



SUMMERTIME SPECTACULAR



London's biggest-ever outdoor cultural festival comes to the capital this summer, with the 'Mayor of London Presents'. It's a series of extraordinary free events, pop-up performances, magical trails and family fun. Read on for some of its many highlights. By Jo Caird

London's streets, parks and open spaces will come alive with the outdoor performances of **Shovertime: Entertainment Everywhere (until 9 Sep)**, which features British international performers, such as Spanish street theatre company, Osadia (pictured right), and the female drummers of China's Red Poppy Ladies' Percussion troupe (pictured above), who performed at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

As you explore London, keep your eyes peeled for the many pop-up shows and happenings. **Playful**

Cities: 99 Tiny Games (until 23 Aug) transforms the city into a giant playground, with a range of activities for children and adults. To play just read the rules that you'll find posted to a wall or footpath nearby.

Experience the city's scenic streets and best sights on any of six free walking routes with **Stroll: Discovery Trails (until 9 Sep)**, or alternatively encounter its arty side with **Explore: Cultural Trails (until 9 Sep)**.

London's lesser-known spaces can be encountered with **Secrets: Hidden London (until 9 Sep)**, which sees artists and performers create work in unique locations. Environmental arts group Red Earth, for example, have transformed Northala Fields in Ealing (pictured left) with an installation that provides the setting for a ritualistic ceremony of fire and sound.

Dazzle: Bridge Illumination (until 9 Sep) sees river crossings from London Bridge (map C8) to the Golden Jubilee Bridges (map C6) bathed with colourful lights to celebrate the 2012 Games.

There's more culture to be enjoyed at **Liberty (1-2 Sep)**, a weekend of performances from top UK and international deaf and disabled artists taking place in five locations including Trafalgar Square. The festival's 10th anniversary programme features Graeae Theatre Company's acclaimed production of *Reasons To Be Cheerful*, a musical about the British punk-rock legend Ian Dury.

Carnaval Del Pueblo (18 Aug) is the largest Latin American outdoor

festival in Europe, featuring a three-mile-long carnival procession, stage performances, a huge salsa competition, children's area and more. Times to be confirmed (TBC). Head for the London Pleasure Gardens, p. 58. carnavaldelpueblo.com.

London Mela (19 Aug), an event celebrating South Asian culture, blends performance, music, and activities for children with food markets and a giant funfair. This year's 10th anniversary also boasts the Mayor's *Eid* Stage, marking the end of the Muslim festival of Ramadan (13.00-21.00, Gunnersby Park, W3). londonmela.org.

Meanwhile, **Surprises: Pop-Up Performances** (dates TBC), includes *What You Will: Pop Up Shakespeare* with Bard excerpts performed around the city.

• Do check the website for the latest news before visiting. For further details, more events, and how to download the London Official City Guide app, visit molpresents.com

