



Steyning Festival to erect 100-foot statue on Chanctonbury Hill

To celebrate its theme of Carnival (in honour of this year's Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro), the organisers of Steyning Festival are planning to erect a life-size, 100-foot tall replica of Rio's Christ the Redeemer statue on the summit of Chanctonbury Hill (see, *an artist's impression*, above).

The statue will be taller than Brighton's i360, and will be visible from the coast. Initially intended to be a temporary exhibit, like the Eiffel Tower, it may become permanent if sufficiently popular with local residents. Christine Aubrey, chair of the Steyning Festival, commented: "This statue will be an iconic image for future generations of Steyning residents, and a testament to the creativity and enthusiasm that lurks in this town."

Steyning also announced that it is twinning with the fabulous city of Rio de Janeiro. Being a future-oriented town with a modest budget, we are doing this via Skype, and we are delighted that one of the founders of Skype, Jaan Tallin, has agreed to chair the proceedings!



Small Town, Big Festival

The Steyning Festival is growing at nearly 20% a year, and maintaining its reputation for delivering high-quality events, with something for all the family. At its present growth rate it will overtake both Chichester and Brighton Festivals in 2022, having already passed Edinburgh's International Festival in 2018.

And this year's Festival (21 May - 5 June) promises to be bigger and better than ever before. For the first time, we have a 300-seater Big Top situated in the heart of the town, providing a hub for much of the entertainment over the two weeks.

Among the highlights of the 100-plus upcoming events are The Comedy Store Players, DJ Craig Charles, tours of the intriguing Wiston House (normally closed to the public), talks by best-selling writers including Peter James, Frank Gardner and Alison Weir, and performances by children's authors Julia Donaldson and Cressida Cowell (creators respectively of *The Gruffalo* and the *How to Train Your Dragon* series).

Stars from *The Archers* will be presenting the wit and wisdom of Philip Larkin, and local talent will be strongly represented in the Art Trail, a production of *Bedroom Farce* by The Steyning Festival Players, and the finals of The Steyning Festival Young Dancer of the Year Competition.
