

soundcheck

Issue 22 | April 2023 | FREE

Reading's FREE live music guide

This month's headliner:



LILAC

+ live gigs for April
+ Reading's political music

Heavy Pop, Reading Mencap and friends present...



supporting **Reading Mencap**

10th BIRTHDAY

SATURDAY 6th MAY 2023

ARE YOU LISTENING? FESTIVAL, READING

- Lineup -

BLACK HONEY • THOMAS HEADON JEFFREY LEWIS & THE VOLTAGE

ASH THE AUTHOR • COACH PARTY • DEADLETTER • DEIJUVHS GIRLI • HOLIDAY GHOSTS • SOPHIE JAMIESON • LAMBRINI GIRLS MARISA AND THE MOTHS • THE NEXTMEN • OPUS KINK

JOHN KENNEDY (Radio X) DJ • PANIC SHACK • PET NEEDS

PRIMA QUEEN • SHELF LIVES • TAYO SOUND • TVAM • JESSICA WINTER

ZIYAD AL-SAMMAN • ACID CLAW • ASHKAT • BUTCH KASSIDY • THE BOBO

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PAGE OF SWORDS • PEM • PLAYING FIELDS • PUBLIC BODY • RUM & DONUTS DJ

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MILA TODD • MISSING THE SCENE • TRACKS & GROOVES DJ • UNCLE PEANUT

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RISING SUN ARTS CENTRE 14+ | ST LAURENCE CHURCH 14+ | SOUTH ST ARTS CENTRE 14+ | SUB 89 14+

Tickets and info

areyoulistening.org.uk

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter icons
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areyoulistening.org.uk

Festival Warm-Up Party
Friday 5th May

DREAM WIFE
DIVORCE • DOOPS • HEARTWORMS
THE PINK DIAMOND REVUE
THE PUSH DJ
6:30pm
St. Laurence Church, Reading

In venues marked 14+, all under 18s must be accompanied by an adult. Your wristband grants access to all of the venues on the day, subject to capacity and age restrictions. Line-up subject to change. Proof of age may be required. Reading Mencap charity number: 1118287 readingmencap.org.uk



Sound-check #22



Adam & Elvis @ Beat Connection, St Laurence Church 24.03.23 Photo: Steve Axtell

While writer, David has been interviewing, lately, he's noticed more local acts taking a political/social stance in their lyrics. So, he wanted to speak to some of them again, specifically about just that. Some of rock history might make you think musicians in any kind of politics is just momentary optimism with a big gob and they all grow up to change their minds anyway, so they're best left out of it. On the other hand, there's always been a Specials, a Chumbawamba or an Idles etc... making it so

integral to what they do that the rest of us must be just shallow and lazy for not bothering. Well, it's on the rise and, according to David, very noticeable round here. So we decided, yes – let's go ask them about it. The results are up the back of this issue after an introduction to Lilac ahead of their appearance at Are You Listening? Festival next month and a whole bunch of gigs to get to in the meantime. See you down there.

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LILAC

A wet... really wet Friday night at the Purple Turtle with Lilac.

Interview: RiCH
Photos: Louis Hitchcock



Beth up the front, Olly on the stool at the back and Lewis multi-tasking in between. Together, they are Lilac and I wanted to find them and get the rundown before their slot at next month's Are You Listening? so... obviously, I waited until it was raining really, really hard, got myself on a No.17 bus full of wet people and headed for the Turtle to find them.

When you see a band step on stage armed with a Fender Jaguar each and no bass, you have half an inkling what you're possibly, going to get, right? ie. A lot of noise – but a kind of 'indie' lot of noise, right? And possibly some floaty light vocals. Right? Wellll... not quite with this lot.

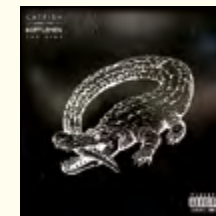
Lot's of guitar noise, sure, and a neat backing track covering the bass end... but then Beth opens up and sings big, loud and proper like it's a rock 'n' roll band. Surprise!

