

THE MIDLANDS ESSENTIAL ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

WOLVERHAMPTON & BLACK COUNTRY

What's On

www.whatsonlive.co.uk

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WILL.I.AM
INTERVIEW INSIDE...

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as Muddles

CERI DUPREE
as Queen Passionella

LUCY EVANS
as Princess Beauty

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December 2013

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MAGAZINE GROUP



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Wagner's Ring Cycle to make its Hippodrome debut

Renowned conductor Valery Gergiev is to direct the world famous Mariinsky Opera in Birmingham next year, as part of the 2014 UK-Russia Year of Culture celebrations. Featuring more than two hundred-and-fifty artists, the Mariinsky will perform a fully-staged production of Wagner's epic Ring Cycle, the first to be presented in the city for decades. With ten trucks of scenery, it will also be one of the biggest productions ever to be staged at the Hippodrome. Of his impending visit to Birmingham, Gergiev said: "I'm delighted to be bringing our Ring Cycle to Birmingham. In Ossetia, where I come from, our own folk tales parallel the myths that inspired Wagner. I believed that we could create a new visual approach to the Ring that had an international resonance." Wagner's Ring Cycle shows at the Hippodrome from 5 to 9 November 2014.



Major investment for new Convention Quarter

Telford & Wrekin Council has announced plans for a £200million development, to further expand the district's leisure, culture and nighttime economy. The development includes the reconstruction of the town's shopping centre, to bring it in line with the existing £250million Southwater Development and the new Convention Quarter. The move is the next step towards making the area one of the leading event capitals in the UK, which is the long-term ambition of the region's official convention bureau, Meet Telford & Shropshire. Sarah Bird, Business Tourism Manager for Meet Telford & Shropshire, said: "This further investment illustrates our commitment to excellence, ensuring that we can really stand out with a distinctive, high-quality and competitive offer."



Ikon begins countdown to its half-century

Birmingham's Ikon Gallery has announced an impressive programme of exhibitions and events to take it through to its fiftieth birthday in 2015. The Ikon has come a long way since its humble beginning as a 'gallery without walls' in the 1960s, when it was sited in the Bullring precinct. Three relocations later, the venue is now settled in its current home in Oozells Square, where it remains one of the UK's flagship institutions for the promotion and presentation of contemporary modern art. A highlight of the forthcoming programme is Ikon Icons, an initiative which invites an artist from each of the gallery's five decades to present works in the venue's Tower Room. These include - in chronological order - John Salt, Ian Emes, Cornelia Parker, Yinka Shonibare and Julian Opie. Other events include youth-led open socials, the creation of a public memory bank, and an in-depth community engagement programme.

Midlands band release album Come What May...

Staffordshire alternative folk rock band Clutching At Straws are all set to release their debut album this month. The six-track Come What May is described by the band as 'an album about love, and our hope that love might be the driving force in the world'. Come What May is released on 16 December. Clutching At Straws are scheduled to play various venues across the region this month and next.



Andris Nelsons unveiled...

A new portrait of CBSO conductor Andris Nelsons has been unveiled at Symphony Hall. Norman Perryman's watercolour - commissioned for the venue by Jayne Cadbury -

is the twenty-ninth addition to the site's collection of Perryman-painted 'action portraits' of distinguished classical musicians. Nelsons' image will grace the walls of the venue alongside those of his immediate predecessors, Sir Simon Rattle and Sakari Oramo.

Local author fulfills Grandmother's dream

The long-held dream of Shropshire grandmother Mollie Cooke has been fulfilled two years after her death. Mollie, from Church Stretton, had always dreamed of putting pen to paper and recording her life story. Unfortunately, dementia robbed her of the opportunity. Now granddaughter Katherine has published Dust To Dust And A Lifetime In Between - a biography charting Mollie's childhood between the wars in rural Shropshire, the death of her first husband in World War Two, and the pain of losing an only child - Katherine's mother. Based on conversations between the author and her grandmother before her descent into dementia, Dust To Dust is available from Amazon



Mollie in her youth

Disney launches campaign for Winnie the Pooh Laureate

A recent survey carried out by Disney has established that seventy-six per cent of West Midlands parents tell stories to their children which have local lives and events at their core. The findings have inspired Disney to launch a new storytelling competition to find five regional Winnie the Pooh Laureates throughout the country.

All stories must be influenced by the author's local area, just as AA Milne used the Five Hundred Acre Wood in Ashdown Forest as the setting for his world famous Winnie the Pooh books.

The Midlands campaign is spearheaded by prize-winning writer Judith Cutler, whose passion for her local area is demonstrated by the fact that twenty of her novels are set in and around Birmingham.

The lucky Midlands winner will have the chance to read their story to a gathering at the Disney Store in Birmingham, have their story printed in a special book, and win a goodie bag of merchandise for their family. For full details and how to enter, visit the Winnie the Pooh Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WinnieThePoohUKandIreland. The competition closes on 17 December.



Birthday concerts for Shropshire trio

Twenty years after making their debut at Shrewsbury School's Ashton Theatre, satirical singing trio Three Men And A Bowtie have announced their return to the venue for two special concerts on 19 and 20 December. The celebratory events see founder members John Moore, Chris Eldon Lee and Fred Phipps joined on stage by Martin 'Monologue' Jones, Nonny James and Sally Tonge. There'll also be a special visit from Shropshire's 'agricultural starlet', Freda The Female Farmer. Having played venues across the UK - receiving a four-star review at the Edinburgh Festival - the troupe's hometown gigs will see them welcoming their fifty thousandth audience member with a bottle of champagne (and two hundred-and-fifty plastic cups). Tickets to the anniversary concert cost £10 and can be purchased from www.threemeninabowtie.ticketsource.co.uk



International Dance Festival Birmingham back for 2014

Birmingham's theatres, streets and squares will go dance-crazy next Spring when the award-winning International Dance Festival Birmingham (24 April - 25 May) makes a welcome return. One of the biggest get-togethers of its kind in Europe, the biennial event will be taking place in the city for the fourth time, and is once again being co-produced by DanceXchange and Birmingham Hippodrome. The festival comprises a world-class programme of international performances, numerous premieres, a number of new commissions and a range of participatory opportunities. Performance highlights include Swiss Company Alias' mesmerising *Sideways Rain*, Vancouver's Kidd Pivot, led by Crystal Pite, and the astonishing Canadian circus company Les 7 Doigts de la Main. There are some familiar names returning too, including the legendary Sylvie Guillem, Sadler's Wells' Breakin' Convention, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's new work *milonga*, and Luca Silvestrini's *Protein*. The festival also sees Matthew Bourne making a much-anticipated return to Birmingham Hippodrome with his production of *Lord Of The Flies*, featuring a cast of young Birmingham performers.

IN BRIEF

Wish Upon A Star this Christmas

Stoke's Regent Theatre, its parent company ATG, and panto producers First Family Entertainment have announced their fundraising intentions for the festive period. Fifty per cent from the sale of every *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs* pantomime brochure will be donated to the When You Wish Upon A Star charity, which helps fulfil the dreams of hundreds of poorly children. It's hoped that £65,000 can be raised during the panto run - enough to charter the Orient Express and take children suffering from life-threatening illnesses on a magical train ride to visit the Warner Bros Studio Tour - The Making Of Harry Potter.

Atlantic crossing all in a good cause...

Shropshire adventurers Harry Martin-Dreyer and Alex Bland are to embark on a three thousand-mile row across the Atlantic in a two-man boat, raising funds for Cure Leukaemia and JDRF. It's estimated that the crossing will take Harry and Alex three months to complete, and may find the duo encountering tropical storms, fifty-foot waves, colossal super tankers and sharks. Having already raised over £100,000 and sourced sponsorship from London's Hotel Rafayel, the pair have received numerous messages of support, including one from Atlantic adventurer Ben Fogle. Harry and Alex set sail from Gran Canaria on 1 December, and head for the west coast of Barbados. To offer your support via a donation, visit www.rowing4research.com



Museums to inspire international writing...

A major new international writing competition, Inspired By My Museum, has been launched by Sampad South Asian Arts in partnership with British Council India. The initiative is inviting budding writers to record and share personal experiences inspired by a visit to a museum. These can be recorded in various forms - poems, short stories or reportage - with entries accepted from anywhere in the world. Winning entries will be recorded in a special commemorative book next year. The partnership's previous venture, Inspired By Tagore (in 2011-12), received an enthusiastic response, and it's hoped that this year's initiative will be equally successful. For further information and to enter, visit www.sampad.org.uk

12 Days of Christmas

What's On wish list...

The festive season at What's On Magazine is always a busy time of year, with the team working tirelessly to provide readers with information about what's happening where in the run-up to, and during, the Christmas holiday. Despite our busy schedule, we've taken a couple of minutes to think about what we'd most like Santa to leave in our Christmas stockings - and, as you can see, we don't ask for a lot. Well most of us don't, anyway...



Paul wants to let you know who's in charge **Hugo Boss Gift Set** £40.00
boots.com

Davina fancies herself as a bit of a Mary Berry **Artisan Food Mixer** £429.95
johnlewis.com



Adrian's easily pleased... **Little Mix Salute Album** £18.00
woolworths.co.uk



Directioner Ryan just can't get enough... **Liam Payne Lifesize Cutout** £26.90
1dcardboardcutouts.com



Lisa's camper van would love this **Rosewood Steering Wheel for VW T2 Bay** £209.95
justkampers.com



Smooth-talker Brian
wants a close
shave **Razor Pit**
£15.94
amazon.co.uk



Hill runner Chris A
wants the
latest **Fell Shoes**
£95.00
runandbecome.com



Gaming geek Chris
wants **Call Of Duty -
Ghosts** £40.00
tesco.com



Jess just wants to
snuggle up on the
sofa in this
All-in-one
£30.00
next.co.uk



Techie Jim's always
one for the latest
gadget...
Surface Pro 2 £719.00
currys.co.uk



Extreme sports fan
Jon wants in on the
action, **Arena Cross**
Family Ticket £49.00
arenacross.co.uk



Lauren's a girl with
expensive tastes...
Louis Vuitton Eole 50
£1,320.00
louisvuitton.co.uk



THERE AIN'T NOTHING

One of Britain's greatest traditions, pantomime continues to play a significant role in the country's festive celebrations. A staple within most pantos, of course, is the character of the Dame, who, originating in Victorian music halls, continues to play a pivotal role in modern-day productions. Donning flamboyant costumes, oversized bosoms and garish make-up while dishing out double entendres by the bucketload - some more risky than others - the Dame slots neatly into most panto storylines as the hero's mother, as with Dame Trott in *Jack And The Beanstalk* and *Widow Twankey* in *Aladdin*. Over the years some of the biggest names in stage and TV entertainment have taken on the to-die-for role of the panto matriarch. Les Dawson, John Inman, Terry Scott, Roy Hudd, Stanley Baxter, Danny La Rue and Paul Grady have all slapped on the rouge at one time or another - as has Christopher Biggins, who's admitted to feeling offended when first approached to play the role. Here in the West Midlands we're fortunate to host some of the country's very best pantomimes, complete with some highly entertaining Dames who we feel are well worth checking out...



Ceri Dupree

Feathers, beads and sequins certainly aren't in short supply when Ceri Dupree takes to the stage. Describing himself as a comedy impersonator, Ceri is all high heels and ostrich feathers, the visual dazzle augmenting not only a quick and witty mind and also a well-developed talent for making the likes of Dame Edna Everage, Nana Mouskouri, Tina Turner, Shirley Bassey and Lady Gaga come vividly to life before your very eyes. Ceri's late-night show can be rude'n'crude as well as funny, but you can rest assured he'll only be bringing the censored version of his comedy patter to proceedings at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre, where he'll be appearing as Queen Passionella in *Sleeping Beauty*.

Read the interview with Ceri at whatsonlive.co.uk

Iain Lauchlan

A stalwart of the entertainment business, Iain Lauchlan is a multi-talented performer who's held in high regard as an actor, director, writer and producer. He's worked on numerous dramas and television series, spent eight years presenting BBC TV's *Play School*, and is one half of the duo responsible for writing the BAFTA-winning *Tweenies* series. With his impressive CV as a director featuring numerous children's arena shows, both in the UK and abroad, Iain has been the man at the helm for large-scale productions such as *Bob The Builder*, *Noddy*, *Thomas the Tank Engine*, *Bratz* and *CBeebies Live*. Often described as an 'encyclopedia of panto', his role as Creative Director for Imagine Productions has seen him help set up no fewer than ten pantomimes across the country for Christmas 2013. Iain is, of course, a regular contributor to the Coventry Belgrade Theatre pantomime, and this year wears two hats for *Jack And The Beanstalk*, both directing the show and playing Dame Trott.



LIKE A DAME...



Gary Wilmot

Having starred in almost as many hit musicals as there are hit musicals in which to star, Gary Wilmot has this year decided to spread his wings by taking on the role of a panto Dame for the very first time (in which case, maybe that should read 'spread his bingo wings!'). Gary's no stranger to the Birmingham Hippodrome - where he's rouging himself up to star alongside panto debutant Gok Wan in *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs* - having previously performed at the venue in shows such as *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and *Cinderella*. A firm favourite with Midlands audiences, he shot to fame on ITV's *New Faces* before going on to star in hit productions of *The Goodbye Girl* and *Me And My Girl*. Gary's TV work includes *Copcats*, *Knees Ups*, *Cue Gary!*, *The Keith Harris Show* and, perhaps most memorably, *Showstoppers*.

Read the interview with Gary at whatsonlive.co.uk



Brad Fitt

Presenting mannerisms which have seen him likened to Eddie Izzard, Brad Fitt became a Dame quite by chance. After training as a stage manager at the Bristol Old Vic, he moved to the Cambridge Arts Centre, where he became company manager for *Dame-among-Dames*, Christopher Biggins. Suggesting 'bits and bobs' for Biggins' panto roles, Brad was eventually asked to write a pantomime for the venue. And then he was asked to direct. And then, finally, he was asked to play a Dame! Sceptical at first, Brad was eventually persuaded to give it a go. His debut, as an Ugly Sister in *Cinderella*, received plenty of acclaim, and led to him being named by the *Sunday Telegraph* as one of the UK's finest Dames. Brad is this Christmas returning to Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn for a third consecutive festive season, and is both directing and performing in Evolution Pantomime's sure-to-be-popular production of *Sleeping Beauty*.

Read the interview with Brad at whatsonlive.co.uk

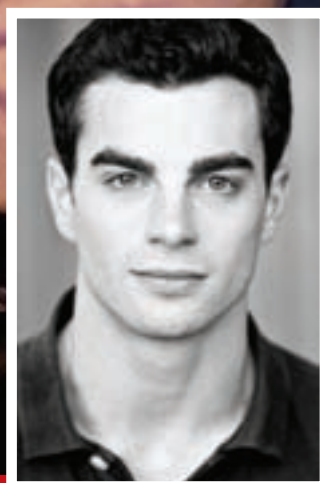


Ian Adams

A high-energy performer who's much in demand, Ian Adams has made a real name for himself on the UK pantomime scene, having written, directed, produced and starred in a veritable Santa's Sack-worth of panto productions down the years. Beginning his professional career as lead vocalist with the dance act Zeebra, Ian also appeared in several episodes of the hit 1980s BBC TV series *Bergerac*. More recent times have seen him establishing a large and loyal fanbase at Lichfield Garrick Theatre, where his regular appearances as the Dame have ensured the panto's laughter count has been as high as a giant beanstalk. This Christmas sees Ian donning the wig, the heels and plenty of slap to star as Dame Fraulein Strudel in the venue's sure-to-be-fun production of *Snow White And The Magic Mirror*.



“ I've had to learn to play the guitar. When we opened in Cardiff it was so scary, because it was something I'd never done before in my life. **”**



Stewart Clarke

talks about getting spiritual in Birmingham...

A Warwick University graduate, Stewart Clarke's acting CV is impressive for someone so young. A West End debut in Loserville earned him plenty of acclaim, as is his current portrayal of Sam Wheat in Ghost The Musical, the much-heralded spectacular that's making its way to Birmingham this Christmas. What's On recently caught up with Stewart to find out more...

What's the best thing about playing Sam Wheat?

It's a fantastic role in terms of its size and emotional reach. He's also a character from an iconic film, so there's that instant recognition which people have. And there are some fantastic songs and great scenes, all of which are wrapped together in a wonderful show.

You've built yourself an impressive CV for someone so young. Do you consider this to be your biggest role to date?

In the world of musical theatre I'd probably say that this is one of the biggest male roles, especially in terms of stage time. It's Sam's story and it follows him throughout the show - so yeah, definitely my biggest.

The scene where you remove your shirt is greeted with plenty of cheers from the audience. Does this add a certain pressure to keep in top condition physically?

Yeah, it's a funny one really, because it's winter now, which normally means 'jumper season'! It's a time when you think about relaxing a bit, but that's just not the case. I suppose it's good motivation for me to keep trim, but I'm looking forward to the day when the tour finishes and I can help myself to a load of cake.

Do you consider yourself to be fairly disciplined?

Yeah, but it can sometimes be quite difficult to find time to eat good meals and get to the gym. When we have two shows a day, and rehearsals, time just disappears. You have to try and grab snippets of exercise time whenever you can.

And is it easy to keep your performance fresh during such a long tour?

You go through stages. When it first opens, you're just running on adrenaline, because it's all new. Then you go through a settled period, and that's quite enjoyable. Then, after a while, you reach a stage where you try and change things a bit. You have different blocks, so you might look back at a previous block and think, 'oh, I did that like that then, and now I do it like this'. Things just change and evolve but generally very subtly. I look back to when we opened in Cardiff and think it looks like a totally different show.

Have you had to learn any new disciplines to play Sam?

I've had to learn to play the guitar. When we opened in Cardiff it was so scary, because it was something I'd never done before in my life. And now here I am, playing the guitar on stage, and acting and singing at the same time!

Did you have the help of a tutor?

I did, but it all happened so quickly. I had about three lessons and then just had to busk it. But as the tour's gone on, it's all become a lot more familiar to me. I've

relaxed into it and it's okay now, but I was a bit nervous to begin with.

Is playing the guitar something you'd like to continue after the tour?

I'd like to think so. It's a great skill to have, and it'll be interesting to see if they let me keep the guitar as a memento after the show...

Ghost features probably the best illusions in musical theatre. Are you sworn to secrecy as to how they all work?

Yeah, I'm sworn to secrecy, but obviously I know how they work because I'm having to operate them - not that I'm claiming to be any kind of David Blaine! What I will say, though, is that they're all very simple when it comes down to it. The bottom line is that they look fantastic, and certainly puzzle the audience.

Ghost is a very emotional show. How do you wind down after a performance?

I'm usually so worn out, I just go home and collapse. It's been nice recently because I've been in Woking, so I've been able to commute. It's quite a nice drive home. I'll put some mellow music on the radio and then, by the time I get home, I'm usually in a pretty good place. It takes a good hour-and-a-half to come down. It's a very tough role in that respect.

What's your favourite pastime away from the theatre?

Sport, particularly football. I'm a fan of Reading FC. There are a few of us in the company who're into football, so we've now got a Ghost football team.

This is your first tour, so how are you finding the experience?

You change venues every two to three weeks and that keeps it fresh. I always find opening nights exciting, and, of course, audiences differ, which is also fun. The hardest thing I'm finding is not having a home base, and having to find my own digs. It's great when you have somewhere nice to stay, but that's not always the case. I guess it's all swings and roundabouts.

You have the bonus of playing on familiar turf for Christmas...

Yeah, many of my formative years were spent in the Midlands. I spent five years at secondary school there and also went to Warwick University, so it'll be nice to be performing nearer home. Hopefully there'll be a lot of supportive people coming along to watch the show.

You were in a lot of musical theatre productions at Warwick. Have you since returned as a member of the audience?

I went back last February to see a show. It was quite funny seeing all these new people, who you don't recognise, performing in shows which obviously mean as much to them as they once did to me. It's quite a sobering reminder that life goes on, and that there are always new people aiming to follow

in your footsteps.

You come from a theatrical background. Were you always destined for a life on the stage?

No, when I was a teenager I really didn't know what I wanted to do. I think I rejected what my parents were doing purely from a 'grumpy teenager' perspective. Then, during sixth form, I just decided to give it a go. It was all on a bit of a whim, really, but I found I loved it. I've never looked back.

Do you class your parents as your biggest inspiration?

Most definitely. They're so supportive and inspiring. They're fantastic, and have helped me through so much.

You're first role was in the West End in Loserville - quite an achievement for someone recently graduated...

Yeah, I was completely over the moon, and just so lucky that the right role came along at the right time.

What's your all-time favourite musical?

I was in a production of Parade with a youth group called The Company at The Lowry in 2010. It was so powerful. It was brief but I haven't really had a show experience like it. The play is based on a true story, and the music is heartbreaking. So yeah, I think I'd have to go with Parade by Joseph Robert Brown.

What's on your radar post-Ghost?

I don't know. I have an ambition to do something for the first time and be known as the person who created that role.

Do you have a hero in the acting world?

Probably Hugh Jackman. He's come from that world where he was at a little theatre in Melbourne and has since progressed to being The Wolverine. He's definitely my hero. To have any kind of career like that, for me, would be insane.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Loving camp shows like Legally Blonde, having a cheesy singalong in the car, and dancing when nobody's looking.

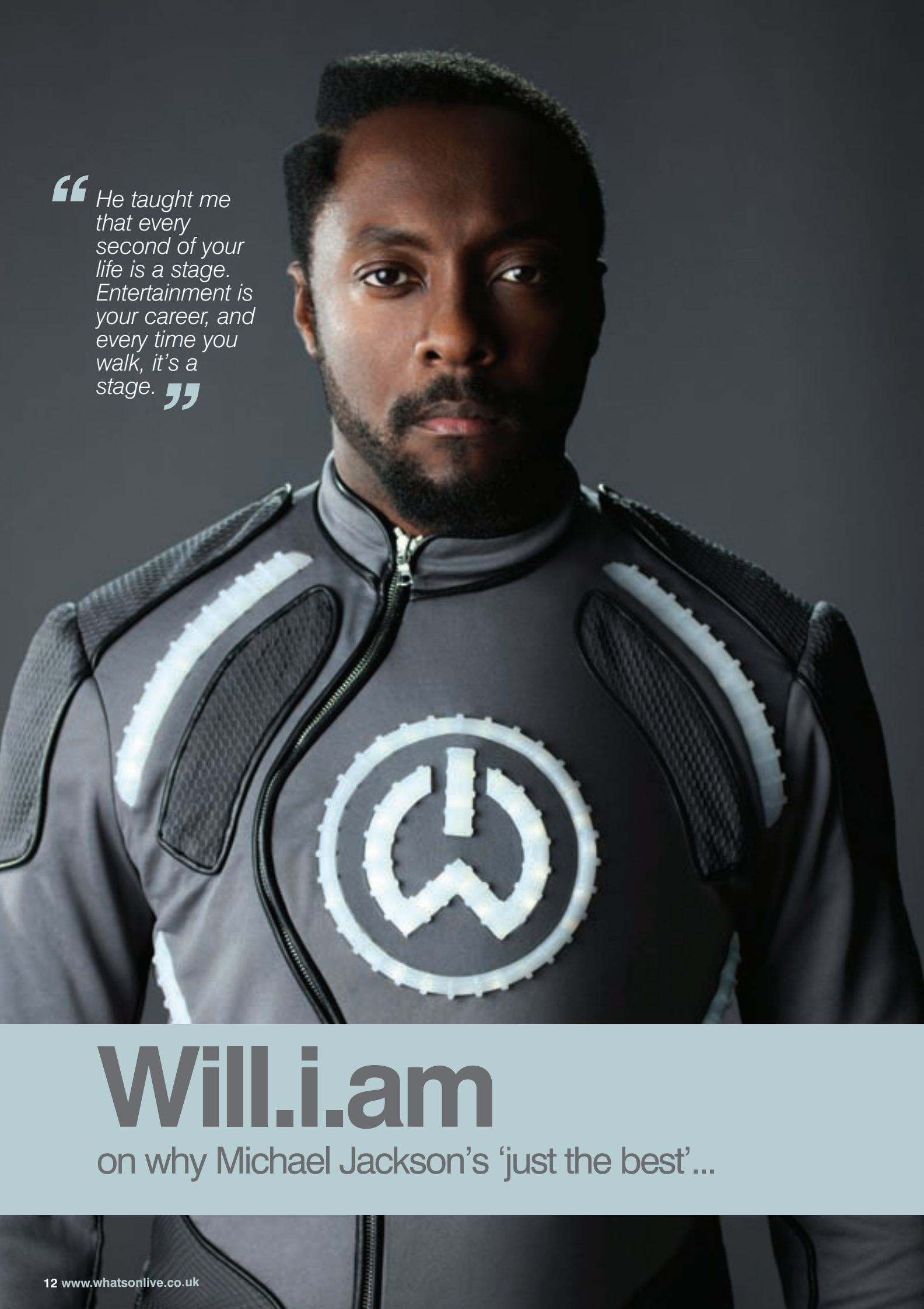
Can you dance?

I'm not a trained dancer in any way, shape or form - and neither do I claim to be - but I'll give it a go. My moves are my own.

Would you ever consider a role that's more, say, physical?

I wouldn't want to do anything like Singin' In The Rain, but something with a bit of movement - I could have a go at that. Perhaps I'll take some classes - who knows?...

Ghost shows at **New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham**, from Tues 17 December to Sun 5 January and **Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent**, Wed 8 - Sat 18 January



“ He taught me
that every
second of your
life is a stage.
Entertainment is
your career, and
every time you
walk, it's a
stage. ”

Will.i.am

on why Michael Jackson's 'just the best'...

As well known for being one of the founding members of hip-hop/pop band the Black Eyed Peas as for being a judge on the hit BBC TV talent show The Voice, multi-platinum producer Will.i.am this month returns to British shores to perform three arena dates. Away from the limelight, Will is involved in a pioneering education project to support under-privileged children. Here, he talks about his involvement with the project, what audiences can expect from his forthcoming tour, and why Michael Jackson is still 'just the best'...

Why the decision to go out on tour, Will?

It was a calling. I never had the desire before to tour by myself. Doing a show here and there, or DJ-ing here and there was cool, but I never had the desire to tour outside of the Peas. I didn't feel the need or the reason. But this project, and especially the success in my solo project, gave me a new desire. It's a new excitement to wanna do that. I'm really happy about it.

What's your vision for the tour?

I just want to represent the songs and display them in a way that excites the audience and allows them, for two hours, to escape whatever it is they've been doing. I know it sounds corny but I just wanna bring joy to people.

Will there be any special guests?

Yeah, but I'm having to keep it a surprise for now. I've got surprises, and I've got to keep them that way.

Who would be your ideal guest?

Jimi Hendrix!

Anyone in the land of the living?

Prince, but I'm trying to be realistic. He's not gonna be an obvious one.

What about Cheryl?

I'm having to keep that a secret.

Is it going to be a very technological show?

You tryin' to figure me out?! I'm a tech junkie, so yeah, it'll be technological.

What's so great about performing here in the UK?

There's something about your country that's pretty freaking. It's an amazing place. People complain when it rains - 'Ah, the weather's horrible!'. Who cares? I'm bringing an umbrella! When the sun comes out, there's a bigger appreciation!

It's a big commitment. Do you have to take a large chunk of time out to prepare?

Yeah, but it's no different to doing an album. An album takes a year, maybe a year-and-a-half. So it's another one of those things.

Is a new series of The Voice out of the question, or is that still up in the air?

No, I just can't discuss Voice details. I was a little bit shaken up last year as a result.

How have things been with Leah since The Voice?

It's great! The last time I was this excited about a project was when the Black Eyed Peas announced we were gonna do a dance album.

How would you describe the type of music we're going to get from Leah?

I would say wonderful layers of sonic euphoria. It's experimental, and there's a lot

of fusion - pop fusion with layers. Leah's voice is just spectacular.

Who would you say you've learned the most from over the course of your career, and why?

Michael Jackson. He taught me that every second of your life is a stage. Entertainment is your career, and every time you walk, it's a stage. He taught me about humility too, to check every moment of every decision and make sure that it's the right decision. As big as he was, he wasn't arrogant and he wasn't rude. He's just the best.

Did working with him change the way you approached your own work, then?

It guides how I approach people that like my work.

In what way?

There are people who accomplish an inch and they act like they created oxygen! They separate themselves from people. As big as Michael Jackson was, with all the things he accomplished, he didn't. I mean, he had to, for safety, but when he was around people, it was as if he'd known them forever. He was always connected and looking for connectivity and conversation. I see today's celebrities and they're the total opposite. There was this generation - James Brown, Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Lionel Ritchie - who were very grounded. Now there's this other generation of celebrities who have this 'I am holier than you!' attitude. I think, 'Dude you sing songs, what the hell are you talking about?!'

Do you see that happen a lot?

Hell, yeah! It makes me laugh. Every time I see that stuff, when I'm travelling about, I think, 'what the f*** are you people doing?' Half of them don't even write the songs they sing! Are you serious? I learned a lot from Michael, James, Stevie and my peers.

How do you respond when you witness that sort of behaviour?

Each to his own. I just know it's a thing I wouldn't do. Every time I'm walking down the street, in a hurry to get somewhere, and someone says, 'Hey Will, can we take a picture?', I have to pretend I don't hear them. That hurts; it breaks my heart. It's like I'm being a dick. Even though I hate having pictures taken, I'm like, 'Really bro, you're taking pictures! You can't just totally be ignored, but you'd better appreciate that picture!'. And I appreciate the fact that someone wants to share that moment with someone they know. At the same time, there's life, and when you're out there in the world, you're usually going somewhere or doing something, and those small interruptions affect your productivity, as silly as it may sound. But saying no, or rushing off, or pretending to ignore because you have somewhere to be for some reason, is difficult for me to be comfortable with.

How do you top the things you've done in the past, like with the NASA and the Olympics.

You just keep creative and keep collaborating. That adds focus to do cool new things.

What excites you most at the moment?

Leah's project. I'm finishing up with Britney. And that's about it right now.

You've been working on a lot of educational projects in the States. Is that panning out the way you'd hoped?

Yeah! We're going for a second phase. Currently we have two hundred kids. In our second phase, we're going to support three hundred more. The area where my school is, two years ago, the graduation was sixty per cent and GPA was 2.4; very low performance. But since then, the graduation's jumped to eighty per cent and the GPA to 2.8. We've seen significant changes, both in parent and teacher participation. It's a great result. So far we've sent twenty kids to China to learn Mandarin, fifteen kids to San Diego to learn code, kids to New Hampshire to do IT and be inspired with the new age, and we've also sent some kids on a tour of the White House.

Does it help that these kids feel people believe in them?

No. People in the hood, people in these areas - where there's no opportunity - they're not worried about people not believing in them. They're worried about opportunities. I could say, 'Yeah I believe in you', but that won't bring opportunity. The opportunities are the tools that are transformative. Okay, there's charity. I'm from the ghetto, that's where I'm from, that's my origins and we don't want to sign up to charity, standing in line, looking poor. Especially in the Twitter-Facebook-Instagram age, where people need the tools. They don't want to be showing everybody they ain't got nothing. Charity is successful only when it's about opportunities and enabling, not hand-outs. If you give money, that money is going to get spent. It should be about, 'Here's some tools and there's this programme where mentors will help guide you'. That's the reason the results we're seeing in Boyle Heights are so encouraging. We're gonna take that to Detroit and areas that need serious reconstruction and transformation. So I'm really excited about that work.

Let's finish on an entertainment note. In your opinion, has Miley Cyrus killed off twerking?

Man, what are you talking about. I had twerking lessons yesterday!

Will.i.am performs at Birmingham's LG Arena on Wednesday 4 December.

