1 TV show 'Little Howard's Big Question' real human Big Howard and animated six-year-old Little Howard are bringing their family comedy show to Reading.

Little Howard has discovered the pencil that drew him. But, on the other end of this magical pencil of life is the eraser of death, and a dark force is at large determined to rub the cheeky chap out for good. Can Little Howard escape his supernatural nemesis? Who

knows... but there will be danger, drama and a lot of laughs on the way.

South Street

Friday 5 February, 8pm

Laura Solon

Rabbit Faced Story Soup

£10, Concessions £8.50

Direct from her run at London's Soho Theatre, Perrier Award Winner, Laura Solon (BBC 1's Harry and Paul) returns with her first show since 2005: The multi-character narrative comedy and sell-out hit at the Edinburgh Festival 2009, Rabbit Faced Story Soup.

So... It's all gone tits down at Black Publishing.

Tepid-shot publisher Diana Lewis is scrambling to find a writer to finish a book and save the company from crisis. Her obstacles include an American Super Agent, a lightly tanned boss, a call centre worker, a diversity officer, The French and a dead rabbit called Ian.

Concert Hall

Sunday 7 February, 3.30pm

Reading Symphony Orchestra

£14, £12, Concessions £2 off, U16s: All £2

Rimsky-Korsakov	Capriccio Espagnol
Debussy	Iberia
Dvorak	Four Slavonic Dances
Bach	Air on a G String
Rodrigo	Flute Concerto

Soloist Laura Lucas by kind permission of The Countess of Munster Musical Trust.

Reading's highly acclaimed Symphony Orchestra are delighted to welcome Laura Lucas to Reading to perform Rodrigo's Flute Concerto. Laura is a highly promising young flautist who has already experienced much success in her career. She has played at many major concert halls in Britain, including the Royal Albert Hall Proms and was principal flute in the National Youth Orchestra for two years.

The Hexagon

Tuesday 9 & Wednesday 10 February, 7.30pm & Wed matinee 1.30pm

Journey's End

By R.C. Sherriff

£18.50, £16.50, £14.50, Concessions £2 off, Groups £2.50 off, Wed matinee: All tickets £15 (no concessions), Schools: All £7

Starring Graham Seed (The Archers, Midsummer Murders) and Adam Best (Holby City, Waking The Dead).

The young, talented and war-weary Captain Stanhope is confronted with the fresh face of his past as an old schoolmate joins his platoon. As the offensive looms ever closer, Stanhope must inspire his men to make the ultimate sacrifice for a war he no longer understands and for a cause he no longer remembers.

This compelling play based on R. C. Sherriff's own experience in the trenches with its heroism, humour and inevitable tragedy shows and courage in the face of certain tragedy.

All staged within Stanhope's claustrophobic dugout, time creeps to a standstill as soldiers await their orders before racing to its heart wrenching climax as these young men face their 'Journey's End'.

Supporting Education in the Arts

Produced by The Original Theatre Company, Icarus Theatre Collective, Anvil Arts and in association with South Hill Park Arts Centre.

South Street
Tuesday 9 February, doors 8pm
Twisted Folk present
Stornoway & Beth Jeans Houghton
All tickets £10

Two of the hottest names on the new folk scene tour the UK as part of the acclaimed Twisted Folk touring banner.

Geordie, Beth Jeans Houghton blends great pop songwriting with her natural eccentric charm and a discernible north-east twang. She has received considerable hype for her debut single Golden (produced by Adem) and follow up EP Hot Toast Volume 1, justifying all the attention with headline grabbing appearances at many of the summer's festivals.

Stornoway have trodden a similar path, self releasing two critically acclaimed singles and cementing their rise with several well received festival appearances. A headline show at the ICA garnered rave reviews from the music press and national media alike.

South Street
Wednesday 10 & Thursday 11 February, 7.30pm
Exiled Theatre & Theale Green Community School present
The Actor and Composer-in-Residence Show
Funny Chekhov!
£7, Concessions £5

Jonathan Shelley's celebrated adaptation of Chekhov's lesser-known works celebrates the comedy inherent and sometimes forgotten in his work. With a soundtrack created by the new Composer in Residence Greg Haines, this promises to be a funny, moving and unforgettable evening.

Adapted from the early stories and shorter plays of Anton Chekhov (1860-1904), Jonathan

Shelley, Greg Haines and a host of talented actors and musicians from Theale Green Community School weave a montage of his writings, including his famous farce *The Proposal*, all presented in a fresh, funny and accessible style.

South Street

Saturday 13 February, 8pm

Testing Grounds

Free Admission

Testing Grounds is a Live Art and Music event where artists are invited to make new work. An experimental meeting place for artists, audiences and ideas to be in an environment supportive of artistic risk.

The event provides audiences with an eclectic program of alternating art forms, embodying diverse artistic attitudes and approaches. We are curating exciting performances and artists, and at the same time creating a comfortable sociable and relaxed atmosphere. Testing Grounds hopes to contribute to the richness of the South East region Live Art scene by creating a place where audiences can glimpse the newest work, be provoked, discuss new ideas and socialise

www.testinggrounds.org.uk

The Hexagon

Saturday 13 February, 8pm

An Evening with Larry Lamb

All tickets £17.50

Come and join Larry Lamb for an evening of entertainment and stories from his life on and off stage.

From selling Encyclopedias' to American Soldiers in Germany to working as a corrosion control technician for Esso in America, Larry has a large repertoire of stories and anecdotes to share with you.

Larry gave up his career with Esso and came to the stage after answering an “Actors Wanted!” advert, and has since gone on to star most recently as *Archie Mitchell*, Machiavellian father and grandfather in *EastEnders* and *Michael “Mick” Shipman*, a loved father in *Gavin and Stacey*. Come and listen to him tell you something of the amazing journey he has had on the way here.