Suddenly, the legend written across the top of their website – 'floral indie with rock 'n' roll spirit' – makes complete sense.

I'm curious now. I asked songwriter, Beth, what the ingredients are that feed this thing. What does she listen to?

Brought up with Britpop-loving parents, Beth, is a longtime fan of Wolf Alice and a big fan of Sonic Youth.

"Love the album 'Goo'. It's my favourite album of all time and it's a massive influence on what we're writing now."



Catfish and the Bottlemen

The Ride

Kind of a new record... We have stock of contemporary and recent vinyl. Not just old stuff!



Isaac Hayes

Shaft

Is this the most 1970s, 1970s artefact in existence?! The Shaft soundtrack on 8-track cartridge.



The Supremes

Meet The Supremes

A beautiful, jewel like record. The Supremes debut on Stateside from 1964 UK Motown LPs didn't exist yet...



Iron Maiden

Flight of Icarus

Turns out Icarus didn't fly too close to the sun. He was attacked by Eddie (Iron Maidens monstrous mascot), with a flamethrower.

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"We never quite capitalise on the dissonance of Sonic Youth, though," reckons Lewis. "because we always push for a catchy chorus."

They've been pushing these ingredients together for two years now, starting in the midst of lockdown with Beth writing songs and sending them to Lewis to do his bedroom production job on them and send them back, and forth, until it's Lilac.

Current tracks out there, *Losing Myself (In You)* and *It's Illusional*, are both bedroom recorded the same way. There's a new single coming, though. It's called *Touch* and they had a different plan for this one.

Lilac's live sound is much heavier than you get on the recordings so far. "Almost completely different," reckons Olly. "Heavier, more noise, more distortion."

And that's what they wanted to capture on the new single so, for this one, "after a year of playing it live, we decided we wanted live drums, and the vocals, recorded in a studio so we went up to The Motor Museum in Liverpool."

Fancy! That's quite a leap!?

"We were followed by this producer who does *The Mysterines* and we love *The Mysterines*. He followed us so we messaged him because we thought 'He's captured a live sound really

well, let's get him involved'. He said 'Why don't you come up to the studio and record a bit?', so we did the three-hour commute."

Sounds like a very worthwhile trip to me.

Also coming up, Lilac, have a top slot at Reading's Are You Listening? festival on May 6th which they've never played before.

"It's kind of an iconic 'mid-tier' festival, I think. It's a benchmark for the great local bands," reckons Lewis.

"It's good for the venues, as well, because it's not out in a field in a tent. It gets some money into the local venues."

And we all need them to look after them, don't we. The good ones, anyway.

And just so you know, at the time of writing this, I believe Lilac have the headline slot at the Rising Sun Arts Centre for Are You Listening?. Keep your eye on the festival website, though, just in case I'm wrong by the time the day comes. ■

lilacband.co.uk

(Waiting for the right moment to say hello to the band, I found a guy hanging around armed with a camera. Turns out he's called Louis, a photographer from London who got the train to Reading to photograph a support band he's never seen, in a venue he's never been to... just in case it was great!! That kind of behaviour, plus the cracking shot on the front of this issue is worth a shout so here it is: www.louishitchcock.photos.)

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VG V

The Village **FREE ENTRY**

Easter Festival 2023
Thursday 6th - Sunday 10th April

Thursday 6th April		
9:00-11:00	The Barnstormers	Retreat
Friday 7th April		
1:00-3:00	Café Zazous	Lyndhurst
3:00-5:00	The Go Go Fives	Retreat
5:00-7:00	Steve Morano Band	Lyndhurst
7:00-9:00	Phil Braithwaite & Friends	Retreat
9:00-11:00	David Gray & John Dunsterville	Lyndhurst
Saturday 8th April		
1:00-3:00	The Keith Allen Band	Retreat
3:00-5:00	Lily Beck & Friends	Lyndhurst
5:00-7:00	Jackie Doe & the Uncertainty of Passion	Retreat
7:00-9:00	Skates and Wagons	Lyndhurst
9:00-11:00	Rufus Ruffcut	Retreat
Sunday 9 April		
1:00-3:00	Mayor & James	Retreat
3:00-5:00	Fleur Stevenson & Hugh Turner	Lyndhurst
5:00-7:00	Paul Glover & Friends	Retreat
9:00-11:00	Hybrid P.I.G	Retreat
Monday 10 April		
3:00-5:00	The Acoustic Beatles Shambles	Retreat
7:30-9:30	Limpopo Groove @ the After Party	Piwnica

