

# AMBULATIUNCULA



# INTRODUCTION

The Forbury Gardens site has a long history, but the formal gardens established between 1856 and 1864 were created at the peak of the Victorian public parks movement. The Inner Forbury was landscaped as a pleasure garden around a central fountain, with an emphasis on formal bedding. The Outer Forbury was intended for athletic and military exercises and was essentially a lawn with a surrounding promenade and perimeter shrubbery. These Gardens, widely regarded as ‘the jewel in Reading’s crown,’ remain a popular destination for both local residents and visitors and are a key site for cultural events and activities.

Conceived within the context of the Artists in the City programme, seven contemporary artists and musicians were invited to make sound works in response to aspects of the Forbury Gardens and Abbey ruins, that together would form a sonic journey through the site. The selected artists reflect the diversity and innovation encompassed within the definition ‘sound art’ but all share an ability to respond to the site’s rich and varied history and environment.

The project’s title *Ambulatiuncula* (‘a little walk’ or ‘a place to walk’) connects a founding aim of the Gardens as a place to promenade with the placement of the individual works on a route, encouraging listeners to walk around the Gardens and experience the works in particular settings.

*Ambulatiuncula* opens up a dialogue between the artists, the listener and the physical realities of place. The past and present interweave and overlap, and listeners are invited to discover new perspectives in what they see and sense around themselves.

Our thanks go to all the participating artists and musicians for their enthusiasm and inspiring contributions and, also, to our colleagues and partners for their support in helping us to realise this project.

Kerry Duggan and Kate Wood  
Artists in the City  
Reading Borough Council

VIBRATION RESONANCE AMPLITUDE FREQUENCY HARMONY TIMBRE CHORD ECHO RHYTHM TONE DEEP HIGH SHRILL FADE-OUT WAVES NOISE OVERTONE PITCH DECIBEL MELODY WHISTLE SING UNISON ACOUSTIC VOICE SOUND SOLO TEMPO TUNE STATIC REVERB SILENCE REFLECTION AMBIENCE COLOUR VIBRATION RESONANCE AMPLITUDE FREQUENCY HARMONY TIMBRE CHORD ECHO RHYTHM TONE DEEP HIGH SHRILL FADE-OUT WAVES NOISE OVERTONE PITCH DECIBEL MELODY WHISTLE SING UNISON ACOUSTIC VOICE SOUND SOLO TEMPO TUNE STATIC REVERB SILENCE REFLECTION AMBIENCE COLOUR VIBRATION RESONANCE AMPLITUDE FREQUENCY HARMONY TIMBRE CHORD ECHO RHYTHM TONE DEEP HIGH SHRILL FADE-OUT WAVES NOISE OVERTONE

# DUNCAN CHAPMAN

- 01 3AM
- 03 MORNING
- 07 MOTHER
- 08 12 BELLS
- 10 WALK
- 12 BUSY
- 14 CALM

The sounds of bells and gongs signal significant events in our lives. Beginnings and endings, birth, death, and marriage are all marked by these sounds. Bells are a universal signifier of stopping, pausing and change. In the past, the days in the Abbey were structured around the sound of bells. A bell signalled the time for monks to rise at 2am to sing the Office of the Lauds, and other bells signalled the time for work, silent contemplation and meals. In the prison the bell marks the division of the day into work, mealtimes and sleeping.

A series of seven short works respond to the juxtaposition of the prison with the Abbey ruins. The sounds of bells and gongs correspond to different parts of the day, inviting the listener to pause, listen, contemplate, and move on, changed in some way.

Combined with recordings of daily activities, and the crackling of candles at St James's Church, the sounds of bells ultimately disappear into silence.