Concert Hall

Sunday 14 February, 7.30pm

Classical Music Alive

Steven Isserlis, Cello

with Sam Haywood, Piano

£22-£11, Concessions & Student Standby tickets available

Programme to include works by Dohnányi, Schumann, Barber and Chopin.

Steven Isserlis is a cellist whose passion for music transcends conventional divisions. Acclaimed worldwide for his musicality and technique alike, he is equally at home drawing the audience into his circle of friends for chamber music or in recital. This concert celebrates important anniversaries of the composers.

Pre-concert talk 6.15pm-7pm. Town Hall (FREE)

The Hexagon

Sunday 14 February, 8pm

Dave Gorman

Sit Down, Pedal, Pedal, Stop and Stand Up

All tickets £18.50

In 2009, Dave Gorman set off on a unique national tour. The intention: to cycle over 1500 miles across Britain in 33 days... with a gig each night. I suppose that explains the title.

But demand for the show has been so high that he's decided to extend the tour, but this time without cycling from venue to venue.

Of course from your point of view it doesn't matter because it's not a show about the journey. Dave – whose hit Radio 4 series 'Genius', started its BBC2 incarnation on our TV screens in 2009 - may be widely acclaimed as the pioneer of documentary comedy but with this show he goes back to his roots as a straight up, one-man-and-a-mic stand-up.

South Street

Wednesday 17 February, 11.30am & 2pm

Banyan Theatre Company present the Polka Theatre production of **Princess and the Pea**

£6.50, Group of Four (min. 1 adult & 1 child): £22

Once upon a stormy night, while the wind and the rain were howling outside, the Royals were all tucked up warm in bed. Suddenly there came a knock at the door and a very wet, very untidy girl was brought inside.

Become part of this playful and comic story of a prince in search of a 'real' princess, a clever queen, a girl who is not as she first appears, a tower of mattresses and of course a tiny pea.

Puppet Theatre for 2-5 year olds

Supporting Education in the Arts

South Street

Thursday 18 February, 11.30am & 2pm

Sea-Legs Puppet Theatre's

Peter & the Wolf

£6.50, Group of Four (min. 1 adult & 1 child): £22

When the Story Man goes in search of a new tale to tell, his journey leads him to a Russian forest and a meeting with Peter's ancient grandfather who tells him the exciting story of the day Peter caught

the big hungry wolf.

With specially written lyrics to Prokofiev's famous soundtrack *Sea Legs* breathe new life into this classic tale of bravery and adventure.

An energetic and fun adaptation told with the use of mime, puppets, live and recorded music, the audience is involved from the start as they are led into an enchanting storybook world.

Suitable for ages 3+
Supporting Education in the Arts

Concert Hall
Thursday 18 February, 8pm
One Man Lord of the Rings
£15, Concessions £13.50

Charles Ross, creator of the hugely successful One Man Star Wars Trilogy, returns with his equally hilarious follow-up – One Man Lord of the Rings – in which he recreates the enchanting world of Middle-earth, armed with nothing more than a pair of elbow pads and his outrageous imagination. No props or costumes are required as Ross hurtles through the Tolkien trilogy – *The Fellowship Of The Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return Of The King* – in just 3,600 seconds of unbelievable kinetic entertainment. If you've seen the films, read the books and named your first-born Frodo, don't miss Ross' zany take on the ever-popular epic saga.

The Lord of the Rings and the characters, items, events and places therein are trademarks or registered trademarks of The Saul Zaentz Company d/b/a Tolkien Enterprises. All rights reserved.

The Hexagon
Wednesday 17 – Saturday 20 February, 2pm & 7pm, Fri 2pm only
The Birmingham Stage Company presents
George's Marvellous Medicine
By Roald Dahl. Adapted by David Wood.

U16s £9.50, Adults £14.50, Family of Four £44,
Groups £10.50, Schools & Youth Groups £7.50

George's Marvellous Medicine is Roald Dahl's amazing story about a young boy who makes a marvellous new medicine to cure his grandmother of her terrifying temper. But when Grandma drinks his special new potion, the most incredible things start to happen. And George's adventure has just begun!

The Birmingham Stage Company is back on tour with a brand new adaptation of one of Roald Dahl's most exciting stories, which was featured on BBC's Blue Peter! It follows the acclaimed productions of Horrible Histories, Why The Whales Came and Danny the Champion of the World.

"Roald Dahl's story has been brought wonderfully to life in this gem of a production for all the family. An eye popping adventure not to be missed!" – The Sunday Mercury

Supporting Education in the Arts

South Street
Friday 19 February, 8.30pm
South Street Comedy Club
£12, Concessions £10

Rob Deering – "Highly enjoyable... A rising star who combines an easy-going cheeky chappie demeanour with a quickfire wit" -
Evening Standard

Pippa Evans – With a plethora of psychotic characters, it's easy to see why her wicked brand of musical comedy saw her nominated for the if.comedy Best Newcomer Award.

Ryan McDonnell – Sometimes bizarre, often dark he'll guide you on a unique journey through the world as he sees it.

Strictly Adults Only

** Line-ups subject to change*

Concert Hall

Saturday 20 February, 7.30pm

The Grimethorpe Colliery Band

£18.50, £16.50

The real stars of the hit movie 'Brassed Off', the Grimethorpe Colliery Band are in constant demand throughout the world for concert appearances. Having won almost every brass band accolade, these musicians have a highly acclaimed international reputation with numerous television appearances and recordings to their credit. Enjoy the fabulous sound of this world famous brass band, performing your favourite classics with passion and style!

"A thoroughly entertaining show and a must for all music enthusiasts!" - The Guardian

South Street

Saturday 20 February, doors 7.30pm

Whole Lotta led

A Tribute to Led Zeppelin

£12.50, Concessions £10.50

Given the thumbs-up by no less a guitar god than Jimmy Page himself, Whole Lotta led are THE Led Zeppelin tribute band.