What's on

HIGHLIGHTS

To see what's on when, visit www.thsh.co.uk

Family



Direct from London's West End
Thriller Live

Tuesday 17 December –
Sunday 5 January

ICC Hall 1
£13.50 – £29.50 plus transaction fee*



**What the
Ladybird Heard**

Friday 20 December –
Friday 10 January

Town Hall
£11.50, £8.50 groups of 10+
plus transaction fee*



**Dr Bunhead's
Very Dangerous
Christmas Show**

Sunday 22 December –
Sunday 5 January

Town Hall
£14, £16 plus transaction fee*

Classical



**The Very Best of
Gilbert and Sullivan**

Sunday 5 January
2.30pm

Symphony Hall
£12.50 – £34 plus transaction fee*



**An Evening of
Music & Dance**
with Birmingham Royal Ballet

Friday 17 January
7.30pm

Symphony Hall
£10 – £29.50 plus transaction fee*



Black Dyke Band

Sunday 19 January
2.30pm

Symphony Hall
£13.50 plus transaction fee*

Rock, Pop & Entertainment



Aggers & Boycott

In support of the
Professional Cricketers'
Association

Thursday 23 January
7.30pm

Symphony Hall
£22.50 plus transaction fee*



**Beyond the
Barricade**

Thursday 30 January
7.30pm

Town Hall
£20 plus transaction fee*

*£2.50 transaction fee, plus £1 (optional) postage, will be charged on all bookings except purchases made in person at the Town Hall or Symphony Hall Box office.

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Music

Roy Wood Rock'n'Roll Band featuring The Proclaimers

Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
Mon 16 December

Singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Roy hails from Kitts Green, and is one of Birmingham's most famous sons. He's been in the music business since the mid-1960s, performing solo as well as in the bands The Move, Electric Light Orchestra and Wizzard. Roy's homecoming for this festive-season concert is particularly appropriate, given that his best-known song is surely I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday, with which he and glam-rockers Wizzard stormed the charts forty long years ago... Roy is joined for this anniversary gig not only by his Rock&Roll band but also The Proclaimers, whose star is once again in the ascendant courtesy of the recently released movie version of stage hit Sunshine On Leith, which features plenty of the Scottish twins' most popular numbers.



White Lies

The Institute, Birmingham, Sun 15 December

White Lies have just released third album BIG TV. Debuting at number four, the album continues in the same epic footsteps as To Lose My Life and Ritual, with references to '80s bands Depeche Mode and The Cure. This being their first tour since their sell-out Wembley gig in 2011, expect an epic live set from the London trio, who're famed for their dark but uplifting sound. Frankie Rose supports.

Julia Fordham

Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury,
Mon 16 December

Starting out as a backing singer for Mari Wilson and Kim Wilde, Julie Fordham pretty quickly found her very own place in the spotlight, cutting her first album in 1988 and going on to make a name for herself on an international level. Nowadays based in California, Julie describes herself as a left field pop singer, shifting from the folk scene to the jazz scene and even dabbling with blue eyed soul. She's touring the UK this year in support of new album Under The Rainbow, which sees her revisiting her classic songs.



Status Quo

LG Arena, Birmingham, Sat 7 December

Iconic rockers Status Quo hold the record for both the most appearances on Top Of The Pops and the greatest number of UK chart recordings. They've also sold around one hundred-and-twenty million records worldwide - not a bad achievement for a group of lads who were still at school when they decided to hook up and form a band. Originally called The Scorpions when they came together in 1962 (then The Spectres, then Traffic Jam), Quo hit the big-time with 1967's Pictures Of Matchstick Men, and they've been banging out the hits ever since. Brit Award winners in 1991 for their 'Outstanding Contribution to Music', the band have this year starred in their first feature film, Bula Quo!, and also released their one hundredth single, in so doing offering plenty of solid evidence that slowing down and smelling the roses really isn't an option for these legendary gods of the British rock scene.

Avenged Sevenfold

LG Arena, Birmingham, Thurs 5 December

Making a long-awaited return to the UK following their epic last set at Download 2011, Avenged Sevenfold have just been announced as Download 2014 headliners alongside Linkin Park. The gig marks the California band's first UK festival headlining slot, and comes on the heels of their number one success with Hail To The King, the first album written without drummer Jimmy Sullivan, who died from an accidental overdose in 2009. Five Finger Death Punch and Avatar support.



CHRISTMAS at SYMPHONY HALL

Friday 20 December 7.30pm

JINGLE BELL CHRISTMAS

Let your Christmas fun begin as the **Jingle Belle** dancers join the **London Concert Orchestra** and two great soloists to kick start your Christmas celebrations...

Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree
We Need A Little Christmas
Merry Christmas Everyone **Jingle Bell Rock**
Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer



Saturday 28 December 7.30pm

RODGERS, HAMMERSTEIN & HART

An enchanting evening of music and songs from the much loved musicals of Rodgers, Hammerstein and Hart, performed by four great West End stars.

Blue Moon **Bewitched** **My Heart Stood Still**
My Funny Valentine **Lady is a Tramp**
Have You Met Miss Jones
Some Enchanted Evening



Saturday 21 December 2.30pm & 7.30pm

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Staged in full 18th Century costume in an evocative candle-lit style setting with festive readings by **Robert Powell** and carols for all.

Handel Zadok the Priest, Christmas sequence from Messiah
Corelli Allegro and Pastorale from Christmas Concerto
Bach Air on the G String **Mozart** Exultate Jubilate
Darke In the bleak midwinter



Sunday 29 December 2.30pm

GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA

The UK's most renowned big band swings you back in time playing Glenn Miller's own original arrangements of favourite wartime chart-toppers.

Moonlight Serenade **In The Mood** **Rhapsody In Blue**
Chattanooga Choo Choo **Strike Up The Band**
Over There **South Rampart Street Parade**
Cherokee **Running Wild**



Monday 23 December 2.30pm

CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGALONG

Clap your hands... stamp your feet... and sing your heart out as irrepressible showman **Jonathan Cohen** leads you through another fun-filled jamboree of his most-loved carols and all-time Christmas hits.

Let it snow **O little town of Bethlehem**
Jingle Bells **The Twelve Days of Christmas**
Rockin' Robin **Sleigh Ride**



Sunday 29 December 7.30pm

LAST NIGHT OF THE CHRISTMAS PROMS

An unforgettable programme of rousing classics with a grand flag waving British finale!

Rossini William Tell Overture **Sousa** Liberty Bell March
Bizet Toreador Song **Verdi** La Donna e mobile
 And all your favourite Prom favourites
Hornpipe **Rule, Britannia!** **Jerrusalem**



Tuesday 24 December 2.30pm

THE GLORY OF CHRISTMAS

A special Christmas Eve concert of joyous seasonal and traditional music that perfectly captures the true spirit of Christmas.

Vivaldi Gloria (first movement)
Frank Panis Angelicus **Widor** Toccata
Willcocks Sussex Carol **Adams** The Holy City
Stanley Trumpet Voluntary **Gruber** Silent Night



Monday 30 December 7.30pm

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

One of the UK's great orchestra's returns to Symphony Hall to crown the year with a programme of much loved classics.

Beethoven Symphony No. 5
Bruch Violin Concerto No 1
Mendelssohn Hebrides Overture
Handel Water Music Selection
Saint-Saëns Introduction & Rondo Capriccioso



Friday 27 December 7.30pm

BOND AND BEYOND

Enjoy a concert celebrating the UK's most famous secret service agent, with all the iconic music and songs from over 50 years plus a tribute to other spies and detectives from around the world.

From Russia with Love **Goldfinger**
Diamonds Are Forever **Live and Let Die**
For Your Eyes Only **License to Kill**



Wednesday 1 January 2.30pm

JOHANN STRAUSS GALA A VIENNESE PARTY

Rainer Hersch the irrepressible showman who took the UK by storm in 2013 returns with a new lighthearted journey through a fizzing assortment of music & dance.

Starring **JOHANN STRAUSS DANCERS**
 in glorious costumes of the period
 and the **JOHANN STRAUSS ORCHESTRA**



Saturday 28 December 2.30pm

THE FOUR SEASONS BY CANDLELIGHT

Vivaldi's masterpiece crowns a new programme of popular 18th Century classics performed in full period costume in an evocative candle-lit style setting.

Handel Let the Bright Seraphim, Rejoice Greatly from Messiah
Trumpet Suite **Water Music Suite**
Vivaldi The Four Seasons



Sunday 5 January 2.30pm

THE VERY BEST OF GILBERT & SULLIVAN

An afternoon of memorable moments from much loved Savoy Operas.

I've Got a Little List, **The Flowers That Bloom in Spring**,
Ta Willow & Here's A How De Do (The Mikado)
Little Buttercup (H.M.S Pinafore)
I Am The Very Model & **A Policeman's Lot**
 (The Pirates of Penzance)



Sherry Counsellors

The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent,
Sat 14 December

Sherry Counsellors' 'Christmas spectacular' puts some of the region's eclectic talent in the spotlight, presenting an evening of musical styles as wide-ranging as scratchy ska and alternative indie. The gig showcases four of the best groups in the Potteries area - Sherry Counsellors (as you'd expect!), Southwall Corner Club, Dirty Money and The Carpet Lions. With Southwall Corner Club recently recording their debut EP and The Carpet Lions swinging a slot on 6 Towns Radio, this promises to be an evening of festive entertainment well worth catching.



The Hoax

The Robin, Bilston, Mon 9 December

In a tiny village in Wiltshire, former school-friends Hugh Coltman, Jesse Davey, Robin Davey and Jon Amor uncovered a shared love of the American blues greats BB King and Stevie Ray Vaughan. Forming The Hoax in 1991, they were hailed 'arguably the most influential British Blues band' for twenty years. Earning rave reviews and awards from the British Blues Connection, they disbanded in 1999 to pursue solo projects. Now they're back, on tour with the original line-up for ten shows across the UK, Netherlands and France.



Black Veil Brides

Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton,
Tues 17 December

With a mission to create a modern-day heavy metal band and combine the theatrics and passion of glam rock outfits such as Misfits, Motley Crue and Kiss, Black Veil Brides was formed by fifteen-year-old Andy Six. Debut album *We Stitch These Wounds* sold over ten thousand copies in its first week, catapulting the boys to stardom. Winners of a host of Kerrang!, Revolver and Loudwire awards, the Brides' new album was released alongside a full-length feature film, a visual depiction of the story within the album. Heaven's Basement and The Smoking Hearts support.



Black Sabbath

LG Arena, Birmingham, Fri 20 December; National Indoor Arena, Birmingham,
Sun 22 December

Birmingham-originated heavy metal pioneers Black Sabbath started out in the late-1960s as a heavy blues rock band named Earth, before a decision to dabble with themes of horror and the occult took them in a decidedly different direction. Guitarist Tony Iommi, bassist Geezer Butler, drummer Bill Ward and, of course, singer Ozzy Osbourne were the original foursome, with the latter's ferocious drug use finally seeing him being kicked out of the band in 1979 (although he's since returned).

With worldwide sales of records topping the seventy million mark, the band's right to their place in the UK Music Hall of Fame and the Rock And Roll Hall of Fame is beyond question, while Rolling Stone magazine paid further tribute to their influence by ranking them at number eighty-five in its One Hundred Greatest Artists Of All Time list. Their return to Birmingham this Christmas comes only a few weeks after they picked up three gongs at the prestigious Classic Rock Roll Of Honour event, including the coveted Living Legend award.

Climax Blues Band

Lichfield Guildhall, Sun 22 December

Local boys the Climax Blues Band (they originated in Staffordshire) have been plying their blues rock-soft rock trade since before Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, and have had almost as many line-up changes as they've written songs (okay, this is an exaggeration, but you get our drift). But then, forty-plus years is a long old time, so comings and goings are hardly a surprise. As you'd undoubtedly expect given their longevity, the band has released no shortage of albums, and enjoyed a UK top ten hit with *Couldn't Get It Right* way back in 1977.

Arthur Doherty Band

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,
Thurs 12 December

Vocalist Arthur's not just a pretty voice. Also excelling with the guitar and bodhran, he's been engaging his audiences in the business of enjoying a good ol' foot-tap for many a year now. Brought up in a traditional Irish family, he likes to offer plenty more than just a few (rather excellent) tunes in his concerts, regularly dipping into his seemingly bottomless bag of jokes and anecdotes to ensure people head for home at the end of the night having been thoroughly entertained.



Placebo

O2 Academy, Birmingham,
Thurs 12 December

Releasing their first album in four years in September - and heading out on an accompanying world tour just for good measure - Placebo's *Loud Like Love* shows are selling out fast. Alternative rock band poster boys, they've described themselves as 'for outsiders, by outsiders', with best-known songs including *Pure Morning* and *Every You, Every Me*. With a cult fanbase that's stood by them throughout a twenty-year career that's taken in glam rock, goth rock, grunge and punk rock, the band are here joined for the first gig on their UK tour by Toy.



Thriller Live

ICC, Birmingham,
Tues 17 Dec - Sun 5 Jan

A concert celebrating the career of the late Michael Jackson, *Thriller Live* features a West End cast of performers, specially created choreography, and more hits than Michael probably had cosmetic procedures! The show includes performances of *I Want You Back*, *I'll Be There*, *Can You Feel It*, *Rock With You*, *She's Out Of My Life*, *Thriller*, *Beat It*, *Bilie Jean* and *Earth Song*.

DECEMBER

LIVE FROM LA SCALA: LA TRAVIATA

Sat 7 Dec, 5pm



With La Scala Opera Company;
starring Diana Damrau, Piotr
Beczala and Željko Lučić. Sung
in Italian.

ROH LIVE SCREENING: THE NUTCRACKER

Thurs 12 Dec, 7.15pm



Tchaikovsky's magical, perennial
Christmas ballet, screened live
from Covent Garden.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

Sat 14 Dec, 7.30pm



Multi-instrumental folk duo bring-
ing a touch of classical, a drop of
jazz, a smattering of music hall
and a healthy portion of seasonal
humour.

LIKELY STORY THEATRE: TINSEL TALES

Thurs 19 Dec, 1.30pm & 7.30pm



All aboard The Historia – the
greatest story-telling ship in the
galaxy. Tinselly, Christmassy fun
show for all the family.

ROMEO AND JULIET

Fri 20 Dec, 2pm

Sat 21 & Mon 23 Dec, 7.30pm

Julian Fellows'
sumptuous new
production of
Shakespeare's
famous love story.
Hailee Steinfeld
and Douglas Booth
in title roles.



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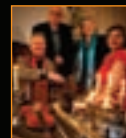
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for Birmingham and the West Midlands

LICHFIELD GUILDHALL

DECEMBER

Sat 7th Dec, 8pm

**Coope,
Simpson,
Frazer and
Freya**



Tickets: £14.50, £12.50 Members

Sun 15th Dec, 8pm

**Johnny Coppin
- All on a
Winter's Night**



Tickets: £15.50, £13.50 Members

Sat 21st Dec, 8pm

**Katriona
Roberts
and Jamie
Gilmore**

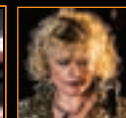


Tickets: £13, £11 Members

Sun 22nd Dec, 7.30pm

**Climax Blues Band
and Bekah Downes**

Tickets: £14, £12 Members



JANUARY 2014

Fri /Sat 17th & 18th January

Lichfield Arts presents

**Lichfield Winter
Beer Festival**



With over 30 real ales, traditional
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christmas blues

Tickets: £2 before 6pm /
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Music GIG REVIEWS

For further reviews, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

Wildflowers

The Institute, Birmingham

Plucked from obscurity by rock legend Robert Plant after being personally handpicked to join him on two sell-out UK gigs earlier this year, Brighton-based folk-country quartet Wildflowers are a rare and magical act. Their combined instrumental weight, faraway vocal harmonies and magnetic stage presence have seen them blossom, in the space of six short months, into one of the most sought-after acts on the British indie-folk-rock scene.

Currently to be found supporting Tom Odell on a sixteen-date sell-out national tour, the band's sun-kissed folk melodies, bohemian-bred cool and perfectly-judged harmonies were an immediate hit with their Birmingham audience, lending a blustery and wet HMV Institute an atmosphere akin to Glastonbury Festival at sunset.

Poised somewhere between the all-American rock anthems of Alanis Morissette and The Eagles and the cheerily up-tempo folk-rock melodies of Mumford And Sons, Wildflowers' peculiar talent for punching out a catchy riff was apparent from the word go - as was the unquestionable richness of Siddy Bennett and James Astbury's folk-inspired arrangements, which featured contributions from mandolin, banjo, harmonica and Hammond organ, as well as other instruments. Particularly worthy of mention is the band's charismatic lead vocalist, the West Country-born Siddy Bennett, whose commanding stage presence and carefree demeanour made her an immediate favourite with the crowd. Channelling the spirit of Woodstock via a hippie-inspired feather headdress and Janice Joplin-esque boots, Siddy's self-confident style was matched by her stunning vocal delivery, which put one in mind of a young Sheryl Crowe or Chrissy Hynde. From her gutsy opening rendition of the folk-rock inspired Where The Flowers Don't Grow to the soothing country & western tones of Another Million Miles, Siddy's impressive command of her instrument and impassioned commitment to her lyrics was much in evidence, ably illustrating just how strong a rival she is to the all-time greats of the country & western songbook.

In a set comprised almost entirely of potential hit singles, notable highlights included the rhythmically upbeat Let It Go, a song of heartbreak inspired by Siddy's troubled relationship with her estranged father and featuring superb supporting harmonies from little sister Kid Bennett and writing partner James Astbury. There was also a folk-inspired toast to the nomadic life called Friends - a melodic number reminiscent of an early Pogues hit - and the slow-swung rock'n'roll anthem Take Me Home, a homage to the Laurel Canyon singer-songwriters of Siddy Bennett's musical upbringing.

In short, a gig well worth an evening of anyone's time.

Katherine Ewing ■■■■■

Bryan Ferry

Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Having grown up with the sounds of Bryan Ferry and Roxy Music (thanks to my mother's borderline obsession with Mr Ferry), I finally had the opportunity to see what all the fuss was about. Kicking off the event was a great warm-up session from the Bryan Ferry Orchestra, an eight-piece ensemble whose exceptional talent is much in evidence on the jazz soundtrack of Baz Luhrmann's highly acclaimed 2013 movie, The Great Gatsby. The sounds that filled the Symphony Hall auditorium certainly made me eager for more.

And more I most definitely got, when the impeccably stylish Bryan Ferry stepped onto the stage! Bryan was backed not only by his orchestra, but also a well-qualified band that included the monumentally talented Oliver Thornton, the babyfaced guitarist delighting the audience with some truly sensational guitar solos.

With my mum and every other woman in the audience screaming in sheer delight, Ferry kicked off the show with Don't Stop The Dance, setting the tone for one of the best concerts I've seen this year. Coming up with a selection of songs that pleases everyone is no mean feat, but Ferry seemed to manage it, blending Roxy Music favourites with Bob Dylan and even John Lennon classics. A heartfelt version of Dylan's Knocking On Heaven's Door really resonated with the audience, while the show reached new heights with Ferry's rendition of Love Is The Drug. The encore performance of Let's Stick Together saw people leaving their seats and hurrying towards the stage for a boogie - a definite highlight of my night. Indeed, it's safe to say that I'm now a Bryan Ferry fan! **Ryan Humphreys** ■■■■■

Music LISTINGS

For full listing information on gigs, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

SUN 1 DEC

THE DOORS ALIVE O2 Academy, Birmingham
PANIC ROOM The Robin, Bilston
BARENAKED LADIES The Institute, Birmingham
THE TOY HEARTS PRESENT THE JITTERBUG VIPERS Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
BLACK VOICES CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Birmingham Town Hall
DISSIDENT PROPHET Kitchen Garden Cafe, Kings Heath, B'ham
TOBY JEPSON Ex Little Angels Frontman, O2 Academy, Birmingham
BLUES BOY DAN OWEN Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury
THE LEGENDS Irish Centre, Birmingham
SHAWN CUDDY Irish Centre, Birmingham
JUNGLE FIRE Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
THE CANDY BOX BURLESQUE The Glee Club, Birmingham
METAL ALL DAYER The Roadhouse, B'ham
PANIC ROOM The Robin, Bilston

MON 2 DEC

THE DARKNESS Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton
THE WORD ALIVE O2 Academy, Birmingham
FLUX PAVILLION O2 Academy, Birmingham
HUDSON TAYLOR The Institute, Birmingham
TIR NA NOG Kitchen Garden Cafe, Kings Heath, Birmingham
BLUES BOY DAN OWEN Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury
FINDLAY Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
TOM STANIFORD The Glee Club, Birmingham

TUE 3 DEC

ELECTRIC SIX O2 Academy, Birmingham
RODDY WOOLMBLE The Institute, Birmingham
DAN BAYLISS QUINTET The Spotted Dog, B'ham
MINDLESS SELF INDULGENCE Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton
PAPA ROACH O2 Academy, Birmingham
BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE National Indoor Arena, Birmingham
THE DARKNESS The Assembly, Leamington Spa
BLUES BOY DAN OWEN Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury
THE FRANKIE VALLI STORY - JERSEY BOY Feat: Stephen James, The Robin, Bilston
CHRISTMAS WITH THE

RAT PACK Symphony Hall, Birmingham
STEELEYE SPAN Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
MICHAEL MONROE The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
THE OLD DANCE SCHOOL The Glee Club, B'ham
THE ADRIAN COX QUARTET Westwood Heath Club & Reading Room, Birmingham

WED 4 DEC

SHOW OF HANDS Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton
THE OFFICIAL RECEIVERS BAND The Jam House, Birmingham
BUDDY WHITTINGTON The Robin, Bilston
WILLIAM LG Arena, Birmingham
EMPIRICAL Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
DON BROCO The Institute, Birmingham
HIGHTALE The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham
OH LAND The Institute, Birmingham
BOO HERWERDINE Kitchen Garden Cafe, Kings Heath, B'ham
THE HOOSIERS O2 Academy, Birmingham
IRENE & TOM Irish Centre, Birmingham
TOSELAND The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
THE FESTIVE FREEDOM FRINGE The Flapper, Birmingham

THUR 5 DEC

BASEMENT JAXX O2 Academy, Birmingham
AVENGED SEVENFOLD LG Arena, Birmingham
THE SUBTERRANEANS The Jam House, B'ham
HAIM The Institute Birmingham
THE BLUE AEROPLANES Hare & Hounds, B'ham
SHINING The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
JOHN OTWAY The Robin, Bilston
VOODOO ROOM The Roadhouse, B'ham
JAMIE LENMAN (EX RUBEN) & KILL CHAOS The Institute, B'ham
OF KINGS AND CAPTAINS The River Rooms, Stourbridge
THE BLACK TAMBORINES, ELEPHANTINE, THE MIGHTY YOUNG & LYRE The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

FRI 6 DEC

BOYZONE LG Arena, Birmingham
HAPPY MONDAYS O2 Academy, Birmingham
THE MAD GESE The Flapper, Birmingham
THE DAMNED Wulfrun

Hall, Wolverhampton
JEAN GENIE - TRIBUTE TO DAVID BOWIE The Assembly, Leamington Spa
NEW BAYS, OUT OF SANITY, BEFORE THE STORY ENDS & WAIT FOR THE FALL O2 Academy, B'ham
THE HEELS The Yardbird Jazz Club, Birmingham
QUEEN - FLASH The Robin, Bilston
SECRET AFFAIR Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
OLIVIA MOORE & UNFURL Symphony Hall, B'ham
KATE RUSBY Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
SKABUCKS The Marr's Bar, Worcester
HOBSONS INLAND SEA SHANTY SINGERS Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire
LABOUR OF LOVE - UB40
TRIBUTE The River Rooms, Stourbridge
51 STONE Route 44, Birmingham
SWING INTO CHRISTMAS Tamworth Assembly Rooms
CHARLIE LAW Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
ABBA REUNION Artrix, Bromsgrove
THE SUBTERRANEANS The Jam House, B'ham

HELLRAZOR The Roadhouse, Birmingham
SUGAR RAZORS The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
T.REXTASY Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
JP COOPER The Institute, Birmingham
FATBOY SLIM The Institute, Birmingham
JAMES SKELLY & THE INTENDERS The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent
LONG DISTANCE Irish Centre, Birmingham
GLADSTONE ROCKS Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent
THE OFFICIAL RECEIVERS The Assembly, Leamington Spa
GORDON HENDRICKS AS ELVIS Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth
MARCUS INTALEX The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

SAT 7 DEC

KATE RUSBY Civic Hall, Wolverhampton
STATUS QUO LG Arena, Birmingham
THE JAKE & ELWOOD
BLUES BROTHERS The Robin, Bilston
THE SUBTERRANEANS The Jam House, B'ham
HANSON The Institute Birmingham
GORDON HENDRICKS AS ELVIS Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth
THE SOUL SURVIVORS The River Rooms, Stourbridge
FOREVER YOUNG ROCK NIGHT The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
SURGE SAXOPHONES mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham
REBEL REBEL The Roadhouse, Birmingham
GILAD ATZMON AND THE

BANKS'S Robin 2
www.therobin.co.uk

SUN 1 DEC
PANIC ROOM

TUE 3 DEC
FRANKIE VALLI
JERSEY BOY STORY

WED 4 DEC
BUDDY WHITTINGTON

THU 5 DEC
JOHN OTWAY
BIG BAND

FRI 6 DEC
FLASH-QUEEN

SAT 7 DEC
BLUES BROTHERS
JAKE & ELWOOD SHOW

SUN 8 DEC
MOSTLY AUTUMN

MON 9 DEC
THE HOAX
(FEAT ORIGINAL MEMBERS)

TUE 10 DEC
SIMON McBRIDE

WED 11 DEC
JONNY COLE

THU 12 DEC
ROY WOOD
ROCK & ROLL BAND

FRI 13 DEC
THE DREAMBOYS

SAT 14 DEC
GO WEST

SUN 15 DEC
BRAVADO-RUSH

MON 16 DEC
MAETLOAF

TUE 17 DEC
LIVE BAND OF THE YEAR 2013
GRAND FINAL

WED 18 DEC
MIKE SANCHEZ

THU 19 DEC
FRED ZEPPELIN

FRI 20 DEC
SOLD OUT

SAT 21 DEC
TALON-EAGLES

SUN 22 DEC
CAVERN BEATLES

MON 23 DEC
TAKE THAT
TRIBUTE TAKE@THAT

TUE 24 DEC
KICK UP THE 80'S

THU 26 DEC
LIMEHOUSE
LIZZY

FRI 27 DEC
OASIS + STONE ROSES
DEFINITELY MIGHT BE + ADORED

SAT 28 DEC
DIRTY DC

SUN 29 DEC
FULL ELECTRIC
QUILL

MON 30 DEC
SOUL SURVIVORS
ALTERNATIVE NYE PARTY

TUE 31 DEC
T-REXTASY
NYE PARTY + DISCO

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WOLVERHAMPTON - WV14 7LJ

Music LISTINGS

For full listing information on gigs, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

ORIENT HOUSE ENSEMBLE Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton
COOPE, SIMPSON, FRAZER AND FREYA Lichfield Guildhall
THE COURTEENERS O2 Academy, Birmingham
WATAIN The Institute, Birmingham
FACE PRESENTS KU:DER'TA FEATURING CHRIS LATTNER AND GUESTS The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham
MOTOWN SOUL SPECTACULAR The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford
UNDER THE COVERS Irish Centre, Birmingham
JACK MCNEILL & CHARLIE HEYS Ort Cafe, B'ham
MMX The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent
LOVELESS LUCK, CHEMICALLY ABUSED, KODIAK AND SOUR SCARLET The Flapper, Birmingham
THE PIGEON DETECTIVES Kasbah, Coventry
THE GRAFHAM WATER SAILING CLUB, VICTOR & NOIR The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham
SELFLESS, BURDEN OF THE NOOSE & BLACK VEINS Scruffy Murphys, B'ham

SUN 8 DEC

JOOLS HOLLAND AND HIS RHYTHM AND BLUES ORCHESTRA Symphony Hall, Birmingham
MOSTLY AUTUMN The Robin, Bilston
OUR MUTUAL FRIEND, THE MOURNING SUNS, EGO HONEY, CHE AND THE MISTAKINGS & TARA CHINN O2 Academy, Birmingham
TAMMY KING, BETHAN AND THE MORGANS The Yardbird, Birmingham
THE VIEW O2 Academy, Birmingham
CONDUIT & JET PACK The Asylum, Birmingham
COLD CROWS DEAD The Flapper, Birmingham
FONTANELLA RECORDER GROUP - PASTIME WITH GOOD COMPANY Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
CHRIS WOOD Kitchen Garden Cafe, Kings Heath, Birmingham
THE PSYCHEDELIC WARLORDS The River Rooms, Stourbridge
J. COLE O2 Academy, Birmingham
THE LEGENDS Irish Centre, Birmingham
SHILLELAGH Irish Centre, Birmingham
FRANKLY GUITAR CLUB
CHRISTMAS CHARITY CONCERT Artrix, Bromsgrove

MON 9 DEC

QUASI Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
AIRBOURNE The Institute, Birmingham
THE PARTY POPPERZ XMAS SPECTACULAR Tamworth Assembly Rooms

ENUFF 2 NUFF Marr's Bar, Worcester
PAIGHTON O2 Academy, Birmingham
THE HOAX The Robin, Bilston
J. COLE O2 Academy, Birmingham
FRAN THE MAN Irish Centre, Birmingham
MIKE DIGNAM The Glee Club, Birmingham

TUE 10 DEC

DEACON BLUE Symphony Hall, Birmingham
SOLID SOUL The Jam House, Birmingham
BLACK STAR RIDERS The Assembly, Leamington Spa
SIMON MCBRIDE The Robin, Bilston
BEYOND THE BARRICADE Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock
UNDER THE INFLUENCE O2 Academy, Birmingham
NIGHTJAR The Spotted Dog, Birmingham

WED 11 DEC

SHED SEVEN Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton
JLS LG Arena, Birmingham
SOLID SOUL The Jam House, Birmingham
JONNY COLE'S BLACK COUNTRY CHRISTMAS BASH The Robin, Bilston
GYPSY FIRE Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire
PHIL BEER/MIRANDA SYKES & REX PRESTON The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham
THE JOHN MORRIS TRIO The Yardbird Jazz Club, Birmingham
MAX RAPTOR & ATTENTION THIEVES O2 Academy, Birmingham
DERANGED, NATRON & MASOCHIST The Asylum, Birmingham
LOOM & BAD MOON Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
THE GAME The Institute, Birmingham
THE ELECTRIC SOFT PARADE The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THU 12 DEC

THE BIG REUNION CHRISTMAS PARTY LG Arena, Birmingham
THE WATERBOYS New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham
SIMON FAULKNER The Jam House, Birmingham
FROM THE JAM: ALL MOD CONS 35TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
PLACEBO O2 Academy, Birmingham
ROY WOOD ROCK & ROLL BAND The Robin, Bilston
MK1 The Institute, Birmingham
ST AGNES FOUNTAIN Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
ARTHUR DOHERTY BAND

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
THE VINYL & THOMAS MCCONNELL The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
DEVIL RED The River Rooms, Stourbridge

FRI 13 DEC

JLS LG Arena, B'ham
ROY ORBISON AND FRIENDS Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock
UK SUBS O2 Academy, Birmingham
BEYOND THE BARRICADE Malvern Theatres
THE DREAMBOYS FIT AND FAMOUS 2013 TOUR The Robin, Bilston
BEE GEES FEVER Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth
CHRIS ALDRIDGE AND BEEBE Symphony Hall, Birmingham
CRAIG CHARLES Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
THE LEGENDS PARTY WITH ABSOLUTE LEGENDS Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
MAMMA MIA - CHRISTMAS PARTY WITH BOOTLEG ABBA Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
FRED ZEPPELIN The Roadhouse, B'ham
SCAR THE MARTYR The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
FLASHBACK TO THE 80'S The River Rooms, Stourbridge
PEACE O2 Academy, Birmingham
MARTHA REEVES The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent
JULIAN SMITH Artrix, Bromsgrove
MONEY FOR NOTHING (DIRE STRAITS TRIBUTE) Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
MAXIMUM ZERO, MAGPIES AND VAGABONDS & PRETEND
BEST FRIEND The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
COME UP & SEE ME Drummonds Bar, Worcester
THE HURLING BOYS Irish Centre, Birmingham
ELECTRO SWING WINTER BLUES Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire
GROAN, IRON HEARSE, MAGE & NUKEBOX Scruffy Murphys, B'ham
FRED ZEPPELIN The Roadhouse, B'ham
ACTION REPLAY Route 44, Birmingham

