

A TASTE OF THE FRINGE

A selection of events from the daily diary. See www.brightonfestivalfringe.org.uk for full details

INTERVIEW CRAIG CHARLES



'Look forward to Northern Soul, Afrobeat, loads of Latin... anything that makes you want to dance'

If you're a funk and soul fan or an avid listener to BBC 6 Music you won't want to miss this gem at Brighton Festival Fringe 2009. Craig Charles of *Red Dwarf* and *Coronation Street* fame will be raising the roof of The Parlure, Spiegeltent and Garden with tunes from his 6 Music show. Charles's *Funk and Soul Show* has been broadcasting for seven years, so he's had plenty of practice, and although it's been a slow build, the show now has a real following.

"We played the Elbow Rooms in Leeds and we sold it out about three times over. It's the first time we've gauged the reaction of the people," he says. Tucked inside a radio studio in Manchester, Charles says he didn't quite realise how popular the show was.

He loves playing live. "For me it's a night out!", he says. Look out for tracks such as "Do I Love You (Indeed I Do)" by Frankie Wilson, anything by The New Mastersounds or Baby Charles. "The kind of stuff that really gets the party started," says Charles. There will be old-school disco aplenty, including KC and The Sunshine Band... "We'll play whatever keeps them on their feet," he says. "You can look forward to funk, Northern Soul, Afrobeat, loads of Latin, just anything that makes you want to dance and make you feel good."

Fresh from filming two reunion episodes of *Red Dwarf* that screened over Easter on Dave, and in between takes of *Coronation Street*, Charles says he realises the main reason he's had a chance to take his funk and soul hobby to

new heights is because of his fame.

He says he slipped back into the leather boots, trousers and jacket and dreads of Dave Lister, his character from *Red Dwarf*, quite easily. For him the character comes from the clothes: "It kind of gives you this different kind of swagger," he says.

He says that walking out of the Rovers Return dressed as Lister on the first day of filming felt a little strange. "If someone had told us back in 1987 when we started making *Red Dwarf*, one day you would be doing it on *Coronation Street* we would have been 'aw whatever'," he laughs.

Anne Giacomantonio

Craig Charles plays on 7 May, 10pm, at The Parlure, Spiegeltent and Garden, Brighton and every Saturday 6pm to 9pm BBC Music.

THE INSECT CIRCUS SHOW

With its spectacular combination of magical world, physical theatre, circus skills and extraordinary costumes, the Insect Circus is a truly unique variety show.
2-5 May, 7-12 May, 14-17 May; times vary, see website for details.
Fletch @ St Andrew's, St Andrew's Church, Waterloo Street.
£10 (£7 concessions).
www.insectcircus.co.uk

JOHN MORAN AND HIS NEIGHBOUR SAORI

A rare chance to see New York's hottest partnership: American composer John Moran, the protégé of Philip Glass, alongside his muse and collaborator, gymnast Saori Tsukada. A musical and physical feast that is impossible to categorise.
18-19 May; 7pm.
The Nightingale Theatre, 29-30 Surrey St.
£8.50 (£6.50 concessions).
www.nightingaletheatre.co.uk

TABU MY FEAR AND YOURS

(Pictured right)
Back by popular demand, Europe's most exciting contemporary circus returns to Brighton with a promenade event, an explosion of furious fun and choreographed mayhem - performed above and among the audience.
2, 3, 5-10 May; times vary, see website for details.
Hove Lawn No 1, Kingsway.
£16 (£12 concessions).
www.nofitstate.org

EVENTS

ENJOYING ALAN BENNETT

This celebration of Bennett's life story interweaves eight extracts from his TV work, films, plays and other works of prose. Witty, wise and often poignant, they speak to all age groups through their clarity and impact.
13 May-14 May, 7.30pm; 17 May, 4pm and 7.30pm.
Brighton Hotel, 143-145 Kings Road.
£7 (£5 concessions).
www.brightonbandstand.org.uk

THE BLIND TIGER CLUB - BRIGHTON'S OWN SPEAKEASY!

A prohibition-era speakeasy, at a secret location. Expect loose talk and bad habits; bourbon, gambling, jazz, swing, dancing, and irregular hours. And be sure to remember this: leave the law at the door - if you can find it that is.
1-3 May, 8-10 May, 15-17 May, 22-24 May, 29-31 May; 11pm-5am.
Secret Venue - see website for details.
£10 (£8 concessions).
www.playgrouplive.com

THE STEAMPUNK HIDDEN CIRCUS

For one day only, Time-travelling Victorians will land at the Marlborough Little Theatre to present awesome acts from a future seen in the past. Steampunk Market open all day.
3 May; 1pm-Midnight.
Marlborough Little Theatre, 4 Princes St.
£5 (£4 concessions).
www.myspace.com/marlboroughlittletheatre

KIDS

MAMET'S 'THE POET AND THE RENT'

The poet loves to write. But poems don't pay the rent! David Mamet retains his sharp and visceral style, making this a wonderful show for all ages.
21-24 May; 6pm-7pm.
Marlborough Little Theatre, 4 Princes St.
£9 (£5 concessions).
www.gustarfesom.com



SEVENTHWAVE IMAGES

THE MAN WHO PLANTED TREES

The plot is simple: a shepherd sets out with his dog to plant a forest and transform a wasteland. This is a captivating and timely adaptation of the environmental classic, with comedy, puppetry and storytelling.
19-21 May; 4.30pm-5.30pm.
The Parlure Spiegeltent & Garden, The Old Steine.
£10 (£8 concessions).
www.puppetstate.com

MUSIC

AFRICAN NIGHT FEVER PRESENTS: AFRICA UNITE

Live music from Yiri Baa, Nana Tsiboe & the Supa High Life band and Nhasitafara Crew (featuring Linos Wengara) performing sizzling West-African beats, high life and Afro-Reggae, plus DJs.
12 May; 7.30pm.
The Parlure Spiegeltent & Garden, The Old Steine.
£8 (£7 concessions).
www.theparlure.com

THE BLUES CORPORATION LIVE!

The legendary Brighton based nine-piece blues and soul band makes one of its rare appearances. Frequently a sellout so arrive early or book ahead to avoid missing out.
23 May; 8pm.
The Brunswick, 3 Holland Road.
£10 (£9 concessions).
www.brunswickpub.co.uk

CANDLELIT CLASSICS: KARL JENKINS REQUIEM

As featured on television, the Classical Brits and Classic FM - this powerful work has become a chart-topping success. Don't miss Jenkins' thrilling choral classic performed in stunning acoustics surrounded by candlelight.
16 May 9pm.
St Bartholomew's Church, Ann Street.
£13 (£10 concessions).
www.brightonfestivalfringe.org.uk

CARNIVALESQUE - LIVE MUSIC ON THE DANCEFLOOR

Featuring Yaaba Funk, a 10-piece horny AfroBeat outfit from London, and Baby Charles - diva driven soulful funk ("Watch out for them!" says DJ Gilles Peterson). Plus: the unpronounceable "skalatinasiangypsytech" DJs, fancy dress, crazy performances... and finally, cake.