Thanks to: Professor Brian Kemp and Tony Stokes

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Duncan Chapman is a composer, sound artist, educator and performer. He works with many leading music organisations in Britain including The Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Britten Sinfonia, Royal Festival Hall, CBSO, BCMG, Wigmore Hall, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, the BBC and Sonic Arts Network. Much of his work involves collaborations with other artists. He has an ongoing working partnership with singer and choreographer Isabel Jones with whom he has produced films, live performances, participatory events and recorded music. Commissions include *re-sound re-side*, an installation for Southwell Minster (London Sinfonietta project); *Captured Moments* for the Irish Chamber Orchestra and the Darwin Music Theatre Project's *Darwin's Dream*, premiered at the Shrewsbury Darwin Festival with the London premiere at the Royal Albert Hall, London. He recently performed at the New Waves festival, Budapest.



# THE MILLER AND MCAFEE PRESS

## 04 AND SO EACH NEW YEAR BEGINS WITH A NEW DAY, YEAR AFTER YEAR, DAY AFTER DAY; AND EACH DAY IS LIKE A YEAR, A YEAR WHOSE DAYS ARE LONG (A SHORT STORY FROM FORBURY HILL)

For this short story, many aspects of the rich histories of the Forbury Gardens, both official and colloquial, are brought together and told by different narrators each with a particular relationship with Reading.

The story's narrative collapses time, creating unexpected coincidences and chance meetings between characters both past and present. People and events, researched over a period of months, collide in one moment and occur over the course of a single day. *And So Each New Year...* challenges the notion of linear time and takes a look down the barrel of history, viewing historical detail geographically, not chronologically. The story begins

and ends with a lone figure sitting on Forbury Hill, suggesting an endless cycle. Aspects of repetition and recurrence are also reflected in the work's title which combines excerpts from poetry by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who was stationed in Reading on military duty, and Oscar Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*.

Each headset plays a version of the short story spoken by different narrators: Councillor Riaz Chaudhri, The Right Worshipful Mayor of Reading; Peter Cockman, Progress Theatre; Professor Brian Kemp, founder member of The Friends of Reading Abbey and local expert on the history of the Abbey and The Forbury; John Madejski, Chairman, Reading FC; Andrew Peach, Presenter, BBC Radio Berkshire; Rev Chris Russell, St Laurence's Church; Her Honour Judge Smith, Reading Crown Court; Sally Taylor, Presenter, BBC South Today.