Keeping the spirit and songs of the legendary Zep alive with their unique energy and stage presence, They don't try and reproduce what the Classic Led Zeppelin line up looked like because for these guys it's all about the music, And what music.

From six to sixty, audiences love the dedication and musicianship Whole Lotta led bring to classics like Whole Lotta love, Stairway to Heaven, Immigrant Song and not forgetting the acoustic side of Zeppelin.

www.wholelottaed.co.uk

The Hexagon

Sunday 21 February, 7.30pm

The Big Big Comedy Bash

Supporting Children with Autism

All tickets £20

An annual highlight, The Big Big Comedy Bash returns with another jam-packed evening of fun and laughter from a bumper bill of comedy's finest.

As always, the line-up is a closely guarded secret; but with the likes of Omid Djalili, Jo Brand, Sean Lock, Ed Byrne, Lee Mack and Reginald D Hunter all having performed in the last couple of years, can you really afford to risk missing out on tickets?

All performers give their time for free so that Children in Touch receive the maximum financial benefit from the night.

Nb. Pictured artists are from previous shows and are not part of the line-up at time of print.

Museum of Reading

Monday 15 – Friday 19 February

Half Term Family Activities at The Museum of Reading

Join us at the Museum of Reading this February Half Term as we roll out our fantastic blend of activities to keep the whole family busy this spring. Take advantage of our Special Monday Opening and FREE art and craft activities on our Activity Cart.

Make and Takes

On Monday & Wednesday, drop in for a quick FREE 'Make & Take' anytime between 10am-12pm and 1pm-3pm.

Mon 15 Feb - **Chinese New Year: Dancing Dragons**

Wed 17 Feb - **Planting Suttons Seeds**

Whizz, Bang, Wallop! – Tue 16 Feb, starting 10am, 11.15am, 1pm & 2.15pm

Create some fun experiments with everyday materials. £2, pay on the day*, Ages 5+

Victorian Schoolroom Experience – Tue 16 Feb, starting 11am, 1.15pm & 2.30pm

A 45-minute experience for adults and children over 5 in our unique Victorian classroom. £1, pay on the day, Ages 5+

Brilliant Creatures – Thu 18 Feb, 10am-12pm & 1pm-3pm

Take a look at our colourful insect collection and make some giant bugs to take home. £5, booking essential, Ages 7+

For more information or to book call 0118 939 9800 or go to www.readingmuseum.org.uk

The Hexagon

Tuesday 23 February, 7.30pm

Yvette Fielding and the Team from Living TV's

Most Haunted Live on Stage

£21, £19, Groups £2.50 off

Featuring Karl Beattie, Brian Shepherd, Cath Howe, Ciaran O'Keefe, Stuart Torvell and Yvette Fielding.

The Most Haunted Team have explored some of the spookiest and infamous locations in the UK, in an attempt to uncover the truth behind tales of restless spirits and mysterious visions.

Now for the first time on stage the team are looking forward to their visit to (town/city) bringing their theatrical debut production of a supernatural thrill fest. The Most Haunted team of mediums and ghost hunters will reveal, purported, paranormal activity and stories related to the Theatre and its surroundings and an audience member will be selected to assist in some of the activities directly.

Parental Guidance Advised

The Hexagon

Monday 22 February, 7.30pm

Jethro – Too Late To Grow Up

£18.50, £17.50, No concessions

After 35 years in the business, Jethro still packs theatres up and down the country, and is still as mischievous as he was as a child. Jethro...Please don't ever grow up, the world would lose one of the most unique comedy legends ever. If you want to laugh until it hurts, look no further than here, this is the show for you!

Strictly Adults Only

South Street

Wednesday 24 February, doors 8pm

Baby Dee

All tickets £10

Cult songwriter, harpist, accordionist and iconic performer, Baby Dee returns to South Street with a new album on Tin Angel (Devon Sproule, Paul Curreri). Produced by Maxim Moston, 'Book of Songs' completes a full circle for Dee. Indeed it's a wonder the album ever came to be made at all. Baby Dee's story takes us from a street in Cleveland, via New York nightclubs, playing alongside *Antony and the Johnsons*, destroying a house with a tree and returning to Cleveland to finally write this beautiful, funny and at times, heart wrenching record. All that is to say, Baby Dee is a true American original.

The Hexagon

Wednesday 24 February, 7.30pm

Classical Music Alive

European Union Chamber Orchestra

£31-£15, Concessions & Student Standby tickets available

Director Eva Stegeman
Soloist Tasmin Little, Violin

Grieg Holberg Suite
J.S. Bach Violin Concerto No.2 in E Major
J.S. Bach Concerto for Two Violins in D minor
Barber Adagio for Strings
Dvořák String Serenade

Tasmin Little returns alongside the European Union Chamber Orchestra to perform two great baroque masterpieces by Bach, his Violin Concerto No.2 in E Major and the effervescent Concerto for Two Violins, when the orchestra's director, Eva Stegeman will join her.

Pre-concert talk 6.15pm-7pm. Kennet Room, Civic Offices (FREE)

Concert Hall
Wednesday 24 February, 8pm
Chris Addison
All tickets £15

At last! Mr. Chris Addison of Bafta Award-winning comedy The Thick of It, In The Loop, Skins and Lab Rats is back with a brand new show of his critically acclaimed stand-up. Daftness! Whimsy! Jokes! Lies! Smartarsery! Flapping about! All present and correct.

