



Thursday 26th June 2025 **PROUDLY PRINTED IN THE THEATRE AND CIRCUS FIELDS OF GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL** FREE • LIBERA • GRATIS

KEEPING THE PEACE

With a fallow year looming, Michael Eavis is ready to squeeze every last drop of fun from this year's Festival, while keeping alive its commitment to standing up for what matters

Words by Chris Salmon

Sitting in an armchair in his house overlooking the Glastonbury Festival site, a few days before gates open, Sir Michael Eavis is telling a story, punctuated by frequent bursts of uproarious laughter. It's about a gang of people in the late 1980s "that was all about drugs and rock 'n' roll", who, he says, thought they were running the Festival. This, as you'd imagine, was contrary to what Michael – the man who created the event in 1970 and on whose farm it still takes place – believed. In fact, Michael was the leader of the other group who thought they were in charge: "the CND campaigning people," as he describes them.

"So, one morning before the Festival," says Michael, "I went to milk the cows at 5am. I looked at the Pyramid Stage and I thought, 'Hang on, where's the big CND sign gone?'" The answer, it transpired, was that in an act of petty rebellion, the rival group had taken it down in the middle of the night and rolled it off across Worthy Farm's fields. Undeterred, Michael milked the cows and got the sign put back up. Not long afterwards, the rock 'n' rollers decided to leave. "They really didn't like our campaigning," says Michael.

And what's made Michael think of this now? Well, every day in the run up to the 2025 Festival, he's been taking a drive around the site to see how the build is progressing. "I do enjoy that," he says. "And do you know who's building IICON,

the big head-shaped stage in Block9? The children of the rock 'n' rollers! Isn't that extraordinary?! What a turnaround!" At which point, Michael starts laughing again.

Of course, the big CND sign is sitting atop the Pyramid Stage again this year. Michael first began supporting the charity – which campaigns for peace and a nuclear-free world – when nuclear weapons were moved to Newbury, around the time his daughter Emily was born. "Campaigning was a driving force for me then, and it hasn't changed," he says.

Glastonbury could easily have morphed into being just a corporate concert in a field, but the Festival has always leaned left, campaigned against war, stood up for the oppressed and argued for a better, greener world. Fifty-five years in, the event resolutely still stands for something. "Oh heaven's above, yes, of course it does," says Michael. "And I think the people that come here are into all those things. People that don't agree with the politics of the event can go somewhere else!"

But even with his 90th birthday fast approaching, these fields are the only place Michael wants to be for the next few days. "I can't run around like I used to, which is a bit of a drag," he says, "but I still get really excited."

Pressed for his Glastonbury 2025 highlights, Michael says he's particularly fond of Glastonbury-on-Sea's pier – "incredible!" – and is

looking forward to the return of two fellow Glastonbury veterans, Neil Young and Rod Stewart: "I love their voices and their songs," he says, with bright-eyed enthusiasm. "I still take a lot of pleasure from all of it. I'm enjoying every day. And Emily is doing so well. I'm just feeling really safe with the show being in her hands."

He is, though, pleased that they'll both get a break in 2026, when Glastonbury takes a fallow year. "I invented those in the '80s," he says, "because it was very stressful with the licence, the police, the village, the press and the council. I thought, we'll give them all a break so they've got nothing to complain about for a bit! And, of course, the farm gets a rest. It was a really good idea. I think we'll all be ready for a break next year!"

Until then, Michael will make the most of Glastonbury 2025, beginning with last night's return of a circus show to the Pyramid arena for the first time in 35 years. "That 1990 one was because they wouldn't give me a licence for a music festival," he smiles. "So I booked a French circus troupe called Archaos and told the council, 'It's a theatre and circus festival now!' – and they had to give me the licence."

After Archaos' spectacular show, which involved cars driving up the side of the Pyramid Stage, Michael went to give the death-defying troupe's leader their fee. "And he said to me," says Michael, slipping into a French accent, "Monsieur Eavis, I admire your cou-range!" Our host bursts out laughing again. But who would disagree?

AFTER THE GOLD RUSH

How Shangri-La's brand-new theme is putting nature back in the driving seat *Words by Emily Mackay*

What happens when the clearance sale of late-stage capitalism ends? After two years of satirising consumer culture and inequality with their Everything Must Go theme, the team at Shangri-La, the South East Corner's art paradise, are ready to answer that question.

The area has undergone a root-and-branch transformation; if Everything Must Go was flashy, neon and urban, its new theme, The Wilding, is thoughtful, natural and very, very leafy. The team ditched social media and returned to their free-party-schooled roots, hand-printing line-up announcements and sending them out with seed packets and plant markers. "I had to really think: what is the essence of Shangri-La?" says creative director Kaye Dunning.

Thinking about the essence of things is exactly what the "Shangers" crew are trying to encourage, and the design of the space will inspire slower appreciation, full of choices, turning points and reflective corners. "We just want to bring

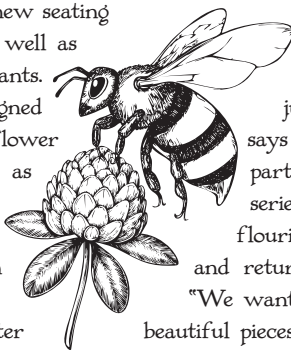
back that awe and wonderment you have when you're in the woods, or when you're a kid and experiencing something for the first time," says Kaye.