SAT 14 DEC

SHED SEVEN The Institute, Birmingham
CASSETTE DAYS & SOUND KID The Flapper, Birmingham
OCEAN COLOUR SCENE O2 Academy, B'ham
DETROIT SOUL The Jam House, Birmingham
THAT'LL BE THE DAY CHRISTMAS SHOW Birmingham Town Hall
GO WEST FEATURING PETER COX & RICHARD DRUMMIE The Robin, Bilston
ROY CHUBBY BROWN The Civic Hall, Wolverhampton
BAD MANNERS The Assembly, Leamington Spa
BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire
KICK UP THE 80'S The River Rooms, Stourbridge
WYLDE ORCHID + DEEP

LOVE FOUNDATION Route 44, Birmingham
SHIN PARWANA Symphony Hall, Birmingham
ALL ON A WINTER'S NIGHT - JOHNNY COPPIN Artrix, Bromsgrove
CLASSIC SOUL CHRISTMAS PARTY WITH BROTHERS OF SOUL Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
KASTELLA The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
JAMIE KNIGHT & THE BIG SWING Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
DAVIDE SQUILLACE The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham
THEATRE OF HATE FEAT STAN STAMMERS, JOHN BOY LENNARD, KIRK BRANDON, ROBIN GOODRIDGE AND ADRIAN PORTAS The Institute, Birmingham
15 YEARS OF VIRUS FEATURING ED RUSH & OPTICAL Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
DAN WHITEHOUSE Birmingham Conservatoire
PANIC! REUNION PARTY The Institute, B'ham
THE FATHER TEDS Irish Centre, Birmingham
NIRVANAGAIN The Marr's Bar, Worcester
JOHN PAUL VILAFRATI Ort Cafe, Birmingham
SHERRY COUNSELLORS The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent
KEVIN GRENELL'S Hanley Castle High School, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcester
DESPERADO The Roadhouse, Birmingham
AMINGTON BAND Tamworth Assembly Rooms

SUN 15 DEC

WET WET WET LG Arena, Birmingham
SYLVIA The Yardbird, Birmingham
BRAVADO - TRIBUTE TO RUSH The Robin, Bilston
BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST The Hive, Shrewsbury
TALON - THE BEST OF THE EAGLES Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock
WHITE LIES The Institute, Birmingham
RECKLESS HEART The Roadhouse, B'ham
RED BIRD SKY Kitchen Garden Cafe, Kings Heath, Birmingham
ALL ON A WINTER'S NIGHT - JOHNNY COPPIN Lichfield Guildhall
STAKEOUT O2 Academy, Birmingham
CHRISTMAS WITH THE TOWN HALL GOSPEL CHOIR The Drum, B'ham
WILSON ROBERTS & FRIENDS AT CHRISTMAS Stratford Civic Hall

MON 16 DEC

JULIA FORDHAM Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury
THE RED LEMONS The Jam House, Birmingham
SLADE AND SWEET Birmingham Town Hall
THE ALBION CHRISTMAS SHOW mac- Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham
MAETLOAF The Robin, Bilston
ANDY JORDAN O2 Academy, Birmingham
CONSPIRE The Sugarmill,

Stoke-on-Trent
MARTHA REEVES & THE ATLANTIC PLAYERS Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
DIRTY OLD FOLKERS Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham
DECLAN GAYNOR The Irish Centre, Birmingham

TUE 17 DEC

THE RED LEMONS The Jam House, B'ham
JONATHAN SILK'S CHRISTMAS BIG BAND The Spotted Dog, Birmingham
REVELATIONS O2 Academy, Birmingham
RIC SANDERS AND FRIENDS Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
IN HINDSIGHT, WE START PARTYS, ORCHARD HILL & THE CONCEPT The Institute, Birmingham
BLACK VEIL BRIDES Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

WED 18 DEC

SARA COLMAN Symphony Hall, Birmingham
PAUL O'BRIEN FAMILY BAND The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham
THE MELLSTOCK BAND Lord Leycester Hospital, Warwick
CERY'S MATTHEWS Birmingham Town Hall
JOHN LENNON MCCULLAGH Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
MIKE SANCHEZ & THE PORTIONS The Robin, Bilston
IRENE & TOM Irish Centre, Birmingham
GNARWOLVES & NAI HARVEST The Flapper, Birmingham
OPERATION ERROR The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent
TENACIOUS D O2 Academy, Birmingham
ROCKET The Jam House, Birmingham

THUR 19 DEC

KIM WILDE O2 Academy, Birmingham
THAT'LL BE THE DAY CHRISTMAS SHOW Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent
FRED ZEPPELIN The Robin, Bilston
CHRIS TYE Symphony Hall, Birmingham
PIVA Stafford Gatehouse
ONLY SHADOWS, INVADE THE ARMADA, FLAMING FIELDS, THE VIBE & BRAINS FOR BREAKFAST The Flapper, Birmingham
MIKE SANCHEZ Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
X-SLF FEATURING EX MEMBERS OF STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, HENRY CLUNEY AND JIM REILLY The River Rooms, Stourbridge
BIG TENT Ort Cafe, Birmingham
INSOLITO, A BORN DISASTER, METHOEMIC, ALTER THE MARTYR & THE FINAL CHAPTER O2 Academy, Birmingham

UNCLE JIM, SWERVE, BAD MOON Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
THE MOTIVES The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent
YEAH YEAH NOH, JUNEAU BROTHERS, MISS HALLIWELL & CHURCH OF ELVIS Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
JAWS & BABYPINK Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
ROCKET The Jam House, Birmingham

FRI 20 DEC

BLACK SABBATH LG Arena, Birmingham
UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE The Jam House, B'ham
SHOWADDYWADDY Wulfrun Hall, W'hampton
THUNDER Civic Hall, Wolverhampton
KATE RUSBY Malvern Theatres
BELLA HARDY TRIO Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton
MANAKIN & MY OWN AGENDA Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
THE FAB BEATLES TRIBUTE The Assembly, Leamington Spa
CHAS AND DAVE The Robin, Bilston
THE NOTEBENDERS Symphony Hall, Birmingham
JINGLE BELL CHRISTMAS Symphony Hall, B'ham
THE STONES The Roadhouse, Birmingham
EARTH TO BLACK SABBATH CONVENTION Scruffy Murphys, B'ham
BOGUS BLOOZE Route 44, Birmingham
THE BEE GEES SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER PARTY WITH STAYIN' ALIVE Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
THE BOOZE BROTHERS Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
WHO'S NEXT The Marr's Bar, Worcester
FLASHBACK TO THE 80'S The River Rooms, Stourbridge
THE SEARCHERS Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
THE GREGORY S DAVIES BAND The Willow Gallery, Oswestry, North Shropshire
MODERN MINDS, DANNY MAHON, FAITH, EGO HONEY & LARANJA The Institute, Birmingham
NICKY ROMERO The Institute, Birmingham
THE MAGOOS Drummonds Bar, Worcester
STAR OF THE SEA Irish Centre, Birmingham
NERVE CENTRE, DUKE & DEMI MARRINER O2 Academy, Birmingham
HOT CLUB DE SWING Hare & Hounds, B'ham
GOD DAMN, THEM WOLVES & TABLE SCRAPS The Flapper, B'ham
DELAMERE The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

SAT 21 DEC

SHOWADDYWADDY The Assembly, Leamington Spa
THE WONDER STUFF, POP WILL EAT ITSELF AND

JESUS JONES O2 Academy, Birmingham
SLYDE ALIVE The Roadhouse, Birmingham
DIRTY OLD FOLKERS Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
TALON - THE BEST OF THE EAGLES The Robin, Bilston
LOVELACE The Flapper, Birmingham
FOREVER YOUNG ROCK NIGHT The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
THUNDER Civic Hall, Wolverhampton
ONE STOP BOOGIE - 70S V 80S The River Rooms, Stourbridge
SOULSHAKE The Yardbird Jazz Club, B'ham
PERMISSION TO ROCK - THE ULTIMATE TRIBUTE BAND Route 44, B'ham
THAT'S LIFE - TAKE THAT & WESTLIFE SHOW Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
TRIBUTE TO THE 80'S PARTY WITH 80'S EXPERIENCE Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
KATRIONA ROBERTS AND JAMIE GILMORE Lichfield Guildhall
NINE DART FINISH The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
TONY JACOBS FROM THE SYD LAWRENCE ORCHESTRA Number 8 Community Arts Centre, Pershore
BRUM PUNX XMAS BASH FEAT. G.B.H, DRONGOS FOR EUROPE & DIRT BOX DISCO The Institute, Birmingham
UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE The Jam House, B'ham
THE FULL SHA BANG Irish Centre, Birmingham
SWORN TO OATH The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

SUN 22 DEC

BLACK SABBATH NIA, Birmingham
THE CAVERN BEATLES The Robin, Bilston
KAI MCKENZIE AS MICHAEL BUBLE The River Rooms, Stourbridge
THE TOY HEARTS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Hare & Hounds, B'ham
CLIMAX BLUES AND BEKAH DOWNES Lichfield Guildhall
KERFUUFFLE St. Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury
THE TWANG The Rain-bow Venues, B'ham
DIRTY LITTLE LIES O2 Academy, Birmingham
ELECTRIC CAKE SALAD, BIRTHRITE & VENOMOUS ADDITION The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
GREG COULSON, DEL BROMHAM, CHERRY LEE MEWIS AND LAURENCE JONES The Assembly, Leamington Spa
THE LEGENDS Irish Centre, Birmingham
LITTLE JIMMY Irish Centre, Birmingham
THE RUBY DUKES, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

MON 23 DEC

TAKE THAT RELIGHTING THE FIRE The Robin, Bilston
LONG DISTANCE Irish Centre, Birmingham
THE TWANG The Rain-bow Venues, B'ham
IN THE CARDS & JUNCTION 16 The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent
DIRTY OLD FOLKERS Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
GOSPEL CENTRAL The Jam House, B'ham

TUE 24 DEC

KICK UP THE 80'S The Robin, Bilston
ONE DIRECTION ADVENTURE The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THUR 26 DEC

LIMEHOUSE LIZZY The Robin, Bilston
THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE The River Rooms, Stourbridge
MICHAEL BUBLE TRIBUTE WITH JAMIE FLANAGAN Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
DIZZY LIZZY The Roadhouse, Birmingham
DEL CAMINO The Jam House, Birmingham
THE HURLING BOYS Irish Centre, Birmingham

FRI 27 DEC

B'SPOKE The Jam House, Birmingham

DEFINITELY MIGHT BE AND ADORED The Robin, Bilston
HIGHER ON MAIDEN V MENTALICA The River Rooms, Stourbridge
IVOR & LYNN'S CLASSIC ROCK DISCO Route 44, Birmingham
THE TREVOR BURTON CHRISTMAS SHOW Featuring The Trevor Burton Band, Mods & Sods and Suzi & The Backbeats, The Roadhouse, Birmingham
HEADRUSH The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

SAT 28 DEC

CHAS N DAVE The Assembly, Leamington Spa
DIRTY DC - TRIBUTE TO AC / DC The Robin, Bilston
ROXY MAGIC The Roadhouse, Birmingham
QUEEN - FLASH THE River Rooms, Stourbridge
SOUL FOOD SOUNDSYSTEM The Yardbird Jazz Club, Birmingham
HEIDI The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham
BETRAYAL WITHIN THE RANKS, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent
B'SPOKE The Jam House, Birmingham
ROUTE 44 END OF THE YEAR PARTY FEATURING THE NOTORIOUS BROS Route 44, Birmingham
BLACK JACK DAVEY The Irish Centre, B'ham

SUN 29 DEC

QUILL The Robin, Bilston
GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA Symphony Hall, Birmingham
PINK MISS UNDERSTOOD The River Rooms, Stourbridge
PAST AND PRESENT - ALL DAYER Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
DECLAN GAYNOR Irish Centre, Birmingham
HEARTBREAKER & MISSED The Roadhouse, Birmingham
SOUL SURVIVORS The Robin, Bilston

TUE 31 DEC

T.REXTASY The Robin, Bilston
NEW YEARS EVE WITH FLARES The Roadhouse, Birmingham
MAMMA MIA NEW YEAR PARTY WITH SENSATION Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
KICK UP THE 80'S The River Rooms, Stourbridge
NEW YEARS EVE WITH THE SUBTERRANEANS The Jam House, B'ham
SEVEN PART SEVEN: NYE The Institute, B'ham
THE FATHER TEDS Irish Centre, Birmingham
SEAN WILSON Irish Centre, Birmingham
THE BLUEBEAT ARKESTRA & ANDREA BROWN The Yardbird Jazz Club, Birmingham

Music Venues Box Office

Birmingham

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THE ACTRESS & BISHOP
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THE ASYLUM
0121 233 1109
THE BARBER INSTITUTE
0121 414 7333
BIRMINGHAM TOWN HALL
0121 780 3333
CBSD CENTRE
0121 780 3333
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THE GLEE CLUB
0871 472 0400
HARE & HOUNDS
0121 444 2081
INSTITUTE
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IRISH CENTRE
0121 622 2314
THE JAM HOUSE
0121 200 3030
LG ARENA
0844 338 8000
NIA
0844 338 8000
THE RAINBOW
0121 772 8174
RED LION FOLK CLUB
0121472 4253
THE ROADHOUSE
0121 459 5660
ROUTE 44
0121 708 0108
SYMPHONY HALL
0121 780 3333
THE VICTORIA
0121 633 9439
THE YARDBIRD
0121 212 2524

Black Country

CIVIC HALL, WOLVERHAMPTON
0870 320 7000
DUDLEY CONCERT HALL
01384 815577
FOREST ARTS CENTRE
0845 111 2898
NEWHAMPTON ARTS CENTRE
01902 572090
THE PUBLIC, WEST BROMWICH
0121 533 7161
ROBIN 2, BILSTON
01902 401211
SLADE ROOMS
WOLVERHAMPTON
0870 320 7000
STOURBRIDGE TOWN HALL
01384 812812
WULFRUN HALL,
WOLVERHAMPTON
0870 320 7000

Shropshire

BIRCHMEADOW, BROSELEY
01952 882210
THE BUTTERMARKET,
SHREWSBURY
01743 355055
THE EDGE ARTS CENTRE,
MUCH WENLOCK
01952 728911
HENRY TUDOR HOUSE
SHREWSBURY
01743 361666
THE HIVE, SHREWSBURY
01743 234970
THE IRONWORKS, OSWESTRY
01691 679123
LUDLOW ASSEMBLY ROOMS
01584 878141
THEATRE SEVERN,
SHREWSBURY 01743 281281
THE PLACE, OAKENGATES,
TELFORD 01952 382382
WEM TOWN HALL
01939 232299

Staffordshire

FOXLOWE ARTS CENTRE, LEEK
01538 386112
LICHFIELD GUILDHALL
01543 262223
THE SUGARMILL, HANLEY
STOKE-ON-TRENT
01159 454 593
TAMWORTH ASSEMBLY ROOMS
01827 709618
VICTORIA HALL, HANLEY
0870 060 6649
STAFFORD GATEHOUSE
01785 254653

Warwickshire

THE ASSEMBLY, LEAMINGTON
01926 311311
THE KASBAH, COVENTRY
024 7655 4473
NAILCOTE HALL,
BERKSWELL
02476 46 6174
STRATFORD CIVIC HALL
01789 207100
THE TIN MUSIC & ARTS,
COVENTRY
0247 655 9958

Worcestershire

ARTRIX, BROMSGROVE
01527 577330
HUNTINGDON HALL / SWAN
THEATRE 01905 611427
MARR'S BAR, WORCESTER
01905 613336
THE RIVER ROOMS,
STOURBRIDGE
01384 397177

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and to find out What's On
at these venues.

Visit: www.whatsonlive.co.uk



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Mon 30 December

Since its formation in 1946, the RPO has operated under the directorship of some of the world's most respected conductors, Rudolf Kempe and Andre Previn included. Based in the beautiful surroundings of Chelsea's Cadogan Hall, the orchestra is no stranger to the recording studio, regularly laying down soundtracks for films and enjoying a long partnership with many of the major commercial record companies. Currently basking in the success of a three-week tour of the US with Pinchas Zukerman, and performances in Spain, Italy, Germany and Poland, the orchestra this month stops off in the region to present a programme of 'stunning classics'. Featuring conductor Christopher Warren-Green and violinist Tamsin Waley-Cohen, the RPO perform Bruch's Violin Concerto, Beethoven's Symphony No.5, Mendelssohn's Herbrides Overture, Handel's A Selection From The Water Music and Saint-Saens' Introduction et Rondo Capriccioso. The concert forms part of Symphony Hall's Christmas Festival.

CBSO Festive Favourites With Mark Williams

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 19, Sun 22 & Mon 23 December

Following hot on the heels of his acclaimed performance in Moliere's Tartuffe at The REP last month, Harry Potter actor Mark Williams returns to Birmingham to narrate Festive Favourites, a staple on the Symphony Hall Christmas calendar. Under the direction of conductor Simon Halsey and accompanied by two hundred-and-fifty voices from the CBSO's massed choruses, this annual event sees the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra presenting a programme of classic carols and seasonal stories.

A perfect way for audience members to get into the spirit of Christmas.



Ex Cathedra: Christmas Music By Candlelight

St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury, Tues 3 December; St John's Church, Hagley, Birmingham, Tues 10 December; St Paul's Church, Birmingham, Wed 18 - Sat 21 December

What better way to get into the festive spirit than by enjoying an evening with one of the country's finest choral music ensembles? Under the directorship of its founder, Jeffrey Skidmore, Ex Cathedra this month presents a series of atmospheric 'Christmas music by candlelight' evenings, blending seasonal favourites from around the globe and across the ages with a variety of readings.

Keeping in the festive spirit, the ensemble also presents An Elizabethan Christmas at Birmingham Town Hall on 8 December (featuring the music of Byrd, Gibbons and Tallis) and Santa Lucia Service - a traditional Swedish service of carols and readings - at Birmingham Cathedral on 9 December.



Only Men Aloud

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 12 December

Grabbing the attention of the nation as contestants and eventual winners of the BBC's Last Choir Standing competition in 2008, Cardiff-based choral group Only Men Aloud's popularity continues to grow. Debut album Band Of Brothers won the group Album of The Year at the Classical Brits in 2010, and in the same year they appeared as special guests on the Christmas Day edition of Strictly Come Dancing. Having more recently scaled down to an eight-piece ensemble, they this month make a welcome return to the Midlands, where they'll be joined by eleven-year-old Liverpool choirboy and Classic Brit Awards performer Jack Topping.

Glyndebourne Opera

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 11 - Sat 14 December

As committed to reaching new audiences as it is to presenting opera of the highest quality, Glyndebourne has been taking its work out on the road every autumn since 1968. A regular at Stoke's Regent Theatre, the company this month returns with L'elisir d'amore. Set in a close-knit, gossip-ridden Italian community, Donizetti's heart-warming comedy in two acts is here sung in Italian with English surtitles. Tenor Christopher Tiesi makes his Glyndebourne debut opposite soloist Joelle Harvey.



Classical LISTINGS

For full listing information on classical concerts, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

NOCTURNE: THE ROMANTIC LIFE OF FREDERIC CHOPIN

Sun 1 Dec, Malvern Theatres
CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR! Featuring the University of Warwick Chorus, Chamber Choir, Wind Orchestra & Brass Band, Sun 1 Dec, Butterworth Hall, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ANDREI GAVRILOV PIANO CONCERT

Programme includes works by Prokofiev & Chopin, Tues 3 Dec, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham
EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT Tue 3 Dec, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury
SIMON BOLIVAR STRING QUARTET Programme includes works by Mendelssohn, Ginastera & Brahms, Wed 4 Dec, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

CBSO: NELSON'S CONDUCTS BRAHMS' THIRD Performed by Andris Nelsons (conductor) and Isabelle Faust (violin), Thurs 5 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

ROYAL MARINES CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR Thurs 5 Dec, Cheltenham Town Hall

CBSO PRE-CONCERT SHOWCASE WITH FAN YU & LUCY CHANG Programme includes works by Chopin (Fan Yu), Debussy & Strauss (Chang), Thurs 5 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GAUDEAMUS Lunchtime concert, Thurs 5 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR - HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Fri 6 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham
BARTOSZ WOROCH VIOLIN CONCERT Programme includes works by JS Bach & Ysaye, Fri 6 Dec, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

CHOIR EVENING Fri 6 Dec, Rugeley Rose Theatre

CBSO PLAYERS: FESTIVE TREATS Fri 6 - Sat 7 Dec, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

CLASSICAL SPECTACULAR Sat 7 Dec, National Indoor Arena, B'ham

BRITISH POLICE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: PROMS NIGHT SPECTACULAR Sat 7 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MERRILY ON HIGH: A CHRISTMAS WITH ALL WOMAN Sat 7 Dec, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

LA TRAVIATA FROM LA SCALA An opera in three acts. Sung in Italian, Sat 7 Dec, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM BRASS BAND

Sat 7 Dec, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

AN ELIZABETHAN CHRISTMAS

Programme includes works by Byrd, Gibbons, Tallis, Sun 8 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

THE SNOWMAN The Peoples Orchestra present an original orchestration alongside a live screening of the Raymond Briggs classic, Sun 8 Dec, Malvern Theatres

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Programme includes works by Beethoven, Richard Strauss, Prokofiev & Haydn, Sun 8 Dec, Stratford Civic Hall

A CHRISTMAS CONCERT FOR STRING ENSEMBLE Programme includes works by Vivaldi, Telemann, John Ireland & Tchaikovsky, Sun 8 Dec, Holy Trinity Church, Shrewsbury

EX CATHEDRA: AN ELIZABETHAN CHRISTMAS Sun 8 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

COMEDIANS AND CAROLS Featuring Folk On, Paul Kerensa, Anette Fagan, Mandy Mudén and Hannah Silvester, Sun 8 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: A LITTLE LIGHT MUSIC Programme includes works by Suppe, Coates, Elgar, Grainger, Ponchielli, Gillis, Anderson & Sousa, Sun 8 Dec, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

MELODY MUSIC BIRMINGHAM CHRISTMAS CONCERT Mon 9 Dec, Birmingham Conservatoire

EX CATHEDRA: SAINT LUCIA SERVICE Mon 9 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

CHRISTMAS WASSAIL A festive feast of choral music and song, comedy and spoken word. Mon 9 - Tue 10 Dec, Highbury Hall, B'ham

CAROLS WITH THOMAS TROTTER & CAMBRIAN BRASS Mon 9 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR - HANDEL'S MESSIAH Tue 10 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

ALEXANDER BAILLIE (CELLO) & JOHN THWAITES (PIANO) Programme includes works by Rubbra & Franck, Tues 10 Dec, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL CAROL CONCERT Tue 10 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL CAROL CONCERT Tues 10 Dec, Birmingham

ham Cathedral
EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Tues 10 Dec, St John's Church, Hagley, Birmingham

THE FOUR SEASONS: MUSICAL & AMICABLE SOCIETY Programme includes works by Vivaldi, Telemann, Richard Mudge & Bach, Wed 11 Dec, Recital Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

L'ELISIR D'AMORE Glyndebourne Opera return with Donizetti's intoxicating comedy, Wed 11 - Sat 14 Dec, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

CBSO TCHAIKOVSKY'S PATHETIQUE SYMPHONY Featuring Andrew Litton (conductor) and Benjamin Grosvenor (piano). Programme includes works by Rachmaninov, Saint-Saëns and Tchaikovsky, Wed 11 - Thurs 12 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RUSSIAN PATRIARCHATE Choir Wed 11 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

TAMWORTH VOICES CHOIR SHOW Wed 11 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

ONLY MEN ALOUD Thurs 12 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS WITH BUBBLE Thurs 12 Dec, Crewe Lyceum

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR & THE CBSO PLAYERS Programme: Brahms' Piano Quintet, Thurs 12 Dec, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL CAROL CONCERT Thurs 12 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

EBLANA STRING TRIO Featuring Jonathan Martindale (violin), Lucy Nolan (viola) and Peggy Nolan (cello), Thurs 12 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JEAN MARTYN Thurs 12 Dec, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock

BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL CAROL CONCERTS Thurs 12 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

CBSO FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSICS: WONDERFUL CHRISTMASTIME Featuring Carl Davis (conductor), Lance Ellington and Katy Treharne (vocals), Fri 13 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MIDLANDS HOSPITALS' CHOIR: A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION Featuring David Lawrence (conductor) Julian Wilkins (organist) Gemini Bass (ensemble) & special guest artist Laura Wright, Fri 13 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

TRIO ISIMSIZ Programme includes works by Haydn, Shostakovich & Beethoven, Fri 13 Dec, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

THE MIDLAND CHAMBER



Classical Spectacular - National Indoor Arena, Birmingham

PLAYERS Fri 13 Dec, Birmingham & Midland Institute

BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONIC WINDS: FAMILY CONCERT Sat 14 Dec, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

STRATFORD CONCERT BAND Sat 14 Dec, Stratford Civic Hall

CERAMIC CITY CHOIR - REALLY BIG SING - MESSIAH Sat 14 Dec, Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

BSW'S BIG CHRISTMAS PICNIC EVENING Sat 14 Dec, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

DEBORAH ROSE: POETIC MUSIC Featuring Martin Riley (piano) & Catherine Harper (cello), Sat 14 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

A VENETIAN CHRISTMAS CONCERT Featuring the Worcester Cathedral Choir, Sat 14 Dec, Worcester Cathedral

CHRISTMAS WASSAIL A festive feast of choral music and song, comedy and spoken word, Sun 15 - Tue 17 Dec, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR: CHRISTMAS TREATS Sun 15 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

AMINGTON BAND PRESENTS A CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS Sun 15 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

BBC WM CAROL CONCERT Mon 16 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

CAROLS FOR THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY Wed 18 - Thurs 19 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Wed 18 - Sat 21 Dec, St Paul's Church, Birmingham

CANOLDIR'S CHRISTMAS FANFARE Featuring Canoldir Male Voice Choir, James Llewelyn Jones (conductor) and Felicity Murphy (soprano), Thurs 19 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

PIVA: AN ELIZABETHAN CHRISTMAS Thurs 19 Dec, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BERKLEY SALON ENSEMBLE & CBSO YOUTH CHORUS Thurs 19 Dec, CBSO Centre, B'ham

CAROLS FOR THE BUSI-

NESS COMMUNITY Thurs 19 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

CHRISTMAS CONCERT WITH ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN AND CHAMBER CHOIR Fri 20 Dec, Stratford Civic Hall

HOPE HOUSE FESTIVE CONCERT Featuring Sundial Theater, Helen E May and Wellington Town band, Fri 20 Dec, Enginuity, Ironbridge

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT Carols and seasonal classics performed by the UK's most elegant ensemble in full period costume in a candle-lit style setting, Sat 21 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE FRONCYLYTE MALE VOICE CHOIR Sat 21 Dec, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS Presented by Blast From The Past, Sat 21 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT Carols and seasonal classics performed by the UK's most elegant ensemble in full period costume, Sat 21 Dec, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

PHOENIX SINGERS CHRISTMAS CRACKER CONCERT Sat 12 Dec, Adrian Boulton Hall, B'ham

CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGALONG With the Birmingham Festival Choral Society & London Concert Orchestra, Mon 23 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GOSPEL CENTRAL Featuring Colin Peters & Andre Basing, Mon 23 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE GLORY OF CHRISTMAS Featuring the Birmingham Choral Union, St Michael's Primary Choir & London Concert Orchestra, John Pryce-Jones (conductor), Andrew Kennedy (tenor) and Crispian Steele-Perkins (trumpet), Tue 24 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

BOND AND BEYOND Concert celebrating the UK's most famous secret service agent, featuring iconic music and songs spanning

fifty years, Fri 27 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

VIENNESE NEW YEAR GALA Presented by The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Fri 27 Dec, Malvern Theatres

THE FOUR SEASONS BY CANDLELIGHT Presented by the Mozart Festival Orchestra. Programme to include works by Handel & Vivaldi, Sat 28 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RODGERS, HAMMERSTEIN & HART Featuring Manchester Concert Orchestra and David Shrubsole (conductor), Gillian Bevan (soloist), Celia Graham (soloist), Norman Bowman (soloist) and Matthew Cammelle (soloist), Sat 28 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LAST NIGHT OF THE CHRISTMAS PROMS Featuring the London Concert Orchestra, Hilary Davan Wetton (conductor), Philip O'Brien (tenor) & James Cleverton (baritone). Programme includes works by Rossini, Sousa, Bizet, Verdi, Ravel, Denza and Grieg, Sun 29 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

FANTASIA Disney's Fantasia live in concert with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sun 29 Dec, National Indoor Arena, Birmingham

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA NEW YEAR CONCERT Featuring Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Christopher Warren-Green (conductor) and Tamsin Waley-Cohen (violin). Programme includes works by: Bruch, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Saint-Saëns, Mon 30 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA Featuring London Concert Orchestra and Anthony Inglis (conductor), Sarah Redgwick (soprano) and Paul Charles Clarke (tenor). Programme includes Verdi, Bizet, Dukas, Strauss, Verdi, Puccini, Ponchielli and Tchaikovsky, Tue 31 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

Alistair McGowan

Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Fri 6 December

Worcestershire-born Alistair McGowan has followed in the footsteps of Mike Yarwood and Phil Cool by not only being a hugely talented impressionist but also a household name. And just like Yarwood and Cool did before him, he's had to deal with the experience of his star being somewhat on the wane. That said, although he may not be quite as hot a property as he once was, he's still not doing too badly for himself, not least because he's a versatile performer, working extensively on stage in shows such as *Measure For Measure*, *Art*, *Cabaret*, *The Mikado* and *Little Shop Of Horrors* (for which he received an Olivier Award nomination). Alistair's best-known and most-loved impersonations include David Beckham, Sven-Göran Eriksson, Richard Madeley and Sir Terry Wogan.



Dominic Holland

The George Hotel, Lichfield, Fri 27 December

Perhaps best known for *The Small World Of Dominic Holland*, a BBC Radio Four programme revolving around his stand-up but also including sketches, the comedian, author and broadcaster Dominic Holland has regularly turned up as a panellist on television programmes such as *Have I Got News For You* and *Never Mind The Buzzcocks*. Despite his many years spent teasing punters' funnybones, he's never quite made it into the vanguard of UK comedy merchants, and in recent times has even been overshadowed by his teenage son Tom, who starred in the hit 2013 tsunami movie *The Impossible*.



Jon Richardson

The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire, Tues 10 December

He's been referred to as an "OCD-afflicted, grumpy young man", a description which will strike chords with anybody who's ever caught Jon Richardson's hugely entertaining act. Richardson's take on life's idiosyncrasies offers an evening of genuinely funny comedy, with seasoned professional Jim Bowen even threatening to "smack his arse if he gets any funnier". Jon can't say he hasn't been warned...



Sarah Millican

Civic Hall, Wolverhampton, Tues 10 - Fri 13 December

One of the brightest comedians around, Geordie lass Sarah Millican enjoyed a rip-roaring sell-out success with her very first tour, with bums on all seats on no fewer than one hundred-and-twenty laughter-filled nights. It almost goes without saying that she's not looked back since. Sarah's certainly an original, and offers great value for money, not least because she's willing to share her knowledge about all manner of fascinating subjects, from how to construct a home-made treadmill to how to access party food even if you don't like parties. Jokes include, "Sex with men in their thirties is generally much better, but you've got to rub their legs afterwards for cramp".



Ken Dodd

Civic Hall, Wolverhampton, Sun 15 December; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 21 December

A comedian dedicated to live work, Ken Dodd's style is unique - a mixture of surreal, silly and more standard material. Sniffed at by many, his anarchic silliness is, in fact, a prototype of trendier acts like Vic Reeves and Harry Hill. And he's always great value for money, too, with patrons having little chance of exiting the theatre in time to catch the last bus home!