The Lyndhurst
88-90 Queen's Road RG1 4DG

The Retreat
8 St John's Street RG1 4EH

Piwnica
81 London Road RG1 4DX

More information
tvef.co.uk

gigguide

SAT 1 APR

THE TURKS
No Good Sons
Free | 8:30

THE FACE BAR
The Skapones
+ The Skavengers
£11.50 | 6:30pm

Tickets include the option to donate for Zoey who is terminally ill with Cancer; please donate what you can to help make her life easier.
tickets.matterpay.com

FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
Live Jazz, Blues and more
Free | 7:30pm

SUN 2 APR

WATLINGTON HOUSE
Readifolk
Liz Simcock
£8(otd) | 8pm

MON 3 APR

PURPLE TURTLE
Amanda's Music presents
The Old Purple Whistle Test
Now Only +
We Don't Run +
Echo Chambers
Free | 8pm | 18+

PURPLE TURTLE
Charity Festival Night for
Meningitis Research Foundation
Goldenboii + Hamez
+ DJ Remy Jones +
Sidious + Nick Clev
+ Br4vo + Jessie
Hilley & more
£3 | 7:30pm | 18+

TUE 4 APR

RUSU: MOJOS
BBC Introducing Live
Deva St. John
+ Rila's Edge
+ Elucidate
£What you can | 7pm | 18+

THU 6 APR

THE BUTLER
FSJB presents
Limpopo Groove
£8(otd) | 8:30pm
Party time with afro-fusion
band Limpopo Groove and
full DJ support.

THE RETREAT
The Barnstormers
Free | 9pm

FRI 7 APR

THE BUTLER
Storm In A Teacup
Edward In Venice
+ For I Am
+ Missing The Scene
+ Launch Control
+ Harrison Wilde
£What you can | 7pm

THE RETREAT
The Go Go Five
Free | 3pm

THE RETREAT
Phil Braithwaite
& Friends
Free | 7pm

SUB89

Ultimate Coldplay
£15.70 | 7pm |
14+(U16 w/adult)
Pretend Coldplay.
premier.ticketek.co.uk

SAT 8 APR

THE FACEBAR
switchblades presents
Paul Ansell's No.9
£12otd | 8pm | 18+

THE RETREAT
The Keith
Allen Band
Free | 1pm

THE RETREAT
Jackie Doe and
The Uncertainty
of Passion
Free | 5pm

THE RETREAT
Rufus Ruffcut
Free | 9pm

SUN 9 APR

THE RETREAT
Mayor & James
Free | 1pm

THE RETREAT
Paul Glover
& Friends
Free | 5pm

THE RETREAT
HybridPIG
Free | 9pm

To list your gig here, for free, just email all the info to copy@sound-check.co.uk.

Info is correct at time of going to press. (At least, I've tried very hard.)

Websites on these pages refer to where to get tickets.

bf = booking fee
otd = on the door
adv = advance

MON 10 APR

PURPLE TURTLE
Amanda's Music presents
The Old Purple Whistle Test
Phil Garvey +
Frankie Bird +
Daed Men
Free | 8pm | 18+

THE RETREAT
The Acoustic
Beatles Shambles
Free | 3pm

THU 13 APR

SUB89
Club Velocity
Shonen Knife
+ The Go Go Cult
£17.60 | 7pm | 18+

40th Anniversary Tour!
"When I finally got to see them live, I was transformed into a hysterical nine-year-old girl at a Beatles concert"
- Kurt Cobain
wegottickets.com

THE BUTLER
Hugh Turner
Funk Quartet
£7(otd) | 8.30pm

High energy jazz and funk originals and covers with explosive guitarist Hugh Turner and group.

