

Chiltern Arts spends two days in the Risboroughs this May, with music, film, literature and walking...

James Runcie, Fenella Humphreys, *Game of Thrones* star Anton Lesser, the Carducci String Quartet, an on-screen appearance from Isata Kanneh-Mason, a guided poetry walk and so much more: six events across two days in the Risboroughs during the 2024 Chiltern Arts Festival.

The 2024 Chiltern Arts Festival explores the theme of *Human Stories*, presenting musicians of the highest calibre (including **The Gesualdo Six**, **I Fagiolini**, violinist **Fenella Humphreys**, and the **Carducci String Quartet**) alongside literary stars of today (including **Roger McGough** and **James Runcie**). Events take place in Henley-on-Thames (10th–11th May), the Risboroughs (12th–13th May), Hughenden (16th May) and Marlow (17th May). The festival this year also launches an exciting new initiative, **ListenUp & ListenIn**, providing access to live classical music for young people as well as online resources to enhance everyone's concert experience.

From **12th to 13th May**, audiences in the Risboroughs can immerse themselves in music, film and literature — starting in Bledlow in the idyllic setting of the 12th Century Holy Trinity Church with an hour-long concert from one of the Festival's young ensembles, a theorbo and viola da gamba duo. The Lions pub in Bledlow is offering parking for anyone purchasing refreshments either side of the concert, too — providing the perfect opportunity to stop by for a Sunday lunch before an afternoon interlude of French renaissance music and fables.

A film screening (taking place at the Brushwood Suite in Princes Risborough) telling the life of Fanny Mendelssohn, the famous Felix's sister, and featuring piano superstar **Isata Kanneh-Mason** is next on the billing, giving audiences the opportunity not only to hear some of this unheralded composer's music, but to see life through her eyes and to hear her story told in this beautiful documentary — directed by none other than her great great granddaughter.

On Sunday evening, violinist **Fenella Humphreys** and novelist **James Runcie** invite audiences to join them at St Mary's Church in Princes Risborough as they take a deep-dive into Bach's world with a combination of music and readings, drawing from Runcie's latest novel, *The Great Passion*, which explores powerful human themes of family life, grief and religion.

On Monday morning there's an opportunity to stretch your legs, explore the countryside and connect with nature through poetry on a guided walk starting at Whiteleaf Cross. The afternoon travels to Soviet Russia — with a talk in Princes Risborough from BBC broadcaster **Stephen Johnson** on the great Dimitri Shostakovich and how his music can touch our lives today, and an evening concert in Monks Risborough that winds the composer's letters around his emotive string quartets. This concert follows in the footsteps of last year's heart-wrenching Beethoven Letters programme and the **Carducci Quartet** return with *Game of Thrones* and *Endeavour* star **Anton Lesser** to introduce you to Shostakovich in the same powerful way.

This festival is not one to miss... and the opportunity to spend two full days in a single location with multiple events on offer provides a new kind of experience with Chiltern Arts. The new '**Festival Passes**' recognise this: why not treat yourself with a **Risborough Pass** and enjoy **20% off** all six of the events on your doorstep? Book now at chilternarts.com