"The best stand-up I've seen" - The Observer
"He's brilliant. No question" - The Times

South Street
Friday 26 February, 8pm
Edinburgh Comedy Award Nominee 2009
Tom Wigglesworth's Open Return Letter to Richard Branson
£12, Concessions £10

Having witnessed a Virgin Train Manager abusing his position (to the extent that Hitler would've watched admiringly and taken notes), Tom writes to Richard Branson about one random act of kindness which caused good to triumph over evil. A cross between Sideshow Bob and Mark Thomas, join Tom as he recounts his hilarious and heart-warming true story involving the world's biggest jobsworth, his fellow passengers, and a brown paper bag from the onboard canteen.

The Hexagon

Friday 26 February, 7.30pm

Ocean Colour Scene

All tickets £22.50

Ocean Colour Scene celebrate their 21st anniversary in 2010 with a full UK tour and the release of a brand new, as yet untitled album, with esteemed producer Gavin Monaghan (Kings of Leon, The Editors, The Twang) at the helm. During their illustrious career, OCS have clocked up an impressive eleven Top 20 singles and five Top 10 albums in the UK alone. Expect all the classics from seminal albums 'Moseley Shoals' and 'Marchin Already' alongside their much-anticipated new material.

The Hexagon

Saturday 27 February, 1pm & 3.30pm

The Little Big Club - Live in Concert

£13, U16s £11, Family £44, Groups 1 in 10 free

The Little Big Club - Live in Concert is heading to the UK for the first time with a brand new singing and dancing stage show that brings together the most popular and best loved preschool characters in one exciting adventure!

The new 90-minute theatrical and musical extravaganza brings Barney, Bob the Builder, Angelina Ballerina, Pingu, Fifi Forget-me-Not and Fireman Sam together on stage for the

very first time and offers something younger members of the family will never forget!

So come along and be part of the magic...

South Street

Saturday 27 February, doors 8pm

South Street & Big Potato Records present

**Dusty & The Dreaming Spires + Holton's Opulent Oog
+ Coley Park + Special Guests**

Free before 9pm, £3 after

Debut night of free live music kicks off with Dusty & The Dreaming Spires with their party attitude and light projections. From Oxford they contain members of the critically acclaimed 'Goldrush' and 'Danny & The Champs'. Expect a thrilling rock set like 'Big Star!

Holton's Opulent Oog will perform new album Love In The Mist out on Big Potato Records. A full band with trumpet and violin. "Holton's Opulent Oog's sound is all wistful sighs, whisky slugs and alt.country brilliance" - 9/10 NME

Ale, cider, surprise guests and records played by Coley Park all at Reading's no.1 music venue!

Concert Hall

Sunday 28 February, 3pm

The Reading Ceilidh

£15, Concessions £12.50, U16s £7.50

Reading Scottish Pipe Band invite you to join them and their guests for a fantastic afternoon of music, song and dance at The Reading Ceilidh in the Town Hall. This evocative show features mainly Scottish and Irish music and dance and includes such favourites as Highland Cathedral played jointly by the pipes and the championship class Wantage Silver Band, but also features some

unusual and entertaining combinations.

Tickets available from the Box Office or via Karen Osman on 07795 550 500 or email peterosman@hotmail.com

MARCH

South Street

Wednesday 3 & Thursday 4 March, 8pm

Inspector Sands present

If That's All There Is

£12, Concessions £10

A successful but desperately average couple are teetering on the brink of marriage. As the days count down towards the big one, panic rises and both find themselves unexpectedly entangled with other people. As their nice, normal lives begin to unravel, the question of what it would take to make them truly happy leads into increasingly dangerous, surreal and hilarious territory.

For anyone who's ever wanted to stand on a windswept plain, howling for lost love.

Inspired by the Peggy Lee song, 'Is That All There Is?', this is the second show from Inspector Sands ("a young company with a big talent" - The Times), recent winners of the Edinburgh International Festival Fringe Prize 2009. Their award winning hit debut 'Hysteria' has toured extensively around the UK and internationally.

South Street

Friday 5 March, 8pm

Richard Herring - Hitler Moustache

All tickets £12.50

Reclaiming Chaplin's moustache for comedy, the star of *The Headmaster's Son* and 90s double act Lee and Herring muses on iconography, whether racists are closer than Liberals to believing that all people are the same and why an innocent square inch of facial hair has taken the blame for Nazism.

"A beautifully crafted and thought-provoking show" - **** Sunday Telegraph

"Stimulating, passionate and thoroughly entertaining" - **** The Times

The Hexagon

Wednesday 3 – Saturday 6 March, Wed – Fri, 7.30pm, Thu & Sat matinee: 2pm

Moscow City Ballet presents

Swan Lake and Cinderella

With the Moscow City Ballet Orchestra

£30, £27.50, £25, Thursday matinee: All tickets £25, Concessions & Groups £3 off, YRP £3 off (Wed & Thu eve only), £5 off per ticket if booking both ballets at the same time (top two prices only)

Swan Lake Wed & Thu 7.30pm & Thu 2pm

Cinderella Fri 7.30pm & Sat 2pm

Moscow City Ballet return to The Hexagon this March with the exquisitely designed and powerfully emotive *Swan Lake*; and an exhilarating traditional Russian version of *Cinderella*.

Accompanied by the Moscow Ballet Orchestra, the MCB has performed to the highest standard and audiences have enjoyed the unique style and artistic integrity of Victor Smirnov-Golovanov's choreography, as well as original versions of the great classical Russian repertoire.

Swan Lake is probably the world's best-known ballet, set to Tchaikovsky's sublime score. You will be moved by this fable which

follows the fate of Prince Siegfried and he falls in love with the beautiful Swan Queen, Odette.

While, Smirnov-Golovanov's version of the classic rags-to-riches fable, Cinderella has all the ingredients of the perfect ballet and a wonderful family outing to the theatre: a handsome Prince, a beautiful Fairy Godmother, lavish sets and costumes, plenty of magic and humour and an uplifting, happy ending.

