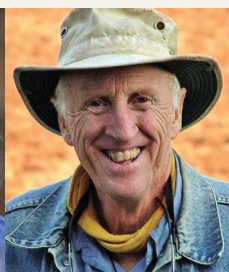


BRISTOL

# FESTIVAL OF IDEAS

WINTER - SPRING 2010

# EVENTS



# BRISTOL FESTIVAL OF IDEAS

We'll soon be announcing the programme for our May Festival, but in the meantime we have some excellent events coming up in our short winter-spring season. Visit our website at [www.ideasfestival.co.uk](http://www.ideasfestival.co.uk) for full details and biographies, new events as well as the latest news. Please refer to the back page for information on how to book and where to find each venue.

## BARBARA EHRENREICH SMILE OR DIE: HOW POSITIVE THINKING UNDERMINES US ALL

**12 January 2010, 18.00-19.00**

WATERSHED MEDIA CENTRE, BRISTOL

Price: £6.50 / £4.50

*The New York Times* calls Barbara Ehrenreich "our premier reporter of the underside of Capitalism". Recent books have seen her go undercover to find a job in America's corporate sector and work in low-wage America, busting the myth of the American dream. She now looks at positive thinking – formerly a marginal 19th century healing technique, which is now seen as the key to success and prosperity. Ehrenreich exposes the downside of the science of happiness which leads to self-blame, a morbid preoccupation with stamping out 'negative' thoughts and, on a national level, created an era of irrational optimism. Ehrenreich attacks conventional wisdom and faux science, and calls for clarity and courage.

## STEWART BRAND AND BRIAN ENO THE FUTURE OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

**18 January 2010, 18.00-19.00**

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL, BRISTOL

Price: £6.50 / £4.50

Stewart Brand is one of the great visionaries of our time. His latest book, *Whole Earth Discipline*, argues that the profound transformations currently underway – climate change, urbanisation and biotechnology – mean that environmentalists need to embrace science and engineering to forestall the cataclysmic deterioration of the Earth's resources. Brand shatters a number of environmental myths, arguing that cities are greener than the countryside, nuclear power is the future of energy, and genetic engineering is the key to crop and land management. He is in discussion with Brian Eno, musician and composer, cultural critic and writer who has a long-standing interest and involvement in new thinking about politics and the future.

## ALBIE SACHS LIFE, LAW AND NELSON MANDELA

**3 March 2010, 18.00-19.00**

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL, BRISTOL

Price: £6.50 / £4.50

Albie Sachs is a hero of our times who played a prominent part in the struggle for justice in South Africa, was tortured, and lost the use of his right arm and one eye in a car bomb attack. His experiences provoked an outpouring of creative thought on the role of law as a protector of human dignity in the modern world. Appointed by Nelson Mandela to his country's first Constitutional Court, he provides unique access to an insider's perspective on the major issues confronting modern South Africa as a fledgling democracy, tells how his extraordinary life has influenced his approach to the cases before him, and provides a rare glimpse into the working of a judicial mind.

## REBECCA GOLDSTEIN AND STEVEN PINKER ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

**3 March 2010, 19.30-20.30**

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL, BRISTOL

Price: £6.50 / £4.50

Award-winning novelist and philosopher Rebecca Goldstein's new novel, *36 Arguments for the Existence of God* – about an atheist with a soul – plunges into the great debate of our day: the clash between faith and reason. World events are being shaped by fervent believers at home and abroad, while a new atheism is asserting itself in the public sphere. On intellectual grounds, the sceptics have everything on their side. Yet people refuse to accept their seemingly irrefutable arguments and continue to embrace faith in God as their source of meaning, purpose and comfort. Goldstein



Barbara Ehrenreich



Albie Sachs

shows that the tension between religion and doubt cannot be understood through rational argument alone. It also must be explored from the point of view of individual people caught in the raptures and torments of religious experience in all their variety. Goldstein is in discussion with Steven Pinker – experimental psychologist, cognitive scientist, and author of the bestselling and award-winning *The Language Instinct*, *The Blank Slate* and *The Stuff of Thought*. A feast of philosophical and religious ideas is promised from a world leading philosopher and novelist and one of the great scientists of our time.

## GERMAINE GREER FORTY YEARS OF FUN WITH FEMINISM

**16 March 2010, 19.00-21.00**

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL, BRISTOL

Price: £10.00 / £8.00

2010 marks the 40th anniversary of the publication of Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*. Her controversial, agenda-setting book influenced millions of women and aroused much hostility. Greer has remained at the forefront of debate ever since. *Forty Years of Feminism and Fun*, her special one-woman show, provides a unique insight into being a fearless international feminist icon and highly regarded academic through four decades of change. Candid, enlightening and highly entertaining, it's a chance to hear the full story – and a chance too to ask Germaine all of those burning questions you've always wanted to ask, serious or light-hearted.

# PAUL DAVIES THE EERIE SILENCE: ARE WE ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE?

18 March 2010, 18.00-19.00

AT-BRISTOL, BRISTOL

Price: £6.50 / £4.50

The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI), an amalgam of science, technology, adventure and curiosity, has detected only the eerie sound of silence after millions of hours of cosmos eavesdropping. In his new book, *The Eerie Silence: Are We Alone in the Universe?*, Paul Davies, Director of BEYOND: Centre for Fundamental Concepts in Science, asks: "Is ET out there, but not sending any messages our way? Is SETI a waste of time and money, or should we be developing a new approach to the search, using new tools and looking for a wider range of 'intelligent' signals? And if signals were received how would we – or should we – respond?"

Bristol Festival of Ideas is an initiative of Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP):

BCDP culture | ideas | arts and sciences



The Bristol Festival of Ideas aims to stimulate the minds and passions of the people of Bristol with an inspiring programme of discussion and debate. Full programme details and booking information can be found on our website at: [www.ideasfestival.co.uk](http://www.ideasfestival.co.uk). This programme is subject to change and additional events may be added. Check our website for updates.

## VENUES AND BOOKING

Our events take place in venues across Bristol city centre. Please contact the relevant venue below to book and purchase your tickets (prices are listed next to each event).

### AT-BRISTOL

Harbourside, Bristol BS1 5DB

Tel: 0845 4586 499 (09.00-17.00 weekdays)

[www.at-bristol.org.uk](http://www.at-bristol.org.uk)

### ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL

Great George Street, Bristol BS1 5RR

Tel: 0845 402 4001 (12.00-18.00 weekdays)

Book online at: [www.stgeorgesbristol.co.uk](http://www.stgeorgesbristol.co.uk)

### WATERSHED MEDIA CENTRE

1 Canons Road, Harbourside, Bristol BS1 5TX

Tel: 0117 927 5100 (10.00-20.30 daily)

[www.watershed.co.uk](http://www.watershed.co.uk)

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