



NEWS RELEASE

January 2009

Music, fireworks and glamour by the River Thames

- Henley Festival, 8-12 July 2009

Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire, a town that is special all year round, becomes extra special in July. Straight after the famous Royal Regatta comes one of the country's biggest and best-loved Arts Festivals – between 8 and 12 July. With the very best in entertainment set against the magnificent backdrop of the River Thames, there's no better time for a break away. Visitors to the Henley Festival can expect a star-studded programme for 2009, including Floating stage performances from the likes of Katherine Jenkins, Sir Michael Parkinson, John Barrowman, the Bootleg Beatles, a quartet of international opera stars in a Puccini evening presented by James Naughtie, and a UK first, Broadway magic from the rave-reviewed Three Mo' Tenors.

Lasting 5 nights, the glorious Black Tie event that is the Henley Festival includes the very best in music, theatre, comedy and dance. Apart from the main stage performances the Festival will be hosting **Fascinating Aida**, writer and broadcaster **John Suchet**, the rock world's favourite maestro **Ray Gelato**, Spanish guitarist **Eduardo Niebla**, the **Radio String Quartet of Vienna** and singer/songwriter **Rebecca Poole**. There's comedy from **Jan Ravens**, **Rich Hall** and his alter-ego Otis Lee Crenshaw, and 'the compère beyond compare', **Arthur Smith**. Also on offer, cabaret burlesque with **Miss Polly Rae and The Hurly Burly Girllys**, blistering dance music from **Sheelanagig**, and jazz from the talented multi-instrumentalist **Michael Mwenso**, the red-hot **Mishka Adams**, and **Kamerunga**, an extraordinary Australian band that fuses everything from jazz to rap and rock. Additionally, there are huge **firework spectacles** and ad hoc performances

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throughout the glorious riverside enclosure - catch anything from indigenous Australian dance, and a 10-piece **Noise Ensemble**, to street theatre from the likes of giant stilt-based insects and a rickshaw airship.

Audiences will be treated to an event full of contrasting performances on whichever night they attend. As always, one ticket gives access to up to six timetabled events each night (as well as the visual art galleries and ad hoc street theatre fun) and access to a choice of bars and eateries.

Henley-on-Thames itself is a delightful riverside town on one of the most beautiful stretches of the River Thames, so combining the town and surrounding countryside with one of the 'must do' events in the summer calendar makes for a wonderful break away from the stresses of everyday life.

To book tickets for the Festival contact the Box Office on 01491 843404 or visit the website at www.henley-festival.co.uk. For more information about accommodation in and around Henley, visit www.henleyaccommodation.co.uk

Generous sponsors of this year's Festival include: Invesco Perpetual, Westcoast, Laurent-Perrier champagne, Lavazza, Hotel du Vin, Southern Electric.

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For interviews, photographs and other press information, please contact Miranda Johnson on 01962 890208, email mirandajohnson@btinternet.com or Rachel Shimell on 02380 732981, email rachel.shimell@ntlworld.com. Alternatively contact Leslie Metzler at the Henley Festival office on 01491 843400, email leslie@henley-festival.co.uk

Notes to Editors:

Henley Festival Trust

As in previous years, all net proceeds from The Henley Festival 2009 will go direct to parent charity The Henley Festival Trust, to finance Henley Festival's charitable and community activities. Examples of this valuable, and much appreciated work include providing: visual arts workshops at the Chiltern Centre for Disabled Children, music therapy for brain-injured attendees at Headway day centre in Henley-on-Thames, music and arts workshops in local schools, and instruments for promising young musicians.

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