The Company has some of the most accomplished and artistic soloists, and a sublime corps de ballet, all schooled in the in the best traditions of the Russian school. The costumes and sets are opulent, colourful, and a feast for the eye when the curtain goes up.

South Street

Saturday 6 March, 8pm

Glenn Tilbrook

All tickets £15

One half of the legendary songwriting ampersand behind Squeeze, Glenn Tilbrook brings his solo show to Reading this March. A hugely successful solo performer in his own right, Tilbrook has perfected a signature style marked by brilliant melodic invention, cheeky humour and slice-of-life pathos, all wrapped up with unshakable hooks and golden boy tenor. The king of the three-and-a-half minute pop song is sure to dip into all parts of his career, so expect songs from 'Up The Junction' and 'Pulling Mussels (From the Shell)' to 'Ray and Me' and 'Untouchable'. Book early.

The Hexagon

Sunday 7 March, 6pm

Windsor First Schools Concert

"Meet Our Folks"

£8, £7 Available from the Organiser on 07769 777 955

"Meet Our Folks" focuses on parents from their children's point of view. Featuring approximately 400 seven to nine year old children

from 13 Windsor First Schools, this concert is a light-hearted look into attitudes, situations and outcomes surrounding children and their parents in those 'formative years'. In addition to those singing others will act, dance, play instruments and entertain the audience of parents and friends.

This concert has been made possible by the enthusiastic support of the area's Rotary Clubs in co-operation with the Education Department of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

South Street

Wednesday 10 March, 8pm

So & So Circus Theatre present

The Hot Dots

£10, Concessions £8.50

Frank Johnstone and Evie Steele met in 1932. This is the story of two hugely successful vaudeville performers and their spectacular fall from grace.

Frank is a juggler who is happy with his lot. From the moment the ambitious Evie walks in to his dressing room at the beginning of the summer season, sparks fly, and Frank's world is turned on its head. They begin performing together, wowing crowds who travel from miles around to see them. As their reputation grows, so does Evie's thirst for fame, and it isn't long before the cracks begin to show. What's more important - love or fame?

"It's clever and funny and poignant- really entertaining!" - The Stage

The Hexagon

Monday 8 – Wednesday 10 March, Mon & Tue 7pm, Tue & Wed 10.30am & 1.30pm

The Birmingham Stage Company present

Horrible Science

by Nick Arnold. Adapted by Mark Williams.

U16s £9.50, Adults £14.50, Family of Four £44,

Groups £10.50, Schools & Youth Groups £7.50

What are millions of animals doing in your kettle? Why don't penguins get spots? Why do rabbits eat the same food twice? Why doesn't the moon wander off? Could a 10-million-volt battery float over your head? And how long would it take for your heart to pump enough blood to fill the theatre?

Billy Miller has no idea what's in store when he enters the crazy, awesome World of HORRIBLE SCIENCE and soon he is under attack from beastly bacteria, vicious volts and foul fluids! Will he regain control before it's too late? Using actors and jaw-dropping 3D Bogglevision, this astounding show has the awful answers - guaranteed to thrill you and your children!

From the acclaimed producers of Horrible Histories comes the seriously squishy world premiere Horrible Science!

Supporting Education in the Arts

South Street

Thursday 11 March, 8pm

"Jo Caulfield Won't Shut Up"

£14, Concessions £12

The minute Jo Caulfield hits the stage you know you're in for a good time.

She is one of the most successful and instantly recognisable female comedians in the country.

Star of Radio 4's critically acclaimed It's That Jo Caulfield Again and regularly seen on Mock The Week (BBC2), Have I Got News For You (BBC1), Never Mind The Buzzcocks (BBC2), Argumental (Dave TV), Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow (BBC1) and Best of The Comedy Store (Ch5).

Concert Hall

Thursday 11 March, 8pm

The Hairy Bikers' Big Night Out

£19.50, Concessions £17.50

Join The Hairy Bikers for an evening of cooking, chatting and laughs. Stars of BBC2's The Hairy Bikers Cookbook, The Hairy Bikers Ride Again and The Hairy Bikers Come Home and The Hairy Bakers which was watched by more than 4 million viewers.

This successful year was rounded off with a one hour Christmas Special, and Dave even won BBC's Celebrity Mastermind, while Si took an admirable second place in the BBC2's Weakest Link.

2009 has been busy for both with a giant 30 part series on BBC2 called The Hairy Bikers' Food Tour of Britain, coming next Mum Knows Best in early 2010 and now the Bikers are embarking upon their national tour, bikes and pans at the ready.

The Hexagon

Thursday 11 March, 7.30pm

The Dubliners

All tickets £18.50

The Dubliners contribution to the world of folk music is unparalleled. After 46-years on the road, the lads, who were such an important part of the British 'folk revival', continue to play sell-out concerts all over the world. They achieved their success and popularity without ever compromising their musical integrity and helped to make folksong a part of the musical diet of the man in the street.

Having sold millions of albums worldwide, their songs of love, life, drink and tales of the emigrant have paved the way for the likes of Planxty, Moving Hearts, The Pogues and U2.

"There isn't a band on earth that can compete with The Dubliners live on stage" – Billy Connolly

South Street
Saturday 12 March, doors 8pm
The Purple Project
£12 advance, £14 on the door

The Purple Project represents the talents of some of the finest musicians working on the live circuit today. All highly experienced session musicians who've worked with members of many top bands including Deep Purple, Rainbow and Whitesnake to name but a few!

The Band's focus is on the music, unlike many other acts that simply 'dress-up' to look the part. Behind each performance lies a deeper understanding of the music - and of course a passion for recreating the unbelievable power and intensity of Deep Purple in full flight!

www.classicpurple.com

The Hexagon
Friday 12 March, 7.30pm
Jethro Tull plus special guests
£28.50, £25.50

Rivalling Zeppelin, Elton John and even the Rolling Stones, Jethro Tull were one of the most successful live acts on the world stage in the mid-seventies. Surprising, really, for a group whose more sophisticated and evolved stylistic extravagance was far from the Pop and Rock norm of that era.