The team have been reworking the materials that made up Everything Must Go, breaking down the slogan-plastered shopfronts and working them into new seating areas and structures, as well as growing hundreds of plants. There's a garden designed with help from Chelsea Flower Show award winners, as well as The Allotments, where artists have been given free rein to design their own plot.

The idea is to foster alternatives to big-tech dystopia. "We want to give people some actual hope in how we get around those things that are ruining our society, our communities and our mental health," says Kaye. "It's a madness, isn't it? It's everywhere you go, and people just follow the blue light. People just get sucked in."

Instead, between shows on the Shangri-La Stage, audiences can get sucked into a Wilding AV performance, projected onto giant tree sculptures made by the creative collective, Trigger. Its soundtrack uses the voices of ordinary people, talking about their relationship with nature – to be further enriched with the contributions of this year's audience.

And all this is just "the pilot episode," says Kaye. "Almost like part one in a five-year series." The Wilding will flourish in the fallow year and return bigger and better. "We wanted to create massive, beautiful pieces of art that can live on for many years and grow with us... every plant we're bringing to the field, we will repot and bring back in 2027," she says. "We want to take people out of their lives completely, and give them a whole new shared experience. Because there's real magic in lots of people getting together en masse."



HOOTIN' AND A HOLLERIN'

Emerging Talent Competition winners Westside Cowboy saddle up to play this year's Festival *Words by Rhys Buchanan*

When Manchester's Westside Cowboy picked up the Pyramid Stage-shaped trophy that came with winning this year's Emerging Talent Competition, it carried extra weight for one member of the band in particular. "I remember running around the Festival when I was ten years old," says drummer Paddy Murphy, who grew up locally. "I vividly remember dreaming that maybe, one day, I could play on one of those stages."

The four-piece band had already been shortlisted from thousands of online entries before they won over a judging panel that included Michael and Emily Eavis at this year's live finals in Pilton.

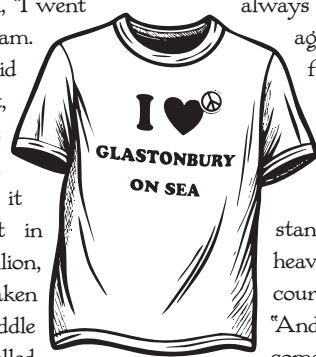
There are echoes of Pavement, Teenage Fanclub and other slacker-rock heroes in their tender alt-rock, alongside more contemporary influences such as English Teacher – but Westside Cowboy's sound is distinctly their own. With Aoife Anson O'Connell singing alongside guitarists James Bradbury and Reuben Haycocks, the melodic precision of West Coast Americana cuts through in songs bright enough to command attention in even the rowdiest of rooms. And now they're here, ready to grab yours.

"This whole process has just been the biggest dream," says Paddy. "Despite Glastonbury being one of the world's biggest festivals, it still

feels really grassroots and family-oriented. It's great how something so big can feel so real, and that it has this platform to champion the next wave of talent."

Given the band came through Manchester's DIY music scene, it's unsurprising to hear Aoife explain how they're approaching this weekend's shows – including an opening slot at Woodsies on Sunday – like any other gig. "We're just going to do what we do, because that's what got us here. We'll bring our own amps and be as loud as possible!"

Wishing Well, Thursday, 10.10pm; BBC Introducing, Saturday, 6.30pm; Woodsies, Sunday, 11.15am



25TH - 29TH
JUNE 2025

WORTHY FARM
PILTON

FRIDAY

THE 1975 • LOYLE CARNER • BIFFY CLYRO • ALANIS MORISSETTE
BUSTA RHYMES • MARIBOU STAYE • GRACIE ABRAMS • FOUR TET • WET LEG
ANOHI AND THE JOHNSONS • BADRADNOTGOOD • BLOSSOMS • BURNING SPEAR
CMAT • DENZEL CURRY • EN VOGUE • ENGLISH TEACHER • PATBOY SLIM • FAYE WEBSTER
FLOATING POINTS • FRANZ FERDINAND • GLASS BEAMS • INHALER • LOLA YOUNG • MYLES SMITH • OSEES
PINKPANTHERESS • SELF ESTEEM • SUPERGRASS • VIEUX PAKA TOURE • WONDERHORSE

SATURDAY

NEIL YOUNG AND THE CHROME HEARTS • CHARLI XCX • RAYE • DOECHII
DEFTONES • EZRA COLLECTIVE • JOHN FOGERTY • AMYL AND THE SNIFFERS
AMAAARAE • BEABADOOBEE • BETH GIBBONS • BOB VYLAN • BRANDI CARLILE
CARIBOU • FATHER JOHN MISTY • GARY NUMAN • GREENTEA PENG • JADE • JAPANESE BREAKFAST
KAISER CHIEFS • KNEECAP • LEPTFIELD • LUCY Dacus • NICK LOWE • NOVA TWINS • PA SALLIEU
SCISSOR SISTERS • THE SCRIPT • TV ON THE RADIO • WEEZER • YUSSEF DAYES

SUNDAY

OLIVIA RODRIGO • ROD STEWART • THE PRODIGY • NOAH KAHAN
NILE RODGERS & CHIC • WOLF ALICE • JORJA SMITH • OVERMONO • THE LIBERTINES
AJ TRACEY • BLACK UHURU • CELESTE • CYMANDE • DANILO PLESSOW • DJO
FUTURE ISLANDS • GIRL IN RED • GOAT • JOY CROOKES • KAE TEMPEST • KATY J PEARSON
PARCELS • PAWSA • ROTEL OTIS • SHABOOZEY • SNOW PATROL • SPRINTS • ST. VINCENT
THE BIG MOON • THE BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE • THE MACCABEES • THE SELECTER • TURNSTILE

SUPPORTING OXFAM, WATERAID, GREENPEACE AND OTHER WORTHY CAUSES

One of this year’s limited edition posters – printed on our vintage Heidelberg press and available to buy from the Free Press tent in the Theatre & Circus Fields.