Sound design: Sam Proctor  
Thanks to: the narrators and Professor Brian Kemp

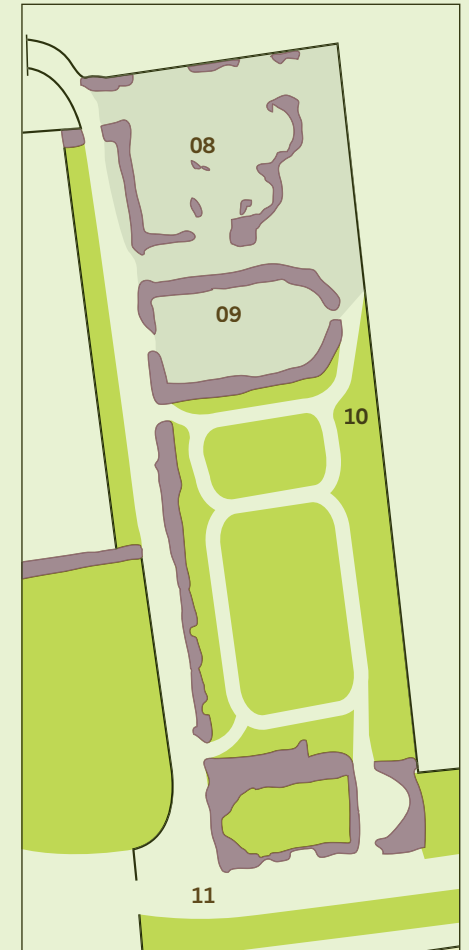
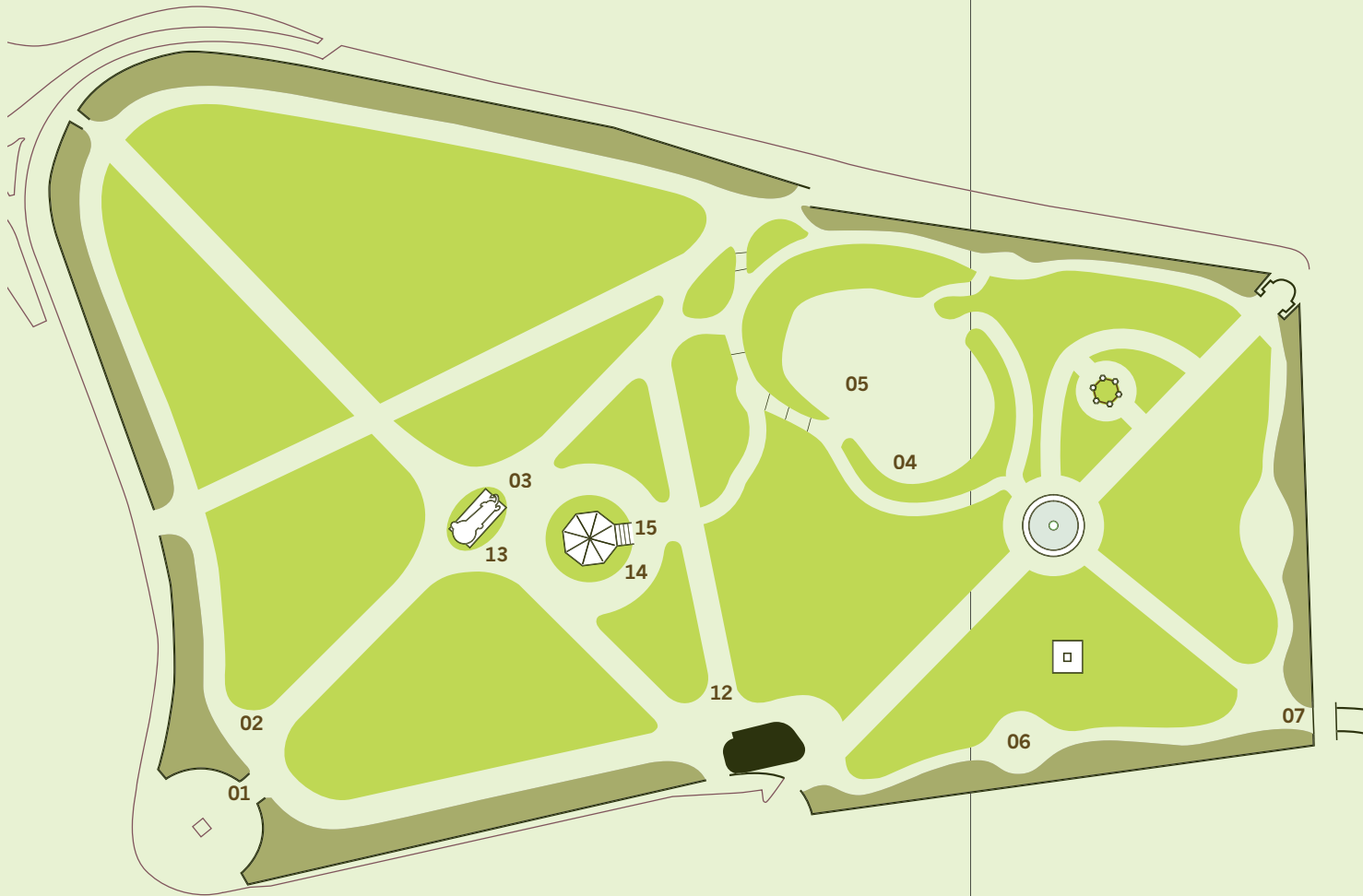
## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Miller and McAfee Press are Andrew Miller and Duncan McAfee, who have been working collaboratively since 1999. Their practice focuses on the production of independently published printed matter and audio works, remixing and recycling cultural agents such as stories, songs, jokes and archives. Often made in collaboration with others, projects straddle artistic disciplines and include contributions from a wide range of groups and individuals. The Miller and McAfee Press exhibit internationally and recent group and solo exhibitions include; *Concrete Mass*, RampART, London; *Saison Video*, Mons en Baroeul, France; *Deptford X*, London; *Thirteen Stories*, Whitechapel Project Space, London; *Kiosk*, touring international exhibition of independent publishers including Istanbul Biennial and ICA,

London; *All For Show*, touring exhibition, USA, Canada, UK; *Violins/Violence*, 1000000mph, London; *XS*, f a projects, London; *Songs For the Workers*, Henry Peacock Gallery, London; *To the Glory of God: New Religious Art*, Liverpool Biennial. They recently completed a residency at the National Institute for Medical Research.