With 30-odd albums to their credit, a Grammy award and sales totalling around 60 million, Ian Anderson, Martin Barre and their merry band of musicians continue the legacy of Tull's music with its rich variety and depth of expression wherever fans, young and old want to hear Rock, Folk, Jazz and Classical – inspired music for grown-ups.

South Street
Sunday 14 March, 11.30am & 2pm
Indefinite Articles present

Claytime

£6.50, Group of Four (min.1 adult & 1 child): £22

Claytime, a play with clay, where the audience are invited to participate.

Indefinite Articles invite you to a place where the earth's natural material meets with children's imaginations: a world of fabulous forms, amazing animals and morphing monsters.

Each Claytime is totally unique - creating its own world, its own characters and its own stories drawn directly from its young audience. Truly interactive theatre at its most engaging.

This show is made with and for 3 to 6 year olds.

The Hexagon

Sunday 14 March, 7.30pm

Henley Symphony Orchestra

Tickets £15, £12, £10, U16's: half price, Groups: 1 in 8 free

Conductor Ian Brown

Puccini Messa di Gloria

Vaughan Williams Towards the Unknown Region

Gershwin Piano Concerto

Parry I Was Glad

Featuring Ashley Wass, Piano; Justin Lavender, Tenor and Lynton Black, Bass.

HSO returns to the Hexagon for the 12th year running, with an exciting programme combining Henley and Benson Choral

Societies with vocal soloists Justin Lavender and Lynton Black, and the gifted and highly acclaimed pianist, Ashley Wass.

The Hexagon

Monday 15 March, 7pm

Jewel of the River

Written by Alfie Hay

Ticket details to be confirmed.

Performed by the children of schools in Henley and South Oxfordshire.

In 2000, the children met by the banks of the River Thames to watch the battle for supremacy between Goddess Isis and Father Thames. Now the children summon them back in The Hexagon, with their own answers as to how they see their future and that of their town.

This is a joint venture supported by Henley Festival and Henley Youth Festival.

The Hexagon

Tuesday 16 March, 7pm

Reading Primary Schools' Music Festival

Adults £7, U16 & 60+ £5

Celebrating everything edible, The Reading Primary Schools' Music Festival Committee presents 'A Mouthful of Music'. 400 children from local primary schools provide an evening of song and dance, drama and poetry that's sure to get everyone's taste buds going. This year's performance will be conducted by Clive Waterman.

South Street

Tuesday 16 & Wednesday 17 March, 8pm

Spike Theatre present

Top of the World

£10, Concessions £8.50

In 1953 beekeeper Edmund Hillary and porter Tenzing Norgay began a gruelling and treacherous ascent to conquer the summit of the world's highest mountain – Everest.

Taking inspiration from Hillary and Norgay's biographies and the Oscar nominated documentary – *The Conquest of Everest* – Spike will re-tell the story behind one of the greatest achievements of the 20th Century.

Incorporating projected animation, puppetry, and a whole load of snow; two heroic performers will bring to life this epic tale of adventure, bravery and international fame.

In association with The Met, Bury and The Unity Theatre, Liverpool.

Concert Hall

Friday 19 March, 8pm

The Tiger Lillies

The Songs of Shockheaded Peter and other Gory Verses

All tickets £15

The Tiger Lillies are the Godfathers of alternative cabaret; Direct from a sell-out London West-End run and the Edinburgh Festival, they take their show celebrating 20-years of dark and deviant theatrics on tour.

For the first time in years, they will perform songs from the Olivier Award-Winning smash *Shockheaded Peter*, their Grammy nominated album *The Gory End* and other deranged favourites.

"There is nothing else like them, they are completely peerless" - Alex Kapranos of Franz Ferdinand.

Suitable for ages 16+

The Hexagon
Wednesday 17 March, 7.30pm
Björn Again
2010 Here We Go Again!
£17.50, Concessions £15.50

One Aussie bloke presents 4 pretendy Swedes and a trip to the theatre you'll never forget!!

Endorsed by ABBA vocalist AGNETHA FÄLTSKOG and having achieved worldwide cult status since Rod Stephen created it in Australia in 1988, the Björn Again show has performed over 3,500 concerts in 51 countries in 21 years in the Northern Hemisphere.

Back by very popular demand, you're invited to join in all the fun with Björn Again - 2010 Here We Go Again! featuring ABBA's hits and songs from Mamma Mia together with the legendary voice of host Tony Blackburn playing all the hits of 1988. This is the greatest party night out for people of all ages.

South Street
Thursday 18 March, 8pm
Samba 101
with Beatroots
£8, Concessions & Advance £6

Advance tickets from www.WeGotTickets.com or email beatrootsmail@me.com to reserve a place.

Workshop 8.15pm-9.45pm
Performance 10pm-10.30pm

Beatroots is Reading's samba drumming group. Having spent ten years entertaining audiences at events around the country, this is your chance to join in. This 90-minute workshop is suitable for complete beginners, rusty drummers and those who just want a challenge. The experienced tutors will have you drumming in no

time. Followed by a full performance with workshop participants welcome to join in at the end.

www.beatroot.co.uk

The Hexagon

Thursday 18 March, doors 7pm

Peter Andre plus guests

The Revelation Tour

SOLD OUT

Having sold out in double-quick time, Peter Andre embarks on a UK Tour following the success of his new album 'Revelation'. If you were lucky enough to get tickets, you'll see Peter performing new tracks including top five single 'Behind Closed Doors' as well a number of classic hits, all accompanied by his live band.

