



LONDON 2012 FESTIVAL

This nationwide cultural festival has a wealth of happenings taking place right here in the capital. Here's just a taster of what's in store.
By Jo Caird and David G. Taylor

Whether you're into dance, music, theatre, fashion, art, food or film, the **London 2012 Festival** is bound to have something to entice you. Running from **21 Jun-9 Sep**, this mammoth, UK-wide festival of creativity is a bit of a cultural Olympics with more than 1,000 events, many of them free to attend. For listings of all the exciting things taking place, visit festival.london2012.com

1 See Leona Lewis (pictured), Tinie Tempah, Plan B, Florence And The Machine, Jay-Z, David Guetta, Jack White, Jessie J, Lana Del Rey and many more amazing music acts at BBC Radio 1's **Hackney Weekend 2012 (23-24 Jun)**. It's the British radio station's biggest-ever free live music event and takes place on Hackney Marshes in east London. The weekender features six stages, including the Radio 1 Main Stage, 1Xtra Arena, an In New Music We Trust Stage, and the BBC Introducing Stage featuring up-and-coming talent. Admission is free, but you must have an advance ticket. Visit the website for full details.



Hackney Marshes, E9. ☎ 08448 737 347. bbc.co.uk/radio1/hackneyweekend/2012/
● Homerton. Off map.

2 On **14 Jul**, Trafalgar Square will be transformed for the finale of **Big Dance 2012** (pictured above, **7-15 Jul**), a biannual UK-wide celebration of dancing. The culmination of thousands of events taking place all over the country, 2,000 dancers will come together for a performance that will have to be seen to be believed. Wayne McGregor, resident choreographer at the Royal Ballet, directs the enormous troupe with support from the English National Ballet, and dance groups and choreographers from across London. You'll find a whole range of spectacular dance events taking place in unusual spaces across the capital, from flash mobs to pop-up cinemas and tea dances, plus a series of countdown events heralding the season, from as early as June. For full details, visit bigdance2012.com

3 Opening from **21 Jun** is the **Official London 2012 Olympic And Paralympic Poster Display**. Running at Tate Britain (p. 82). This exhibition features official Olympics posters from 1912, to the present day, and includes London 2012 designs by a range of artists such as Tracey Emin, Bridget Riley, Chris Ofili, and Bob and Roberta Smith (pictured).

4 Get set for the largest poetry festival ever staged in the UK. The Southbank Centre's **Poetry Parnassus (26 Jun-1 Jul)** brings together more than 200 poets (one from each of the competing Olympic nations), for a week of free, multilingual readings, plus workshops, discussions and more. It's part of the Southbank Centre's **Festival Of The World** season (from **1 Jun**), with an international-flavoured assortment of cultural events, including many you can take part in.
Southbank Centre, p. 111.

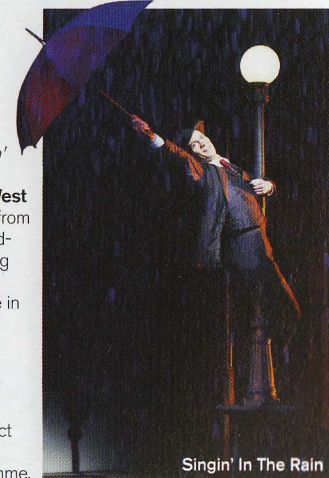
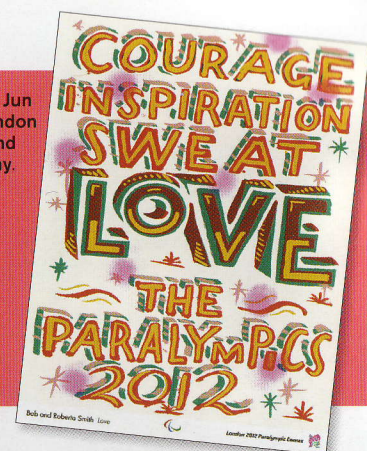
5 **Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch: World Cities 2012 (6 Jun-9 Jul)** is a month-long season of dance celebrating the iconic German choreographer Pina Bausch. Ten shows, inspired by 10 global locations, will be performed at the Barbican (p. 109) and Sadler's Wells (p. 111), by the company Bausch founded in 1972, and ran until her death in 2009.