Comedy Box Office

ALEXANDRA THEATRE, BIRMINGHAM
0844 871 3011
ARTRIX, BROMSGROVE
01527 577330
BEDWORTH CIVIC HALL
02476 376707
BIRMINGHAM TOWN HALL
0121 780 3333
THE DRUM, BIRMINGHAM
0121 333 2444
DUDLEY CONCERT HALL
01384 815 577
GLEE CLUB, BIRMINGHAM
0871 4720400
HIGHLIGHT, BIRMINGHAM,
0844 844 0044
HUNTINGDON HALL,
WORCESTER,
01905 611427
FOXLOWE ARTS CENTRE,
LEEK, STAFFS
01538 386112
KITCHEN GARDEN CAFE,
BIRMINGHAM
0121 443 4725
LG ARENA, BIRMINGHAM
0844 338 8000
LUDLOW ASSEMBLY
ROOMS
01584 878141
MAC, BIRMINGHAM
0121 446 3232
PALACE THEATRE,
REDDITCH
01527 65203
THE PUBLIC, WEST
BROMWICH
0121 533 7161
DRUMMONDS BAR,
WORCESTER
01905 28190
RICOH ARENA, COVENTRY
0844 873 6565
THE ROSES THEATRE
TEWKESBURY
01684 295074
ROYAL SPA CENTRE,
LEAMINGTON SPA
01926 334418
STAFFORD GATEHOUSE
THEATRE
01785 254653
SOLIHULL ARTS COMPLEX
0121 704 6962
THE SLADE ROOMS,
WOLVERHAMPTON
0870 320 7000
THE GEORGE HOTEL,
BURSLEM, STAFFS
07763301081
TAMWORTH ASSEMBLY
ROOMS
01827 709618
THEATRE SEVERN,
SHREWSBURY
01743 281281
VICTORIA HALL, HANLEY,
STOKE-ON-TRENT
0844 871 7649
WARWICK ARTS CENTRE
02476 524524
WEST BROMWICH TOWN
HALL
0121 596 4429
WULFRUN HALL,
WOLVERHAMPTON
0870 320 7000

Comedy LISTINGS

For full listing information on comedy gigs including times and dates visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

GREG DAVIES Sun 1 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham
JASON MANFORD Mon 2 - Tue 3 Dec, Dudley Town Hall
ED BYRNE Wed 4 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
JIMEOIN Wed 4 Dec Artrix, Bromsgrove
SARAH MILLICAN Wed 4 - Thurs 5 Dec, De Montfort Hall, Leicester
PAUL MCCAFFREY, MARLON DAVIS & CRAIG HILL Wed 4 - Sat 7 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham
STEVE HUGHES Thurs 5 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove
KUM-N-AVALOFF COMEDY NIGHT Thurs 5 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall
MARKUS BIRDMAN, DOMINIC WOODWARD, ADAM RUSHTON, PETE PHILLIPSON & LOU CONRAN Thurs 5 Dec, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek
STUART GOLDSMITH, MARK MAIER, LAURA LEXX & JOE BROMEHEAD Thurs 5 Dec, The George Hotel, Lichfield
KAI HUMPHRIES, JAY HAMPSON, ANTHONY

KING & MC DAMION LARKIN Fri 6 Dec, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
AVA VIDAL, JAMIE HOWARD & JAMAICAN TEDDY BEAR Fri 6 Dec, The Drum, Birmingham
ALISTAIR MCGOWAN Fri 6 Dec, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire
KEVIN MCCARTHY, PETE JOHANSSON, BARRY CASTAGNOLA & CHRIS TURNER Fri 6 - Sat 7 Dec, Highlight Comedy Club, Birmingham
CARL DONNELLY Sat 7 Dec, Hereford Courtyard Theatre
COMEDY IN THE MET Sat 7 Dec, The Met Studio, Stafford
ANDREW LAWRENCE Sun 8 Dec, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
WES ZAHARUK, ANDY KIND AND TONY VINO Sun 8 Dec, Crewe Lyceum
COMEDIANS & CAROLS FEAT. PAUL KERENSA, ANETTE FAGAN, MANDY MUDEN & HANNAH SILVESTER Sun 8 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral

OPEN MIC COMEDY - HOSTED BY LOUDEEMY SOUP Mon 9 Dec, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham
JON RICHARDSON - WORK IN PROGRESS Tue 10 Dec, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire
SARAH MILLICAN Tue 10 - Fri 13 Dec, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton
JEREMY HARDY Wed 11 Dec, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury
JEN BRISTER, SUSAN MURRAY, MADGE HOOKS & MC MAUREEN YOUNGER Wed 11 Dec, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham
TOPPING AND BUTCH, TREVOR CROOK, QUINCY & JIM SMALLMAN Wed 11 Dec, Highlight Comedy Club, Birmingham
IAN STONE, IAN MOORE & ANDY ROBINSON Wed 11 - Sun 15 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham
CARL HUTHCINSON, HAYLEY ELLIS & TOMMY ROWSON Fri 13 Dec, Hereford Courtyard Theatre
BARBARA NICE'S CHRISTMAS CRACKER Fri 13 - Sat 14 Dec, mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham
PETE JOHANSSON, SIMON BLIGH WITH QUINCY, TOPPING AND BUTCH Fri 13 - Sat 14 Dec, Highlight Comedy

Club, Birmingham
ROY CHUBBY BROWN Sat 14 Dec, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton
KEN DODD Sun 15 Dec, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton
TOADALLY FREE COMEDY! Mon 16 Dec, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham
BARBARA NICE'S COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS Tue 17 - Sat 21 Dec, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham
SIMON BLIGH, ANDY ASKINS, CURTIS WALKER & JARLATH REGAN Tue 17 - Sat 21 Dec, Highlight Comedy Club, Birmingham
JOE LYCETT, MARK OLVER WITH DAN NIGHTINGALE PLUS COMIC TBC Wed 18 - Sat 21 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham
THE MICHAEL MCINTYRE TRIBUTE COMEDY PARTY WITH MIKE MACINTYRE Thurs 19 Dec, Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire
GARETH RICHARDS, KIERAN BOYD & STEVE BUGEJA Thurs 19 - Fri 20 Dec, Hereford Courtyard Theatre
LAUGH OUT LOUD COMEDY CLUB Sat 21 Dec, Regent Theatre, Stoke-On-Trent
KEN DODD Sat 21 Dec, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent
TREVOR NOAH Sun 22 Dec, Wulfrun Hall,



Dan Nightingale

Wolverhampton
SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO Sun 22 Dec, Drummonds Bar, Worcester
DOMINIC HOLLAND, BOOTHBY GRAFFOE, KIRI PRITCHARD-MCCLEAN & JIM SMALLMAN Mon 23 Dec, The George Hotel, Lichfield
GAVIN WEBSTER, MICKEY D Fri 27 Dec Station Pub, Sutton Coldfield
SUZI RUFFELL, PATRICK MONAHAN WITH GARY DELANEY AND JOHN FOTHERGILL Fri 27 - Sat

28 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham
ROY CHUBBY BROWN Sat 28 Dec, Victoria Hall, Stoke-On-Trent
COMEDY IN THE MET Sat 28 Dec, The Met Studio, Stafford
DAN NIGHTINGALE, ANDY ROBINSON, IAN COPPINGER & COMIC TBC Tue 31 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham
JOJO SMITH, SIMON BLIGH, JUNIOR SIMPSON & ANDREW BIRD Tue 31 Dec, Highlight Comedy Club

THE EASY WAY TO BOOK YOUR TICKETS ONLINE

whatsonlive.co.uk

The most comprehensive what's on listings website for Birmingham and the West Midlands

WORLD CLASS ENTERTAINMENT



THE ULTIMATE PANTO
ADVENTURE
**SNOW WHITE
AND THE SEVEN DWARFS**
TUE 3 DEC - SUN 5 JAN*



'A REAL TREAT'
SUNDAY EXPRESS
GLYNDEBOURNE
L'ELISIR D'AMORE
WED 11 & SAT 14 DEC



THE MUSICAL PHENOMENON
FRESH FROM THE WEST END
GHOST
WED 8 - SAT 18 JAN 2014



LEST WE FORGET
014 DANCE
WED 12 - SAT 15 FEB



ROBERT POWELL
STARS AS POIROT
BLACK COFFEE
MON 17 - SAT 22 FEB



A LICENCE TO THRILL
BRENDAN COLE
WED 26 FEB



THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY
BUDDY
MON 3 - SAT 8 MAR 2014



'BURSTING WITH COLOUR'
DAILY TELEGRAPH
**WHAT THE
LADYBIRD HEARD**
TUE 18 & WED 19 MAR



ELLEN KENT OPERA
LA BOHÈME
FRI 21 MAR



ELLEN KENT OPERA
AIDA
SAT 22 MAR



THE ROD STEWART MUSICAL
**TONIGHT'S
THE NIGHT**
MON 24 - SAT 29 MAR



★★★★★
'BEATLEMANIA IS BACK'
CAPITAL GOLD
LET IT BE
MON 31 MAR - SAT 5 APR



IT'S BACK AND IT'S
GONNA LIVE FOREVER!
FAME
MON 28 APR - SAT 3 MAY

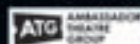


**SEVEN BRIDES
FOR SEVEN
BROTHERS**
MON 5 - SAT 10 MAY 2014



REGENT THEATRE & VICTORIA HALL
STOKE-ON-TRENT

ATG TICKETS 0844 871 7649 (Fees apply)
www.atgtickets.com/stoke (Fees apply)



*NO PERFORMANCES MON 9 - MON 16 DEC

Theatre



Sleeping Beauty

Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, Sat 7 December - Sat 18 January

The Grand is certainly on a roll when it comes to providing high-quality panto fare - and the venue's Christmas 2013 offering looks set to be every bit as entertaining as its illustrious predecessors. The lovely Ceri Dupree dons a plethora of glamorous outfits when he revisits his much-acclaimed role of Queen Passionella in this star-studded version of Sleeping Beauty. Ceri is joined by comedian Joe

Pasquale, who brings all of his squeaky-voiced charm and not-insignificant panto experience to bear in the role of Muddles. Former Corrie favourite Lucy Evans stars as Princess Beauty. Expect to laugh so hard you'll think you're Father Christmas (ho ho ho)!

Read the interview with Ceri Dupree online at www.whatsonlive.co.uk



Ghost The Musical

New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Tues 17 December - Sun 5 January;
Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 8 - Sat 18 January

Matthew Warchus' stage version of the award-winning film starring Patrick Swayzee, Demi Moore and Whoopi Goldberg returns to the Midlands having received much critical acclaim since opening on Broadway and in the West End. For those not in the know, it tells the story of a ghost named Sam who, caught between this world and the next, desperately attempts to communicate with his girlfriend Molly and warn her that she's in mortal danger from his murderer. A timeless tale about the power of love that beautifully blends the audience-satisfying genres of romance and comedy, Ghost has also been praised for its dazzling state-of-the-art staging, and is certainly a show well worth catching. Read the interview with Stewart Clarke on page 10.

Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs

Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 19 December -
Sun 2 February

As you'd expect from the UK's most glittery of glittering pantomimes, this Hippodrome extravaganza boasts a festive hamper's-worth of big-name stars. Fashion guru Gok Won makes his panto debut, ably illustrating 'How To Look Good' as The Man In The Mirror, ex-EastEnders John Partridge plays the splendidly handsome Prince, Stephanie Beacham shows her claws as the Wicked Queen, and Gary Wilmot gets all rouged-up as The Dame. Paul Zerdin and Matt Slack are also on hand to ensure the laughter count is good'n'high, while Danielle Hope stars as the eponymous heroine with the penchant for befriending vertically challenged forest-dwelling miners. Read the interview with Gary Wilmot online at www.whatsonlive.co.uk



WED 5 - SAT 15 FEB

SWAN LAKE



£18.50 - £42.50

WED 19 FEB - SAT 1 MAR

Three of a Kind
The Prince of The Pagodas



BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

£15 - £40

TUE 4 - SAT 8 MAR

WNO

Spring 2014

La traviata
Verdi
Manon Lescaut
Puccini
Boulevard Solitude
Mendelssohn



wno.org.uk

£10 - £40

TUE 11 - SAT 15 MAR

PAUL MICHAEL GLASER as Isaac

Based on the Sholem Aleichem Stories
By Special Permission of Arnold Perl

Fiddler on the Roof



£15 - £35

TUE 18 MAR - SAT 5 APR



SINGIN' IN THE RAIN

£16 - £45

TUE 8 - SAT 19 APR

BILL KENWRIGHT
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH
THE REALITY GROUP PRESENTS

EVITA

SHE SEDUCED A NATION

★★★★★

STARRING
MARTI PELLOW
AS CHE




£13 - £39.50

TUE 22 - SAT 26 APR

HAPPY DAYS

A NEW MUSICAL



£15 - £35

TUE 29 & WED 30 APR

Sideways rain
Alias

£10 - £20

INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL BIRMINGHAM 2014

14

TUE 6 & WED 7 MAY

Sylvie Guillem:
6000 MILES AWAY

El/Forsythe/Kyllán
A Sadler's Wells London Production
£20 - £39.50



JOHN PARTRIDGE
GOK WAN STEPHANIE BEACHAM

Snow White AND THE Seven Dwarfs

The Spectacular Family Pantomime!

GARY WILMOT PAUL ZERDIN

THU 19 DEC - SUN 2 FEB

Presented by The Twinn FX



£14 - £39

Theatre PREVIEW

What The Ladybird Heard

Birmingham Town Hall, Fri 20 December - Fri 10 January

With Julia Donaldson's *A Squash And A Squeeze* exhibition having delighted thousands of children during its time in Birmingham this year, it's a bit of a no-brainer to mount one of her stories as a festive offering. Birmingham Town Hall has very wisely done just that, presenting a stage version of the award-winning picture book by Donaldson and Lydia Monks. When Hefty Hugh and Lanky Len set out to steal the farmer's prize cow, they soon find that the best laid plans of mice and crafty robbers can sometimes be undone by the tiniest and quietest of creatures - namely, one very small ladybird... Fifty-five action-packed and musical minutes in length, this well-reviewed show is recommended for children aged two and older.



Peter Pan

Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Sat 14 December - Sun 5 January

North Midlands-based pantomime audiences this year get the chance to fly away with the boy who wouldn't grow up to a magical island filled with adventure. Meet a real fairy, marvellous mermaids, wonderful Wendy and the down-on-their-luck Lost Boys. Oh, and beware the ever-so-wicked Captain Hook and a very hungry crocodile who goes tick-tock (he swallowed a clock). Long-in-the-tooth EastEnders Adam Woodyatt takes a break from the perils of playing Ian Beale to star as the Captain, with the always-good-value Grumbleweeds ensuring there's plenty of comedy to enjoy alongside all that splicing of mainbraces and shivering of timbers.



Bring Up The Bodies

The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Thurs 19 December - Sat 29 March

Henry VIII's conflict with the Catholic Church has left England in serious peril, with France and the Holy Roman Empire ominously manoeuvring for position. With Anne Boleyn the Queen but Henry in love with Jane Seymour, master manipulator Thomas Cromwell calls upon all his powers of persuasion to ensure the nation's safety and advance his own ambitions...



Snow White

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 3 December - Sun 5 January

Everybody knows the story - the nasty old queen's less than keen on her younger and more beautiful stepdaughter, who takes refuge from her royal evilness by holing up in the deep, dark forest with a household of small but splendidly friendly miners... The fact that *Snow White*'s a twenty-four carat classic of a fairytale means that a pantomime version is always a surefire winner. Expect all the usual elements, including rouged-up Dames in colourful costumes, plenty of thigh-slapping and slapstick comedy, singalongs aplenty to enjoy, and even a few naughty jokes to make sure the grown-ups don't feel too left out of things. And to ensure audiences experience optimum Potteries panto pleasure, local hero and Regent Theatre favourite Jonathan Wilkes makes his now near-annual appearance, on this occasion donning the tights and lighthearted demeanour to star as Muddles.

The Wind In The Willows

Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Wed 11 - Sun 15 December

Following the success of last year's *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*, Pool Hayes Youth Theatre this year presents Alan Bennett's stage adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved riverside tale. A firm festive favourite, Grahame's classic story ably demonstrates the way in which one life can command the full attention of three others! Mole, Badger and Ratty simply don't have time for any of their own interests - they're far too busy having to look after their reckless and irrepressible friend, Toad...

The Snow Dragon

mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, until Sun 8 December

After their successes with *The Gruffalo* and *Room On The Broom*, Tall Stories here return with the story of a goat named Billy, who unexpectedly finds himself in the company of some less-than-pleasant wolves in the woods on New Year's Eve. If ever there was a time to meet the legendary Snow Dragon, this must surely be it...



Aladdin

The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Thurs 12 December - Sun 5 January

A perfect story for an evening of family entertainment finds street youth Aladdin trying against all odds to win the hand of the beautiful princess, and being helped in his efforts by the mystical - and traditionally gargantuan - genie of the lamp. Benidorm's Asa Elliott stars as Aladdin, with Comedy Store and Jongleurs favourite Phil Butler taking the role of Wishee Washee.

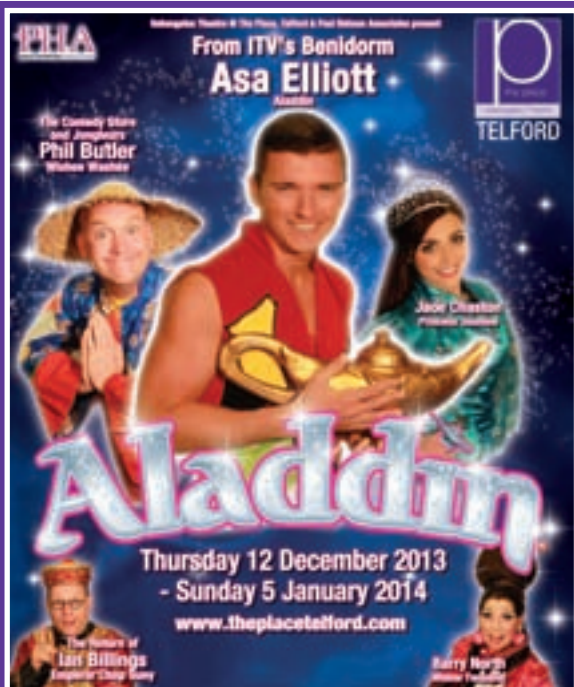


Tales From A Friend Of A Friend

Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Fri 6 December

The strange phenomenon of urban mythology is here both explored and celebrated by writer, storyteller and musician John Edgar. In a show lasting for ninety minutes, Edgar presents new folk tales that are every bit as magical, bizarre, amusing and downright terrifying as any of their more traditional predecessors.

What's on...



Wed 22nd January
FOGGY & WHIT: GIVIN' IT GAS
7.30pm. Tickets: £20



Thurs 6th February
LEE HURST: THINGS THAT MAKE YOU GO AAARGH!!!
8pm. Tickets: £17, £15 concs



Tue 11th - Wed 12th February
DINOSAUR ZOO - LIVE
Tues 11, 1.30pm, Wed 12 10.30am & 4.30pm. Tickets: £16, £13.50 standard



Fri 14th February
THE ELECTRO SWING BALL FEELS THE LOVE
700pm Tickets: Early Bird £18



Sat 15th - Sun 16th February
MOSCOW STATE CIRCUS PRESENTS PARK GORKOGO
Sat 15, 7.30pm, Sun 16 2pm & 5pm.
Tickets: Band A £23, £20 concs; Band B £19, £17 concs; Band C £14



Fri 21st February
ALL STAR AMERICAN WRESTLING
7.30pm. Tickets: £15, £10 concs
Family of 4 (2 Adults, 2 Children) £45



Thurs 27th February
COLIN FRY: THE VOICES FROM HEAVEN SHOW
7.30pm. Tickets: £20

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Wendy And Peter Pan

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Tues 10 December - Sun 2 March

Second star to the right and straight on till morning - that's the way to Neverland. Fly away with the boy who wouldn't grow up to a magical island filled with adventure. Meet a real fairy, Wendy and the Lost Boys. Oh, and beware the wicked Captain Hook. And don't forget to listen out for the 'tick-tock' of a very hungry crocodile. Instructions, instructions!... JM Barrie's classic tale is here adapted by Ella Hickson. Casting includes Michelle Asante as Tiger Lily, Fiona Button as Wendy and Sam Swan as Peter. Holby City's Guy Henry takes on the menacing role of Hook.



Snow White And The Magic Mirror

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 6 December - Sun 5 January

As with Sleeping Beauty and Jack And The Beanstalk, Snow White is certainly a popular choice of pantomime with Midlands theatres this Christmas, a fact which makes it all the more important that each respective venue ensures it's presenting a show that's just that little bit different. Lichfield Garrick's take on Snow White certainly has plenty to recommend it, not least seven puppets called Pugh, Pugh, Barney, McGrew, Cuthbert, Dibble and Grub. Midlands Today presenter Joanne Malin also features in the cast, taking on the role of Queen Evileene.



Sleeping Beauty: The Rock'n'Roll Panto

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 13 December - Sat 11 January

They've done it before and they're doing it again. Yep, Stafford Gatehouse's oft-used twist of imbuing their annual pantomime with a real rock'n'roll flavour has proved so popu-



Sleeping Beauty

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 5 December - Sun 12 January

The tragic tale of a young princess who's tricked by an evil fairy and pricks her finger on a spinning wheel, causing her to sleep for one hundred years, offers a great story around which to build a pantomime production of real quality - and judging by its panto offerings in previous years, Theatre Severn's 2013 festive presentation is likely to be just that!

Shrewsbury favourites Eric Smith (BBC Radio Shropshire) and comedian Adam Moss are joined by much-admired Dame, Brad Pitt, for a show that features audience participation, lavish sets and stunning special effects - not to mention a fire-breathing dragon!

lar in previous years that the venue's giving its 2013 production the exact same treatment. So...they've taken a fairytale about a princess who's been put to sleep for a hundred years by the spell of an evil witch, stirred in a few time-honoured pantomime favourites such as an outrageous Dame, and seasoned liberally with all manner of rock-'n'roll hits, including Celebration, Don't Leave Me This Way, Wake Up Little Susie and The Shoop Shoop Song. A recipe for success, if ever there was one - so expect a veritable feast of fun and frivolity.

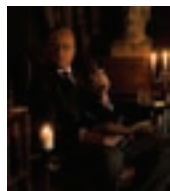


Image from 2012 production of Beauty and The Beast

A Pleasing Terror

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 20 December

This one-man show presents a double-bill of terror from the pen of celebrated ghost story writer MR James. First up is Canon Alberic's Scrapbook, which finds a young Cambridge antiquary discovering that the devil is very much in the detail when he's presented with an unusual manuscript volume... Completing the programme is The Mezzotint, in which a ghoulish revenge is enacted within a work of art, before the frightened eyes of an Oxford museum curator...



Dick Whittington

Tamworth Assembly Rooms, Wed 18 - Mon 23 December

The story of a young man who heads for London in search of fame and fortune is one of the most popular of all pantomimes, not least because of the top adventures in which Dick finds himself involved, courtesy of the not-so-pleasant King Rat and the Sultan's problem with vermin in his palace. With the business of falling in love and becoming the Lord Mayor of London to further distract him, there's certainly no guarantee that the fine young fella will be home in time for the Queen's Speech!

A Christmas Carol

The REP, Birmingham, until Sat 4 January

For anybody tired of the commercialism of Christmas in the twenty-first century, delving into the delightful world of Charles Dickens should offer the perfect antidote. Of all his festive stories, A Christmas Carol reigns supreme. The covetous sinning of the miserly Scrooge, the eternal hope offered by Tiny Tim, and the eerie visions of redemption - visiting Ebenezer in the shape of three yuletide ghosts (plus Jacob Marley!) - all combine to give the tale an old-world charm that offers a welcome festive haven from the stresses and strains of the technological age.



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TALON - THE BEST OF THE EAGLES
Saturday 14th
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£20.00

ALADDIN
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Monday 23rd & Tuesday 24th • 2.30pm
Thursday 26th to Sunday 29th
2.30pm & 7.00pm
Monday 30th
2.30pm
Tickets £13.50, Concessions £11.50
Family Ticket £42.00
Groups of ten or more £10.50

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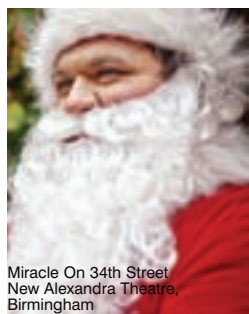
wlct.org/prince-of-wales

Theatre LISTINGS

For full listing information on theatre productions including times and dates visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

From SUN 1 DEC

RSM STAGE ACADEMY: OUR JOURNEY Annual showcase of work including a performance of Bohemian Rhapsody, which the students performed live at The Royal Albert Hall earlier this year, Sun 1 Dec Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton
THE SNOW DRAGON Tall Stories fave storytelling, comedy and song in a magical pre-Christmas performance for young children and their families, until Sun 8 Dec, mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham
THE NUTCRACKER Birmingham Royal Ballet present Sir Peter Wright's enchanting version of the much-loved festive favourite, until Thurs 12 Dec, Birmingham Hippodrome
ROOM ON THE BROOM Stage adaptation of Julia Donaldson's best-selling book that's sure to provide a magical, musical treat for children and families alike, until Sun 29 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN Birmingham Stage Company present their acclaimed version of Philippa Pearce's fantasy novel, until Sat 1 Feb, Old Rep, Birmingham
ONE HUNDRED AND ONE DALMATIONS Adapted and directed by Theresa Heskins until Sat 1 Feb, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme
JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Family pantomime, until Sat 4 Jan, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry
A CHRISTMAS CAROL Bryony Lavery's stage adaptation of Charles Dickens' Victorian Christmas classic, until Sat 4 Jan, The REP, Birmingham
JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Traditional family panto with slapstick and songs galore, until Sat 4 Jan, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury
NOCTURNE: THE ROMANTIC LIFE OF FREDERIC CHOPIN The third programme of words and music scripted and adapted from letters and diaries by Lucy Parham, Sun 1 Dec, Malvern Theatres
THE NUTCRACKER Presented by Ballet Theatre UK Sun 1



Miracle On 34th Street
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham

Dec, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick
DANCE ACADEMY SHOW Sun 1 Dec Rugeley Rose Theatre
WIND IN THE WILLOWS Amateur production by the Nonentities, Mon 2 - Sat 7 Dec, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster
UNCLE ERIC'S MURDER AT CHRISTMAS Expect a great night out with comedy, mayhem and more than twenty of the greatest 60s hits ever written including some Christmas classics, Mon 2 - Sat 14 Dec, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme
CANTABILE An evening of comic songs presented by one of Britain's most popular vocal groups The London Quartet, Tue 3 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms
HANSEL AND GRETEL Award-winning European ensemble NIE bring the Brothers Grimm storytelling to life through storytelling, multiple languages and live music, Tue 3 - Wed 4 Dec, mac - Midlands Arts Centre
ALADDIN Tue 3 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, The Swan Theatre, Worcester
SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS First Family Entertainment returns to produce the highlight of the Christmas Calendar with this year's Regent Theatre Pantomime, Tue 3 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent
HORRIBLE SCIENCE From the producers of Horrible Histories comes the seriously squishy spectacular Horrible Science, Tue 3 - Sat 7 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall
THE PICKWICK PAPERS Dean Gaffney, John D. Collins and Rebecca Wheatley star in a brand new adaptation of the Charles Dickens classic, Tue 3 - Sat 7 Dec, Malvern Theatres
DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT Tue 3 - Sat 28 Dec, Bedworth Civic Hall
NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: FRANKENSTEIN Part of the National Theatre's 50th anniversary celebrations. Danny Boyle directs, Wed 4 Dec, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury
STANLEY Birmingham School of Acting present Pam Gems award-winning marital comedy, Wed 4 - Sat 7 Dec, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham
MOTHER GOOSE'S GOLDEN CHRISTMAS Festive adventure for children, Wed 4 - Sat 7 Dec, Netherton Arts Centre, Dudley
A MAGICAL MERRY CHRISTMAS Presented by CWAGMS, Wed 4 - Sat 7 Dec, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock
RENT Amateur production by The Old Joint Stock

Theatre Company, Wed 4 - Sat 14 Dec Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham
A CARNIVAL OF CHRISTMAS CURIOSITIES Presented by Fired Up Theatre and Stage It! Thurs 5 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms
BEATS A coming-of-age story exploring rebellion, apathy and the irresistible power of gathered youth, Thurs 5 - Fri 6 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET Popular Christmas favourite based on the on the classic 20th Century Fox motion picture, Thurs 5 - Sat 7 Dec, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham
SLEEPING BEAUTY Thurs 5 Dec - Sun 12 Jan, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury
TALES FROM A FRIEND OF A FRIEND Storyteller and musician John Edgar tells a selection of new folk tales that are just as magical as their more traditional predecessors, Fri 6 Dec, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton
SNOW WHITE AND THE MAGIC MIRROR Starring Midlands Today news reader, Joanne Maline, as Queen Evilene, Fri 6 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Lichfield Garrick
ROBIN HOOD Dean Taylor's version of the panto favourite, Fri 6 - Sat 14 Dec, Hall Green Little Theatre, Birmingham
ROMEO & JULIET Ballet Cymru present a choreographed performance of Shakespeare's much-loved romantic tale, Sat 7 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall
A NIGHT OF 60'S MUSIC & LAUGHTER Featuring Doug Parker, Nipper Thomas, Chris Knott and The Crockers Sat 7 Dec, Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Dudley
A '60S NIGHT OF MUSIC & LAUGHTER Sat 7 Dec, Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Dudley
THE FANTASTIC MR FOX Stage adaptation of Roald Dahl's classic tale, Sat 7 - Sat 21 Dec, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham
ALADDIN Sat 7 Dec - Sat 4 Jan, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa
SLEEPING BEAUTY Family pantomime starring Joe Pasquale, Ceri Dupree & Lucy Evans, Sat 7 Dec - Sun 19 Jan The Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton
OH NO IT ISN'T! A festive comedy thriller written and directed by Nick Walker, Sat 7 - Sat 28 Dec, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry
FLAIR DANCE ACADEMY SHOW Sun 8 Dec, Rugeley Rose Theatre

Week Commencing MON 9 DEC

THE PARTY POPPERZ XMAS SPECTACULAR The action is non-stop as Prince, David Bowie, Freddie Mercury, Showaddywaddy, Bay City Rollers, Sweet, Donny Osmond and many more appear in fully authentic costumes, Mon 9 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

CHRISTMAS WASSAIL A festive feast of choral music and song, comedy and spoken word, Mon 9 - Tue 10 Dec, Highbury Hall, B'ham
THE ENCHANTED TALES Three folk tales for Christmas, including Rumpelstiltskin, The Snow Queen & Ali Baba, Mon 9 - Sat 28 Dec, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham
ALADDIN Mon 9 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Palace Theatre, Redditch
SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS An amateur production presented by The Norbury Players, Tue 10 - Thu 12 Dec, The Norbury Theatre, Droitwich
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Traditional family panto Tue 10 Dec - Sun 15 Dec, Rugeley Rose Theatre
WENDY AND PETER PAN Ella Hickson's new version of JM Barrie's classic tale of the boy who never grows up, Tue 10 Dec - Sun 2 Mar, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon
WINTER DANCE An evening of different styles by community groups, schools & colleges, Wed 11 Dec, Dudley Town Hall
MR PUNTILA AND HIS MAN Matti Newman University Drama Department present an 'hilarious and anarchic story about a hard-headed businessman and his chauffeur Matti, Wed 11 - Fri 13 Dec, mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham
L'ELISIR D'AMORE Glyndebourne Opera return with Donizetti's intoxicating comedy, Wed 11 Dec - Sat 14 Dec, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent
THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Pool Hayes Youth Theatre present Alan Bennett's stage adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's riverside adventure for children and adults alike... Wed 11 Dec - Sun 15 Dec, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton
WOLF HALL Mike Poulton's dramatisation of Hilary Mantel's Man Booker Prize-winning novel, Wed 11 Dec - Sat 29 Mar, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon
ALADDIN Thurs 12 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford
SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS Traditional family pantomime, Thurs 12 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Malvern Theatres
DICK WHITTINGTON Thurs 12 - Sun 22 Dec, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall
THE PARADISE PROJECT Third Angel explore the differences between heavenly paradise and earthly utopia and the human need to invent such a concept, Thurs 12 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
SLEEPING BEAUTY Get ready for another rocking Christmas with Sleeping Beauty, as the classic fairy tale is told with a Rock 'n' Roll twist, Fri 13 Dec - Sat 11 Jan, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

A CHRISTMAS CAROL THE MET STUDIO

Fri 13 & Sat 14 Dec

James Hyland reprises one of the greatest one-man shows of all time in his award-winning production of 'A Christmas Carol' - As told by Jacob Marley (deceased). Told from the perspective of Scrooge's deceased business partner, this critically acclaimed theatrical adaptation delivers thrills, chills and excitement aplenty for all age groups.