The Hexagon

Friday 19 March, 8pm

The Bootleg Beatles in Concert

30th Anniversary Tour

£22.50, Groups £20

Re-live the sights and sounds of sixties as the world's premier Beatle band returns to The Hexagon with their spectacular two-hour multi-media stage production featuring all the classic hits.

Using film footage of the period and 'with a little help from' their regular brass and string ensemble the show traces the history of the Fab Four from Liverpool's Cavern Club through Sgt Pepper to The Apple Rooftop in what has now become one of the 'not to miss' annual traditions of the seasons calendar.

South Street

Friday 19 March, 8.30pm

South Street Comedy Club

£12, Concessions £10

Andrew Lawrence – “From the moment he graced the limelight, he owned the stage... absolutely brilliant stuff” - BBC

Ava Vidal – Having started stand-up in 2003, Ava’s measured, deadpan, and sometimes brutal delivery have won her a raft of award nominations, fans and appearances on e4’s King of Comedy and NBC’s Last Comic Standing.

Colin Cole – "One of the most exciting performers to come out of Australia since skippy!" - New York Times

Strictly Adults Only

* *Line-ups subject to change*

South Street

Saturday 20 March, doors 8pm

Andy Raven

£5 advance, £7 on the door

Leading the band with fiddle and vocals, Andy Raven plays urban folk, a contemporary blend of traditional folk and urban sounds driven by tight rhythms and creative instrumentation. Having entertained crowds across the UK, Andy and his band of Graham Judd, Ben Humphreys and Rikk Smith return to their home town for this much anticipated gig, treating audiences to local tales of the city, finding love in Berkshire, re-interpretations of traditional tunes and satirical political comment.

The Hexagon

Saturday 20 March, 8pm

**Celebrating 25 Years of
The Solid Silver 60’s Show**

£22, £20

The UK's original and premier 60s show is back celebrating 25 sensational years!

Expect all your favourite 60s hits including The Crying Game, Little Things, Sweets for My Sweet, Needles & Pins, Twist and Shout, Do You Love Me, Where Do You Go To My Lovely, Frozen Orange Juice Wild Thing, Love is All Around, Hippy Hippy Shake, Good Golly Miss Molly and many more.

The only place to hear the classic hits performed by the original hitmakers!

Concert Hall

Sunday 21 March, 7.30pm

Classical Music Alive

Stephen Hough, Piano

£22-£11, Concessions & Student Standby tickets available

Programme includes works by Bach, Fauré, Franck and Chopin.

Stephen Hough is widely regarded as one of the most important and distinctive pianists of his generation. In 2008 his recording of the complete Saint-Saëns Piano Concertos was named the most popular recording of the past 30 years at the Classic FM Gramophone Awards. This recital is about counterpoint: not so much within the pieces, but between them.

Pre-concert talk 6.15pm-7pm. Town Hall (FREE)

Reading Libraries

Wednesday 24 March, 7pm

Reading Libraries Spring Quiz

£3, Library members £2 (max 6 per team)

Join Reading Libraries staff for this popular quarterly quiz. Test your knowledge with rounds including local history, the joys of spring and books. Great prizes to be won and refreshments will be served

For tickets email info@readinglibraries.org.uk or call 0118 901 5950

South Street

Thursday 25 March, 8pm

roots/round/about presents

Mamer (China)

Alt-Country from the grasslands of China

£8, Concessions £5

Mamer is one of China's most original and influential young artists and the father of *Chinagrass*, simple, honest, accessible music with one foot in the past and another in the future. His debut album 'Eagle' released through Peter Gabriel's Realworld label, features songs of the grasslands combining traditional Kazakh folk and dombra music with Western folk, rock and virtuosic performances on guitar, dombra and other traditional instruments. Haunting, lyrical, ambient and subtle, Mamer breathes new life into the ancient songs and instruments of this magical landscape.

www.rootsroundabout.co.uk

The Hexagon

Thursday 25 – Saturday 27 March, 7.30pm & Sat matinee 2.30pm

Porridge

A New Stage Adaptation by Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais

Thurs - Sat evening: £22, £20, £18, Sat 2.30pm: All tickets £20

Limited 2 for 1 on Thursday evening, Concessions & YRP: £2.50 off top two prices,

Groups of 10+: £3 off top two prices

After successfully bringing *Dad's Army* and *'Allo 'Allo!* to the stage, Calibre Productions come to The Hexagon with a real 'coup de theatre' – the first ever professional stage adaptation of the BBC's hit comedy *Porridge*.

Penned by the original writers Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais - the same fabulous team who brought *Auf Wiederseh'n Pet* to our screens - this hilarious new play features all your favourite *Porridge* characters.

So prepare for laughs-a-plenty as Fletch, played by Shaun Williamson (*EastEnders* and *Extras*), Godber and the other inmates of Slade Prison take on the system under the nose of the ever suspicious Mr Mackay in what promises to be a sure-fire comic treat for the whole family.

**** A stirring triumph behind bars *The Daily Telegraph*

**** Extremely good. The performances are 'uniformly' excellent
What's on Stage

South Street

Friday 26 March, 8pm

Pappy's present a World Record Attempt

200 Sketches in an Hour (plus bonus sketches and an interval)

£12, Concessions £10

Fresh from Channel 4 and a critically acclaimed, sell out run at the 2009 Edinburgh Festival, "the funniest sketch troupe on the Fringe" (*The Scotsman*) return to take the UK, and the record books, by storm.

In 2007 they were nominated for the If.comedy award. In 2008 they won Chortle Best Sketch Act, performed in Australia and had their own shows on Channel 4 and Radio 4.

Join them for a full night of sketches and songs and a chance to see them attempt the impossible.

200 sketches. 60 minutes. 1 World Record. Heroic attempt, or spectacular folly?

