



Bird Nerd *and the* Red List

*A dance theatre piece
by Marie-Louise Flexen*



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Contents:

Performance piece description and theme

Bird Nerd On Screen

Tour package and fees

Marketing details

Audience and industry feedback

Performance images

Technical information

Credits and thanks

Contact:

Marie Louise-Flexen and Sarah Lorraine Ferris

Co-producers Bird Nerd & The Red List

mflexen@gmail.com | sarahlorraine.connect@gmail.com

DANCE THEATRE PIECE DESCRIPTION

Bird Nerd & The Red List is an exciting dance theatre piece, focusing on popular UK birds of high conservation concern.

Take a journey with the birdwatcher as they embody four different birds; Lark, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Swift and Nightingale. A fascinating exploration through dance, music, sound and spoken word. Performed and created by dance artist and performer, Marie-Louise Flexen .

While exploring habits and behaviour, we see the birdwatcher's personal and emotional connection to each bird and the natural world.

"Witty, moving and original".

"Stunning! I was captivated. One of my favorite performances. What a beautiful way to educate us".

The piece shares vital information and ways to take action through an accessible, heartfelt, and hopeful lens.

So far, performances of the piece have included Gloucester Guildhall, Stroud Arts Festival, Swindon Dance, Gloucestershire Libraries, Stroud Film Festival, Stroud Arts Festival and Celebrating Age, Wiltshire.