WAGING HEAVY PEACE

Nine reasons you really should come rockin’ with Neil Young on Saturday night at the Pyramid Stage *Words by John Lewis*

He doesn’t take his headline slots lightly

Neil’s last visit to Worthy Farm, in 2009, delivered one of the great Glastonbury sets. It included 50 years of hits (Heart of Gold, Cinnamon Girl, Down by the River, The Needle and the Damage Done), an extended version of Rockin’ in the Free World with five false endings, and a closing cover of The Beatles’ A Day in the Life, which saw him rip the strings from his guitar and beat it with a mic stand, before performing an unexpected vibraphone solo.

He was once in a band with Rick James

In 1966, Neil played guitar in a Toronto band called the Mynah Birds, fronted by the future Superfreak funk legend. They were signed to Motown until Rick was arrested for absconding from the US Navy.

He’s the godfather of grunge

His albums Rust Never Sleeps

and Ragged Glory are cited as the blueprint for grunge. Sonic Youth, Pixies and Dinosaur Jr all covered his songs. Nirvana, Alice in Chains and Stone Temple Pilots were Neil Young obsessives. Soundgarden and Blind Melon toured with him – and Pearl Jam were even his backing band on 1995’s Mirror Ball. “He’s taught us a lot as a band about dignity and commitment and playing in the moment,” said Eddie Vedder, inducting Neil into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1995. During his speech, Neil thanked the late Kurt Cobain for his inspiration.

He’s a cult film director

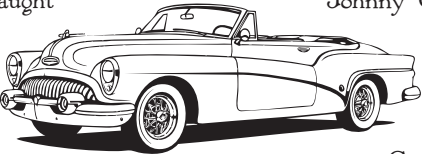
In 1982, Neil spent \$3m producing and directing Human Highway, a film set in the hours before a nuclear holocaust. It starred Dennis Hopper, Dean Stockwell and the new wave band Devo. David Lynch was a fan.

He’s been covered by just about EVERYBODY

There have been more than 3,000 versions of more than 200 Neil Young songs, including covers by... Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Oasis, Dolly Parton, The Byrds, Lana Del Rey, Saint Etienne, Paul Weller, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Johnny Cash, Everything but the Girl, The Meters, System of a Down, Elvis Costello, Susanna Hoffs, The Smashing Pumpkins, Roxy Music, Thom Yorke, Everything Everything, Teenage Fanclub, Norah Jones, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Damian Lewis, Dave Gahan, k.d. lang, Duran Duran...

He collects vintage cars

As a child, Neil fell in love with the 1953 Buick Skylark and has since acquired dozens of vehicles, including a 1941 Chrysler Windsor Highlander that once belonged to Steve McQueen, a 1948 Buick hearse,



LIVE AND LEARN

Standup Alexandra Haddow on what the Festival has taught her

All of life can be found in the Cabaret tent

We all know who the main stage headliners are, but who are you going to stumble across in the Cabaret tent at 3pm on Friday? As a performer and compère, I’ve met John Cooper Clarke, got a photo with Basil Brush, eased some seriously scrambled minds and introduced two of the country’s most famous comedians – not telling jokes, but DJing at midnight. It shape-shifts through the day, and none of those shapes are boring.

Never try to upstage a fox

Speaking of Basil, never, ever

try to one-up him – you won’t win. Especially when it comes to confusing the hell out of your audience with biting political satire and extremely post-watershed jokes. I know from experience. You weren’t part of everybody’s childhood, so all you can do is your best and look on the bright side: no one has their hand up you for your entire set.

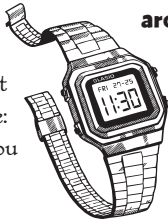
The key to feeling young again is The Healing Field

Two years ago, my boyfriend had a gong bath and swears he left the

tent a new man. Can Charli xcx do that? Probably. But now you can also walk around the rest of the Festival with a zen glow.

You can never have a bad time around a campfire

Strummerville is growing every year, with surprise acts swinging by there most days. Gems like Strummerville are the places to see the coolest acts, on a stage you can almost fit in your car. Don’t miss Joei Supernova’s annual Thursday night DJ set – the best way to kick off your Glastonbury.



Time means nothing here

When was the last time you watched a DJ while eating a breakfast bap? And the only time you’ll say, “Quick, there’s a band on I want to see,” as the sun rises, is at Glastonbury. So, throw your watch away, it has no use here.

Expect the unexpected

Last year, I saw Gok Wan smash his DJ set in the Glade without putting a chunky waist belt on anyone, and snooker legend Steve Davis was in the queue at the bar after spinning his weird music. Who’s next? Well, the BBC’s Ros Atkins is DJing at Stonebridge again. Fingers crossed for a set from Claudia Winkleman somewhere.