7.30pm, £13 / £11 concs

PIVA: AN ELIZABETHAN CHRISTMAS THE MET STUDIO

Thurs 19 Dec

Kickstart your Christmas festivities by joining renowned early music group Piva for an evening of seasonal music, songs and stories from Tudor times. This entertaining show celebrates the yuletide season in true Elizabethan style. Playing on over 40 authentic instruments such as hurdy-gurdy, bagpipes, shawms and recorders, Piva will take you back to the origins of our many familiar Christmas customs and carols. The perfect Christmas show for all the family.



7.30pm, £10 / £8 concs

A PLEASING TERROR / A WARNING TO CURIOUS THE MET STUDIO

Fri 20 & Sat 21 Dec

Over a century after they were first published, the ghost stories of MR. James retain their power to terrify and amuse. Each gripping one man show retells two of the earliest and eeriest.

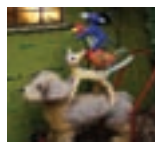


7.30pm, £10 / £15 for both shows

MUSICIANS OF BREMEN THE MET STUDIO

Sun 22 & Mon 23 Dec

What happens to old toys when no one loves them any more? A worn out toy donkey, a pull along dog, a one eyed cat and a mechanical cockerel find themselves in just such a place. They escape and run away to Bremen Town to try their luck as musicians. So begins the greatest adventure of their lives in this classic fairytale of friendship and courage. Told with fabulous puppets, an innovative stage set and a brilliant musical soundtrack!

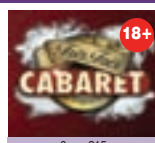


Sun 22, 1.30pm & 3.30pm
Mon 23, 11.30am & 1.30pm
£7 / Family Ticket £24

TRÈS TRÈS CABARET THE MET STUDIO

Fri 27 Dec

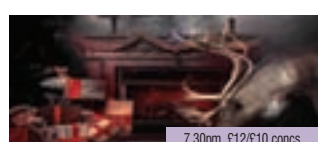
After the runaway success of Stafford's first burlesque and cabaret night, Très Très Cabaret is back with a very special show for the festive season. Très Très Cabaret promises to bring you the most extravagant variety show. Featuring the hottest performers from the international cabaret scene to surprise and delight you... Dress to impress and join us for an evening of glitz, glamour and so much more. "



8pm, £15

CHRISTMAS TIME THE MET STUDIO

Sun 29 & Mon 30 Dec



7.30pm, £12/£10 concs

Charlie and Toby are feeling low. It's Christmas Day and they're serving time at Her Majesty's pleasure. But why shouldn't they be having a Merry Christmas in spite of their incarceration? Join them on a fantastical adventure through Dickens, pantomime, musical, Christmas dinner and Christmas films! See as they build a wonderfully Merry Christmas around them with songs, snowmen and lots of laughs in this truly festive show that puts the 'cell' firmly back in 'celebration'! Christmas. Time. is a musical comedy for all the family that's fun and fantastically funny!

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Music and lyrics by Jason Carr

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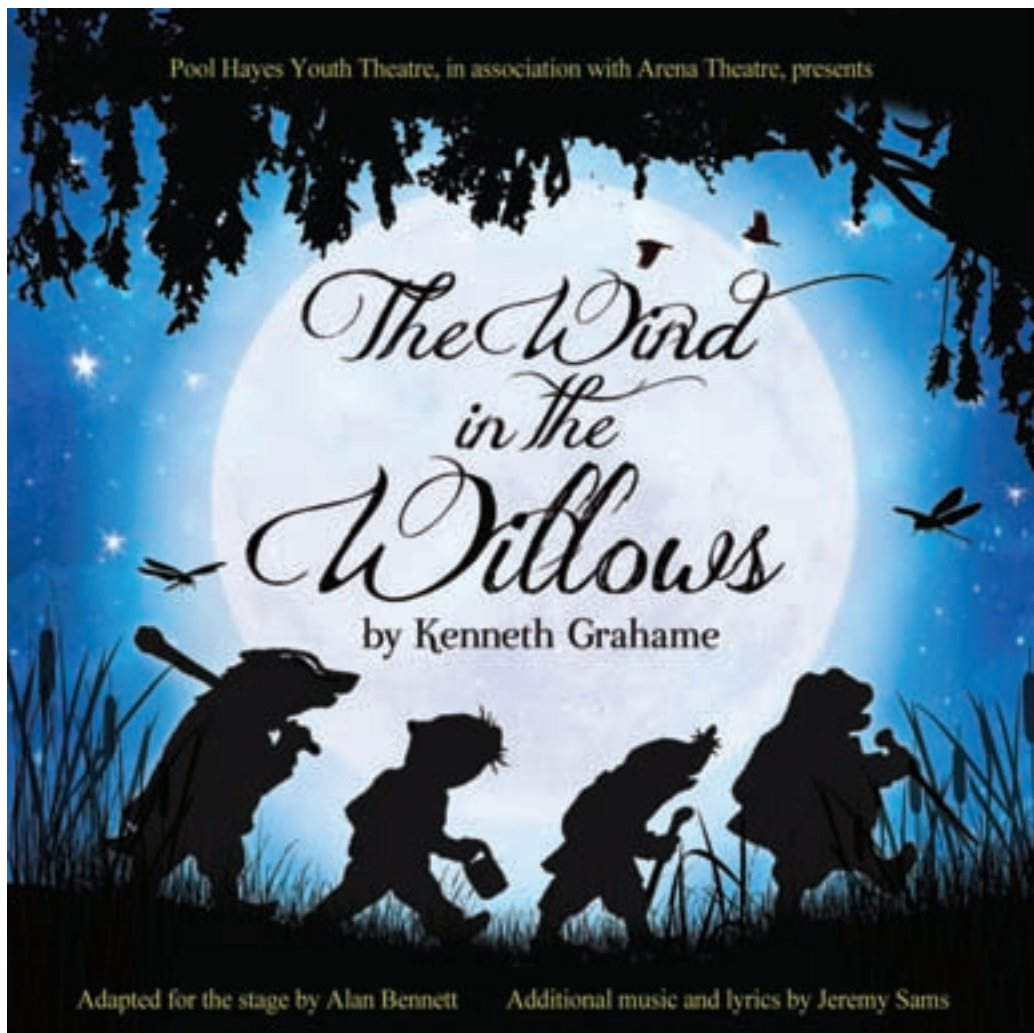
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Pool Hayes Youth Theatre, in association with Arena Theatre, presents

The Wind in the Willows

by Kenneth Grahame



Adapted for the stage by Alan Bennett Additional music and lyrics by Jeremy Sams

*This Christmas, travel
with us down
the riverbank on a
exhilarating journey
with Ratty, Mole,
Badger and Toad*

Wed 11th - Sat 15th Dec
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Theatre LISTINGS

For full listing information on theatre productions, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

A VERY DICKENSIAN CHRISTMAS A ninety-minute performance in two halves which pays homage to Charles Dickens, the man who influenced Christmas festivities more than any other, Fri 13 Dec, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster
THE DREAMBOYS FIT AND FAMOUS 2013 TOUR A two-hour show featuring classic 1980/90s disco numbers, with resident DJ Jaye Tee, Fri 13 Dec, The Robin, Bilston
CINDERELLA Cinema screening of the Dutch National Ballet's production of the much-loved fairytale, accompanied by Prokofiev's magnificent score, Fri 13 Dec, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire
THE NUTCRACKER Presented by Ballet Theatre UK, Fri 13 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms
A CHRISTMAS CAROL - AS TOLD BY JACOB MARLEY James Hyland reprises one of the greatest one-man shows of all time

in this award-winning production, Fri 13 - Sat 14 Dec, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
COME HEAVY SLEEP A passion-fuelled murder story that takes inspiration from Shakespeare's Othello, Fri 13 - Sat 14 Dec, The REP, Birmingham
JACK & THE BEANSTALK Starring Malcolm Stent, Fri 13 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Solihull Arts Complex
WAKE UP SLEEPING BEAUTY Fun, songs and audience participation for two-to-nine year-olds, Sat 14 Dec, The Swan Theatre, Worcester
LIVE MET BROADCAST: FALSTAFF Live screening of Robert Carsen's new production, which sees Verdi's opera transposed to the English countryside in the mid-twentieth century, Sat 14 Dec, Malvern Theatres
TWO WEEKS WITH THE QUEEN The Crescent Theatre Company present Mary Morris' story about never giving up... Sat 14 - Sat 21 Dec,

Crescent Theatre, Birmingham
PETER PAN A Swash-buckling pantomime adventure, starring Adam Woodyatt as Captain Hook and The Grumbleweeds as Smee & Starkey, Sat 14 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Crewe Lyceum
PETER AND THE WOLF AND THE SNOWMAN A double-bill of classical musical stories for children, accompanied by a live orchestra and narrated by Sanjeev Bhaskar, Sun 15 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
BEAUTY & THE BEAST Working Theatre present their annual family pantomime, Sun 15 Dec, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

Week Commencing MON 16 DEC

DIRTY OLD FOLKERS ANNUAL PANTOMIME Mon 16 Dec, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Kings Heath, Birmingham
LIVE MET BROADCAST: FALSTAFF Live screening of Robert Carsen's new production, which sees Verdi's opera transposed to the English countryside in the mid-twentieth century, Mon 16 Dec, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING A modern re-telling of Shakespeare's classic comedy, Mon 16 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall
SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS An amateur production presented by The Norbury Players, Mon 16 - Thurs 19 Dec, The Norbury Theatre, Droitwich
THE DISCOVERERS, NON-SENSE & WOW A showcase of new work - including drama, comedy, songs and dance - by three local theatre groups, Tue 17 Dec, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton
JESUS - MY BOY A one-man play - the story of Jesus as seen through the eyes of Joseph, Tues 17 - Sat 21 Dec, The Swan Theatre, Worcester
366 DAYS OF KINDNESS Bernadette Russell's multi-media performance, blending storytelling, stand-up & live documentary, Tue 17 - Sat 21 Dec, The REP, Birmingham
GHOST: THE MUSICAL Smash-hit musical direct from the West End, Tue 17 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham
THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE Join Peter, Susan and Edmund as they venture

into CS Lewis' magical land of Narnia, Tue 17 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, The Dream Factory, Warwick
CHRISTMAS CRACKERS, MAYHEM & CHEER Storytelling and songs of Christmases past and present, Wed 18 Dec, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Kings Heath, Birmingham
CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS Evening of festive music and poetry, courtesy of the Gloucestershire Constabulary Brass Band, Wed 18 Dec, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury
WBS SIXTH FORM PANTO Presented by William Brookes School, Wed 18 Dec - Thurs 19 Dec, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, Shropshire
CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT 2013 Presented by Nonentities, Wed 18 - Fri 20 Dec, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster
DICK WHITTINGTON Traditional family pantomime, Wed 18 - Mon 23 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms
MOTHER GOOSE All & Sundry present a traditional family pantomime packed with song, dance and general silliness, Wed 18 Dec - Sun 22 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS Featuring John Partridge, Gok Wan, Stephanie Beacham, Gary Wilmot, Paul Zerdin & Matt Slack, Thurs 19 Dec - Sun 2 Feb, Birmingham Hippodrome
BRING UP THE BODIES Mike Poulton's new dramatisation of Hilary Mantel's Man Booker Prize-winning novel, Thurs 19 Dec - Sat 29 Mar, The Swan Theatre Stratford-upon-Avon
A PLEASING TERROR Performance of two spine-chilling ghost stories (Canon Alberic's Scrapbook & The Mezzotint) from the highly reputed author MR James, Fri 20 Dec, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
RAGARELLA Ragga version of the Cinderella fairytale, Fri 20 - Sun 22 Dec, The Drum, Birmingham
MOTHER GOOSE OTFM present a fun-filled pantomime, Fri 20 Dec - Weds 1 Jan, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick
WHAT THE LADYBIRD HEARD Based on the award-winning picture book by Julia Donaldson & Lydia Monks, Fri 20 Dec - Fri 10 Jan, Birmingham Town Hall
DIRTY OLD FOLKERS ANNUAL PANTOMIME Sat 21 Dec, Hare &

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Theatre LISTINGS

For full listing information on theatre productions, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

Hounds, Birmingham
A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS
 Presented by Blast From The Past, Sat 21 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
EMBRACED BURLESQUE
 Featuring a burlesque striptease, live music and comedy, Sat 21 Dec, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton
CHILDREN'S THEATRE The Norbury Players present a short play performed by adults for children aged four to ten, Sat 21 Dec, The Norbury Theatre, Droitwich
A WARNING TO THE CURIOUS RM Lloyd Parry performs the final installment of the MR James trilogy, Sat 21 Dec, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
A CHRISTMAS CAROL BY CHARLES DICKENS Clive Francis recreates the occasion, bringing to life his most famous characters. The first half features a delightful introduction by Francis, who will explain more about that first reading at Town Hall and Dick-

ens' exploits in Birmingham, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall
BURLESQUE NIGHT! An evening of sparkle, tease, feathers and tassels! Sun 22 Dec, The Marr's Bar, Worcester
JAY RAYNER: GREEDY MAN IN A HUNGRY WORLD Restaurant critic and BBC One Show reporter Jay Rayner combines hard-nosed reporting with witty memoir to take you on a journey through the world's edible landscape, Sun 22 Dec mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham
THE MUSICIANS OF BREMEN Toy Story meets the Brothers Grimm in a new adventure of friendship and courage, Sun 22 - Mon 23 Dec, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
ALADDIN Sun 22 - Mon 30 Dec, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock
DR BUNHEAD'S VERY DANGEROUS CHRISTMAS SHOW Sun 22 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Birmingham Town Hall

Week Commencing MON 23 DEC

TRES TRES CABARET
 Stafford's very own burlesque and cabaret night. Strictly over-18s only. Fri 27 Dec, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
IRIS WHITE AND THE KINGDOM OF CURIOUS CHRISTMAS TREES Voice On A Stick blend music, games and drama to create a relaxed theatrical experience for young children, Sat 28 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove
CHRISTMAS TIME A musical comedy full of Christmas spirit and festive cheer, Sun 29 - Mon 30 Dec, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
CINDERELLA DE Caverswall Theatre Company present their version of the classic Christmas pantomime, Sun 29 Dec - Sat 4 Jan, Stoke Repertory Theatre

Week Commencing MON 30 DEC

THE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD
 Jars Of Clay present a tale for Christmas... Tue 31 Dec - Sat 4 Jan, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

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Here are a few of our favourite theatre productions we reviewed from last month. For further theatre reviews, visit, www.whatsonlive.co.uk

Richard II

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

The packed house waited with bated breath as the glorious sopranos and musicians opened the performance. We were ready to be thrilled by this fantastic production. And we were. Gregory Doran, the director of this play and the new Artistic Director of the RSC, offered us a theatrical treat. We all knew that David Tennant would completely commit to the complex role of Richard II, because that's what he does. However, this was very much an ensemble production, and he was ably supported by brilliant performances from the rest of the cast. John of Gaunt was in the safe hands of Michael Pennington. The Duke of York was played by an increasingly worried Oliver Ford Davies, and Nigel Lindsay was forthright as Henry Bolingbroke. The cameo role of the Duchess of Gloucester was played with energetic angst by Jane Lapotaire. Stephen Brimson Lewis's clever designs placed us firmly in the fourteenth century, but Richard II, with its political themes, is very much a play for anytime. This production is the first from the RSC to be filmed live for cinema broadcast, and will be available free in classrooms around the UK. This is the Royal Shakespeare Company at its best.

Jan Watts ■■■■■



Welsh National Opera: Tosca

Birmingham Hippodrome

Set in 1800, Puccini's Tosca finds Rome threatened by Napoleon's French army. The opera follows the story of painter Cavaradossi and his lover, the celebrated singer Floria Tosca, as their lives are endangered by Cavaradossi's old friend Angelotti, an escaped political prisoner. With Baron Scarpia, the chief of police, vying for Angelotti's blood, the artists enter an intriguing game of cat and mouse. Tosca is at times a flirtatious lover, flighty and vulnerable, and at others fiercely jealous. Most pleasing as the teasing, capricious diva, she slips easily into the role of pleading lover. Despite her pious devotion, she has no qualms about repeatedly using a blade to taunt Scarpia.

American Soprano Mary Elizabeth Williams poured an incredible depth of emotion into her performance, her rendition of Vissi d'arte ably illustrating her sublime talent. The scheming Scarpia drew us into his performance of Te Deum in the musical climax to Act One, while Cavaradossi's spectacular swansong, E lucevan le stelle, elicited from the audience a spontaneous round of applause mid-aria.

A grand Italian melodrama, a tale of tragic romance and a truly timeless piece, Tosca is an opera that should be enjoyed at every opportunity.

Alev Dervish ■■■■■



West Side Story

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

Featuring some of the most memorable songs in the history of musical theatre, West Side Story continues to enthral audiences across the world. The timeless tale is a familiar one. Based on Shakespeare's Romeo And Juliet, it has at its core the emotive subjects of forbidden love and racial rivalry. The animosity between the two street gangs - the Jets and the Sharks - is always played out to great effect, courtesy of amazing choreography and Bernstein/Sondheim's exquisite score.

Great expectations inevitably accompany such an iconic show, and this latest touring production certainly delivered on every level. From the moment the Jets slid onto the stage with When You're A Jet through to the heart-rending finale, West Side Story consistently wowed its audience with its dramatic lighting, beautifully executed choreography and well-constructed sets (which transported you right into the heart of Manhattan). Casting was key, and the pairing of Katie Hall (Phantom Of The Opera and Les Miserables) as Maria with Louis Maskell as Tony was a match made in heaven. Their operatic rendition of Tonight was simply sublime, taking your breath away as it resonated around the auditorium. Ensemble pieces America and I Feel Pretty were equally well performed.

With not a note out of key, a foot out of step or a lighting effect off-cue, this is one musical which I'd strongly recommend that you get along to see when it returns to the Midlands next year. Patsy Moss ■■■■■

West Side Story shows at the New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham from 1 to 19 April.

Jekyll And Hyde

Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

Robert Louis Stevenson's eerie tale is here given a 1930s setting and a jazz twist. Blue Orange Theatre's Halloween adaptation is faithful to the original novella and oozes the same gothic mystery. It also offers a considerable female presence - something which, particularly in the eyes of a twenty-first century reader, Stevenson's text is clearly lacking. Carefully isolated areas of the stage allow several scenes to run concurrently, neatly telling the story through fast-paced sequences of exposition that maintain their clarity despite their speed. These are balanced successfully with thrilling dramatic moments which deliver a tingle to the spine. The action is regularly broken up (and pushed along) by sublime hooks from classic jazz songs, performed by the female leads in a seedy nightclub setting. The hooks provide a dovetail between scenes, or sometimes act as a stark counterpoint during moments of danger. It's this juxtaposition that's especially effective in creating the horror of the piece. The lush harmonies of Irving Berlin's music jar with Mr Hyde's violent exploits in an extremely unsettling way that will have you swooning and spooked in equal measure.

A truly memorable five-star production. Adam Sherwood ■■■■■

Tartuffe

The REP, Birmingham

This is a thoroughly entertaining night of theatre. Words and clever choreography sizzle. Though Tartuffe was first performed in 1664, this production is a very modern one. The artful translation by Chris Campbell and the outrageous and courageous direction by Roxana Silbert bring French farce right up to date.

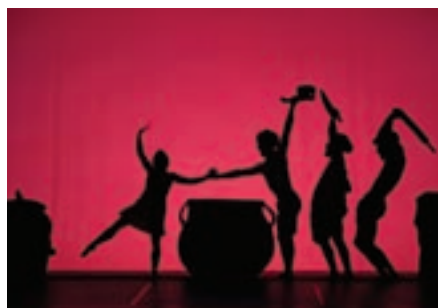
Liz Ashcroft, the designer, though referencing seventeenth century France in her superb contemporary setting and costume design, supports Tartuffe as a play for the twenty-first century. The comic timing of each cast member is spot on, delighting a packed audience. Mark Williams plays Tartuffe, a grotesque hypocrite who betrays everyone. Ayesha Antoine as Dorine controls centre-stage with her feisty energy. Elmire, played by Sian Brooke, goes from a 'marzipan princess' to a lusty siren. Janice Connolly, well known in the Midlands for her theatre and stand-up comedy performances as Mrs Barbara Nice, is terrific as Mrs Pernelle and the bark of her small dog. The satirical themes of Molière still pack a political punch. The modern-day references towards the end of the play make you laugh while hitting the target. Tartuffe is farce at its very best. Jan Watts ■■■■■

Imelda Staunton in Hampstead

Acclaimed actress Imelda Staunton is to star in David Lindsay-Abaire's *Good People*. The award-winning actress will play the role of Margie, a sharp-tongued single mother who'll do whatever's required to pay the bills after losing yet another job. Directed by Jonathan Kent and with further casting yet to be announced, *Good People* shows at Hampstead Theatre from 27 February to 5 April.

Shadowlands in the West End

An innovative theatrical experience fusing shadow theatre, dance, circus, music and spectacular backdrops is heading to the West End in March. Pilobolus Dance Theater's *Shadowlands* has inspired many other companies and productions around the world, including Hungarian dance troupe *Attraction* - winners of Britain's Got Talent 2013. Set to an original score by American musician, producer and film composer David Poe, the show runs at the Peacock Theatre from 11 to 30 March.



Lee Hall

Shakespeare In Love, on stage...

Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard's multi-award-winning 1998 film *Shakespeare In Love* has been adapted for the stage by Lee Hall and will make its theatrical debut at London's Noel Coward Theatre next summer. Directed by Declan Donnellan, the brand new production will feature a cast of twenty-six actors and musicians. A lighthearted romantic comedy, *Shakespeare In Love* follows the legendary Stratford Bard during his early days as a playwright when, plagued by

debt and tormented by writer's block, he engages in a passionate relationship with the young noblewoman Viola De Lesseps. The couple's forbidden love soon draws plenty of unwanted attention, in particular from Queen Elizabeth I - inspiring the young Will to write the most famous love story of all time... *Shakespeare In Love* shows at the Noel Coward Theatre from July, with tickets on sale from February. For further information, visit www.shakespeareinlove.com

WEST END LISTINGS:

MUSICALS

AMERICAN PSYCHO

Almeida Theatre, 3 Dec 2013 - 25 Jan 2014

BILLY ELLIOT - THE MUSICAL

Victoria Palace Theatre, booking until 16 May 2015

BODYGUARD

Adelphi Theatre, booking until 30 Aug 2014

BOOK OF MORMON

Prince Of Wales Theatre, booking until 8 Mar 2014

CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY - THE MUSICAL

Drury Lane Royal, booking until 1 Nov 2014

CIRCUS OF HORRORS

Lyric Theatre, booking until 16 Dec 2013

COMMITMENTS

Victoria Palace Theatre, booking until 14 Sept 2014

DIRTY DANCING

Piccadilly Theatre, booking until 22 Feb 2014

FROM HERE TO ETERNITY

Shaftesbury Theatre, booking until 26 Apr 2014

GRUFFALO

Lyric Theatre, booking until 12 Jan 2014

I CAN'T SING! THE X FACTOR MUSICAL

London Palladium Theatre, 27 Feb 2014 - 25 Oct 2014

JERSEY BOYS

Prince Edward Theatre, booking until 9 March 2014 and Piccadilly Theatre, 14 Mar - 25 Oct 2014

LES MISÉRABLES

Queen's Theatre, booking until 25 Oct 2014

LET IT BE

Savoy Theatre, booking until 8 Feb 2014

LIGHT PRINCESS

Lyttelton, National Theatre, booking until 2 Feb 2014

LION KING

Lyceum Theatre, booking until 20 Jul 2014

MAMMA MIA!

Novello Theatre, booking until 25 Oct 2014

MATILDA THE MUSICAL

Cambridge Theatre, booking until 21 Dec 2014

MISS SAIGON

Prince Edward Theatre, from 3 May 2014 - 25 Oct 2014

MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT

Playhouse Theatre, booking until 8 Feb 2014

ONCE Phoenix Theatre, booking until 31 May 2014

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Her Majesty's Theatre, booking until 25 Oct 2014

PORGY AND BESS

Open Air Theatre, Regents Park, 17 Jul - 23 Aug 2014

SCOTTSBRO BOYS

Young Vic Theatre, booking until 21 Dec 2013

STEVEN WARD

Aldwych Theatre, 3 Dec 2013 - 1 Mar 2014

STOMP

Ambassadors Theatre, booking until 21 Dec 2014

THRILLER LIVE

Lyric Theatre, booking until 28 Sept 2014

WE WILL ROCK YOU

Dominion Theatre, booking until 5 Apr 2014

WICKED

Apollo Victoria Theatre, booking until 1 Nov 2014

WIND IN THE WILLOWS

Duchess Theatre, 11 Dec 2013 - 1 Feb 2014

DRAMA

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Young Vic Theatre, 4 Dec 2013 - 21 Dec 2013

CORIOLANUS

Donmar Warehouse, booking 6 Dec 2013 - 8 Feb 2014

CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

Apollo Theatre, booking until 25 Oct 2014

DROWNED MAN: A HOLLYWOOD FABLE

Temple Studios, booking until 30 Dec 2013

EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES

Olivier National Theatre, booking until 18 Mar 2014

FATAL ATTRACTION

Haymarket Theatre, Royal, 8 Mar - 21 Jun 2014

FROM MORNING TO MID-NIGHT

Lyttelton National Theatre, booking until 26 Jan 2014

HORRIBLE HISTORIES

BARMY BRITAIN PART TWO

Garrick Theatre, booking until 5 Jan 2014

WAR HORSE

New London Theatre, booking until 15 Feb 2014

WOMAN IN BLACK

Fortune Theatre, booking until 26 Jul 2013

COMEDY

39 STEPS

Criterion Theatre, booking until 18 Oct 2014

BARKING IN ESSEX

Wynham's Theatre, booking until 4 Jan 2014

DICK COMES AGAIN!

Leicester Square Theatre Lounge, booking until 19 Jan 2014



Dick Comes Again!, Leicester Square Theatre Lounge



From
FRI 13
DEC

The Hobbit: The Desolation Of Smaug CERT tbc

Starring Ian McKellen, Martin Freeman, Richard Armitage, Benedict Cumberbatch, Luke Evans, Lee Pace, Cate Blanchett, Orlando Bloom, Evangeline Lilly, Christopher Lee, Hugo Weaving, James Nesbitt Directed by Peter Jackson (New Zealand/UK/USA)

Although *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* received somewhat lukewarm reviews (it was episodic and overlong), it garnered \$1,017,003,568 at the global box-office. That's over a billion dollars. Now comes Chapter II, in which Gandalf, Bilbo Baggins and those silly dwarfs hike their way to the Kingdom of Erebor. There, they encounter the dragon Smaug, voiced by Benedict Cumberbatch. Having played Stephen Hawking, William Pitt the Younger and Julian Assange, there's obviously no end to the man's talents. Oh, and he also plays *The Necromancer* in this film. In 3D.



From
THURS
26 DEC

All Is Lost CERT 12a (106mins)

Starring Robert Redford Directed by J.C. Chandor (USA)

It might not be a particularly encouraging title, but this one-man show has received critical acclaim in the States - and Redford is being talked up for an Oscar nomination. He plays a sailor whose craft takes on water when it collides with a shipping container: what follows is a story of elemental survival. Although there's virtually no dialogue, the film is meant to be extraordinarily gripping. From the writer-director of *Margin Call*.

TOP 5

FILM BOX OFFICE

- 1 Gravity (12a)
- 2 Philomena (12a)
- 3 The Counsellor (18)
- 4 The Butler (12a)
- 5 Thor: The Dark World (12a)



Gravity

Released from Fri 6 Dec

Kill Your Darlings CERT 15 (104mins)

Starring **Daniel Radcliffe, Dane DeHaan, Ben Foster, Michael C. Hall, Jack Huston, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Elizabeth Olsen**
Directed by **John Krokidas (USA)**

Cinematically, there's been a sudden interest in the generation of Beat poets, what with James Franco playing Allen Ginsberg in *Howl* and last year's long-awaited adaptation of Jack Kerouac's *On The Road*. This time, Daniel Radcliffe plays Ginsberg in a true crime story that implicates him, Kerouac (Huston) and William S Burroughs (Foster) in a murder.



Nebraska CERT 15 (115mins)

Starring **Bruce Dern, Will Forte, June Squibb, Stacy Keach**
Directed by **Alexander Payne (USA)**

Bruce Dern looks destined to be the dark horse shoo-in at next year's Oscars. He plays a dipsomaniac who travels from Montana to Nebraska with his son (Forte) to supposedly claim some prize money. And the director Alexander Payne is good at road movies: he was also responsible for the critically hallowed *About Schmidt* and *Sideways*.



Homefront CERT 15 (100mins)

Starring **Jason Statham, James Franco, Winona Ryder, Kate Bosworth, Rachelle Lefevre, Vincent D'Onofrio**
Directed by **Gary Fleder (USA)**

Sylvester Stallone and Jason Statham are reunited on this action-thriller, although this time Sly just wrote the script. Statham plays a former DEA agent who moves his family to a quiet town to escape his violent past, only to find the place is ruled by a meth drug lord (Franco). Based on the novel by Chuck Logan.

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Released from Fri 6 Dec

Black Nativity

CERT PG (93mins)

Starring **Forest Whitaker, Angela Bassett, Tyrese Gibson, Jennifer Hudson, Mary J. Blige, Vondie Curtis-Hall**

Directed by **Kasi Lemmons (USA)**

There's some major talent behind this festive offering. Besides the Oscar-winning Forest Whitaker and Jennifer Hudson, there's the director Lemmons, who previously brought us the commendable *Eve's Bayou* and *Talk To Me*. Here, we have a Baltimore teenager who decides to visit New York in order to meet up with his estranged relatives. For Christmas.



Scatter My Ashes At Bergdorf's

CERT PG (94mins)

Starring **Giorgio Armani, Vera Wang, Marc Jacobs, Joan Rivers, Nicloe Richie**

Directed by **Matthew Miele (USA)**

Scatter My Ashes At Bergdorf's has been described as being 'as dynamic, lush and intimate as the store itself'. For those who aren't in the know about such matters, the Bergdorf of the title refers to Bergdorf Goodman, a luxury-goods department store based on New York City's Fifth Avenue, located in Midtown Manhattan. Founded in 1899 by Herman Bergdorf, the company has established itself as the most famous of all American emporiums - and this hugely engaging movie offers cinema-goers the chance to take a peek behind the scenes at the store's endlessly fascinating inner workings. Highlights include celebrities like Joan Rivers and Candice Bergen recalling their shopping experience, while the use of clips from *Sex And The City* and old Woody Allen movies ably illustrates the luxury retailer's impact on styles and fashions across the decades. This is a homage not only to a legendary department store but also to the creative and inspiring people who work there.



Getaway

CERT 12a (90mins)

Starring **Ethan Hawke, Selena Gomez, Jon Voight, Rebecca Budig, Paul Freeman, Bruce Payne**

Directed by **Courtney Solomon (USA)**

Not to be mistaken for a remake of the 1972 Steve McQueen film *The Getaway*, this crime actioner is actually the story of a former racing driver whose wife is kidnapped. With



nothing to go on but a voice on the phone, Brent Magna (Hawke) is forced to follow detailed instructions if he ever wants to see his wife again... The American reviews were not kind.



Old Boy

CERT 18 (104mins)

Starring **Josh Brolin, Elizabeth Olsen, Sharlto Copley, Michael Imperioli, Samuel L. Jackson, Richard Portnow**

Directed by **Spike Lee (USA)**

Yep, it's another remake. The original was the cult, wildly inventive (and violent) South Korean *Old Boy* from Park Chan-wook, about a man seeking vengeance for his false imprisonment. Here, Josh Brolin (*No Country For Old Men*, *Gangster Squad*) plays the detainee with retribution on his mind. Expect some strong adult content.



Frozen

CERT PG (108mins)

Featuring the voices of **Kristen Bell, Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff, Santino Fontana, Josh Gad, Alan Tudyk**

Directed by **Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee (USA)**

Walt Disney's fifty-second animated feature since *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs* (1937), this fantasy with songs follows the company's fairytale tradition. This one is loosely based on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Snow Queen*, in which the kingdom of Arendelle is turned into an eternal winter by the Princess Elsa (Menzel). Director Chris Buck previously brought us *Surf's Up* and *Tarzan*. In 3D.

Released from Fri 13 Dec

Cinema Paradiso

CERT 15 (120mins)

Starring **Philippe Noiret, Salvatore Cascio, Marco Leonardi, Jacques Perrin**

Directed by **Giuseppe Tornatore (Italy)**

It's back - the welcome re-release of the 1988 masterpiece about a middle-aged man's reflection on his past, in particular the Sicilian cinema (and its projectionist) that formed his dreams. A love letter to the movies, the film is overlong, self-indulgent and over-sentimental, but it contains a gallery of memorable images and is stuffed full of supreme craftsmanship. No wonder it won the Oscar for Best Foreign Film.



Fill The Void CERT U (91mins)

Starring **Hadas Yaron, Chaim Sharir, Ido Samuel, Irit Sheleg**
Directed by **Rama Burshtein (Israel)**

With films like *Eyes Wide Open*, *Lebanon*, *Lemon Tree* and *Waltz With Bashir*, Israel is proving to be a leader in world cinema. This one scooped seven Israeli Oscars and is set in the highly orthodox world of the Haredi Jewish community in Tel Aviv. Shira Mendelman (Yaron) is an eighteen-year-old girl looking forward to her marriage when, out of the blue, her older sister dies in childbirth. So, in keeping with the levirate tradition, she is now forced to marry her late sister's husband... *Fill The Void* is the first mainstream feature to be directed by an Orthodox Jewish woman.



A Christmas Candle CERT U (100mins)

Starring **Hans Matheson, Samantha Barks, Sylvester McCoy, Susan Boyle, John Hannah**
Directed by **John Stephenson (USA)**

Only time will tell whether *The Christmas Candle* joins the ranks of must-watch festive movies such as *It's A Wonderful Life*, but at first glance it certainly seems to have plenty going for it. Set in 1890, in an enchanting village called Gladbury, deep in the heart of the English countryside, it tells the story of progressive young minister David Richmond, whose arrival has inspired the villagers to perform good deeds and great acts of kindness. But the minister's modernising ways don't suit everybody. The dyed-in-the-wool village candlemaker is a man on a mission - a mission to preserve the legend of the Christmas Candle, which has it that every twenty-five years an angel will visit him and touch a single candle. Whosoever then lights the candle will receive a miracle on Christmas Eve... But when the candle goes missing, Gladbury's residents must brace themselves for the most astonishing Christmas they've ever experienced.



Released from Fri 20 Dec

Anchorman: The Legend Continues CERT tbc

Starring **Will Ferrell, Steve Carell, Paul Rudd, David Koechner, Christina Applegate, Vince Vaughn, Harrison Ford**
Directed by **Adam McKay (USA)**

The newsreader Ron Burgundy (Ferrell) was a vain, chauvinistic and bombastic character who ruled the airwaves of San Diego in the 1970s. Now down-on-his-luck, he's reunited



From
THURS
26
DEC

with his old crew to join a twenty-four-hour news channel in New York. Expect a lot of star cameos: Jim Carrey, Nicole Kidman, Liam Neeson and Kanye West, for starters.

Walking With Dinosaurs: The 3D Movie CERT U (87mins)

Starring **Patchi, Scowler and Juniper**
Directed by **Neil Nightingale and Barry Cook (UK/USA)**

If you're not tired of dinosaurs yet, the prehistoric giants return in this big-screen adaptation of the BBC series of the same name. Using state-of-the-art computer animation and real-life backgrounds, the film tells the (fictitious) story of three *Pachyrhinosauruses* (you know, those centrosaurine ceratopsid dinosaurs) from infancy through to adulthood.

The Harry Hill Movie CERT tbc

Starring **Harry Hill, Julie Walters, Sheridan Smith, Simon Bird, Jim Broadbent**
Directed by **Steve Bendelack (UK)**

For those who remember a certain British comedian in the 1974 release *The Best Of Benny Hill*, this may send a shiver down the spine. Still, Harry Hill has his followers and this is an all-new comedy in which Hill, as Harry Hill, goes on a road trip with his Nan (Julie Walters) to Blackpool.



The Secret Life Of Walter Mitty

CERT PG (114mins)

Starring **Ben Stiller, Kristen Wiig, Adam Scott, Patton Oswalt, Sean Penn, Shirley MacLaine** Directed by **Ben Stiller (USA)**

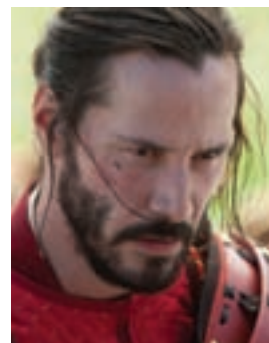
Not a sequel, nor a reboot, but a remake (of sorts), this is the second adaptation of James Thurber's 1939 short story about the fantasist of the title. Long in gestation (Jim Carrey, Owen Wilson, Mike Myers and Sacha Baron Cohen were all due to play the lead), the film finally got kick-started when Ben Stiller entered the frame. Mitty, previously played by Danny Kaye, is the ultimate dreamer, who embarks on extravagant adventures inside his own head.

Released from Thurs 26 Dec

47 Ronin CERT 15 (129mins)

Starring **Keanu Reeves, Rinko Kikuchi, Tadanobu Asano, Hiroyuki Sanada, Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa** Directed by **Carl Erik Rinsch (USA)**

Another week, another remake. Actually, there have been dozens of films on this subject, a famous Japanese story of revenge and honour. When the leader of a group of ronin (samurai) is killed, the forty-seven warriors embark on a journey of retribution. Although based on a true story (that occurred in the eighteenth century), this version will veer a little from the truth, particularly with the introduction of giants and witches. In 3D.



Film A-Z LISTINGS

All films are currently on general release unless otherwise stated. For full listing information, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

The Apartment PG

An office clerk lets his cal-
lous boss use his apart-
ment for afternoon dal-
liances until he discovers
the lady he secretly loves
is involved. Stars Jack
Lemmon and Shirley
McLaine. *Showing at
Wern Town Hall, Thurs 19
December*

Arthur Christmas U

Arthur highlights the tech-
nological advances of
operations at the North
Pole, revealing how Santa
produces gifts and distrib-
utes them around the
world in just one night.
However, every operation
has a margin of error...
*Showing at Wern Town
Hall, Sat 14 December*

Battle Of Algiers 15

One of the all-time
greats of world cine-
ma, this film about
winning the battle
and losing the war
against terrorism in
Algeria is as dramatic,
gripping and relevant as
when it was made over 40
years ago. Starring
Brahim Haggiag, Jean
Martin. *Showing at The
Hive, Shrewsbury, Sat 7
December*

The Bishop's Wife U

Angel Dudley comes to
earth to help out bishop
Henry Brougham, who is
engaged in a fundraising
appeal to build a cathed-
ral which in turn has led
him to become cut off
from his wife and parish-
ioners, a state of affairs
the suave angel intends to
put straight. Starring Cary
Grant, Loretta Young,
David Niven. *Showing at
Foxlowe Arts Centre,
Leek, Tues 17 December*

The Broken Circle Breakdown 15

Elise and Didier fall in love
at first sight. He talks, she
listens. He's a romantic
atheist, she's a religious
realist. But when their
daughter becomes seri-
ously ill, their love is test-
ed. *Showing at Stoke Film
theatre, Tues 3 December*

Blue Jasmine 12a

New York socialite Jasmine
Francis has got a major
case of the blues. She is
also forced to move in with
her sister when her mar-
riage to a rich businessman
self-destructs. Stars Alec
Baldwin and Cate
Blanchett. *Showing at
Artrix, Bromsgrove, until
Mon 2 December; Ludlow
Assembly Rooms, until
Tues 3 December;
Warwick Arts Centre, Fri
13 - Mon 16 December;
Atfield Theatre, Oswestry,
Sat 21 December*

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THE FILM
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Captain Phillips 12a

Tom Hanks plays the
eponymous Captain
Richard Phillips, who was
abducted by Somali
pirates in 2009. It's a tale
ripped straight from the
headlines, based on the
book by Captain Phillips
himself. *Showing at Old
Market Hall, Shrewsbury,
Mon 2 - Thurs 5
December; The
Courtyard, Hereford, Sun
8 - Weds 11 December;
Roses Theatre,
Tewkesbury, Thurs 12 - Fri
13 December; Ludlow
Assembly Rooms, Mon
16 - Weds 18 December;
Malvern Theatres, from Fri
27 December*

Child's Pose 15

Comelia
is sixty and unhappy: her
son, Barbu, is thirty-four
and strives to become
independent. When
Barbu gets involved in a
tragic accident she uses
all her skills to save him
from jail. But it's a thin line
between motherly love

and manipulation.

*Showing at The Light
House, Wolverhampton,
Mon 2 - Weds 4
December*

Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs U

This is the sequel to the
2009 cartoon about a boy
who found a way to turn
water into food. Here, the
lad has to find a way to
stop his contraption from
creating mutant food
beasts, a nasty side-effect
of his invention *Showing
at Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sun
29 - Mon 30 December;
Ludlow Assembly Rooms,
from Tues 31 December*

The Company You Keep 15

Jim Grant is a small town
lawyer whose sympathies
with middle-aged mum
Sharon Solarz raise suspi-
cions after she is exposed
and arrested by the FBI
for her part in violent
1960s radicalism. Starring
Robert Redford, Susan
Sarandon *Showing at
Foxlowe Arts Centre,
Leek, Tues 10
December*

Dom Hemingway

Dom Hemingway is a
safecracker who's just
spent the last twelve years
in prison. Now he's out
and wants his reward for
keeping his mouth shut.
Stars Jude Law, Richard
E. Grant. *Showing at The
Light House, Wolverhampton, until
Thurs 5 December*

Enough Said 12a

Here, a divorced woman
finds out that the man
she's pursuing is in fact
the ex-husband of her
new girlfriend. Stars Julia
Louis-Dreyfus, James
Gandolfini, Catherine
Keener *Showing at
Warwick Arts centre, Mon
9 - Thurs 12 December*

The Epic Of Everest U

Filmed in brutally harsh
conditions, this is the of-
ficial record of the leg-
endary Everest expedition
of 1924 that sparked an
on-going debate over
whether Mallory and Irvine
did indeed reach the sum-
mit. *Showing at Warwick
Arts Centre, Fri 13 & Sun
15 December; The
Courtyard, Hereford, Mon
16 - Tues 17 December*

The Fifth Estate 15

Benedict Cumberbatch
plays the editor-in-chief
and founder of Wikileaks,
Julian Assange. Assange
himself has dismissed the
film as "a hostile work,"
while Cumberbatch has
heaped praise on the eye-
opening website.
*Showing at Ludlow
Assembly Rooms, Weds
4 - Thurs 5 December*

Free Birds U

When most Americans
think of turkey, they think
of Thanksgiving. So two
intrepid game birds put
aside their differences and
hijack a time machine to
travel back to the first
Thanksgiving - to change
the course of history. With
the voices of Owen
Wilson, Woody Harrelson.
*Showing at Old Market
Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 27 -
Tues 31 December*

Gone With the Wind PG

A manipulative Southern
belle carries on a turbu-
lent affair with a blockade
runner during the
American Civil War. Stars
Clark Gable and Vivian
Leigh. *Showing at The Old
Market Hall, Shrewsbury,
Sun 1 December*

Great Expectations 12a

Based on the classic
novel by Charles Dickens
following the trials and
tribulations of one Pip
Pirrip. Stars Jeremy Irvine,
Robbie Coltrane, Helena
Bonham Carter. *Showing
at The Norbury Theatre,
Droitwich Spa, Weds 18
December*

Gravity 12a

Matt Kowalsky (George
Clooney) is on his last
shuttle before retirement,
along with medical engi-
neer Dr Ryan Stone
(Sandra Bullock) on her
first mission in space.
Then, on a routine space-
walk, their craft is
destroyed, leaving them
stranded in the cosmos...
*Showing at The Courtyard,
Hereford, until Weds 4
December; Warwick Arts
Centre, until Thurs 5
December*

The Great Gatsby 12a

Baz Luhrmann's produc-
tion of the famous F Scott
Fitzgerald novel stars
Leonardo De Caprio and
Carey Mulligan. *Showing
at The Edge Arts Centre,
Mon 16 December*

Hannah Arendt 12a

A biopic of the influential
German-Jewish philoso-
pher and political theorist
who coined the phrase
'the banality of evil'.
*Showing at The Courtyard,
Hereford, Tues 10 - Weds
11 December*

A Hijacking 15

A high quality
Scandinavian drama with
a woolly jumper nowhere
to be seen? Surely not!
Then again, when you
see that the action has
been transferred from the
police procedurals that
make up Saturday nights
on BBC4 to the mascu-
line, close confines of a
trawler under Somali
Pirate control, you'll
understand why. *Showing
at The Hive, Shrewsbury,
Sat 14 December*

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire 15

Following the victory of
Katniss Everdeen in the
first film (adapted from the
novel by Suzanne
Collins), President Snow
plans a new, far more
deadly tournament...
Stars Jennifer Lawrence,
Josh Hutcherson.
*Showing at Electric
Cinema, Birmingham,
until Thurs 5 December;
Malvern Theatres, until
Thurs 5 December*

Il Divo 15

A riveting tale of political
intrigue, state-sponsored
terror and organised crime,
based on the extraordinary
true story of Giulio
Andreotti, seven times
prime minister of Italy.
Starring Toni Servillo, Piera
Degli Esposti. *Showing at
The Hive, Shrewsbury, Fri
6 December*

In A World... 15

Carol Soto is the daughter
of a legendary voice-over
artist and is determined to
buck the trend for male
voices on trailers. Starring
and directed by Lake Bell.
*Showing at The Courtyard,
Hereford, Sat 21 - Thurs
26 December*

It's A Wonderful Life U

When selfless George
Bailey attempts suicide on
Christmas Eve, he gains
the attention of a guardian
angel that shows him all
the people whose lives
George has touched and
the difference he's made
to his community. Stars

James Stewart, Donna
Reed. *Showing at Light
House, Wolverhampton,
Sun 15 December; The
Courtyard, Hereford, Mon
16 - Weds 18 December*

Justin And The Knights Of Valour PG

As Justin embarks on a
quest to become a knight,
he must first learn all
about honour and
courage to become a
man. With the voices of
Freddie Highmore and
Saoirse Ronan. *Showing
at Electric Cinema,
Birmingham, Sun 15 -
Tues 24 December;
Ludlow Assembly Rooms,
Fri 27 - Sat 28, Mon 30
December*

Le Week-end 15

Comedy-drama about a
couple who attempt to
rejuvenate their marriage
by visiting Paris. Once in
the French capital, they
bump into an old friend,
who acts as a catalyst for
things to come. Stars Jeff
Goldblum and Jim
Broadbent. *Showing at
Artrix, Bromsgrove, until
Mon 2 December; The
Courtyard, Hereford, until
Weds 4 December;
Warwick Arts Centre, Fri 6
- Sun 8 December;
Ludlow Assembly Rooms,
Mon 9 - Weds 11
December*

Like Father, Like Son PG

Ryota Nonomiya feels
he's earned his perfect
life. Then he receives a
phone call from the hospi-
tal where his son was
born. There'd been a mix-
up, and his son, Keita, is
not actually his...
*Showing at Ludlow
Assembly Rooms, Weds
18 & Fri 20 December*

Lincoln 15

The film focuses on the
sixteenth US president's
last four months in office
and his fight to establish
the Thirteenth
Amendment. Stars Daniel
Day-Lewis, Sally Field.
*Showing at Forest Arts
Centre, Walsall, Fri 6
December*

Metro Manila 15

When he and his family
move to Manila from the
Philippine mountain
ranges, Oscar gets a job
on an armoured truck -
but the job's high mortali-
ty rate isn't a good thing.

CINEMA Box Office

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Warwickshire

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0871 224 4007
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MALVERN THEATRE
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08444 777 1000
WAREHOUSE,
KIDDERMINSTER
01562 747773
VUE, WORCESTER
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THE ROSE'S THEATRE,
TEWKESBURY
01684 295 074

Showing at Stoke Film Theatre, Thurs 5 December

Nativity PG

A primary school teacher is charged with the biggest challenge of his life - directing the school's musical version of the Nativity, competing against the posh local school for the honour of best reviewed show in town. Stars Martin Freeman, Pam Ferris. *Showing at Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Thurs 12 December*

Nebraska 15

A dipsomaniac travels from Montana to Nebraska with his son to supposedly claim some prize money. Stars Bruce Dern and Will Forte. *Showing at Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 6 - Thurs 12 December*

One Chance PG

James Corden plays Paul Potts who, you may recall, was the tenor who won the first series of Britain's Got Talent in 2007. And before you dismiss this as a cheap British rip-off of Reality TV, the director is the Hollywood filmmaker who steered Meryl Streep through her paces in The Devil Wears Prada and Hope Springs. *Showing at Old Market Hall, Fri 6 - Thurs 12 December; Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 13 - Thurs*

19 December; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 27 - Sun 29 December; Warwick Arts Centre, Fri 6 - Thurs 12, Fri 27 - Mon 30 December

Parkland 15

Parkland tells the story of the chaotic events which took place in the Dallas Parkland Hospital, to which the fatally wounded JFK and his blood-splattered wife were taken in the aftermath of the shooting. Stars Zac Efron and Tom Welling. *Showing at Warwick Arts Centre, until Thurs 5 December*

Philomena 12a

Dame Judi Dench plays Philomena Lee, an elderly woman who decides to search for the son taken from her when she was just a teenager. Also stars Steve Coogan. *Showing at The Light House, Wolverhampton, until Thurs 5 December; Malvern Theatres, until Thurs 12 December; Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, Sat 14 & Sun 15, Tues 17 & Thurs 19 December; Warwick Arts Centre, Tues 17 - Mon 23 Dec; Artrix, Bromsgrove, from Mon 30 December*

Pride And Prejudice u

Sparks fly when spirited Elizabeth Bennet meets the single, rich, and proud Mr Darcy, who reluctantly finds himself falling in love

with Lizzie despite her ghastly relatives, scandal and misunderstandings galore. Stars Keira Knightley, Matthew Macfadyen *Showing at The Courtyard, Hereford, Tues 3 December*

Romeo And Juliet PG

This is a traditional version, filmed in fair Verona, with an American as Juliet Capulet (Oscar nominee Hailee Steinfeld). Romeo is portrayed by the London-born Douglas Booth. *Showing at Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Fri 20 - Sat 21, Mon 23 December; The Courtyard, Hereford, Mon 23 - Thurs 26 December*

Saving Mr Banks PG

This is a bio of PL Travers, the author of Mary Poppins. The film is divided between Travers' early years in Australia and the later negotiations with Disney to make a film of her popular children's novel. Emma Thompson plays Travers and Tom Hanks, Walt Disney. *Showing at Electric Cinema, Birmingham, until Thurs 5 December; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Mon 9 - Thurs 12 December; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 13 - Tues 24, Fri 27 - Tues 31 December; Warwick Arts Centre, Fri 20 - Tues 24, Thurs 26 - Tues 31 December*

Scrooged 12

TV network president Cross is mean, nasty, uncaring, and has a sadistic sense of humour. Before the night is over, he'll be visited by a maniacal New York cab driver from the past, a present-day fairy who's into pratfalls and, finally, a ghoulish seven-foot headless messenger from the future. Stars Bill Murray, Karen Allen *Showing at The Courtyard, Hereford, Tues 17 December*

Searching For Sugarman 12

Rodriguez, an American singer-songwriter, released two albums around 1970. They found their way to South Africa, where he became as big as the Rolling Stones. Then he disappeared. *Showing at The Hive, Shrewsbury, Fri 20 December*

The Selfish Giant 15

This story about friendship, greed and exploitation follows two young ruffians, Arbor and Swiftly, as they get in ever deeper with a cantankerous, potentially dangerous scrap merchant. *Showing at Stoke Film Theatre, Fri 6 - Sat 7 December; The Courtyard, Hereford, Mon 9 - Weds 11 December*

Sense And Sensibility PG

The story follows the Dashwood sisters -

though they're members of a wealthy English family of landed gentry, circumstances result in their sudden destitution, forcing them to seek financial security through marriage. Stars Emma Thompson, Kate Winslett *Showing at The Courtyard, Hereford, Tues 10 December*

Stories We Tell 12a

Sarah Polley is both filmmaker and detective as she investigates the secrets kept by a family of storytellers. *Showing at Stoke The Edge Arts Centre, Mon 9 December*

Summer In February 15

In this adaptation of Jonathan Swift's novel, the artist Alfred Munnings (Dominic Cooper) and his friend Gilbert Evans (Dan Stevens) obsess about the same woman (Emily Browning). *Showing at Stoke The Edge Arts Centre, Mon 2 December*

Sunshine On Leith PG

This musical film follows the story of two soldiers from Afghanistan who have to adjust to civilian life in Edinburgh. Stars Peter Mullan. *Showing at Warwick Arts Centre, Sat 14 & Mon 16 - Thurs 19 December; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 20 - Fri 27 December; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Fri 27 - Sat 28, Mon 30 December*

Turbo u

Theo is a gastropod mollusc - a garden snail to you and me - who dreams of being the fastest snail in the world. And he wants to join the Indy 500. With the voices of Ryan Reynolds, Paul Giamatti. *Showing at The Courtyard, Hereford, Sat 21 - Thurs 26 December; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Mon 23 - Sat 28 December*

Village At The End Of the World 15

Lars is the only teenager in town who, in a community of hunters, doesn't want to hunt. Whilst the rest of the community pull together to try and re-open the fish factory, Lars begins to plan his escape. *Showing at Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Tues 3 December*

Willow PG

When Willow Ufgood (Warwick Davis) finds an abandoned baby, he's thrust into a magical and dangerous adventure, as the child is destined to end the reign of the evil Queen Bavmorda. With only a single swordsman (Val Kilmer) at his side, he must overcome the evil that threatens to destroy anyone who stands in the Queen's way. *Showing at Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 13 December*

For full listings visit: www.whatsonlive.co.uk

DVD NEW RELEASES

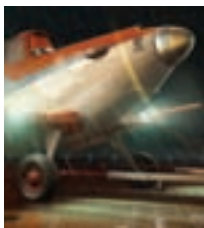
Grown Ups 2 12a

Three years after the events of the first film, Lenny Feder, played by Adam Sandler, relocates his family to his childhood town. However, it being the last day of school, nothing goes according to plan. Also stars Kevin James. **Released 2 December**



Planes u

Dusty, a small-town aircraft, dreams of competing as an air racer. There's one major problem: he's afraid of heights. Oh, and another problem is Ripslinger, a plane for whom, in immoral terms, the sky's the limit. **Released 2 December**



Kick-Ass 2 15

Here, in this sequel to the highly original Kick-Ass, Red Mist adopts the un-PC moniker (and flash costume) and holds Kick-Ass accountable for the death of his father. Stars Aaron Taylor-Johnson. **Released 9 December**

The Conjuring 15

In Hollywood there are more haunted houses than mansions. In this horror opus from James Wan, the director of Saw and Insidious, Vera Farniga and Patrick Wilson play paranormal investigators who look into the Harrisville case. Based on a true story. **Released 9 December**



Pain & Gain 15

Mark Wahlberg and Dwayne Johnson, aka The Rock, play man-mountains who get involved in an extortion ring and kidnapping plot that goes terribly awry. Based on a true story. **Released 23 December**



One Direction - This Is Us PG

An all-access look at the phenomenal boy band on the road. This is Us traces the boys' humble beginnings to international fame, interspersed with concert footage. **Released 19 December**

Lovelace 18

It's hard to imagine the sunny and innocent Amanda Seyfried of Mamma Mia! fame playing Linda Lovelace. But she does so here, in the story of the porn star born Linda

Boreman who became a household name after starring in Deep Throat (1972). Also stars Peter Sarsgaard as Linda's violent husband Chuck Traynor, a man with seemingly no motive for his cruelty. **Released 23 December**



Elysium 15

Following the critical success of his South African sci-fi opus District 9 (2009), Neill Blomkamp now takes the reins on this Hollywood sci-fi epic. It's set on a ravaged version of our planet in the future, where it's really not a very nice place to live. When factory worker Max DeCosta (Matt Damon) contracts cancer, he attempts to escape the planet and infiltrate the orbiting city of Elysium, a domain of the rich that's free of disease and crime. **Released 26 December**

The Way, Way Back 12a

A shy fourteen-year-old boy goes on holiday with his mother and her domineering boyfriend. It proves to be an unforgettable summer. Stars Steve Carell and Toni Collette. **Released 26 December**





Christmas at the Shire Hall Gallery



Rachel Elliott



Julia Parry-Jones



Emma Leonard



Hannah Turner

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ENGLAND

Visual Arts

Heta Patel: At Home

mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham,
until Sun 26 January

Nottingham-based artist Heta Patel's work sets out to define his place within two very different cultures, and uses photography and film in order to examine the subject of identity. At Home marks a real turning point in the artist's practice, as he moves away from the self-portraiture works for which he's previously been known. Here, Patel is no longer the sole protagonist in the camera's frame. Indeed, in some cases he's completely absent, instead using other means to question human relationships and the need to give meaning to existence. The artist's first major solo exhibition, At Home was launched at Nottingham's New Art Exchange in 2012.



Illuminate

Shire Hall Gallery, Stafford, until Sun 5 January

Works representing and interpreting light in its various forms provide the basis for this mixed-media exhibition. Through installation, sculpture and photography, contemporary artists demonstrate how light can transform mood, explore technological processes and tell stories. Artists featured include Joanne Berry, Jim Bond, Rob & Nick Carter, Raphael Daden, Simon Fenoulhet, David Rhys Jones and Michael Shaw.



Reference Works

Library Of Birmingham, until Sun 29 December

In what's considered to be the largest and most important photography commission ever undertaken in the second city, Reference Works comprises visual responses to the old Central Library building and to the new Library of Birmingham. Each artist's work focuses on a different aspect of the project, with photos by Michael Collins, Brian Griffin, Andrew Lacon and Stuart Whipps all featuring.

**LAST
chance
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David Tremlett Exhibition

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, Wed 4 December - Mon 21 April

David Tremlett (b 1945) is best known for his large-scale site-specific wall drawings of geometric arrangements: abstract compositions of arcs, circles, trapezoids and line. Using pastel pigment applied by hand, Tremlett makes these compositions directly upon the walls, floors and ceilings of the building. They are orchestrated to shift the viewer's comprehension of the space; opening out, expanding and reducing, creating new vistas, architectural rhythms and pauses. Formally constructed compositions of purely abstract elements which emanate the sensual joy of colour and hue - as well as illustrating the relationships between geometry and curved line - the compositions also speak of things experienced, seen and done by the artist.

A Big Bang: The Origins Of The Pop Art Collection

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Sat 7 December - Sat 21 June

Home to one of the largest regional collections of Pop Art in the UK, Wolverhampton Art Gallery here explores works by some of the biggest names in the industry. The first of a two-part display, A Big Bang features pieces acquired by the gallery over the past fifty years, including examples from the ICA print portfolio of 1964 by Bridget Riley, Gillian Ayres and Richard Smith. Exhibits of photorealism by John Salt (see interview on page 53), Boyd & Evans and David Hepher also feature.



Birmingham-born artist John Salt is recognised for his pivotal role in the artistic movement known as Photorealism. John was also the first artist to exhibit in the original Ikon gallery in 1965, and will next year be involved in the gallery's year-long celebrations leading to its fiftieth anniversary in 2015. His work is currently being showcased as part of a major Photorealism retrospective exhibition at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. What's On recently met up with John to chat about his life in art...

A former pupil at the Birmingham School of Art and London's Slade School of Fine Art, John Salt's work first gained public recognition in 1965, when he became the first artist to exhibit at Ikon, a new gallery situated in the heart of Birmingham.

So what does John remember about the early days of one of the city's most prestigious art spaces? "Well, the artists in the co-operative which started Ikon didn't want to show their own work in the first exhibition, so they asked me to do it. I agreed, and exhibited some fairly abstract pieces which I guess were influenced by American abstract expressionism and were slightly pop. I was playing around with a lot of Pop Art at the time. The good thing about Ikon's venture was that it brought art to the people, with pieces displayed in such a way that people could view work from outside."



John Salt's Bride 1969

John's most vivid memory of the exhibition is the close encounter the Ikon kiosk had with a car. "We were hanging the exhibition when we heard this terrific clatter on the roof. A car had hit the railings. It had wedged itself, and the wheels had gone over the edge, sending the railings down onto the top of the kiosk, which was made out of corrugated material. A very memorable moment but also very frightening."

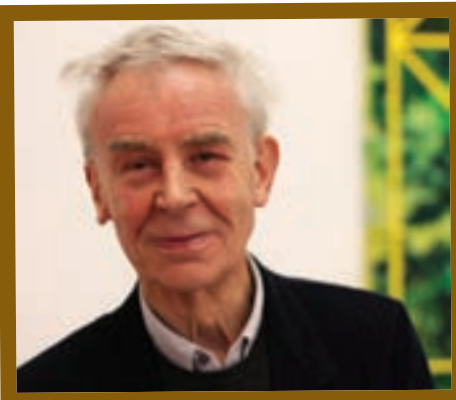
Two years on and John's sense of adventure saw him and his wife cross the Atlantic. "The States was the centre of the art world at the time, and that was a big draw for me. So I persuaded my wife, and off we went. Initially we only intended to stay for a year. Baltimore University offered me a place on its Graduate programme for an MFA - Master of Fine Art - and offered to pay. At the same time they offered me some teaching to support us both. It was a two-year course, but I said I'd do a year and then fly back to Britain. I didn't want to become a Master Of Fine Art, I didn't want a degree very much; I just wanted an excuse to be there. I liked it immediately." So how did John's involvement with photorealism come about? "I certainly didn't know anything about it at the time. I'd been playing around with abstracts and then moved slightly into minimal art, which was the trend at that time. I thought of it as my chance to

become re-born, inasmuch as no one there would question why I wasn't doing what I used to do. So I thought I'd do something on the subject matter that I saw around me. You know what it's like when you go somewhere new - it looks exciting, fresh and interesting, and I thought 'I must do something with this'. I found a book in the library on a photographic exhibition in the Museum of Modern Art called Towards The Social Landscape. In it were photographs of what I was seeing outside, and I thought to myself, 'I could use some of these - I could paint from these photographs by quite well-known photographers'. So that's how it started. Some of the works I produced were large-scale but were always black-and-white, as they were taken from black-and-white photographs. I didn't know of anyone else who was doing that sort of photorealism art at the time. It certainly wasn't named at that stage."

Twelve months later, instead of heading back to Britain as originally planned, John was persuaded to make his way to New York and take the second year of his MFA qualification out of residency, in a loft apartment. So was this the beginning of John living the high life? "Yes, quite literally - but it didn't have the glamour associated with loft-living nowadays. We were living in lower Manhattan in the late-1960s, and there were a lot of buildings which had been neglected. I wasn't selling very much at that time, but I got in with a gallery and found a dealer. I had a show uptown in 1969, my work started to sell and things began going along very well."

Much of John's subject matter centres around abandoned vehicles and car interiors. He's often sited his upbringing in a city of car manufacturing and his father's repair garage as influences. But what impact did the environment in which John found himself in the States have on his art? "Underneath Brooklyn Bridge, which goes over Manhattan, there was this space to which cars would be towed. The area became a dumping ground for cars. As we lived quite close by, I'd go down there and take photographs. This subject matter has stayed with me, although it's evolved over the years." Documenting his surroundings in artform, did John see it as a way of getting a message across about social/environmental issues? "I've never tried to tell a story through my art. It could be interpreted that way; I don't mind. To me, that's all too meaningful - I've always just wanted it to be seen for what it is."

Photorealism in the late-'60s/early-'70s evoked plenty of lively discussion in the art world. How aware was John of the works being created by his contemporaries? "When I talk about the artists that I mixed with, there was still a lot of abstract work. There was



something coming about called minimalist abstraction, which was a bit like expressionism but done by younger people. There wasn't much of what you might call photorealism. I certainly didn't know anything about it at the time. I was only aware of two other artists doing similar work to me. These were Chuck Close and Richard Estes, whose work is also being shown in the exhibition at BMAG. The only other people who seemed to be doing it were artists from California. Abstract Expressionism/Pop Art was more of an east coast/New York-type phenomena. Then you had the west coast art, which was realist but much more enjoyable - lyrical, and depicting the good life which California stands for."