Photo: Steve Skinley

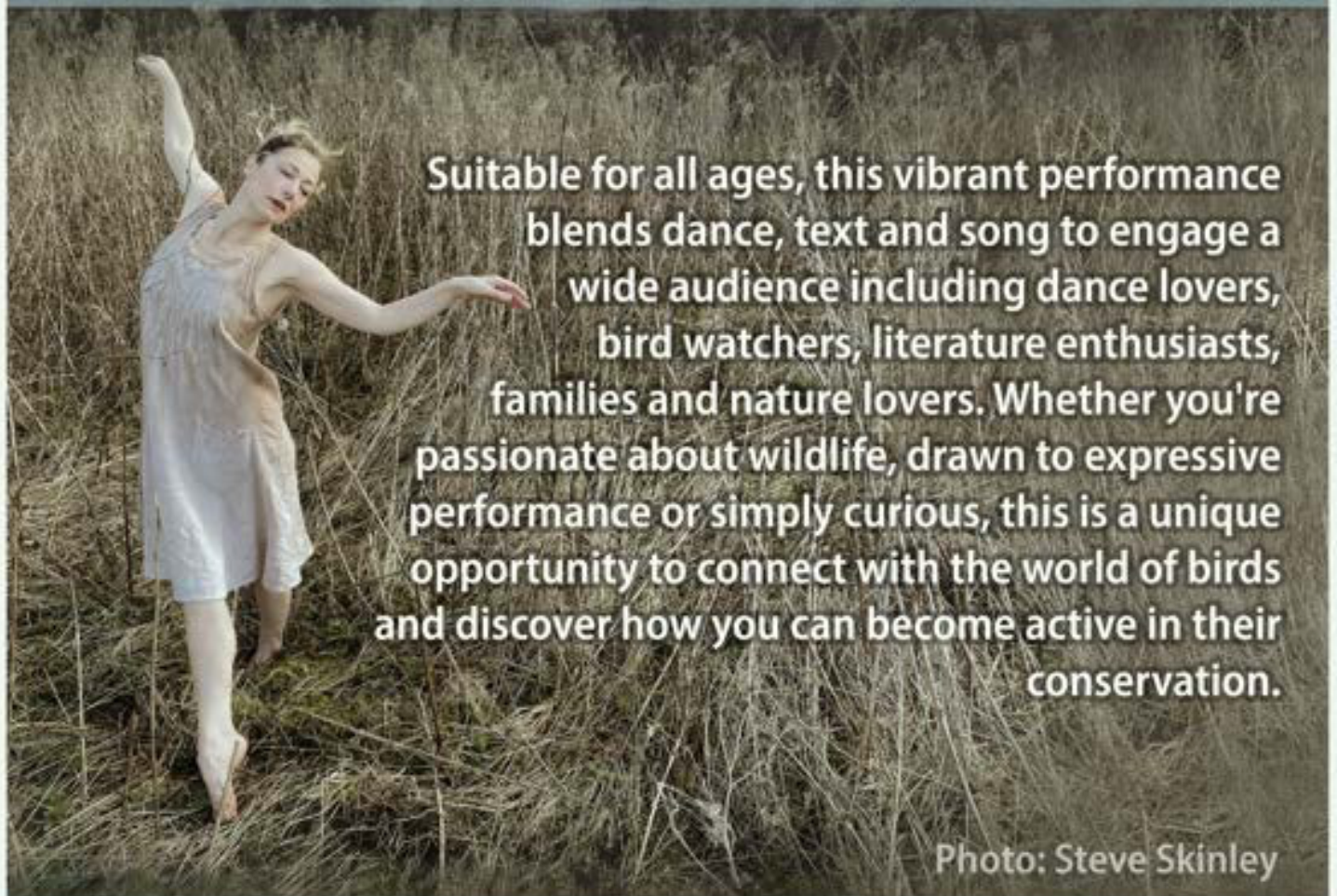
PERFORMANCE PIECE DESCRIPTION CONTD

Title: Bird Nerd and The Red List **Length:** 30 minutes

Choreographer and Performer: Marie-Louise Flexen

Scale: Intimate **Target Audience:** Suitable for all ages

Additional: Post show Q&A, bird talk, workshop or participatory crafting activity.



Suitable for all ages, this vibrant performance blends dance, text and song to engage a wide audience including dance lovers, bird watchers, literature enthusiasts, families and nature lovers. Whether you're passionate about wildlife, drawn to expressive performance or simply curious, this is a unique opportunity to connect with the world of birds and discover how you can become active in their conservation.

Photo: Steve Skinley

Marie-Louise is currently an associate artist at Swindon Dance and a core member of Dance in Gloucestershire collective. She has ongoing support from Prema Arts Centre. Most recently, Marie-Louise was awarded a place with Pushing Boundaries, Dance East with international choreographer, Gaelit Liss. She is also supported by Celebrating Age at Wiltshire Music, Oxford Health, Stroud Valleys Project and Stroud Arts Festival.

BIRD NERD & THE RED LIST ON-SCREEN

Marie-Louise has worked with filmmaker Robyn Pete for a number of years. In 2022, Robyn filmed and directed the award-winning short film 'Arrival By Horse', which documents Marie-Louise's transformative journey with horses.

Robyn has made a specially adapted film of Bird Nerd & The Red List for film festivals and screenings, conservation events, organisations and educational facilities, making the piece widely accessible outside of live performance.



BIRD NERD **AND THE RED LIST**

Click to watch short promo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vr5ic70PSTs>

Click to watch full 30-minute performance

<https://www.marielouiseflexen.com/#WhatsHappening>

Filmed at Lansdown Hall and Gallery, Stroud

Venue manager: Penny de Lotz

Technician and lighting: Mark Crowe

Artistic cinematography: Elizabeth Stopford

Sound technician: Steve Skinley

Stock footage: Adobe

Music permissions pending

TOUR PACKAGES & FEES

Bird Nerd and The Red List packages available:

- 1) Performance only
- 2) Performance and additional activity
- 3) Nightingale & The Emperor
interactive storytelling experience

1. PERFORMANCE ONLY

Solo performance of Bird Nerd & The Red List.

30-minute dance theatre piece.

Option to include a post-show talk,
Q & A or a bird talk (dependent
on availability of BTO speaker)

Suitable for indoor and outdoor
locations. Performer will attend with
a sound technician, which is
included in the fee.

Photo: Steve Skinley

Maximum of 2 shows per day.

Minimum of one hour get-in and get-out needed (time for
technical rehearsal is preferable and required in theatre
settings).

Fee is £500.00 plus travel and expenses.

PERFORMANCE AND ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Additional activities can be supplied following the performance. A movement workshop or participatory crafting activity or the Nightingale and the Emperor interactive storytelling experience. Usually 1 show a day, if an additional activity is included. Get in touch for a bespoke package. Fee is £500.00 plus travel and expenses

Photo: Steve Skinley



INTERACTIVE STORYTELLING EXPERIENCE

Enjoy the classic fairy tale, *The Emperor and the Nightingale* by Hans Christian Anderson, through interactive storytelling. The story will be read by author, performer and artist, Steven Skinley and will feature music and sound for a fully immersive experience. Dancer Marie-Louise Flexen portrays the Nightingale and invites participants to engage in movement and performance.



Followed by a crafting activity session. Each child will have the chance to design, make and take home their own magical bird mask.