Alexandra performs at Cabaret, Saturday, 10.30pm... before Basil!

HERE'S TO YOU, GLASTONBURY

BY POET IN RESIDENCE JOHN BERKAVITCH

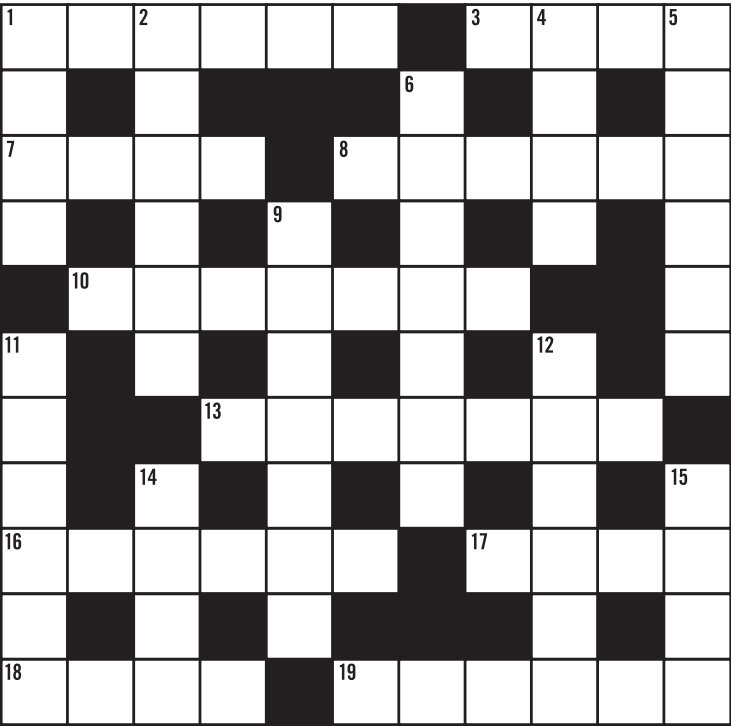
To all of you who gave your time to really make this party,
The fire-breathing, manic pixie, yoghurt-weaving, planet-fixing,
Total dream of magic stitching, tofu-eating wokerati,
Thanks to all these people. For all they did and do
And thanks to those who stay behind to be part of the clean-up crew,

See this is a festival that was built from actions,
And every action is an act of love,
It would be for nothing if not for you,
So here’s to you, for showing up.

Read the full poem, plus more of John’s work, at glastonburyfestivals.co.uk

GLASTONBURY CROSSWORD #4

By Papersmyths (Answers on page 4)



ACROSS

- 1 Find one at Glastonbury-on-Sea (6)
- 3 You’ll see one fluttering in front of the Pyramid Stage (4)
- 7 As in, Rimski’s and Mez (4)
- 8 German emperor precedes leaders, on Saturday (6)
- 10 _ Spear, Friday’s roots reggae artist (7)
- 13 Sunday headliner’s surname (7)
- 16 There is a dragon one (6)
- 17 Type of patrol you’ll find on Sunday (4)
- 18 This press, for example (4)
- 19 Pilton __, ooh la la! (6)

DOWN

- 1 __ and the Sniffers (4)
- 2 Tent with high-flying acts (6)
- 4 What you are if you can’t find your tent (4)
- 5 Peace __, visited by the Dalai Lama (6)
- 6 Good ones are required in any crowd (7)
- 9 90s R&B group performing on Friday (2-5)
- 11 First name of Saturday’s jazz drummer (6)
- 12 Jalen __, soul singer at The Park (6)
- 14 Escapism was her breakout single (4)
- 15 A pair were said to be found under the Pyramid Stage (4)

FULL-KIT WONDERS

Prepare to out-observe your fellow football fans

Words by Rhys Buchanan

Whether it’s that garish keepers’ jersey that should have stayed at the bottom of your mate’s wardrobe or a checkered retro beauty from the Bundesliga 2, you’re guaranteed to see plenty of classic football shirts at the Festival this year. It’s a craze that’s grown exponentially, turning Worthy Farm into a football-hipster catwalk – a trend that pals Carl Faulkner and Rhys Hayter first spotted in 2019, when they decided to start snapping polyester devotees for their Festival Football Shirts Instagram page.

“We were sitting around our campsite and noticed people walking

by in different colours. We’re both massive footy fans and have been going to festivals since our late teens, so we just started documenting it,” says Rhys. The concept is simple enough: “We go up to strangers, chat to them and get a silly photo.”

Carl still remembers the characters they met in the first year of collecting Festival-goers in their shirts. “There was a guy camping next to us in a Portsmouth shirt from when the club was in the doldrums... but the highlight was a bright orange Swansea away shirt from the 90s!”

A football shirt is, it seems, the perfect Festival ice-breaker. “We’ve

and a Hummer that runs on biodiesel. His favourite is the hybrid LincVolt – a 1959 Lincoln Continental which he has adapted to run on electricity and ethanol.

He set up a charity

Two of Neil’s three children were born with cerebral palsy, including one with paraplegia. In 1986, he set up The Bridge School, an organisation to help children with severe speech and physical disabilities.

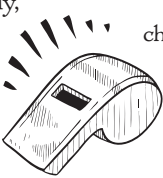
He’s a hero in east London

Two tracks on Neil’s classic 1972 album, Harvest, were recorded with the London Symphony Orchestra at Barking Town Hall. In 2023, Barking and Dagenham Council hosted a celebratory Neil Young Day, with local boy Billy Bragg unveiling a plaque at the venue.