6 See highlights from stage musicals including *Billy Elliot The Musical*, *Chicago*, *Ghost The Musical*, *Jersey Boys*, *Disney's The Lion King*, *Matilda The Musical*, *Singin' In The Rain*, *Stomp*, *The Wizard Of Oz* and *Wicked* at this year's **West End Live (23-24 Jun)**. The casts from every single one of London's world-famous musicals will be performing at a free, family-friendly, open-air entertainment festival taking place in Trafalgar Square. For details, visit westendlive.co.uk

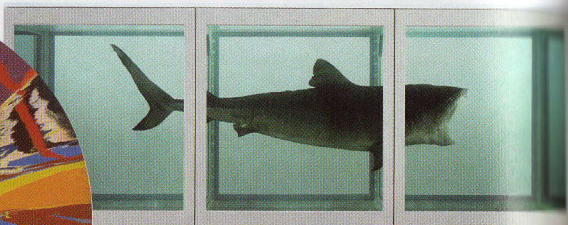
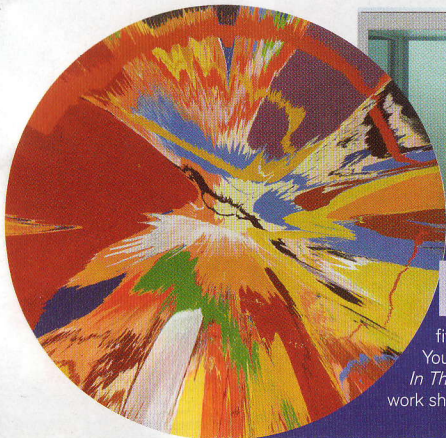
7 The **Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra Of Venezuela**, the product of the South American country's visionary music education programme,

El Sistema, delights audiences around the world with its ambitious and energetic performances. This month (**23-26 Jun**) they are coming to London for a week-long residency and series of concerts at the Southbank Centre (p. 111), led by charismatic young musical director Gustavo Dudamel.

8 *Metamorphoses* is an epic work by Roman poet Ovid (43 BC-17 AD), which inspired the artist Titian to create some of his greatest paintings, and the multimedia event **Metamorphosis: Titian 2012** brings together a range of artists, choreographers and composers to celebrate these works by the Venetian renaissance master. The Royal Opera House (p. 111) will host performances of new dance pieces created in response to three of Titian's masterpieces,



Singin' In The Rain



9 **Damien Hirst** has been making waves in the art world for over two decades now, and this exhibition at Tate Modern (p. 42), his first major UK retrospective, is a fitting tribute (**until 9 Sep**). It features over 70 works by the Young British Artist, including *The Physical Impossibility Of Death In The Mind Of Someone Living* (pictured), Hirst's famous 1991 work showing a tiger shark suspended in a tank of formaldehyde.

Diana And Actaeon, The Death Of Actaeon and Diana And Callisto (**from 14 Jul**). Meanwhile over at the National Gallery (p. 80), the paintings themselves will be shown in a free **Metamorphosis: Titian 2012** exhibition (**from 11 Jul**), alongside new Royal Opera House set designs by contemporary British artists including Chris Ofili, Conrad Shawcross and Mark Wallinger. If you head for Trafalgar Square on **16 Jul**, you can catch a free live screening of one of the Royal Opera House performances.

10 Artist, musician, film-maker, peace-activist and all round icon **Yoko Ono** is presenting her work at the Serpentine Gallery (p. 82) **from 19 Jun**. The show, which extends out of the gallery

into Kensington Gardens, features installations, films and performances, including a project called *Smile*, which invites people around the world to upload a portrait of themselves for inclusion in a global anthology of grins.

11 For the ultimate Games fix, don't miss the display **London 2012 Olympic And Paralympic Games Medals** at the British Museum (**until 9 Sep**, p. 42). The medals will be displayed alongside objects that tell the story of Britain's involvement with the Olympics and Paralympics over the years, and visitors will learn how the medals for the 2012 Games were produced, from mineral mining to design. It's the perfect exhibition to get you in the Olympic mood.

12 **Dr Dee (25 Jun-7 Jul)** is the new opera from Blur and Gorillaz frontman Damon Albarn. Playing at the London Coliseum (p. 111) and blending acoustic pop with contemporary opera, this English National Opera production tells the story of the little-known historical figure Doctor John Dee, who was a mathematician, astrologer, alchemist and medical advisor to Queen Elizabeth I. Following the success of Albarn's first opera, *Monkey: Journey To The West*, *Dr Dee* received very favourable reviews at its world premiere at the Manchester International Festival just last year (pictured below).