[www.themmpress.com](http://www.themmpress.com)

FROM THIS DELIGHTFUL MOUNT WHAT PROSPECTS RISE, DEMAND OUR NOTICE AND CREATE SURPRISE...  
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#### KEY TO AMBULATIUNCULA

Begin at the Victoria Gates at the south west entrance to the Forbury Gardens

**01. Duncan Chapman**  
3AM (0.48)

Walk towards the Maiwand Lion

**02. Melanie Pappenheim**  
*The Names* (2.29)

Follow the path to the summit of Forbury Hill

**03. Duncan Chapman**  
*Morning* (2.56)

Take a seat

**04. The Miller and McAfee Press**

*And So Each New Year Begins With A New Day, Year After Year, Day After Day; And Each Day Is Like A Year, A Year Whose Days Are Long (A Short Story From Forbury Hill)* (8.00)

**05. Melanie Pappenheim**  
*Joshua Vines Esq* (4.14)

Follow the path down the hill, past the fountain towards Abbots Walk. Take a seat

**06. Eva Weinmayr**  
*I Didn't Start The Fire* (6.33)

Head through the Forbury Tunnel

**07. Duncan Chapman**  
*Mother* (0.54)

Enter the Abbey ruins

**08. Duncan Chapman**

*12 Bells* (2.12)

**09. Melanie Pappenheim**  
*Summer is icumen in* (1.56)

Head south alongside the prison wall towards the River Kennet

**10. Duncan Chapman**  
*Walk* (1.08)

Linger at the waterside. Head back through the

Abbey ruins and promenade around the Inner Forbury.

Arrive at the café

**11. Chris Watson**  
*Sailing To An Island* (8.00)

Settle near the café

**12. Duncan Chapman**  
*Busy* (3.23)

Head towards the Maiwand Lion. Take a seat

**13. Gavin Lombos**  
*A Lion's Tale* (8.24)

Remain seated or wander around

**14. Duncan Chapman**  
*Calm* (2.46)

Promenade around the lawns of the Outer Forbury

**15. Ergo Phizmiz**  
*Garden Waltz* (19.39)

# EVA WEINMAYR

## 06 I DIDN'T START THE FIRE

*I didn't Start the Fire* is a collage of local and national news headlines, spoken, whispered and shouted by different voices of varying ages and diverse cultural backgrounds.

Eva Weinmayr comments on the way the contemporary media manipulates reality, by 'shrinking a complex world into two, three or four line banner headlines.' The work responds to the Gardens' history as a platform for public address and alludes to the role of the town crier as a broadcaster of news.

The listener is engulfed by a swarm of voices, from both near and far, emerging and disappearing into the Gardens. The intimacy of the human voice, combined with the anonymity of reductive words, creates a stark work of poetry.

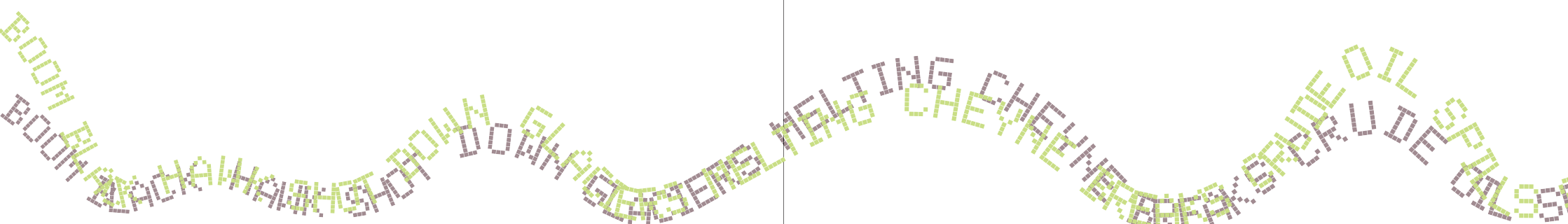
Voices: Richard Forster, Alexander Geccelli, Mary George, Douglas Park, Fiona Rintoul, Diana Stone, Zinovy Zinik