He doesn’t like Trump using his songs

When Donald Trump started using Rockin’ in the Free World and Like a Hurricane as campaign anthems in 2015, Neil responded: “Every time one of my songs is played at your rallies, I hope you hear my voice... the voice of a tax-paying US citizen who does not support you.”

Neil Young and The Chrome Hearts headline the Pyramid Stage, Saturday, 10pm



THE HEALING FIELD

WORKSHOPS

YOGA

HATHA FUSION
ASHTANGA
IYENGAR
LAUGHTER

CLASSIC TAI CHI

SACRED CHANTS

TAROT CARDS

REFLEXOLOGY

SHIATSU

KUNDALINI DANCE

QIGONG

SPORTS MASSAGE

OPEN-HEART SINGING

PRANIC HEALING

ACUPRESSURE

NUMEROLOGY

ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

GONG BATHS

Q&A: GARY LINEKER

The football icon talks Rod the Mod, the need for more kindness and headlining the Pyramid Stage

Interview by Chris Parkin

You came to the Festival in 2019; what did you think?

It was a lot of fun! When you arrive at the start, the overriding thing, more than anything, is the vastness of it. It's just so enormous. When you're there, the range and the amount of miles of walking you do – I think that was the main thing. And the planning that must go into it strikes me as something quite special. I saw Caribou, they were really good. And Blossoms, who have an album called Gary – I feature a little bit on a video they made. They're both playing this year.

Was Glastonbury on your radar when you were still playing? Magazines like Shoot had us believe footballers didn't have the broadest taste in music.

I think that was fair, if it was based on me. Culturally, I love the theatre, which is probably not typical for most footballers. But footballers are basically young men. A lot of them are into music, I was probably slightly different in that aspect. Also, you're very focused on what you're doing in sport, and that's pretty consuming. There's a lot of life to live after football, that's when you start to look for different things in life.

You selected Rod Stewart for your 1990 Desert Island Discs – is he on your Festival bucket list? Rod is on my list, yeah. I went to see him in concert. I'd just signed for Barcelona in 1986 – I signed at the same time as Mark Hughes – and he was playing at the Nou Camp, so we went along. Half the crowd were

just looking at Mark and myself to see our reactions. Later that night, we went for dinner, and in the far corner of the restaurant sat Rod Stewart. We spent the whole night trying to pluck up the courage to go and say hello, but we never did. I saw Rod at an awards do, told him the story, and he was going. "Why didn't you come and say hello!?"

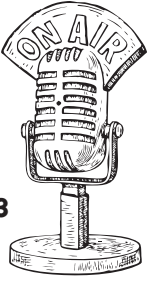
You visited Pilton in 2023 to mark the opening of the latest social homes built by Michael. How important are initiatives like that? I think it's heartwarming what they've done, and the sort of thing you can do to make a difference to people's lives. I don't think it's expected, but it's massively appreciated. It was

an honour to go and open the new housing they created. You can see the difference it makes. You know, I think this government could take on more initiatives like that. Then there'd be more homes for people in the country, which is obviously a massive problem.

Emily showed you around the site afterwards; it looks quite different without all the people...

When nobody's there, you get more of a grasp of the scale, and also the things that have gone into it – the buildings they're making and the various stages. When you're there, you're in a crowd of people, but to see it empty, you could see all its beauty, especially with the countryside it's in.

Your former Beeb colleague Ros Atkins is DJing again. If Silver Hayes asked you, what would you play? I'd wheel in one of my sons to help me spin that kind of, what do you call it, house tech? I'm never quite sure. I'll leave [Groove Armada's] Andy Cato to do the music.



Speaking of Andy, what are you both talking about on Saturday? It's basically along the lines of: everything is done to try and divide us, and I think if people can pull together – because I think most of us are decent human beings – then just a bit more kindness in the world would go a long way at the moment.

Elton John said FA Cup finals are like headlining Glastonbury. Would you swap your winners' medal for a Pyramid Stage slot?

If I could sing! If I had a voice or I could play an instrument, I'd absolutely adore that. I always think, with musicians, there's no one trying to stop them from playing. In football, of course, there's always someone trying to stop you. In music, pretty much everyone in the crowd is on your side. That must be amazing, when everyone's singing along, and you're not going there thinking: I might be s*** today and everyone will hate me. Or maybe they do!

Gary Lineker is in conversation with Andy Cato at The Information, Silver Hayes, Saturday, 5pm

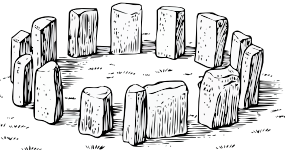
MAKING THE GRADE

From the Emerging Talent Competition to The Park Stage – English Teacher are stepping up

Words by Emily Mackay

"Not everybody gets to go to space," Lily Fontaine sings on English Teacher's 2024 debut album This Could Be Texas. "Not everybody gets a time to shine." This subtly arresting, wryly intelligent Leeds band, though, were always shoo-ins for indie rock's astronaut programme. In 2022, they were runners-up in Glastonbury's Emerging Talent Competition. Now, a Mercury Prize win and an ever-growing fanbase later, they've jumped from a slot at Left Field last summer to an early-evening one on The Park Stage, just before mega-morphing Cali psych-punk legends, Osees. And this time, they're going to be on TV. "I can't wait," says guitarist Lewis Whiting. "It's an absolute dream to play The Park Stage. It's a really big slot, and the fact it's on telly fills me with a lot of excitement.