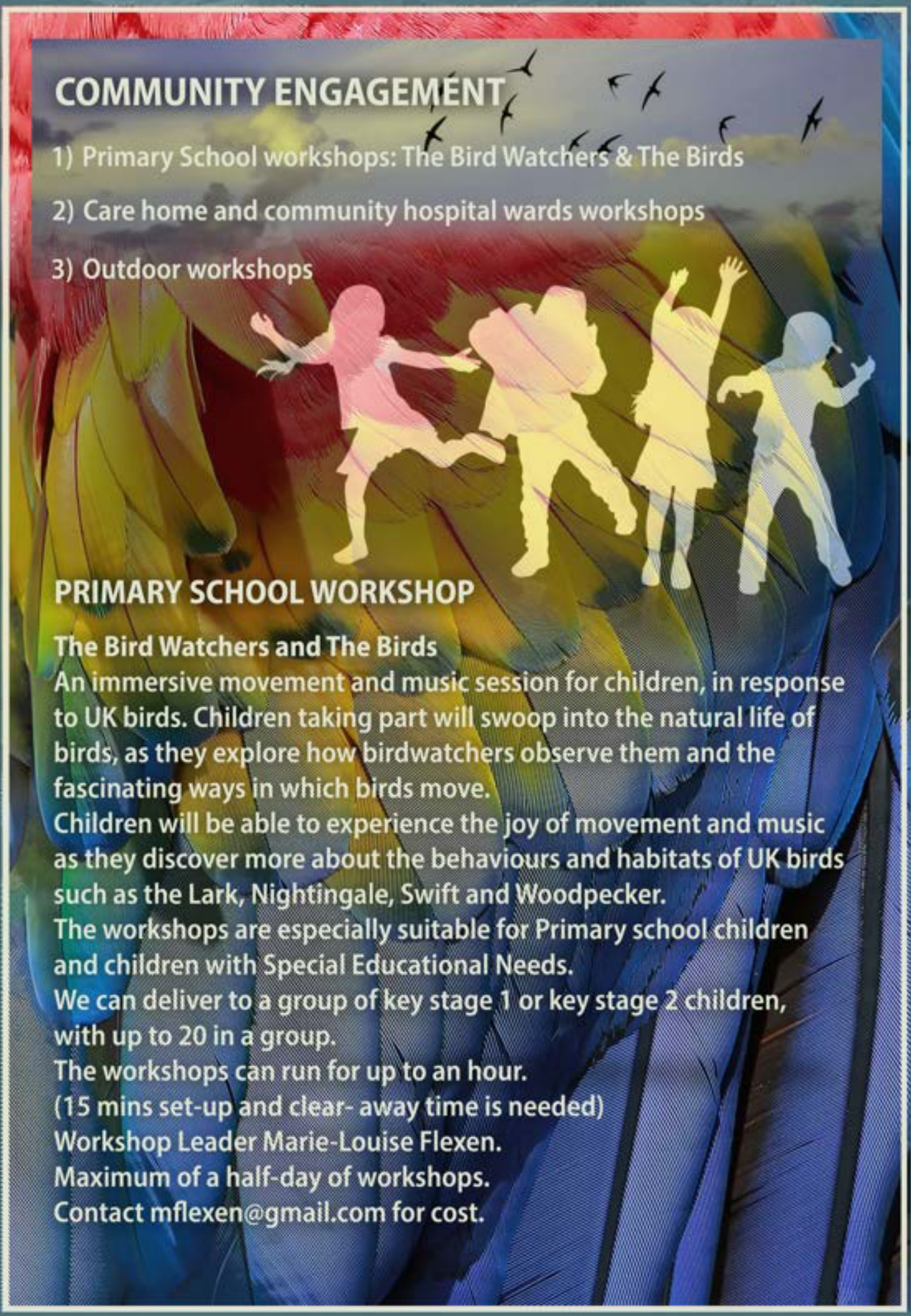
Most suitable for ages 5-10 years old
Children to be supervised by a parent/
carer. Most suited to a library or school
setting.

Performers: Marie-Louise Flexen and
Steven Skinley
Maximum of 2 shows per day

Fee is £400.00 plus travel and expenses



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



- 1) Primary School workshops: The Bird Watchers & The Birds
- 2) Care home and community hospital wards workshops
- 3) Outdoor workshops

PRIMARY SCHOOL WORKSHOP

The Bird Watchers and The Birds

An immersive movement and music session for children, in response to UK birds. Children taking part will swoop into the natural life of birds, as they explore how birdwatchers observe them and the fascinating ways in which birds move.

Children will be able to experience the joy of movement and music as they discover more about the behaviours and habitats of UK birds such as the Lark, Nightingale, Swift and Woodpecker.

The workshops are especially suitable for Primary school children and children with Special Educational Needs.

We can deliver to a group of key stage 1 or key stage 2 children, with up to 20 in a group.

The workshops can run for up to an hour.

(15 mins set-up and clear-away time is needed)

Workshop Leader Marie-Louise Flexen.

Maximum of a half-day of workshops.

Contact mflexen@gmail.com for cost.

CARE HOMES AND COMMUNITY HOSPITAL WORKSHOPS

All Things Birds!

An inclusive and therapeutic movement and music session, in which participants will have a full sensory experience, as they journey into the natural life of birds.

Those who take part will be invited to enjoy moving to music and reminisce about their own memories of birds. To touch and explore the movement of feathers, or perhaps hold a bird nest. To become the birdwatchers, as Marie-Lou dances among them. To play with rhythm and listen to the natural sounds of birdsong.