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Monday 3rd April
Meningitis Research Foundation Charity Night
GOLDENBOII, HAMEZ, DJ REMY JONES,
SIDIIOUS, NICK CLEV, BRAVO, JESSIE HILLEY
& MORE
Free Entry • 7:30pm

CLUB
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LESS

Monday 10th April
CLUB RECKLESS
Rock, Metal, Emo,
Alt Club night
Free Entry

Tuesday 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th
Weekly drum 'n' bass night
Free Entry • 10pm to close
in The Turtle Dungeon

WOBL

Thursday 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th
FOUND NATIVE
hosted by Mr Sango
The quintessential
sounds of Africa
Free Entry • 10pm-close, in The Turtle Dungeon



Friday 21st April
SIS:DEM
All female DJs



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Free Entry
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Friday 21st April
MATES RATES COMEDY
7:30pm

COMEDY
@
TURTLE

Saturday 22nd
DR SYNTAX & PETE CANNON
SUPPORTED: SPARKZ
7:00pm, in the Turtle Dungeon

Sunday 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th April
SUNDAY REGGAE *hosted by Mr Gee*
Free Entry • 10pm-close
In The Turtle Dungeon

Sunday 9th April **Easter weekend bonanza!**
DON LETT'S, JACK HOLLYWOOD,
BUBBLIN' BOB, THE SKAVENGERS
hybrid culture reggae,
punk and ska gig
Free Entry • 15:00-22:00



Friday 28th April
HARD TIMES
Live Rock covers
8pm

Saturday 29th April
The Scarlet Vixens Burlesque Present
EUROVISION THONG CONTEST
7pm

Every Friday and Saturday
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alternative music. The best sounds
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CAZ AND THE TRAITORS

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FRI 14 APR

SUB89
The Beat
feat. **Ranking Jnr**
£24.65 | 7:30pm
14+(U16 w/adult)
premier.ticketek.co.uk

THE FACEBAR
The Swamp
Morass Of Molasses
+ Mountainscape +
The Two Ton Shoes
£5adv, £7otd | 8pm | 14+
eventbrite.co.uk

SUN 16 APR

WATLINGTON HOUSE
Readifolk
The Foxglove Trio
£8otd | 8pm

MON 17 APR

PURPLE TURTLE
Amanda's Music presents
The Old Purple Whistle Test
One Eyed Man +
Cloud Cat +
Strangers In Transit
Free | 8pm | 18+

HEXAGON
Ward Thomas +
Charlie Worsham
£29.50, £27 | 7pm
whatsonreading.com

TUE 18 APR

HEXAGON
Rumours of
Fleetwood Mac
£47, £37, £32 | 7pm
Pretend Fleetwood Mac
whatsonreading.com

THU 20 APR

PURPLE TURTLE
BBC Introducing:
Deva St. John
+ Split The Dealer
+ Who Ate All The
Crayons
Free | 7:30pm
Pretend Fleetwood Mac
whatsonreading.com

Email listings info to
copy@sound-check.co.uk

FRI 21 APR

SUB89
Resurrection + Noel
Gallagher's High
Flying Carpets
£16.80 | 7pm | 14+
premier.ticketek.co.uk

SAT 22 APR

RISING SUN ARTS CENTRE
Non Canon &
Suzannah Evans
£7.70 | 2pm | All ages
premier.ticketek.co.uk

PURPLE TURTLE
Dr Syntax & Pete
Cannon + Sparkz
£16.50 | 7pm | 18+
premier.ticketek.co.uk

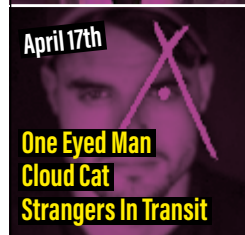
THE FACE BAR
Stogfest Promotions
The Runaway Killers
+ Simulation Muse
£14adv, £16otd | 7:30pm | 18+
tickettailor.com

SUN 23 APR

WATLINGTON HOUSE
Readifolk
The Twagger Band
£8otd | 8pm



PRESENTED BY AMANDA'S MUSIC
Free entry - Every Monday, 8pm
Cellar Bar, Purple Turtle, 9 Gun Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 2JR



April 3rd
Now Only
We Don't Run
Echo Chambers

April 10th
Phil Garvey
Frankie Bird
Daed Men

April 17th
One Eyed Man
Cloud Cat
Strangers In Transit

April 24th
Simon Morley
Nothing Dreams
Dandy Man

MON 24 APR

PURPLE TURTLE
Amanda's Music presents
The Old Purple Whistle Test
Simon Morley +
Nothing Dreams +
Dandy Man
Free | 8pm | 18+

TUE 25 APR

FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
Live Jazz, Blues and more
Free | 7:30pm

FRI 28 APR

THE FACE BAR
Ed Sheeran
Experience
+ One Eyed Man
+ Dan Curtis
£12.50 | 7pm

SUB89

The Black Charade
+ Fell Out Boy
£16.80 | 7:30 | 14+ (U16 w/adult)
premier.ticketek.co.uk

PROGRESS THEATRE
Jazz in Reading
Leon Greening Trio
plus guest Alex Garnett
£18, £16(concs), £9 (U16s)
7:30pm
ticketsource.co.uk

RISING SUN ARTS CENTRE
Club Velocity

The Snags + Horse
Rock + Alan Caruso
£7.20 | 8pm | All ages
wegottickets.com

PURPLE TURTLE
Hard Times
Free | 8pm | 18+

SAT 29 APR

THE CASTLE TAP
Corvid
Free | 8pm

THE FACEBAR
Specialized Reading 2023
Natural Right +
The Corsairs + The
Highwasters + Rage
DC + Till I'm Bones
+ The Skavengers +
Gold Steppers
£16.50 | 12pm | 16+
wegottickets.com

SUN 30 APR

WATLINGTON HOUSE
Readifolk
Theme Night
'Money Matters'
£3(otd) | 8pm

THE FACEBAR
Chop Suey
+ Killswitch UK
£11 | 7pm | 14+
fatsoma.com

FORBURY GARDENS
Cheese Feast 2023
Free | 5pm Fri – 7pm Sun
You're right. Not a gig, it's a cheese-based food fest but... if you're going Sun 30th, a bunch of local heroes, are on for one night only as The EuroVisionaries and playing... well, you can probably guess.

THU 4 MAY

THE BUTLER
FSJB present
Fusion 6
£6(otd) | 8pm
Fusing funk, jazz, blues and Latin elements.

Email listings info to copy@sound-check.co.uk

THE FACE BAR

5TH MAY 2023 – DOORS 7PM – FREE ENTRY!

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Masquerader

Reading's Political Music

Words: David Conquest

Reading has a thriving music scene but not all songs can be about human meets human; human likes human; human likes human a lot; they break up.

There's a healthy socially conscious music scene too that takes a wide variety of personal experiences and turns them into songs to put the world right. And for good reason.

A lot has happened over the last fifteen years or so that's impacted on people's lives and futures. Financial crises, Brexit, Covid, Ukraine, inflation, strikes and just the general state of politics. It's not obvious for many if they'll be able to buy or even rent a home and homelessness has shot up. Not to mention social issues that are mounting up.

From the outside, Reading, in leafy Berkshire, might seem a fairly prosperous city but many people are still badly affected and it's showing up in the home-grown music.

Tape It Shut are an American style punk band (think Anti-Flag, Offspring and Green Day) singing it how they see it. Writer and singer Dan Tape and drummer/vocalist Andrew told me their material is heavily based on UK politics. For them, music is a vehicle to make people more aware.

Dan says "Currently, a lot of the songs in the set are either based on issues we've encountered in the workplace or in our lives where we're like, this is not a great thing, we should write a song about it." He admits he's at his most productive when he's angry, especially after getting through a copy of The Guardian or the Daily Mail. Two of their biggest influences have been Nigel Farage and Liz Truss, so that gives you an idea of the area we're in here.

Their biggest song at the moment (which always goes

down well live) is 'Honest Politics' from EP 'Dinosaurs vs Robots'. It's a pretty easy to comprehend mix of anti-politician rant with a big dose of humour and some pretty darn good riffs to bounce around to.

Dan says "It's essentially this spiel that politicians give out of 'hey, I'm a politician, you should trust me, I have your interests at heart', when they don't entirely have that at all. And that's what the song attacks. It says look, you shouldn't believe these people, we should demonise them. We should criticise them, not take what they say at face value."

Another local band unashamedly pushing their views forward on social issues are **Masquerader**, a noisy math-punk group often seen playing around Reading. I asked writer/singer Danny and bassist Chris about their motivations; why don't they write the usual love and break-up songs?

Danny explains, "I think music for me, it's an expression of how I'm feeling or frustration. It's the outlet for a lot of the things that you can't do much about or you don't have the words to describe in any succinct way, so you use the creativity of a song to get the general gist of what you feel out there. For me, that's always been a big part of the music."

It comes through in his demanding stage presence too, "I'm quite energetic and I throw myself around. For me that performance, as much as it's fun to watch, it's an expression of getting it out there, that frustration."

When he started writing 'Paper Thin' it was about toxic masculinity but soon expanded into his personal experiences of body image and racism. He says "In general, Paper Thin is about the perspectives that different people have on different issues and the constant conflict that the world

is in, whether that's politically or socially. To some people, an issue is the biggest thing in the world and to others it can be an absolute tiny microscopic problem."

The initial spark came from a fascination with videos by "infamous micro-celebrity" Charlie Zelenoff. Danny was drawn to the clash between his questionable behaviour in the boxing ring and his need for affirmation. He saw it as typical of how some guys try to present themselves in a masculine way, "he thinks that his worth is based on how well he can beat people in fights, to be a powerful dude."

Danny used a sample from one of the videos, "It's him having kind of a breakdown, a bit of a panic attack at the time and that's what I chose to sample because I think it's a really strong sentiment. He's trying to go off on a rant and act really tough, but at the same time, he's completely breaking down and I think it really shows the kind of glass house that toxic masculinity is structured on."

This idea of self-worth chimed with his own body image questions (leading to the chorus lyric 'Paper thin, bag of bones') and racism issues. The pair acknowledge though that they're far from being activists and only consider they do the bare minimum in that respect. This was brought home when Danny witnessed a minor anti-trans/LGBT protest outside the library, when a group had come to the city to rally against a family-friendly drag performer reading stories. And so, he took time out to talk about it on stage. Chris says "I think there's a responsibility to show self-awareness and make other people aware of these things."

Tape It Shut




Perhaps they were following their own advice from the second verse of 'Paper Thin', where they address standing up for your beliefs even when they don't 'fit in'. As in, when you're in a group of people who are like you and, because they think they're amongst like-minded people, someone admits to certain opinions. Danny says "Because the unfortunate reality is that white people listen to other white people or guys listen to other guys. Speaking up is hard sometimes. Just because you're not directly affected by these things doesn't mean that you aren't ever in a position where you can do something to help the cause."

What else can you do? Go and show your support to some local bands and then there are local elections on 4th May so get out there and have your say. ■

Tape It Shut play regularly and look out for an album from them towards the end of the year. @tapeitshut Masquerader have an EP out soon and are always gigging around the town. @i.am.masquerader

To advertise in Sound-check, please email me at rich@sound-check.co.uk. There are details at sound-check.co.uk. We're keeping it as cheap as possible to just cover the cost of keeping this thing alive so, the more people buy ads, the cheaper it gets!

Reasonable efforts are made to ensure that all info in Sound-check is correct at time of going to press. If you're worried, though, please check with the relevant venue.

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CLUB VELOCITY/NEW MIND PROMOTIONS PRESENT

GOTH/POST PUNK LEGENDS



GHOST DANCE

PLUS



THURSDAY 4TH MAY 2023

Tickets : £15.00 Adv - More On The Door

Doors: 8.00pm

[WeGotTickets.Com/ClubVelocity](https://www.wegotickets.com/clubvelocity)

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