Museum of Reading

Saturday 27 March – Sunday 4 July

The Life and Times of Paddington Bear™

New Exhibition in the Special Exhibitions Gallery

Free Admission

Celebrating the famous bear from Darkest Peru and his creator, Michael Bond, who spent his childhood in Reading. This exhibition tells the story from the very first book *A Bear Called Paddington*, published in 1958, to the most recent title in the series *Paddington: Here and Now*, published in 2008 - exactly fifty years later.

Explore the adventures of the marmalade loving, duffel-coat wearing Paddington Bear, whose books have sold more than 35 million copies worldwide and been translated into over 40 languages.

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The Hexagon

Sunday 28 March, 7pm

Wokingham Children's Concert

"Watch This Space!"

£8, £7 Available from the Organiser on 07769 777 955

This year's takes us on a journey to investigate other worlds. We focus our attention on the planets around us and take time to think about what might be out there! Each of the main planets is placed in the spotlight and investigated through drama, poetry, dance and song.

This concert is part of the 'Music For All' project set up by Wokingham Borough Council's Children's Service. Celebrating a 63rd year, Wokingham Area Schools Music Association continues to provide opportunities for pupils in Wokingham schools to make music together, this year sharing the experience of being part of a choir of over 400-voices.

South Street

Tuesday 30 March - Thursday 1 April, 7.30pm

Reading Youth Theatre presents

Nothing to Declare

£6, Concessions £3

With American dollars sewn into their pockets a group of young refugees head for Britain: home to red buses, beefeaters and Susan Boyle! But in the dark recesses of ports -where human cargo is the fastest growing illegal industry in the world, their dreams and delusions give way to self-preservation.

This bold new play by RYT explores themes of safety and identity, sacrifice and survival; and asks why when they finally reach the safe haven of a children's home, so many of these children disappear.

Poignant, compelling and funny, we follow this epic journey. Will the kids get past border control? Will our Gap year girls find broadband connection? And will the children's home staff manage to prove who the good guys are?

The play has been part funded by the Youth Opportunities Fund and will go to Edinburgh this year.

The Hexagon

Tuesday 30 March, 7.30pm

Fascinating Aida

Happy Birthday Fascinating Aida!

£17.50, Concessions & Groups of 10+: £15

Britain's top female comedy trio are 25 years old. Well, actually, they're older than that (Dillie Keane formed FA in 1983), but the girls have decided their Silver Jubilee can be celebrated for a few more years at least.

For those of you who thought they'd retired, this isn't a comeback;

it's a chance for you to help them celebrate this auspicious birthday. They're doing it for the fun, not the money, which will soon be worthless anyway.

Dillie, Adele and Liza look forward to entertaining you with some new songs. Thrill to the beauty of the harmonies, marvel at the intricate rhymes and, if you're one of their older fans, remember to switch your hearing aid to the theatre's loop system to avoid unpleasant whistling.

"They are more than ever quite irresistible... simply hilarious" –
News of the World

REGULAR EVENTS

Concert Hall

Wednesday 13 January & Wednesday 17 March, 1pm

Classical Music Alive

Lunchtime Organ Recitals

All tickets £4

The Concert Hall is proud to present a series of bi-monthly organ recitals by locally and nationally renowned organists. All recitals last approximately 45 minutes.

Wednesday 13 January

William McVicker & David Pether – Town Hall, Reading

A jolly programme of organ duets and solos.

Wednesday 17 March

Paul Derrett – Recording Artist, Hull

Works by Widor, Vivaldi and Whitlock.

South Street

Thursday 21 January – Thursday 18 March, doors 8pm

Thirsdays Blues

£10, Members £7.50

Every month the best of blues – national and local, from acoustic through jump and jive to nu and alt.blues...

21 January

Sonny Black - A performer who's complete mastery of his instrument is a joy to watch, or as the Americans put it: "A quiet treasure...relaxed, uplifting almost spiritual" - Blues Revue

18 February

Duck Baker - One of the most highly regarded finger-style guitarists of his generation, all the way from Virginia where he learned his ragtime from the likes of Buck Evans, he now lives very near and we are pleased to welcome him to his new local Blues Club.

18 March

An evening of Country Blues led by:

Ragtime Jug Orchestra - The authentic string-band sound of the early 20th century, playing a good-time mix of ragtime, country blues, hokum, skiffle, old-timey and jug band music.

Audience participation is always encouraged - bring a kazoo, jug or shaker and join in.

South Street

Monday 4 January – Saturday 27 March

Reading Youth Theatre

Offering young people the opportunity to develop their drama skills in a relaxed and fun environment, led by experienced tutors.

Monday Evenings

4 January – 22 March (excluding 15 February)

13 – 18 year olds: 6pm - 8pm

£50 per term

Saturday mornings

9 January – 27 March (excluding 13 & 20 February)

Reception – Year 2: 10am – 11am

Year 3 – Year 5: 11.15am – 12.15am

Year 6 – Year 8: 12.30pm – 2pm

For more details, call South Street on 0118 901 5234

South Street

Friday 15 January – Friday 16 April

Poets' Café

Doors open at 8pm, poetry begins at 8.30pm

£6, Concessions & Poets £4

Writer, comedian and champion of all things poetical, A.F. Harrold comperes Reading's longest-running and best loved poetry platform. Every month the night is made up of an open mic section welcoming anyone to read their work in a friendly atmosphere and a full reading by some of the country's finest poets.

15 January **Lesley Saunders**

19 February **Maggie Butt**

19 March **Helen Mort**

16 April **Tom Chivers**

RAV

April – August 2010 Previews

Previews

Snow White on Ice

Wed 12 – Sun 16 May

The Hexagon

The Alter Eagles

Sat 10 April – South Street

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Thu 15 April – The Hexagon

Derek Acorah

Wed 21 April – The Hexagon

Telling Tales

Sun 25 April – South Street

La Roux + Special Guests

Mon 26 April – The Hexagon

Kate Rusby

Sat 8 May – Concert Hall