Sound Producer: Titus Kroder

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Eva Weinmayr's practice ranges widely from gallery based installations to site-specific projects and the publication of artists' books. Recent publications include *Suitcase Body Is Missing Woman*, published by Book Works, London, and *Water Found On Mars*, a collaborative book project with the artist Gustav Metzger, published by Hatje Cantz in early 2006. Working and exhibiting internationally, she recently completed a residency in San Francisco to research the local legacy of spoken word.

Solo exhibitions include: *Hear The Tiny Auto Horns, When They Tiny Blow*, t1+2 artspace, London; *Road Signs*, Nusser & Baumgart, Munich; *VichyWaShi*, Revolver Showroom, Frankfurt. Recent group shows include: *Writing In Strobe*, Dicksmith Gallery, London; *Yes No*, Vane Contemporary Arts, Newcastle; *Contemporary Artists Working With Newspaper*, Three Colts Gallery, London and Raid Projects, Los Angeles.



# CHRIS WATSON

## 11 SAILING TO AN ISLAND

*Sailing to an Island* celebrates the changing acoustic landscape of the Forbury Gardens over its thousand year history.

The piece opens to the ringing sound of the mistle thrush, an ancient song performed on the site before human habitation.

The wind blows and creaks through birch leaves, whispering the arrival of the Vikings in AD 870 and their fellow Norse travellers, hrafn ravens. Grazing herds of red deer stalk rich, deciduous woodland that swathe the site at the turn of the century and rutting roars bellow across forests supporting astonishing bird life. A dawn chorus swells the canopy of trees and the songs of thrushes, warblers and woodpeckers mark the arrival of new spring days.

Civil war brings desolation and decay. Flies and crows pick over the haunting remnants of the past whilst the spirit of the site waits patiently.... Water, life, restoration and new minds draw people alongside the wildlife. In 2006 the rich, fluty song of a blackbird accompanies the chimes of the tower clock and the sounds of visitors and city life.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Chris Watson is a sound recordist with a particular interest in recording the sounds of animals, habitats and atmospheres from around the world. As a freelance recordist for film, television and radio, he specialises in natural history and documentary location sound, together with track assembly and sound design in post production. He has released 3 solo CDs for Touch; *Stepping into The Dark* (Award of Distinction, 2000 Prix Ars Electronica), *Outside The Circle of Fire*, and *Weather Report*. Sound work for television includes *The Life of Birds* (BAFTA Award for Best Factual Sound), *The Life of Mammals*, *Life in the Undergrowth* and *Big Cat Diary*, all for BBC television. He was a nominee for a Sony Radio Award for *A Swallow's*

*Journey* for BBC Radio 4. Recent performances and installations include, *A Winter's Tale*, FACT, Liverpool; *Tracks*, Accademia Britannica, Rome and, Venice La Biennale.

[www.chriswatson.net](http://www.chriswatson.net)

CHESTNUTS, THE MISTLE THRUSH AND ROBINS AND BIRIAD INSECTS BUZZ IN THE WOODS OF CARRIDON  
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# GAVIN LOMBOS

## 13 A LION'S TALE

The Forbury Gardens are a notable town centre recreation site, popular with parents and young children.

Musician Gavin Lombos has collaborated with children from Class 7 at Thameside Primary School, Reading to create a fantastical tale of the iconic Maiwand Lion. Developed through a series of workshops linked to the literacy strategy, the children's fertile young minds envisioned the animated kleptomaniac King of Beasts stepping down from his pedestal to roam his kingdom, accompanied by his only friend the Monkey, to fish, drink banana smoothies and do a spot of disco dancing!