I love playing gigs like that." Singer Lily is also psyched, "but just talking about this, actually, I'm shaking". Their live audiences have certainly seen a boost since their Mercury Prize win – Lily even occasionally gets recognised now. More importantly, she says, "It's given me a lot of confidence that maybe I didn't have before." They're now channelling this new assurance, as well as their tour-honed knowledge about how songs can grow and change, into their second album. "We're right in the deep of it at the minute, working out what we want out of it," says Lewis. "We're hopefully going to put something down by the end of the year." At least



one new track should get a chance to stretch its legs at The Park. "I'm excited to gauge people's reactions," says Lewis. "If it goes well, that would mean the world," adds Lily. Lewis first came to the Festival as a Hoosiers-loving 12-year-old with his mum and brother in 2008. "It was sick, because we got out of school to go and do it... And I did see Amy Winehouse, but I only remember hearing it and seeing the backs of people's legs." Lily's first time was in 2022, after the Emerging Talent Competition, but she's since thrown herself into the Festival's lesser-known corners. Last year, she was the guest musician at Canon Fodder at the Free University of Glastonbury. "Stuff like that

is what is really appealing to me: getting to experience things outside of the music that are really unique... and I actually met Jodie Whittaker up there afterwards, which was insane, because I'm a massive Doctor Who fan." And as well as watching Doechee and Wolf Alice (Lily), and Beth Gibbons, Alanis Morissette and Weezer (Lewis), they'll be doing plenty of exploring this year. Lily is steeling herself for a taste of the South East Corner at night, after going last year "during the day, just dancing in the middle of no one" – and she's ready to tick off another essential Glastonbury experience. While Lewis has enjoyed the late-night charms of the Stone Circle, even doing a morning interview straight after ("I don't really remember it... just kind of chaos"), Lily has yet to make it up to the King's Meadow in the small hours. "Everyone seems to have their Stone Circle story," she says. "So maybe I'd like to get mine this year."

English Teacher play The Park Stage, Friday, 4.30pm

SLOW DOWN

A few chill-out spots you oughta know

Dragon's Tail Even endurance ravers need to rest their tootsies. That's where this new oasis between Shangri-La and Unfairground comes into play: a pocket of calm with artworks, a bar and chill vibes from Notting Hill Carnival sound systems.

Hilltop havens Many will leave Worthy Farm mere husks of their pre-Festival selves. But those climbing up above The Park or to the Strummerville campfire for a break will emerge victorious, with glutes of steel.

Green Fields In the Festival's beating heart, the BPMs are replaced by wind chimes, thoughtful conversation and a near-glacial pace of life. Once the main stages kick in, a serene magic settles over the Fields' tranquil corners.

The Wood Woodsies' sylvan sanctuary feels like another world – a leafy balm to the hubbub beyond. Climb the ship-shaped platform for a twilight view of the Tor or immerse yourself in the Tree Stage's late-night ambient soundscapes – lying down, eyes closed.

South East Corner by day Like a benevolent Jekyll and Hyde, the South East Corner has two sides: a wild nighttime persona, and a more reasonable daytime version – when you can wander easily and take in all the radical creativity.

Theatre & Circus Fields The price of a quieter life? Being roped into the walkabout performers' mischief or witnessing painfully daring feats under the big top. Or turn your intrusive thoughts into a clay model at Daemon or Doppelganger.

CRAFTY DEVILS

Traditional skills might be under threat – but not at Glastonbury

Words by Chris Parkin

The Festival has long been a maker's utopia. Everywhere you look, there's a painted bin, bench or sign, a hand-carved artwork, or a traditional workshop adding to the magic. But we shouldn't take these displays of creativity – or the skills behind them – for granted. Heritage Crafts, the UK charity supporting traditional crafts, recently reported that an increasing number of skills are critically endangered. It's a trend we can't afford to ignore, believes author of the Red List report and regular Festival-goer, Mary Lewis. "These aren't just exhibits," she says of the traditional crafts being championed in the Greencrafts Village. "They're a direct line to our

cultural heritage and a testament to human ingenuity. Without them, we would lose something essential." Mary is thrilled to see a number of Red List skills given space in Greencrafts, including coracle making, wheel banding, and horn antler craft. But it's not the only place onsite where people get handy. "The Festival is built on heritage craft skills: costume makers, hat makers, puppet makers, set painters and sculptors. From the rich heritage of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller crafts at Atchin Tan to the vibrant art in Unfairground, the Festival showcases the diverse tapestry of makers that define UK cultural expression."

WELL VERSED

Amid all the madness is a Festival singing with poetry

Words by Katie Glass

They say the poetry is in the streets, but here at Glastonbury, stanzas are being performed under canvas. On Friday lunchtime, at the Free University of Glastonbury, you'll find a woman dressed as a human cannonball reading verses at Canon Fodder – a poetry show where writers and musicians perform their work, and the work of an artist underappreciated by 'the canon'. "People can find poetry a bit off-putting or intimidating, or they may feel they don't know how to act at a poetry show," explains Lily 'Canon Fodder' Blacksell. "My feeling is that if I look a bit stupid in my helmet and jumpsuit, no one else needs to worry about that."