The workshops are for adults with a learning and/or physical disability and older people in care and hospital ward settings. The sessions are inclusive and can meet the needs of all the participants.

The sessions can be run during a morning or afternoon. Time will include setting up, participant movement, music, some movement from Marie-Lou, time to talk about birds and the all-important tea break!

Workshop leader Marie-Louise Flexen.

Maximum of 2 workshops per day.

Contact mflexen@gmail.com for cost.

MARKETING DETAILS



Website:

<https://www.marielouiseflexen.com>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/marielouiseflexen>

Facebook :

<https://www.facebook.com/marielouise.flexen>

Marie-Louise is an experienced dance artist, versatile performer, choreographer and movement director with 30 years' experience. She has worked with renowned dance makers and theatre directors since graduating from the London School of Contemporary Dance. Over the past 20 years she has produced, created, and directed numerous Arts Council funded and commissioned performances, which have included large-scale site-specific works, touring dance theatre, dance films, combined arts collaborations, outdoors arts, street theatre, participatory dance, cabaret and performance for influential musicians. Previously Marie-Louise was a company member of Seven Sisters Group, London and El Paller, Catalunya. After moving to Gloucestershire, she also became a dancer with rhythm tap company Sole Rebel and Swerve Dance Theatre. Marie-Louise won 2015 Inspiring Leader, One Dance UK award. She was a finalist in The Place Prize 2005 and was nominated for a Total Theatre Award 2007.

MARKETING APPROACH AND DEMOGRAPHIC

Suitable for all ages. Suitable for dance audiences, bird watchers and everyone! The piece has been created to share information about birds on the endangered red list in an engaging and accessible way, with a heartfelt message of hope.

**It is engaging for all ages and those who enjoy a range of performance experiences and connections to nature. It includes dance, text, song and tap dance
Links to birds in well-known text and poetry**

Event organisers to promote via posters, email and social media and any direct audience engagement appropriate. We provide text and images.

We share via our own social media channels. Please tag Marie-Louise.



Photo: Steve Skinley

AUDIENCE AND INDUSTRY FEEDBACK

"The most beautiful dance experience I have ever attended. Thank you for organising it. I was in tears throughout the performance".
Audience member. Bishops Cleeve Library

"It was probably our most positively received event from the Earth Day programme, so thank you again for providing such a moving experience for the audience".
Chelsea Crutchley, Gloucestershire Libraries Events Co-ordinator

"So beautiful. The way you captured the movement is exquisite. Good to have the dialogue in too as it helps those that are visually impaired and it also informs the audience".
Audience member. Tinkley Gate, National Trust

"Bird Nerd is a delightfully informative dance theatre piece. Marie Lou's performance is captivating as she takes us through the detailed characteristics of 4 of the endangered species on the Red List, woven cleverly into a bird watcher's day. A very special performance that everyone should see".
Rebecca Seymour, Creative Producer, Celebrating Age Wiltshire

"Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the performance and I have never seen them so enthralled or quiet. That says it all. Everyone was talking about it afterwards".
Athelstan House, Malmesbury

"I just wanted to thank you for delivering the storytelling session and the marvellous performance."
Sarah Fletcher. Swindon Dance,
Family Fiesta Day organiser

Photo: Steve Skinley



PERFORMANCE IMAGES

*"Sometimes it's easier to fly far away,
than to stay and struggle against the odds.
returning to the ground, only once it's safe"*

*"With your tip-tap-tapping,
like a roadman drilling,
the sound of your rythmn
is everso thrilling"*



*All the voices
that are spinnin' around me
Trying to tell me what to say
Can I fly right behind you?
And you can take me away*



*"As I danced , the nightingale told
me that while life can be difficult,
there is still beauty, love and joy
to be found, often in the smallest
of things*



*"Aerobatic sooted soarer,
Winged dynamic dancer.
Ancient bird speeder*

Photos: Sarah Gardiner

BIRD NERD TEAM

Co-producer - Sarah Lorraine Ferris

Access support worker - Jack Clearwater

Theatrical mentor: Susie Donkin

Sound Design: Steven Skinley

Filmmaker: Robyn Pete

Costumes: Katie Taylor

Pack Design: Steven Skinley

Tap choreography: Hannah Ballard

Tap boards - Flexen Bespoke and Steven Skinley

Well-being & accessibility mentoring - Holly Thomas
and Helen Edwards



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

**SWINDON
DANCE**

**GLOUCESTER
GUILDHALL**

HAWKWOOD
centre for future thinking



Prema



**Stroud
— Arts
Festival**



OHC
OXFORD • HEALTH • CHARITY

DiG
— DANCE IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE