



## The Ashley Wood Festival of the Acoustic Arts

The beautifully sunny weekend of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> July saw the inaugural Ashley Wood Festival of the Acoustic Arts. Taking place in the beautiful setting of Ashley Wood Farm, Festival-goers were treated to a full two-day line-up of music, poetry, and theatre.



(picture by Tim Kidner, [www.kidnerpix.com](http://www.kidnerpix.com))

There were two inside performance spaces, The Theatre Space and the Barn. Many theatre pieces also took place in the gardens, including a spectacular 45 minute version of Measure for Measure by Bath-based theatre company, Hammerpuzzle, and several short pieces written by writers connected with The Scriptwriters Doo Dah, a group of writers based at Salisbury Arts Centre.

Performers came to the farm from Salisbury, Manchester, Oxford, London, and even Copenhagen. The bill also featured a number of local performers.

Previous page: the view from The Barn (picture Tim Kidner, [www.kidnerpix.com](http://www.kidnerpix.com))



Hammerpuzzle performing in the garden on Sunday afternoon (picture by Tim Kidner, [www.kidnerpix.com](http://www.kidnerpix.com))

One of the most striking features of the weekend was the sheer range of work on offer, from the challenging but wildly entertaining performance of Monkey Poet (Manchester-based Matt Panesh), the socially-informed songs of Dorset's Graham Moore, and Sam Willetts' forensically observed poetry (short-listed for the T.S. Eliot prize), to Le Navet Bete's hilarious physical comedy, the laid-back grooves of Matt Chanarin and Friends, and the delicate harmonies of Copenhagen's Shanghai Lulu. Emily Burrige shared her beautiful solo cello show, and Victoria Mosley read from her recently published novel, *Moonfisher*. All festival attendees commented on the quality of the work on show.



Luke Annis (picture Tim Kidner, [www.kidnerpix.com](http://www.kidnerpix.com))



The Navet Bete in full flow during their hilarious show, Napoleon: A Defence, on Saturday night (picture by Tim Kidner, [www.kidnerpix.com](http://www.kidnerpix.com))

The programme in The Barn was superbly compèred by Feargus Dunlop, of the theatre company, New Old Friends, who also performed a selection of hilarious sketches from Sketchy At Best, their recent show that has been entertaining audiences all over the South West.

Food was provided by local caterers De-Liz, and Keystone Brewery provided the bar.

A range of events were also provided in the pubs of Tisbury, including music from Jim Ghedi and The Epstein at the South Western on Friday night, and a busy Saturday night featuring a poetry evening at Beatons, In The Piepline at The South Western, and Louis Barrabas and The High Priest at the Benett Arms.

Full details of the line-up over the weekend, and further information on all the performers, can be found at the festival website, [www.ashleywoodfestival.com](http://www.ashleywoodfestival.com). Planning is already underway for next year's festival, which will take place on the weekend of the 30<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> July. Early-bird weekend tickets for £40 (a 20% saving on the full price) are available at [www.wegotickets.com](http://www.wegotickets.com) until the end of 2011.