Canon Fodder is "a good fit for the Free University because it's vaguely educational and can definitely be enjoyed on a hangover". Last year, Lily's highlight was seeing novelist and poet Joe Dunthorne read Sandra Beasley's poem about capybaras while English Teacher's Lily Fontaine borrowed Shaun Keaveny's guitar. This year, musicians Nabihah Iqbal and Gwenno will be joining in the fun. Poetry belongs at Glastonbury because, Lily says, "it's all about connection! Poems draw connections between images, figures of speech, themes, emotions, details – often unexpectedly. Glastonbury draws

connections between art forms, people, emotions... the lyrics you heard the night before, the catchphrases you end up forming with your friends, the what3words you're sending, the names of food stalls. If those aren't poems in themselves, they're excellent starting points." Poet Brian Bilston joins his fellow verse peddlers at Poetry & Words on Saturday (16.54pm). He last came to Glastonbury "many centuries ago" as a student, and found himself standing next to Feargal Sharkey watching the Pixies. He thinks Glastonbury sings with poetry because it's rich in human experience – and, to quote



Carol Ann Duffy, "it's the music of being human". "I believe there's a poem – or a poet – for everyone. There will be poems which help to bring new meaning or insight, reflection or humour to the things in your own life." Don't worry, though – Brian promises that poetry is accessible to bleary minds, "unless you go and see one of those shouty poets. The monotone of my own delivery, however, will help you sleep it off." He goes on to note that "there has long been a relationship between poetry and hallucinogens. Think Keats and his opium, Baudelaire and his hashish, Larkin and his Vicks VapoRub." And who is Brian looking forward to? John Hegley ("the first poet who made me realise it wasn't illegal to mix poetry and comedy"), Jenny Foulds, Robin Ince, Pete the Temp, Hannah Silva... Not forgetting the bands – after all, aren't lyrics poetry? "I'll leave that question for the literary critics to debate."

LATEST NEWS FROM THE FESTIVAL

BROADCASTING LIVE FROM THE FARM

WORTHY FM ON THE OFFICIAL GLASTONBURY APP & 87.7FM

WORTHYFM.COM

“ME AND MY WIFE ARE GOING TO EXPLORE IN DISGUISE”

We catch up with ‘Little Alex Horne’ – he’s actually 6ft 2in – before he unleashes Taskmaster and The Horne Section on the Festival *Interview by John Lewis*

What brings you to Glastonbury?

I’ve never been before, which is why I jumped at the chance. On Friday, Greg Davies and I are doing a Taskmaster in the Cabaret tent. We don’t often do live shows that aren’t broadcast – the last time was in New York in January, which was madness. There are some tasks we do with the crowd, some on stage with special guests. We’ve never done it at a festival. Expect it to be chaotic but controlled.

Will all the tasks be unique? You famously haven’t repeated a task in 177 episodes...

Actually, that’s not quite true. In the early shows, we asked guests to get Greg a present for less than 20 quid. We did that for three weeks running. They were all very different, but I realised we were repeating ourselves, and from that point on I decided that

all tasks needed to be unique, and I’m quite strict on myself. It does mean that some of them are now getting a bit convoluted. There will be new ones for Glastonbury, but we may do one or two classics from the past.

Taskmaster is like The Apprentice, but good. And funny. Discuss.

I quite like that. It’s because the tasks are being undertaken by comedians. Comedians are funny people, in both senses of the word – they’re funny ha ha, but they’re also funny peculiar. They use parallel ways of thinking, they think outside of the box, they do odd things, they find ways of cutting corners and cheating. I love watching these ridiculous, brilliant minds problem-solve in real time.

It’s become a bit of an international sensation, hasn’t it?

I was on holiday with my wife and children in Portugal and we were in a bar showing the Portuguese version of Taskmaster on telly. I don’t speak a word of Portuguese but I could just about follow what was going on. It’s fascinating to see the Swedish one, which has a female presenter. I think it’s much better for the guests to be told what to do by a woman rather than two old, decrepit men. And the New Zealand version is great. I’m quite hands-on with all these things, because I don’t want to muck up the brand.

You front The Horne Section, who are all very good jazz musicians. Do you actually like jazz?

Oh, good god, no. It’s awful stuff. But I do have terrible taste in music. I like Chris Rea. I like some really

bad folk music. I have terrible taste in most things – clothes, food, film... But The Horne Section is lots of fun. Stupid songs, stupid dances, stupid interactions, costume changes, from five experienced musicians who’ve all played Glastonbury with various bands, along with one idiot comedian who never has.



Didn’t you play the French horn at school?

Yes. I thought it would be funny, because it mirrored my surname. But it wasn’t. It was a terrible choice.

It’s incredibly difficult to play, it’s muffled, you don’t get any interesting parts. But some of my oldest friends were much better than me, and they ended up in the Chichester Youth Orchestra, and became professional musicians. And, at the age of about 30, we decided to

do something together – hence The Horne Section.

There appears to be a lot of crossover between music and comedy...

Oh, there are so many similarities. It’s hard to make a living in both. You’re both used to being ignored. You live a nomadic lifestyle. And there are specific similarities with jazz – both are improvisational, both require close listening and accurate responses in perfect time, both require thinking on your feet. I always like singers who talk a lot between songs. I particularly love lyricists who aren’t exactly comedians but who are funny in a quite oblique and poetic way – Bob Dylan, Jarvis Cocker, Neil Hannon...