Having moved back to the UK in the late-'70s and settled in South Shropshire, John continues to work on his art and admits to having a more relaxed approach. "I don't mind when pieces get finished, but I do need to keep in contact with them. If I leave it for too long, I lose confidence with the piece. I never plan and I never know what I'm doing. I'm sure most artists must have a plan, and although I have a process, I forget what that is. Every piece seems like the first one I've ever done. I don't think that's a pressure but it does bring an edge to the process." So are the walls of John's South Shropshire home adorned with his works? "I only have one around the house, which I'm not particularly keen on. I think I've probably become over-familiar with it; I much prefer having other people's work around the house." Finally, I question whether John has given much thought to leaving photorealism behind and trying his hand at another art form. "I would've liked to, but I'm not very confident with the prospect, so don't think I could. But when I look back, I'm quite proud of what I've done." And so he should be...

Examples of John's work will be exhibited as part of Photorealism: 50 Years Of Hyperrealistic Painting, which shows at **Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery** until Sun 30 March



Image copyright: Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

VisualArts LISTINGS

For full listing information on Visual Art exhibitions, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

CLOSER Solo exhibition from former soldier Stuart Griffiths, until Sun 8 Dec, mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

SHAD.OW An exhibition of work by Ann Wilkinson and Anne Guest, until Sat 14 Dec, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN: BUSTER KEATON, SCULPTURE & THE ABSURD until Sat 14 Dec, The Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

CIRCUS EXHIBITION until Sun 15 Dec, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

LIQUID LAND: LEGACIES OF OIL & POWER BY RENI EFFENDI Exhibition which highlights the struggles of people living in some of the world's most polluted areas, until Fri 20 Dec, Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton

MATT WATKINS: THE BIRDS OF AMERICA Animated interpretation of Birmingham Library's most valueable artefact,

until Sun 22 Dec, Library of Birmingham

SENSING SCULPTURE until Tues 31 Dec, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

THE OTHER MR DARWIN The story of 'the other Mr Darwin, Alfred Russel Wallace', who was so nearly the Father of Evolution, until Sun 31 Dec, Dudley Museum & Art Gallery

FROM FERTILE GROUND A changing programme of displays, projects and events exploring themes from the Natural World, until Tues 31 Dec, Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery

PIT PROFILES Exhibition which explores the links between coal mining & art, until Tues 31 Dec, Coalbrookdale Gallery, Ironbridge, Shropshire

WAR EFFORT Major new exhibition which focuses on the massive WWII contribution made by the British motor industry, until Sun 5 Jan, Coventry Transport Museum

KEEPING UP APPEARANCES: FASHION THROUGH TWO WORLD WARS until Sun 5 Jan, Herbert Museum & Art Gallery, Coventry

CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW Featuring limited edition prints by Aine Venables & jewellery by Julia Parry-Jones, until Sun 5 January, Shire Hall Gallery, Stafford

LINE, SPACE AND ANGLES A joint exhibition of contemporary photography & drawing, until Fri 10 Jan, The Bond Cafe Gallery, Birmingham

REGENERATED The story of the Jewellery Quarter's Smith & Pepper jewellery factory, until Sat 11 Jan, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

MILLET TO MANET French prints from the late-nineteenth century, until Sun 12 Jan, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

MAD DOGS & ENGLISH-MEN Humorous exhibition which explores the relationship between man and his four-legged friend, until Sat 18 Jan, Bilston Craft Gallery

FIRST IMPRESSIONS Focusing on The Barber's collection of works on paper, until Sun 19 Jan, The Barber

Institute, Birmingham
A TRIBUTE TO AGATHA CHRISTIE until Sun 19 Jan, Bantock House & Park, Wolverhampton
W MOORCROFT LIMITED 1913 - 2013: 100 YEARS OF LIVING ART POTTERY until Sun 19 Jan, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent
WOLVERHAMPTON SOCIETY OF ARTISTS until Sat 25 Jan, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

JOHN MONKS: PAINTING IN LAYERS Set of large-scale paintings on canvas which bring atmosphere to inanimate and immutable objects and scenes, until Sun 26 Jan, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

ARTIST ROOMS: JOSEPH BEUYS Exhibition from one of the most influential artists of the late-twentieth century, until Sat 1 Feb, Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery

WINTER SHOWCASE until Sat 15 Feb, Bilston Craft Gallery

DEAN KELLAND: NO HIDING PLACE Fusion of performance, filmmaking, collage and print, exploring cultural identities and stereotypical representations of masculinity, until Sat 15 Feb, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

DOROTHEA WIGHT & MARC BALAKJIAN until Sun 2 March, The New Art Gallery, Walsall

IN STITCHES: A CELEBRATION OF RSC COSTUME until Mon 31 Mar, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

SHAKTI: NIKHIL CHOPRA until Sat 5 Apr, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

EXPOSED: THE BODY IN ART FROM DURER TO FREUD until Mon 21 Apr, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

DEVIL'S IN THE DETAIL Collection of rare nineteenth century wood engravings which champion the skill and craftsmanship of the Victorian trade catalogue engraver, until Wed 30 Apr, Enginuity, Ironbridge, Shropshire

TRADE SHOW Group exhibition exploring trading structures used by artists within everyday life situations, Sat 7 Dec - Sun 22 Feb, Eastside Projects, Digbeth, Birmingham

BACK TO FRONT: 40 PERMANENT COLLECTION

GEMS Exhibition which celebrates the fortieth anniversary of the gallery's Garman Ryan collection, until Sat 16 Nov 2014, New Art Gallery, Walsall

THE ROGER PILKINGTON COLLECTION until Sun 10 Aug, Broadfield House Glass Museum, Dudley

CATHERINE DE BARNES ART SOCIETY AUTUMN EXHIBITION Mon 2 - Sat 14 Dec, Solihull Arts Complex

TIM JOHNSON: THE LUMINESCENT GROUND Exhibition of recent and new paintings by the Australian artist whose work owes much to 'indigenous traditions of the Central Desert, Wed 4 Dec - Sun 9 Feb, Ikon, Birmingham

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS Sat 7 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Red House Glass Cone, Stourbridge

AND WHEN YOU FINALLY DISAPPEAR... Exhibition which reinforces mac's commitment to supporting local talent, Sat 7 Dec - Sun 2 Feb, mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

MAKING MOVES: CREATING FUTURES FOR CRAFT Exhibition of contemporary craft which showcases the results of nine maker's residencies across the West Midlands, Sat 14 Dec - Sun 2 Feb, mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

STRYX Group exhibition, Sun 15 - Sat 21 Dec, Stryx, Digbeth, Birmingham

Christmas at Ikon Shop

Ikon Gallery's independent shop stocks a range of products ideal for Christmas gifts, from beautiful art books and children's gifts to handmade stationery and jewellery.

In the run up to Christmas, Ikon Shop is open extra hours and Ikon also offers creative workshops where you can make unique personalised gifts.

Thursday 5 December: Card making, £5

Wednesday 11 December: Book making, £15

Wednesday 18 December: Jewellery making, £20

Cost includes all materials. Limited places, for more information or to book visit www.ikon-gallery.org or telephone 0121 248 0708. All profits from Ikon Shop support Ikon Gallery's charitable artistic and educational programme.

Ikon Gallery

1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2HS
0121 248 0708 / www.ikon-gallery.org
Open Tuesday - Sunday, 11am-6pm, free entry

IKON

Ikon is supported using public funding by Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council. Ikon Gallery Limited trading as Ikon. Registered charity no. 528892



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23 Dec	24 Dec	25 Dec	26 Dec	27 Dec	28 Dec	29 Dec
Open & 7.30pm	Open Only	No Show	Open & 7.30pm	Open & 7.30pm	Open & 7.30pm	Open & 7.30pm
30 Dec	31 Dec	01 Jan	02 Jan	03 Jan	04 Jan	05 Jan
Open & 7.30pm	Open Only	Open & 7.30pm	Open & 7.30pm	Open & 7.30pm	Open & 7.30pm	Open & 7.30pm

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Events



The Moscow State Circus

Star City, Birmingham, Wed 18 December - Sun 5 January

Making a welcome return to Birmingham's Star City, Moscow State Circus are promising their 'greatest production to date.' Featuring all the splendour associated with the world-famous circus troupe, A Gift For Christmas begins with clowns Splendid Pavlik and Klava welcoming audiences into a 'wondrous and mysterious place' where 'magnificent feats of human achievement' are high on the agenda. As the

loveable buffoons fool around, they're surrounded by a multitude of flying, back-flipping, juggling and roller-skating performers. The circus's line-up on this occasion includes the award-winning Flying Trapeze of Alievs White Birds, whirlwind rollerskaters the Veslovskis, elegant hand-balancer Vladislav Khostik and ariel artist Natalia Goncharova.

Take Me Out: Live On Stage

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 6 - Sun 8 December

Comedian-come-cupid Paddy McGuinness is bringing his primetime TV series to the Midlands this month as part of Clothes Show Live. Thirty single girls, all looking for their Mr Right, will be chosen at the show to take part in an on-stage evening event which will see a selection of bachelors hoping to impress the ladies. On bringing the show to the Midlands, Paddy said, "I've packed the girls a flask of Lambrini and the boys will be wearing their lucky pants. Take Me Out Live will be bringing Saturday nights to Clothes Show Live. Let the public see the party!"



Clothes Show Live

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 6 - Tues 10 December

A hot ticket for fashionistas everywhere, Clothes Show Live regularly attracts a plethora of well-known celebrities from the worlds of music and TV - and this year is no exception. With appearances by model Thom Evens, singer Peter Andre and TOWIE's Amy Childs already confirmed, 2013 promises to be a bumper show. In addition to showcasing wares from hundreds of leading fashion and beauty brands, the five-day event features non-stop catwalk shows in the AlcatelOnetouch Fashion Theatre. In association with Company Magazine, and hosted by fashion icon Henry Holland, industry expert Caryn Franklin and MTV presenter Becca Dudley, this 'ultimate fashion frenzy' includes live performances from Union J, Kingsland Road and Stooshe, as well as other special guests still to be announced.



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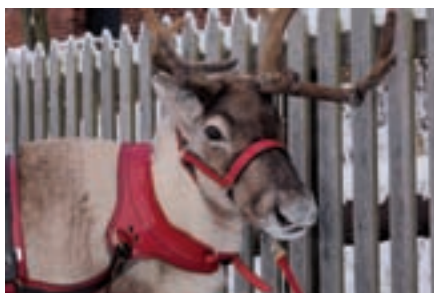
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Victorian Christmas

Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire, Sat 7 - Sun 8 December; Sat 14 - Sun 15 December

Plenty of Victorian festive cheer is on offer at Shropshire's Blists Hill museum this month, as residents busy themselves with preparations for Christmas. Visitors to the award-winning site can observe festive cooking demonstrations from the townsfolk, watch some of the seasonal entertainment on offer - including Punch & Judy, a mini-pantomime and carol singing - and partake in a spot of Christmas shopping in the museum's retail outlet. And just in case all that's not enough to ensure your youngsters are happily entertained, Father Christmas himself - together with his reindeer - will be on hand to hear some last-minute present requests.



Great Taste Festival Of Food And Drink

Donington Park, Sat 7 - Sun 8 December

Great British Bake Off judge Paul Hollywood is just one of the star attractions at this two-day celebration of food and drink. The country's best-known artisan baker, Paul takes over the cookery theatre on the Saturday, showcasing his speciality bakes and talking about what makes his tastebuds 'tingle'. Sunday's show sees The Fabulous Baker Brothers and Michelin-starred chef John Burton Race offering plenty of useful advice and answering audience questions. Other highlights during the two-day event include baking competitions, demonstrations, a producers' theatre, bars, pop-up cafes and numerous stalls selling a variety of festive delights.



Oswestry Christmas Music Live

Oswestry, North Shropshire, Fri 6 December

Widely regarded as one of Shropshire's largest festive celebrations, Oswestry Christmas Music Live sees the Shropshire town come alive with fairground rides, live music and roaming street entertainers. The return of a synthetic ice rink in Festival Square (7pm onwards) is certain to delight those in search of a bit of gentle exercise. Meanwhile, the indoor market not only offers



Santa's Winter Wonderland

SnowDome, Tamworth, until Tues 31 December

Promising to take visitors on 'an epic adventure to faraway lands', the all-new Santa Show follows Holly Berry and the Christmas Fairy as they try to unravel the mystery of the missing presents. Suitable for all age groups, The Winter Wonderland Show is just part of the festive fun on offer at Tamworth's snowy indoor attraction. A safe environment ensures visitors are able to play and slide in real snow as they explore Santa's Christmas snow trail, take a walk through the enchanted forest, enjoy a game of snowballs and hitch a ride on a sledge. The less adventurous, meanwhile, can observe the snow action as they amble along the promenade walkway. There's even an animal village, where you can meet Santa's reindeer and discover some of his furry friends.

the chance to shop for late-night bargains but also houses Santa's Grotto (in aid of the Hope House Charity). A massive fireworks display at Cae Glas Park brings this year's event to a close.



Christmas At Sandwell Park

Sandwell Park Farm, Sat 14 - Sun 15 December

The big-bearded gent with the massive sack of presents and eight flying reindeer is just one of the attractions families can enjoy at Sandwell Park Farm this Christmas. St Nick is in residence throughout the month, but is particularly keen for visitors to join him on the 14th and 16th for a special Christmas Fayre, complete with carol singers, brass and jazz bands, and a choir. Free children's activities also feature, while a craft fair provides a perfect opportunity to purchase presents aplenty for family and friends. Festive food, including a hog roast, ensures a rumbling stomach won't distract from the feast of entertainment on offer.



Santa Safari

Hawkstone Park, Weston-under-Redcastle, Shropshire, Sun 1 Dec; Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec; Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Tues 17 - Mon 23 Dec

The North Pole's most famous resident comes to North Shropshire this month, with Hawkstone Park Follies once again transformed into a Santa Safari experience. A trip through the site's 'mystical woodland' leads the way to a hillside grotto, where a Wishing Arch marks the entrance to a network of fairy-lit caverns and tunnels. It's here that Santa, his elves and reindeer will reside in the run-up to Christmas. For visitors wishing to make more of their day at Hawkstone Park, refreshments, mince pies and a full festive menu are on offer at the on-site hotel.



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Events LISTINGS

For full listing information on Events, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

from
SUN 1 DEC

BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW

The list of celebrity chefs participating in this prestigious event seems to get longer with every passing show, and this 2013 winter version is no exception, until Sun 1 Dec, NEC, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL Festive fun with glass making demonstrations, open studios, puzzles, trails and craft activities for children, until Sun 1 Dec, Broadfield House Glass Museum & Red House Cone, Stourbridge

SANTA HUNTS Join in a fun-filled search for Santa with costumed guides and magical Christmas clues pointing the way to Santa's workshop. This is a pre-book event, until Sun 1 Dec, Black Country Living Museum

THE FLYING SHOW A show for recreational flying enthusiasts featuring light aircraft, microlights, gyrocopters, gliders, models and more, until Sun 1 Dec, NEC, Birmingham

THE 2013 BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL TATTOO Bringing together bands from across the world for a weekend promising 'spectacular pageantry' and 'thrilling displays', until Sun 1 Dec, National Indoor Arena, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS CRAFT MARKET Featuring exhibitors selling a wide variety of Christmas crafts, Sun 1 Dec, Red House Glass Cone, Stourbridge

THE SHUGBOROUGH CHRISTMAS FAIR until Sun 1 Dec, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Staffordshire

WINTER CRAFT FAIR Featuring a huge array of works from local designer makers, until Sun 1 Dec, mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

BIRTHPLACE 3D LIGHTSHOW until Thurs 19 Dec, Shakespeare's Birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon

FRANKFURT MARKET Popular annual event which sees Birmingham's Victoria Square, Chamberlain Square and New Street filled with stalls selling a variety of German delights, until Sun 22

Dec, Birmingham

CENTREPIECE selling exhibition featuring a beautiful array of pieces from some of the region's finest jewellers, until Mon 23 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE SANTA EXPERIENCE until Tues 24 Dec, Park Hall Farm, Oswestry, North Shropshire

WINTER SKATE The perfect opportunity for wannabe Torvill and Deans to try out their skating skills on an Olympic-sized outdoor ice rink, until Sun 5 Jan, Centenary Square, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW until Sun 5 Jan, Shire Hall Gallery, Stafford

DRAYTON'S MAGICAL CHRISTMAS See Thomas Land transformed for Christmas with decorations, festive music and a 3D screening of Polar Express, until Sun 5 Jan, Drayton Manor Theme Park, Tamworth

MEET MISS BYRNE Meet and talk with Factory Inspector Miss Caroline Byrne while on this day in 1910 she visits to inspect Gladstone Pottery, Sun 1 Dec, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

DECK THE HALL & STIR UP SUNDAY Help make swags to decorate the house & have-a-go at stirring the Christmas pudding. Children's crafts also available, Sun 1 Dec, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton

CHRISTMAS FAYRE Featuring children's entertainment, stalls, fair organ music & a visit from Santa, Sun 1 Dec, Northcote Farm, Wolverhampton

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS FAIR Featuring crafts, workshops, food & entertainment, Sun 1 Dec, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

CHRISTMAS FUN DAY Visit the museum for festive fun including free children's entertainment, facepainting and balloon modelling, Sun 1 Dec, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

SANTA STEAM SPECIAL Festive favourite with visitors travelling from the station in Kidderminster to visit Father Christmas in his grotto in Arley. Presents for all fare-paying children, Sun 1 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster

WINTER TRAIL Simple,

fun search around the museum, Mon 2 - Sat 4 Jan, Dudley Museum & Art Gallery

LUNCHTIME TALK: THE REAL DEATH ON THE NILE A talk by Stuart Williams on travels in Egypt in the 1920s and 1930s, Tues 3 Dec, Bantock House Museum, Wolverhampton

SALLY MORGAN: PSYCHIC SALLY ON THE ROAD Wed 4 Dec Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

WINTER GUIDED TOURS Wed 4 Dec, Aston Hall, Birmingham

BANTOCK BEARS Traditional jointed teddy bear making workshop, Wed 4 Dec, Bantock House, Wolverhampton

STAFFORDSHIRE HOARD TOUR & VISIT TO CONSERVATION STUDIO Go behind the scenes & meet the experts. Pre-booking essential! Wed 4 Dec, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING Featuring entertainment from City organist, Steve Tovey, Wed 4 Dec, Mayoral Suite, Wolverhampton

WHAT IS IT? Expert advice on the identification and care of ceramics, art and local and natural history, Wed 4 Dec, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

MOSELEY BY CANDLE-LIGHT Seasonal three-course meal followed by a candlelit tour of the hall, Thurs 5 Dec, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton

CIVIC CAROL SERVICE Traditional service featuring choirs from across the city, Thurs 5 Dec, Darlington Street Methodist Church, Wolverhampton

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING Led by an expert, learn about the different techniques used to make your wreath and get creative with the opportunity to make something special to take home with you, Fri 6 Dec, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire

CHRISTMAS LUNCH WITH 1940S ENTERTAINMENT Festive afternoon with entertainment from Lola Lamour, Fri 6 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP Join professional photographer Peter Rally as he shares tips about the art of creating the perfect picture, Fri 6 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

FAMILY GREEN WREATH WORKSHOP Fri 6 Dec, Weoley Castle, Birmingham

GLADSTONE ROCKS Chance to watch local bands perform while

drinking local beer at the museum, Fri 6 Dec, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING Led by an expert, learn about the different techniques used to make your wreath and get creative with the opportunity to make something special to take home with you, Fri 6 Dec, Witley Court, Worcestershire

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS Festive entertainment, including carols, tombola, period crafts, demonstrations, punch & mince pies, Fri 6 Dec, Bantock House & Museum, Wolverhampton

ELIZABETHAN EVENING Three-course dinner with entertainment, Fri 6 Dec, Harvington Hall, Worcester

WINTER GUIDED TOUR Learn about the mill's history & see how the milling machinery works, Fri 6 Dec, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS AT HOME WITH THE EDWARDS Evening of traditional Christmas activities and entertainment, Fri 6 - Sat 7 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

CHRISTMAS WREATH WORKSHOP Have a go creating a traditional wreath using material from Sunnycroft's gardens, Fri 6 - Sat 7 Dec, Sunnycroft, Shropshire

FAWLT TOWERS - THE DINNER SHOW Join grumpy Basil, long suffering Sybil and terminally inept waiter Manuel, for a riotous evening of entertainment. A cast of professional actors will bring the much-loved sitcom to life around you as you enjoy your meal, Fri 6 - Sat 7 Dec, Crewe Lyceum

ARTY PARTY Fortnightly art club for eight to fourteen year olds, Sat 7 Dec, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

BATTLE FOR THE HOARD Watch a Dark Age wargame tournament and have a go at commanding your own warriors in a strategy battle game at this free event, Sat 7 Dec, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

MYTHS AND LEGENDS Discover fascinating tales from the past as this guided tour examines objects within the site's collections which span the centuries, Sat 7 Dec, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

YULETIDE IN ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND Discover how the Anglo-Saxons celebrated the midwinter festival of Yule, what we

now call Christmas, with music and tales by the fire, Sat 7 Dec, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

A PERIOD CHRISTMAS Meet costumed characters & learn about Christmas in the Tudor, Stuart, Georgian & Victorian periods, Sat 7 Dec, Ancient High House, Stafford

HANSEL AND GRETEL COSTUME WORKSHOP Opportunity for children to make and wear their own costume, reflecting the themes found in each performance, Sat 7 Dec, mac - Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

STUDIO 54 CHRISTMAS VINTAGE FAIR Including over sixty stalls selling everything from clothes to jewellery, furniture and crafts. Live music from Ryan from The Clocktower and Laura Jane, a pop-up vintage salon and a range of culinary delights to enjoy too, Sat 7 Dec, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

SCALLYWAGS CRAFT DAY Chance to get the kids creative at Christmas, Sat 7 Dec, The Fort Shopping Park, Birmingham

GALLERY TOUR Sat 7 Dec, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

FROST FAIR Sat 7 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP Chance to make your own Christmas wreath using natural materials, Sat 7 Dec, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton

CALLIGRAPHY IN MOTION A performance & participatory event led by internationally acclaimed Kathak artist Sonia Sabri, Sat 7 Dec, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA Festive beer festival featuring a visit from Santa, Sat 7 Dec, Marston's Visitor Centre, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs

A NIGHT OF 60'S MUSIC & LAUGHTER Featuring Doug Parker, Nipper Thomas, Chris Knott and The Crockers, Sat 7 Dec, Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Dudley

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT CROOME Featuring the Malvern Hills Singers, Sat 7 Dec, Croome Park, Worc

CHRISTMAS WREATHS

CHILDREN'S DROP-IN Sat 7 Dec, Walsall Museum

MUCH WENLOCK CHRISTMAS FAYRE Sat 7 Dec, High Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire

MEET THE REJLANDERS! Special re-enactment event featuring a walk and talk journey through the life of the father of photography Oscar Rejlander and his wife & muse Mary Bull, Sat 7 Dec,

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS WORKSHOP Decorate your very own Christmas stocking, Sat 7 Dec, Walsall Leather Museum

TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS See the Tudor manor decorated for Christmas, sample festive refreshments and enjoy period entertainment courtesy of living history group, Gloriana, Sat 7 Dec, Selly Manor, Birmingham

ACORNS SANTA FUN RUN Sat 7 Dec, Brindleyplace, Birmingham

BLACK COUNTRY CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR Sat 7 Dec, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT CROOME Featuring the Malvern Hills Singers, Sat 7 Dec, Croome Park, Worcs

AN INTRODUCTION TO SILKSCREEN & STENCILS Sat 7 Dec, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

CHRISTMAS CAROL TRAINS Jump on board and join the New Dimensional Experience Choir for a truly festive experience, Sat 7 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster

CANDLELIT CHRISTMAS Sat 7 Dec, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

SANTA SAFARI Take a magical trip through Hawkstone's network of caves before arriving at Santa's magical grotto, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Hawkstone Park, Weston-under-Redcastle, Shropshire

LORD BERWICK'S CHRISTMAS Step back in time & enjoy festivities from the mansion's two-hundred-year history, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

SANTA HUNTS Join in a fun-filled search for Santa with costumed guides and magical Christmas clues pointing the way to Santa's workshop. This is a pre-book event, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SANTA STEAM SPECIAL Festive favourite with visitors travelling from the station in Kidderminster to visit Father Christmas in his grotto in Arley. Presents for all fare-paying children, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster

SANTA AT THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS Explore the festively decorated Victorian Servants' and meet Santa in the Butler's pantry where he'll be handing out gifts to visiting children, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

FAMILY SANTA TRAIL Visit

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CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

SAT 30 NOV & SUN 1 DEC
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Join us for Christmas themed crafts, storytelling, glass bauble making demonstrations, a Christmas trail, our Christmas gifts grotto and the chance to meet Santa and Mrs Claus



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Events LISTINGS

For full listing information on Events, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

the castle & help the servants make a Christmas pudding, decorate the castle and receive a surprise gift from Santa's grotto, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Tamworth Castle
FESTIVE WINTER WONDERLAND Seasonal activities & festive fun featuring Cadbury's very own panto, Jack And The Cocoa Bean Stalk, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Cadbury World, Birmingham
CHRISTMAS CRAFT & FOOD FAYRE Featuring over sixty indoor and outdoor stalls and plenty of festive treats for foodies, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Weston Park, Staffordshire
VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS Experience the atmosphere of a bygone age & observe as the residents of Blists Hill busy themselves with traditional festive celebrations, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire
GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS Wreath & Christmas card workshop, Sat 7 - Sun 8

Dec, Wightwick Manor & Gardens, Wolverhampton
CHRISTMAS AT THE CASTLE featuring winter wonderland grotto, carriage rides, seasonal gifts & craft stalls, children's activities & performances by local choirs & musical groups, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Worcestershire County Museum
A VERY VINTAGE CHRISTMAS A vintage, hand-made & festive fair featuring vintage tea room, retro 50s diner & bar, music, children's entertainment & an abundance of items for sale, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Dec, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Stafford
A TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS Join the Vernon family for a traditional family Christmas, Sat 7 - Mon 23 Dec, Hanbury Hall & Gardens, Droitwich, Worcestershire
THE LAUGHTER CREWE A comedy and curry night featuring comedians Wes Zaharuk, Andy Kind and Tony Vito, Sun 8 Dec, Crewe

Lyceum
STORYTIME WITH SANTA Enjoy a traditional Christmas story with Santa & Mrs Claus, Sun 8 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs
MEET SANTA'S REINDEER Donations to Birmingham Children's Hospital welcome, Sun 8 Dec, The Fort Shopping Park, Birmingham
FONTANELLA RECORDER GROUP WORKSHOP Sun 8 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
CHRISTMAS AT STAFFORD CASTLE Holly wreath making workshops for adults & snow globe workshops for children, Sun 8 Dec, Stafford Castle & Visitor Centre
CHRISTMAS MARKET Get into the festive spirit with carol singers, mulled wine & more than fifty stalls selling seasonal wares, Sun 8 Dec, Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent
SANTA'S WORKSHOP Christmas craft workshop where visitors can help Santa's elves make a variety of festive goodies, Sun 8 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs
DAVEEES ANTIQUE & COLLECTORS FAIR Sun 8 Dec, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

CHRISTMAS LIGHT BUS TOUR Sparkly open-top bus tour taking visitors from Victoria Square to the glittering Jewellery Quarter, with festive stories from around the city along the way, Sun 8 Dec, Birmingham City Centre

Week Commencing
MON 9 DEC

STORYTIME WITH SANTA Enjoy a traditional Christmas story with Santa & Mrs Claus, Mon 9 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs
FILM & TV QUIZ Mon 9 Dec, Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton
CHRISTMAS CAROLS In the Great Parlour. Mince pies & mulled wine also available, Mon 9 - Tues 10 Dec, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton
CHRISTMAS TOURS Ticket includes a warming mug of hot berry punch & a mince pie, Mon 9 - Fri 13 Dec, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham
KNIT-NIGHT AT LOCKWORKS Evening of knitting, crochet & chat, Tue 10 Dec, Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton

CHRISTMAS MARKET & RACE DAY Tues 10 Dec, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Stafford
QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL CAROL CONCERT Tue 10 Dec, Birmingham Cathedral
CHRISTMAS STORIES Tues 10 Dec, Warstones Library, Wolverhampton
WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP Chance to make your own Christmas wreath using natural materials, Wed 11 Dec, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton
GOLD CLUB Featuring a range of art activities, Wed 11 Dec, Wolverhampton Art Gallery
WINTER GUIDED TOUR Wed 11 Dec, Aston Hall, Birmingham
BRINDLEYPLACE CHRISTMAS CRACKER PULL Attempting to beat the Guinness Book of World Records current record which stands at 603 people. For further information, visit, alisa.raine@brindleyplace.com, Wed 11 Dec, Oozells Square, Birmingham
GALLERIES NIGHT Enjoy the collections of five of Birmingham's galleries - Eastside Projects, Ikon, The Barber, RB&A & mac. A free Art Bus will shuttle visitors between each of the

venues, Wed 11 Dec, Birmingham
CHRISTMAS WITH BUBBLE Enjoy a festive three course set-meal whilst listening to Michael Buble tribute, Mikey Powell, Thurs 12 Dec, Crewe Lyceum
A CRAFTPLAY CHRISTMAS Fri 13 Dec, Bantock House, Wolverhampton
BEAUTIFUL BAUBLES WORKSHOP Ticketed event, Fri 13 Dec, Weoley Castle, Birmingham
BOWMAN ANTIQUE FAIR Featuring up to four-hundred stands selling antiques, curios, vintage, retro & collectables, Fri 13 - Sun 15 Dec, Stafford Bingley Hall
CHRISTMAS MAGIC Drop in and be entertained by magician Ron Popple and take home a balloon sculpture. Shows will be at regular intervals throughout the day, Sat 14 Dec, Dudley Museum & Art Gallery
BAYARD'S COLTS OPEN DAY - COLTS AT CHRISTMAS Special opportunity to view the museum's historic Bayard's Colts, with Christmas activities also available for children to enjoy, Sat 14 Dec, Walsall Museum
TEA WITH SANTA Join Santa & his elves for a

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Sunday 8th December THE NEC, BIRMINGHAM

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Events LISTINGS

For full listing information on Events, including times and dates, visit www.whatsonlive.co.uk

Christmas tea party, Sat 14 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs
PRINTMAKING WORKSHOP: SCREEN PRINT FROM PAPER CUT Designs Free workshop which forms part of the city's printmaking celebrations, Sat 14 Dec, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

CHRISTMAS MAGIC Drop in and be entertained by magician Ron Popple, Sat 14 Dec, Dudley Museum & Art Gallery

CAROLS IN THE COURTYARD Sung by a local choir against a backdrop of the candlelit courtyard. Mulled wine & mince pies also available, Sat 14 Dec, Back to Backs, Birmingham
CHRISTMAS CRAFTS Children's event, Sat 14 Dec, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury

CHRISTMAS CAROL TRAINS Jump on board and join the New Dimensional Experience Choir for a truly festive experience, Sat 14 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster

BAMMA 14 The UK's ultimate mixed martial arts promotion is back with the return of Paul Daley! Sat 14 Dec, LG Arena, Birmingham

SANTA HUNTS Join in a fun-filled search for Santa with costumed guides and magical Christmas clues pointing the way to Santa's workshop. This is a pre-book event, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SANTA STEAM SPECIAL Festive favourite with visitors travelling from the station in Kidderminster to visit Father Christmas in his grotto in Arley. Presents for all fare-paying children, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster
CHRISTMAS GROTTO Get along & visit santa in his grotto & receive a gift from his workshop, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING Design & make your very own Christmas wreath to take home, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Northcote Farm, Wolverhampton
SANTA SAFARI Take a magical trip through Hawkstone's network of caves before arriving at Santa's magical grotto, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec,

Hawkstone Park, Weston-under-Redcastle, Shropshire
SEARCH FOR SANTA Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

CHRISTMAS AT THE CASTLE featuring winter wonderland grotto, carriage rides, seasonal gifts & craft stalls, children's activities & performances by local choirs & musical groups, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Worcestershire County Museum