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Gavin Lombos is a Reading based musician and producer who specialises in devising large scale percussion pieces, and music projects that explore world music or combine traditional instruments with new technology. He has composed music for bands, CD and film soundtracks, and produced music and digital effects integrated into live drama. He has performed in live bands for the past 20 years playing with the Dhol Foundation, Paris based dance act Recycler and the band Bloco Electro. He is musical director of Beatroots, one of the UK's longest established community samba groups and is co-director of PlugnPlay Studios and Readipop, an innovative community music and media initiative.

[www.soniclaboratory.net](http://www.soniclaboratory.net)



# ERGO PHIZMIZ

## 15 GARDEN WALTZ

Ergo Phizmiz visualises the Forbury Gardens as a series of rotating, wind-powered and mechanical roundabouts constructed by a crazed Victorian. These circular formations, with the bandstand at the centre, are driven by an immense underground, wind-powered or clockwork mechanism, that creaks and wrenches until the bandstand, the fountain, and the great big tree, spin on their respective axes. Complemented by the chaos of surrounding traffic, this immense mechanical garden whirs and rotates day in, day out, enjoyed by children and grown-ups alike, though not by those prone to dizzy spells!

The music is composed using samples from 50 records of mechanical and classical music, a collection of car horns and a clutch of old, battered accordions, squeezeboxes and ukuleles. The lyrics are sourced from W S Gilbert's libretti for *The Yeomen of the Guard* and *Trial by Jury*, and the nonsense poetry of Edward Lear.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ergo Phizmiz works in sound, video and multimedia, exploring the possibilities of sampling and recontextualising cultural material with more traditional creative practices. He has created audio and video work internationally, including Tate Modern, Royal Festival Hall, the Dutch Academy of Fine Art, Cologne Kulturbunker, Arts Council England, Cherbourg-Octeville College of Music, Resonance FM, Ubuweb, the Radia Network, WFMU, Sonic Arts Network and BBC Radio 3. His work spans live performance, installation, video, radio, and interactive music. He has collaborated with artists including People Like Us, Safety Scissors, Irene

Moon, Martha Moopette, The Bees, Scanner, The The, Luke Fowler, Xper Xr, Alex Nielsen and Man From Uranus. He has released music with the labels Sonore, Mukow, Sonic Arts Network, Scape, Soleilmoon, The Wire, LMC, Egotwister and Match My Foot.

[www.ergophizmiz.com](http://www.ergophizmiz.com)



# INFORMATION

Artists in the City is a Reading Borough Council programme that creates opportunities for contemporary artists to make interventions in the public realm and influence the spirit of a place. For further information visit: [www.artistsinthecity.org.uk](http://www.artistsinthecity.org.uk)

To celebrate the launch of *Ambulatiuncula*, local singers performed a specially commissioned choral work, *Primrose's Dispatch*, composed by Melanie Pappenheim with words by Adey Grummet

Artist Duncan McAfee worked with young people from St Laurence's Church to create sound works in response to their environments

## Access

All areas of the Forbury Gardens and Abbey ruins are fully accessible

The works are experienced through Dataton audio sets available from the Museum of Reading Shop, The Town Hall, Blagrove Street, Reading

## Shop opening hours

Tuesday to Saturday, 10am – 4pm  
Sunday, 11am – 4pm

Sets can be booked in advance. Alternative times by arrangement. Telephone 0118 939 0714 for information

**Please remember to return your Dataton audio set and headphones to the Museum of Reading Shop**

## Artists' Talk

Thursday 18 May, 6.30pm  
Silverthorne Room, The Town Hall, Blagrove Street, Reading  
The Miller and McAfee Press and Duncan Chapman discuss their practice and their work for *Ambulatiuncula*

Refreshments available  
A free event.

Booking required. To reserve a place call 0118 939 0714

Thanks to Thames Valley University (Reading campus)

Audio sets produced by  
Orbital



Funded by the National Lottery through Arts Council England



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**ARTISTS  
IN THE CITY**