Will you be wearing a black suit to Glastonbury?

I have four identical black suits. They’re all very cheap and machine-washable polyester. I’m tempted to wear them around Glastonbury, in the mud, but with the demographic of Glastonbury overlapping with that of Taskmaster, I worry that I’d rather stand out. So me and my wife are going to explore in disguise.

Watch Taskmaster at Cabaret, Friday, 6.55pm; The Horne Section play Avalon Stage, Sunday, 8.20pm

FOCUS IS POWER

Journalist and activist Carole Cadwalladr on her Glastonbury awakening – and why organising matters *Words by Katie Glass*

“I used to see Glastonbury on the telly and think it looked like my nightmare,” laughs Carole Cadwalladr.

Then, in 2017, the journalist and activist was invited to speak at Left Field – and was converted. That year, Carole watched crowds chant Jeremy Corbyn onto the Pyramid Stage, saw Stormzy perform and John McDonnell speak. Then, returning to her campsite at 6am as dawn broke, found Billy Bragg playing guitar by a fire pit. “That was very magical,” she grins. The first gig she’d ever seen was Red Wedge – Billy and Paul Weller’s Thatcher-era protest collective, created to mobilise Labour support through music. Billy was “an integral part in my personal political education, so being at his campsite, and on his stage, felt very special,” says Carole.

“There is a role for music in politics,” she strongly believes.

“The most interesting art engages in the present, and we are living through such an extraordinary political moment. Having musicians, journalists and activists discussing those issues in the context of Glastonbury is really necessary and important.”

In her own work, the Orwell prize-winning journalist, who exposed the Cambridge Analytica scandal and currently writes a Substack newsletter called How to Survive the Broligarchy, takes a particular interest in the vast data harvesting by global technology companies. This year, Carole is hosting a Q&A with director Asif Kapadia (Speakers Forum, Thursday, 7pm) about his dystopian film 2073, a meditation on surveillance authoritarianism and climate collapse. And then,



on Saturday at midday, she joins a Left Field panel on Confronting the Rise of the Far Right.

Her message is urgent: “I really want people to wake the f*** up and realise how technology is such a fundamental threat to our national security and our entire way of life. And the UK government is asleep at the wheel.” She highlights, for example, the existential damage that artificial intelligence is already wreaking on the creative industries. “All the musicians at Glastonbury are having their work stolen by AI companies, who are ripping up our intellectual property laws with impunity.”

But on the plus side, she feels that such moments of crisis are also a moment to rally: “We’re not

helpless, we just have to organise. That’s why Billy Bragg and Left Field is so important, because the Labour movement is a really clear template for how collective action can work. We have power. Elon Musk was a helpful cartoon villain for people to understand technology platforms are dangerous. But I think that moment of calamity is also a moment of great opportunity to organise, motivate and inspire people to take back f***ing control of the internet, because the internet doesn’t have to be this way.”

In a misinformation age, she encourages people to find independent commentators they trust. She reads Timothy Snyder, Ruth Ben-Ghiat, Rebecca Solnit, Robert Reich, and the newsletter produced by her non-profit the-citizens.com – a movement holding tech companies to account.

She still holds on to the power of art, too. Among the musicians Carole is most excited to see this year are Self Esteem – who created the theme tune for her recent BBC Sounds podcast Stalked – and, in the spirit of escapism, Neil Young. “I’m allowed a bit of that!”

"Sounds of Joy and unity," said the horse.

Illustration by Charlie Mackesy, the British artist, illustrator and author of The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse, created exclusively for the Free Press. © Charlie Mackesy, 2025

NOTICES

TABLE SAVER Unsightly water rings ruining your life? You need these Glastonbury beer mats, available to buy from the Free Press tent.



READY, SET, SPANK! Get bouncy with Detroit ghettotech titans HiTech when they open the Lonely Hearts Club stage tonight, 6pm.

ACCESS DENIED Despite reports, HS2 will not be linking up with the Glastonbury Monorail. Shame!

SLIDE AWAY Catch the wondrously melancholy and slide guitar-assisted folk musician Oisin Leech at the Acoustic Stage, Saturday, 1pm.

Evenu shalom alechem
(We bring peace)

Shalom Alerhem
Salam Aleikoum
(We bring peace upon you)

Join the Green Fields’ Mantra
for Peace in the Sacred Space,
today at 12.30pm.

MAKE A WISH! Celebrate yours and everyone else’s birthdays – hey Chris Salmon! – in the Circus Field, Friday to Sunday, 5pm, at The Birthday Party – started by Dug Orton 45 years ago!

GROW, MY PRETTY Floating Points’ Sunflower Soundsystem – six towering speaker stacks – has blossomed just in time for an appearance at Silver Hayes, with guests from Thursday to Sunday.

The Festival is working with WaterAid to make plastic-free disposable sanitary pads and tampons available for free at all information points and women’s urinals. The same number of pads and tampons will be donated to the UK charity, Beauty Banks.

PIER PRESSURE Get an education in top-tier swearing from the king of Glastonbury-on-Sea, Bingo Dick.

DID YOU KNOW? The Festival’s Stone Circle in the King’s Meadow, built by Ivan McBeth, was inspired by the constellation Cygnus.

TEA AND SYMPHONY BBC Radio 3’s Georgia Mann drops an ‘essential classics’ classical set at BBC Introducing, Saturday, 11am.