FESTIVE WINTER WONDERLAND Seasonal activities & festive fun featuring Cadbury's very own panto, Jack And The Cocoa Bean Stalk, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Cadbury World, Birmingham

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS Meet Father Christmas' Reindeer and enjoy Mr. Morton's Christmas party with festive songs, cooking demonstrations and much more... Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

SANTA AT THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS Explore the festively decorated Victorian Servants' and meet Santa in the Butler's pantry where he'll be handing out gifts to visiting children, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

TILE DECORATING WORKSHOPS Use the tube lining technique to produce a 6x6inch tile featuring your own design and choice of colours. Fired tiles can later be sent home for a small extra charge to cover postage and packing, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Jackfield Tile Museum, Ironbridge, Shropshire

FAMILY SANTA TRAIL Visit the castle & help the servants make a Christmas pudding, decorate the castle and receive a surprise gift from Santa's grotto, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Tamworth Castle

17TH CENTURY CHRISTMAS Savour traditional festive recipes, toast bread over an open fire & join in some traditional 17th century games, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton

VINTAGE & HAND-MADE FAIR Sat 14 - Sun 15 Dec, Broadgate, City Centre, Coventry
EDWARDIAN CHRISTMAS Listen to local carol singers in the Billiard room & experience the sights & smells of a tra-

ditional Christmas, Sat 14 - Sun 22 Dec, Sunnycroft, Wellington, Shropshire

LORD BERWICK'S CHRISTMAS Step back in time & enjoy festivities from the mansion's two-hundred-year history, Sat 14 - Sun 23 Dec, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

WINTER WILDLIFE WALK Sun 15 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs
SANTA'S WORKSHOP Christmas craft workshop where visitors can help Santa's elves make a variety of festive goodies, Sun 15 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

STORYTIME WITH SANTA Enjoy a traditional Christmas story with Santa & Mrs Claus, Sun 15 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

MISTLETOE & MULLED WINE Traditional festive group singing in the Victorian courtyard, Sun 15 Dec, Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton

Week Commencing MON 16 DEC

WINTER WILDLIFE WALK Mon 16 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs
CHRISTMAS CAROLS In the Great Parlour. Mince pies & mulled wine also available, Mon 16 - Tues 17 Dec, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton

HERBERT ILLUMINATIONS: FASHION IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR Tue 17 Dec, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry
SANTA SAFARI Take a magical trip through Hawkstone's network of caves before arriving at Santa's magical grotto, Tues 17 - Mon 23 Dec, Hawkstone Park, Weston-under-Redcastle, Shropshire

CAROLS IN THE SQUARE Wed 18 Dec, The Square, Shrewsbury
WINTER GUIDED TOURS Wed 18 Dec, Aston Hall, Birmingham

THE MOSCOW STATE CIRCUS Wed 18 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Star City, Birmingham
WESTON BY CANDLELIGHT See the house transformed with festive decorations & roaring fires while dining on a seasonal menu prepared by Head Chef Guy Day, Thurs 19 Dec, Weston Park, Staffordshire

A TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS Thurs 19 Dec, Stoke City Centre
CAROL CONCERTS Soak up the festive atmosphere & enjoy a glass of mulled wine & mince pie, Thurs 19 - Sat 21



Dec, Hanbury Hall, Droitwich
VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS EVENINGS Visit the museum as it takes on a festive flavour with cottages illuminated by gas and candlelight. Entertainment is provided in the form of street performers, brass bands & carol singers, Thu 19 - Mon 23 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Coventry

EARTH TO BLACK SABBATH CONVENTION An event whereby hardcore Black Sabbath fans can enjoy an afternoon of music from authentic tribute band - From Sabbath to Hell - before seeing the band themselves play later that evening at the LG Arena, Fri 20 Dec, Scruffy Murphys, Birmingham

LOCAL HISTORY TALK: WOLVERHAMPTON AS A RAILWAY TOWN Talk by Ned Williams, Fri 20 Dec, Wolverhampton Art Gallery
WINTER SOLSTICE WALK Fri 20 Dec, Smestow Valley, Wolverhampton

NATURAL CRAFTS - WREATH MAKING Demonstration & workshops of traditional wreath making using natural materials, Fri 20 Dec, Smestow Valley, Wolverhampton

HOPE HOUSE FESTIVE CONCERT Fri 20 Dec, Ingenuity, Ironbridge, Shropshire
WINTER WILDLIFE WALK Sat 21 Dec, National Memorial Arboretum, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

CHRISTMAS CAROL TRAINS Jump on board and join the New Dimensional Experience Choir for a truly festive experience, Sat 21 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster

CHRISTMAS VICTORIAN MARKETS Sat 21 Dec, Leek, Staffordshire
CHRISTMAS TRAIL Learn about the Christmas story as you weave your way around the Cathedral trail, Sat 21 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION Tudor merry-making with music, dance & 16th century Christmas customs, Sat 21 Dec, The Commandery, Worcester

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT Sat 21 Dec, Avoncroft, Bromsgrove
CHRISTMAS BOX OF DELIGHTS Workshop where visitors can make Christmas fairies, angels, snowmen, crackers & candles, Sat 21 Dec, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

SANTA AT THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS Explore the festively decorated Victorian Servants' and meet Santa in the Butler's pantry where he'll be handing out gifts to visiting children, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Dec, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

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ARTY PARTY Fortnightly art club for 8-14 year olds, Sat 21 Dec, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

SANTA STEAM SPECIAL Festive favourite with visitors travelling from the station in Kidderminster to visit Father Christmas in his grotto in Arley. Presents for all fare-paying children, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster
SEARCH FOR SANTA Follow the clues hidden around the site to find your way to Santa, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Dec, Avoncroft, Bromsgrove
FAMILY SANTA TRAIL Visit

the castle & help the servants make a Christmas pudding, decorate the castle and receive a surprise gift from Santa's grotto, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Dec, Tamworth Castle

SANTA HUNTS A fun-filled search for Santa where costumed guides and christmas clues point the way to Santa's workshop. This is a pre-book event, Sat 21 - Tue 24 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT join the friends of the museum as they bring the 1837 Darby Hand Chapel to live with a traditional festive service, Sun 22 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

COMMANDERY KITCHEN CHRISTMAS PARTY Step back in time to the Victorian era and join the servants as they embark on their own their annual Christmas party, Sun 22 Dec, The Commandery, Worcester

DR BUNHEAD'S VERY DANGEROUS CHRISTMAS SHOW Sun 22 Dec - Sun 5 Jan, Birmingham Town Hall

Week Commencing MON 23 DEC

FESTIVE SEASON SERVICE With the Christmas festivities over, why not blow the cobwebs clean away with a leisurely steam train journey along the Severn Valley, Thurs 26 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster

TOY COLLECTORS' FAIR Six hundred stalls of toys, trains and models at Britain's Biggest Toy Collectors Fair, Fri 27 Dec, NEC, Birmingham

BLONDIESTUDIO 54 NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY Including a three-course meal and DJ Peza, Tue 31 Dec, Cromwells Hotel and Wine Bar, Shrewsbury

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What Our Members are up to in December 2013

Sunday 1 December

- Brocton and the Haywoods Moderate Ramble
- Clent Easy Ramble
- Cupcake Christmas Decorating Workshop
- Derby City Walk
- Good Food Show
- Peak District Walk - Silly Dale
- Zip World - Ultimate Zipline Experience

Monday 2 December

- Badminton For Fun - Worcester
- Spice Book Club

Tuesday 3 December

- Nutcracker

Wednesday 4 December

- Badminton For Fun - Coventry
- Badminton For Fun - Wolverhampton
- Badminton at NIA
- Curry and Quiz - Solihull
- Synchronised Swimming for Beginners
- Tamworth and Lichfield Pub Night
- Tudor Christmas with Henry VIII at Tutbury Castle

Thursday 5 December

- Austrian Christmas at Franzls
- Halesowen and Quinton Pub Night

- Unihoc (Mixed Indoor Hockey)

Friday 6 December

- Center Parcs Christmas Party Weekend
- Charity Sleep Out

Saturday 7 December

- Birmingham Canals Walk
- Chocolate Experience
- Christmas Party - Hunton Park, Herts
- Eyam Leg stretcher Mountain Bike Ride
- Feel the Fear .. and do it anyway®
- Inkberrow and the Lenches Ramble
- Nottingham Christmas Market Pub Treasure Trail
- Scuba Taster Morning Experience
- Winter Wildlife Tour of Middleton Lakes

Sunday 8 December

- Attract, Create and Maintain your Perfect Relationship
- Christmas Adventure Trekking Day
- Cinema Night
- Exploring the Countryside (Outdoor Skills Day)
- Frankfurt Christmas Market Pub Treasure Trail
- Glass Art Workshop
- Learn to Drift!
- Singing for Beginners - Find your Voice!
- Spice Choir - Develop your Singing Ability

- Winter Walking/ Navigation Skills Day

Monday 9 December

- Badminton For Fun - Worcester
- Darts Night and Buffet

Tuesday 10 December

- Cheltenham Wine Tasting Evening
- Solihull Pub Night

Wednesday 11 December

- Badminton For Fun - Coventry
- Badminton For Fun - Wolverhampton
- Badminton at NIA
- Sutton Pub Night

Thursday 12 December

- BMX Taster Session

Saturday 14 December

- A Victorian Christmas
- Abseiling for the Terrified
- Christmas Dinner Dance 2013
- Christmas Dinner Dance Accommodation
- Makeover or Boudoir Photography Session
- Spice National Christmas Appeal - Kindu Trust

Sunday 15 December

- Santa Cycle and Present Drop in Sutton Park

"It's an opportunity to get to do lots of things you wouldn't otherwise do... and meet lots of people you wouldn't otherwise meet". Jamie, Spice member

HOLIDAYS

LEISURE

SOCIAL



Flying



Outdoor Pursuits



Walking



Motor Sports



Water Sports



Wild & Wacky

Monday 16 December

- American Pool Night and Buffet
- Badminton For Fun - Worcester
- Bromsgrove Pub Night

Tuesday 17 December

- A Christmas Wassail
- Kings Heath Pub Night

Wednesday 18 December

- Badminton For Fun - Coventry
- Badminton For Fun - Wolverhampton
- Badminton at NIA
- Quiz
- Sutton Park Mulled Wine/Mince Pie Ev Ramble

Thursday 19 December

- Warwick and Leamington Pub Night (NEW VENUE)

Friday 20 December

- East Midlands Christmas Dinner Dance 2013
- East Midlands Christmas Dinner Dance with Accommodation
- The Enchanted Tales

Saturday 21 December

- Christmas Carriage Ride

- Clun and The Shropshire Way Ramble

- Spice Manchester Christmas Masked Ball
- Yorkshire Christmas Party

Sunday 22 December

- Whittington + Hopwas Moderate Ramble

Monday 23 December

- Bournville on Christmas Eve
- Christmas Break: Manchester
- Festive Afternoon Tea with Carols
- Knowle Locks Xmas Eve Easy Ramble + Lunch

Wednesday 25 December

- Christmas Day Link Up 2013
- Christmas Day Lunch
- Escape Christmas with a Day on the Mountains

Friday 27 December

- Beddgelert and Snowdonia Twixmas Walking Weekend
- Borrowdale Twixmas Walking Break
- Christmas Clay Pigeon Shooting
- Cinema Night - Rubery
- Spice Hits Town at the Jam House

Sunday 29 December

- Balloon Flight
- Borrowdale New Year Walking Break
- Horsley Park - North Downs New Year Walking Break
- Made in Birmingham Walk and Afternoon Tea
- Nottinghamshire New Year Walking/Social Break
- Snowdonia New Year Walking Break

Monday 30 December

- Edinburgh's Hogmanay 2013/14
- Magical Mystery Circus Sleepover - EXTRA NIGHT
- Shatterford and Upper Arley Ramble
- Tamworth Town Walk

Tuesday 31 December

- Edinburgh's Hogmanay Champagne Dinner
- Magical Mystery Circus Sleepover Party
- New Year Break in London and Thames Cruise
- Nottingham New Year's Eve party and Accommodation
- Pantomime - Peter Pan
- Spice Yorkshire NYE Party with Accommodation

Check out our Christmas events

visit: www.spicebham.com



What will you be doing tomorrow?

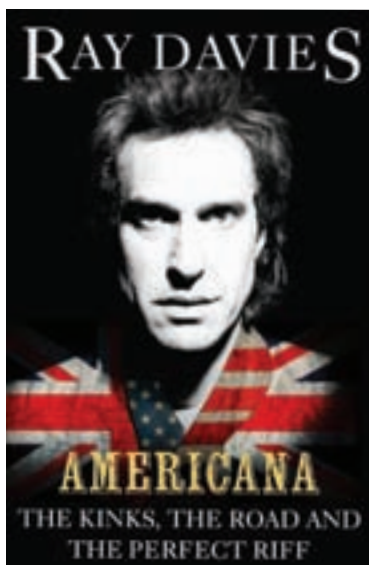
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Books

Americana: The Kinks, the road and the Perfect Riff

By Ray Davies

A fan of all things American, Ray Davies toured the States with The Kinks during one of the most tumultuous eras in American history - until, that is, the group were banned from performing there in 1965. Decades later, while living in New Orleans, he experienced a transformative event - a shooting, as a result of a botched robbery, that nearly took his life. In *Americana*, Davies tries to make sense of his longstanding love-hate relationship with the US, a relationship which has both inspired and frustrated him. From his quintessentially English perspective, he takes readers on a very personal road trip through his life and career as a rock star, in the process revealing what music, fame and America really mean to him.



Doctor Who: The Doctor - His Life And Times

By James Goss and Steve Tribe

Having touched millions of lives over the past fifty years, Gallifrey's last-surviving Time Lord remains one of British television's most popular science fiction characters. And with a new Doctor in the house this month, *The Doctor - His Life And Times* takes a look back over the past half-century, exploring the story of a two-hearted alien who stole a spaceship, travelled through time and space, and repeatedly saved the universe in the process. Told by the Doctor's friends, enemies and the man himself via journals, letters, trial records,

secret government files and tabloid journalism, this is an ideal Christmas gift for Whovians everywhere.

John Bishop: How Did This All Happen

By John Bishop

One of the nation's funniest comedians, John Bishop is also one of the wealthiest. It's well documented that comedy wasn't his first career choice, but the lad from Liverpool took a gamble which thankfully paid off (both for him and us!). In *How Did This Happen*, John looks back, in his own inimitable style, on his formative years growing up on a council estate - a time spent dreaming of ousting Kenny Dalglish from Liverpool FC's starting line-up! Marriage, kids, and travelling the globe on a shoestring are other subjects he writes about, as is the split that one night led to him standing on a stage, complaining to strangers. It was a night that changed his life forever, and started him on his journey to stardom...

TOP 5 BOOKS

- 1 **Diary Of A Wimpy Kid**
Jeff Kinney
- 2 **Alex Ferguson My Autobiography**
- 3 **Demon Dentist**
David Walliams
- 4 **David Jason: My Life**
David Jason
- 5 **A Christmas To Remember**
Katie Flynn

TV



Festive fun with David Walliams' Gangsta Granny

A TV adaptation of the David Walliams novel *Gangsta Granny* is to air on BBC One this Christmas. Julia McKenzie, Joanna Lumley, Rob Brydon and Miranda Hart will bring Walliams' highly acclaimed work to life in a brand new sixty-minute adaptation. *Gangsta Granny* tells the story of schoolboy Ben (Reece Buttery), a young lad bored beyond belief when made to stay with his grandmother (McKenzie). But when Granny lets slip she was once an international jewel thief, life becomes a bit more interesting... Not wishing to be left out, the Christmas Day offering also features an appearance by Walliams, performing alongside Miranda Hart as Ben's *Strictly Come Dancing*-obsessed parents.

West Wing actor in new BBC drama

Veteran American actor Martin Sheen, perhaps best known from the hit TV series *The West Wing* and the Francis Ford Coppola movie *Apocalypse Now*, is to star in a new drama based on the true story of *Moby Dick*. A one-off ninety-minute film, *The Whale* sees Sheen play Thomas Nickerson, an old man who tells of his life as a cabin boy on the ill-fated whaling ship *Essex*. Promising a gripping narrative, *The Whale* features 'spectacular' underwater shots which capture the boat caught in a storm. Jonas Armstrong, Adam Rayner, Paul Kaye, David Gyasi and Jolyon Coy also star. *The Whale* shows on BBC One over the Christmas period.

A return to Spain's sunny climes...

ITV's award-winning comedy *Benidorm* will return for a sixth series in the New Year. Joining the holiday-loving Garvey family at the infamous Solana Resort will be the Dykes - a brand new family of four from Watford. Fans of the series will be pleased to know that all the old favourites - Donald and Jacqueline, Joyce Temple Savage, Mateo and transsexual Les - will also be making a return. And there'll be special guest appearances to spice things up too, with Matthew Kelly, Philip Oliver, Ken Morley and Rustie Lee all heading for the Spanish coastal resort.



Eating Out

Yet another award for South Shropshire pub

One of South Shropshire's oldest public houses is celebrating after receiving the West Midlands Wedding Venue of the Year Award from Your Wedding Planner Magazine. Ludlow's Ye Olde Punch Bowl Inn was awarded the prestigious accolade for its excellent facilities and the professionalism of its staff. The venue, which prides itself on consistently delivering excellent food, was recently nominated as one of the best inns in the country by travel experts Les Routier and in the summer was voted as the region's Best Free House Pub.



Team wins Gold in the Middle East

A Shropshire chef is in jubilant mood after winning three ounces of pure gold in a major new international gastronomic contest in the Middle East. Gennaro Adaggio, Head Chef at Shrewsbury's La Dolce Vita restaurant, was the youngest member in a team of Welsh chefs who collectively came fourth in the Dubai World Hospitality Championships. The finale of the event - a presentation ceremony in the desert - saw Gennaro and each of his teammates awarded a gold cooking pot containing a pure gold medal.



Wolverhampton restaurant reopens under new management

A Wolverhampton restaurant which closed in October after twenty years of trading has reopened under new management. Business partners Nick Avdia and Paulo Eloschir have together invested £30,000 in Italian restaurant Rosso E Nero, installing a new kitchen as part of a major refurbishment. The reopened venue, renamed Amici, will specialise in both Italian and Spanish dishes, and is expected to provide nine new jobs in the near future..



Real deal in the Cellar...

REVIEW

What to do with Weston Hall? This has been a question that's puzzled the would-be restaurateurs of Stafford for years, with each new morning bringing a false dawn, and every makeover of the old building proving to be little more than an exercise in quite literally papering over the cracks. But almost exactly one year after it opened, it's starting to look as though The Cellar restaurant could be the real deal. Although not the first eatery to offer 'classic English dishes made from locally sourced produce', The Cellar's A La Carte menu certainly tantalised both my own and my wife's tastebuds when we viewed it online prior to our visit. And if you can get excited about a menu while perusing it on a computer screen in your own

living room, you're normally onto a good thing. Stafford locals will know Weston Hall well, but if you haven't seen it before, it's beautiful in a striking and imposing sort of way, the grounds impressively decorated with clever lighting. Once inside The Cellar you're struck by how modern and welcoming your surroundings are, the restaurant arranged so as to ensure its customers feel they've got plenty of space in which to dine and relax. We started with the rich chicken liver parfait offset with a sweet red onion marmalade (£5.95) and oak smoked salmon (£6.25). Both starters were shared, as were contented smiles. With temperatures plunging below freezing outside, the lamb shank (£14.25) and roast breast of duck (£14.95) proved to be ideal comfort food, with the lamb falling off the bone

and the duck cooked exactly to my wife's taste. Although full, room was somehow made for chocolate brownie (£5.50) and a decadent cheeseboard (£6.50), all washed down with a warming glass of red. For a chilly Tuesday night in Stafford, The Cellar at Weston Hall was pleasingly busy. Watching guest after guest leave with smiles and thanks, it's not hard to imagine this restaurant being a fixture in the town for a considerable time to come. *Simon Carter*

Food:
Service:
Ambience:
Overall value
OVERALL

Weston Hall,
Weston Bank,
Weston,
Stafford,
ST18 0BA
01889 271082



"Awesome experience"
"A must visit restaurant"
"Amazing" "Excellent"

Just a few of the excellent reviews on Trip Advisor last month about The Peach Tree - come and see for yourself!



**The
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Telephone: 01743 355055
www.thepeachtree.co.uk

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Restaurant REVIEWS



Shropshire restaurant offers affordable fine dining and interesting combinations

The Saracens in Hadnall has had a good reputation for a number of years, so when we heard of a new chef and a change in direction, we were curious to sample the results.

Walking into the restaurant, it still has the same warm, homely feel that I remember. We slouched on the leather sofas while waiting for our table, sipping wine and nibbling canapes (brie and salami bon-bons, no less!).

The menu at The Saracens features an excellent selection of food. I would happily have chosen ninety per cent of both the starters and mains, so thought the best thing to do was opt for the five-course taster menu.

Brace yourselves...

Home-baked bread; chicken liver and port parfait with toasted brioche, poached raisins and fresh figs; pan-fried scallops with black pudding croquette, parsnip & vanilla puree and salsa verdi; a beef tasting-plate (which included seventy-two-hour braised brisket, herb meat loaf and shredded beef shin); a pre-dessert of honey parfait with blackberry sorbet; and finally, a dark chocolate tart. All for the very reasonable price of £35 per head.

The taster menu got off to an excellent start for us - and not knowing what you're having does, of course, add to the novelty. The parfait turned what's normally a standard pub-grub starter into a really interesting combination of flavours. Absolutely delicious, it was followed by a classic combination - black pudding and scallops, with croquette's seemingly being a Shropshire food trend at the moment. I could have eaten a plateful of both. The beef was a slow-cooked meat-lover's heaven, and though the richness of all three meats wouldn't be to every-

one's taste, they were beautifully cooked with a lovely accompaniment of smoked cheddar mashed potato and jus. The pre-dessert was possibly one of the most delicious desserts I've eaten in Shropshire - the blackberry flavour cut through the sweetness of the honey and white chocolate beautifully, and I was once again wishing there was a little more in the glass! The dark chocolate tart was very rich after a large meal, which, again, isn't to everyone's taste, but it was certainly the mother of all chocolate tarts! Some of the desserts on the a la carte menu sounded incredible, like the white chocolate & passion fruit crème brûlée with sweet chilli shortbread and pineapple sorbet.

Overall, I really like the direction that The Saracens is going; creating interesting combinations of flavours and ingredients without being pretentious - fine dining that's both accessible and affordable. On top of that, the service was delightful, with professional, informative staff adding to the experience. The only thing that hasn't progressed alongside the kitchen is the decor in the dining area, which is rather dated - a small price to pay, though, for an excellent meal that I'll be recommending to everyone.

Jessica Aston

Food:	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Service:	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Ambience:	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Overall value:	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
OVERALL	■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Saracens At Hadnall
Shrewsbury Rd
Hadnall
Shropshire
SY4 4AG
Tel: 01939 210877

Restaurant LISTINGS

For full listing information on restaurants, including opening times and type of cuisine, visit: www.whatsonlive.co.uk

Birmingham

AIR RESTAURANT LG
Arena, Bickenhill Rd,
0844 338 0333

BANK 4 Brindleyplace,
B1 2JB 0121 633 4466

BAR ESTILO 10-114
Wharfside St, The
Mailbox, B1 1RF 0121
643 3443

BERLIOZ Burlington
Arcade, New St, B2
4JQ
0121 633 1737

**BLUE PIANO RESTAURANT
AND BAR** 24-26
Harborne Rd, B15 3AA
0121 454 6877

BUONISSIMO 1 Albany
Rd, Harborne, B17 9JX
0121 426 2444

CAFE OPUS 1 Oozells
Square, Brindleyplace,
B1 2HS 0121 248
3226

CARLUCCIO'S The
Water's Edge,
Brindleyplace
B1 2HP 0121 633
9262

**CENTENARY BAR &
BRASSERIE** Broad
Street, B1 2EP 0121
245 2080

CHUNG YING GARDEN 17
Thorpe St, B5 4AT
0121 666 6622

CIELO 6 Oozells Square,
Brindleyplace, B1 2JB
0121 632 6882

COTE The Mailbox,
B1 1RX 0121 631 1587

DEL VILLAGGIO
Unit 528, Middle Mall,
The Bullring, B5 4BE
0121 643 1400

EDMUNDS 6 Brindley
place, B1 2JB 0121
633 4944

ITIHAAS 18 Fleet St, B3
1JL 0121 212 3383

JAMIE'S ITALIAN Middle
Mall, Bullring Shopping
Centre, B5 4BE
0121 270 3610

JIMMY SPICES Regency
Wharf, Broad St, B1
2DS 0121 643 2111

LAS IGUANAS Arcadian
Centre, Hurst St, B5
4TD 0121 622 4466

THE LOFT LOUNGE
143 Bromsgrove St,
B5 6RG 0121 622
2444

THE LOST & FOUND

8 Bennetts Hill, B2 5RS
0121 643 9293

LOVES The Glasshouse,
Browning St, B16 8FL
0121 454 5151

MECHU 47 - 59 Summer
Row, B3 1JJ 0121 212
1661

METRO BAR & GRILL 73
Cornwall St B3 2DF
0121 200 1911

MOUNT FUJI The
Bullring, B5 4BH 0121
633 9853

OPUS 54 Cornwall St,
B3 2DE 0121 200
2323

THE ORIENTAL The
Mailbox, 128-130
Wharfside St, B1 1RQ
0121 633 9988

PENNY BLACKS
The Mailbox, 132-134
Wharfside St, B1 1XL
0121 632 1460

PICCOLINO
9 Brindleyplace B1
2HS 0121 634 3055

PITCHER & PIANO
Brindleyplace, B1 2HP
0121 643 0214

POPPY RED Arcadian
Centre, Birmingham B5
4TD 0121 687 1200

PURNELL'S 55 Cornwall
St, B3 2DH 0121 212
9799

THE RECTORY 50-54 St
Paul's Sq, B3 1QS
0121 605 1001

RED PEPPERS 117
Wharfside St, B1 1RF
0121 643 4202

SAN CARLO 4 Temple St,
B2 5BN 0121 633
0251

SHIMLA PINKS 215
Broad St, B15 1AY
0121 633 0366

SIMPSONS, 20 Highfield
Rd, Edgbaston B13
3DU 0121 454 3434

THE SLUG AND LETTUCE,
Brindley Place,
Birmingham B1 2HL
0121 633 3049

STRADA 109-111
Wharfside St, The
Mailbox B1 1XL
0121 643 7279

THAI EDGE 7 Oozells Sq,
B1 2HL 0121 643 3993

THE VAULTS Newhall
Place, Newhall Hill,
B1 3JH 0121 212 9837

WAGAMAMA Brindley
Place, Birmingham B1
2HL 0121 643

Black Country

ARBOUR LIGHTS 127-128
Lichfield Street, Walsall
WS1 1SY 01922
613361

BANKS BISTRO Chapel
Ash, Wolverhampton
WV1 4EP 01902
238433

BELLA 82 Chapel Ash,
Wolverhampton. 01902
427555

BENGAL FUSION 174
High St, Lye,
Stourbridge DY9 8LN.
01384 891111

BILASH 2 Cheapside,
Wolverhampton, WV1
1TU 01902 427762

THE BLUE BRICK
Broad Gauge Way,
Wolverhampton WV1
1AA 01902 875301

BRAVACCIOUS 4 Upper
Green, Wolverhampton
WV6 8QQ 01902
756052

CAFE CHAMPAGNE 253-
255 Bilston Road,
Wolverhampton WV2
2JN 01902 458024

CASA CASITA Upper
Gornal, Dudley, DY3
1UP 01902 676754

CATELLANI'S 6 School
St, Wolverhampton,
WV1 4LR 01902
428928

CINNAMON COURT
Bentley Mill Way,
Walsall WS2 0BP 0121
568 6664

THE COWSHED Clive
Farm Clive Rd,
Patttingham, WV6 7EN
01902 701888

THE CROOKED HOUSE
Coppice Hill, Himley
DY3 4DA 01384
238583

THE DITCH 1 Town Hill,
Walsall, WS1 2EU
01922 643215

DON SALVO 25
Darlington Street,
Wolverhampton WV1
4HW 01902 712819

DUNSLEY HALL Dunsley
Rd, Kinver, DY7 6LU
01384 877077

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Aston Road, Aldridge,
Walsall WS9 0NU 01922
455122

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Dudley, DY5 1UR
01384 482 882

FIVE RIVERS Vicarage
Place, Walsall WS1 3NA
01922 646164

FOUR STONES Adam's
Hill, Clint, Stourbridge,
DY9 9PS 01562 883260

FRANZLS 151 Milcote Rd,
Smethwick, B67 5BN
0121 429 7920

FRENCH CONNECTION
3 Coventry St,
Stourbridge DY8 1EP
01384 390940

FRENCH HEN Bromsgrove
Rd, Clent, Stourbridge
DY9 9PY 01562 883040

GOLDEN MOMENTS 2-3
Ablewell St, Walsall WS1
2EQ 01922 640363

LE BRASSERIE 5 Lower
Mill Street,
Kidderminster. DY11
6UU 01562 744976

MADE IN THAI Darlington
St, Wolverhampton WV1
4HW 01902 312512

PARADISE BALTI 7 Lower
Mill Street, Kidderminster
DY11 6UU 01562 60479

THE PIE FACTORY 50 Hurst
Lane, Tipton DY4 9AB
0121 557 1402

RED FORT Fold St,
Wolverhampton, WV1
4LP 01902 424440

RISTORANTE ROMAGNA 4
Upper Green, Tettenhall,
Wolverhampton WV6
8QQ 01902 756052

SAFFRON Wolverhampton
Road, Oldbury B69 4RR
0121 552 1752

SIMON'S 520 Chester Rd,
Aldridge, Walsall, WS9
0PU 0121 580 9293

SPICES Hollywell Rd,
Wednesbury. WS10 7PA
0121 502 0720

THE SPRINGHILL
Warstones Rd, Penn,
Wolverhampton WV4
4LB 01902 342530

THE SUMMERHOUSE 92
Gospel End Rd, Dudley
DY3 4AN 01902 676
102

THORNECROFT
Bridgnorth Rd,
Wolverhampton, WV6
7EQ 01902 700 253

THE WOODMAN Claverley,
Wolverhampton WV5
7DG 01746 710 553

Shropshire

AFTAB 25 High St,

Ironbridge TF8 7AD
01952 432055

ALBRIGHT HUSSEY
Ellesmere Rd,
Shrewsbury, SY4 3AF
01939 290 523

BISTRO JACQUES 77/77a
Mardol, Shrewsbury SY1
1PZ 01743 272586

BUFFALO STEAK HOUSE
125 Frankwell,
Shrewsbury SY3 8JX
01743 537523

BUTLERS Park St, Shifnal,
TF11 9BA 01952
460662

CASA NARANJO Barracks
Passage, Wyle Cop,
Shrewsbury SY1 01743
588165

CASA RUIZ 45 High
Street, Bridgnorth, WV16
4DX 01746 218 084

CHEZ MAW Best Western
Valley Hotel, Buildwas
Rd, Ironbridge, TF8 7DW
01952 432247

THE COTTAGE Tern Hill,
Market Drayton TF9 3PX
01630 638984

CROMWELLS 11 Dogpole,
Shrewsbury SY1 1EN
01743 361440

DA VINCI'S 26 High St,
Ironbridge, TF8 7AD
01952 432250

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Road, Dorrington,
Shropshire SY5 7JD
01743 719100

DRAPERS 10 St Mary's St
Shrewsbury, SY1 1DZ
01743 344679

THE FEATHERS Brockton,
Much Wenlock TF13
6JR 01746 785202

FENNELS 8 Market Place,
Shifnal TF11 9AZ
01952 463020

THE FOX INN 46 High St,
Much Wenlock TF13
6AD 01952 727292

FRANK CAFE BAR 129
Frankwell, Shrewsbury
SY3 8JX 01743 354422

THE GOLDEN CROSS 14
Princess St, Shrewsbury,
SY1 1LP 01743 362507

GRANARY BAR & GRILL
Weston Park, Weston-
under-Lizard, Nr Shifnal,
TF11 8LE 01952
852107

THE GLUTTON CLUB 165-
167 Frankwell,
Shrewsbury SY3 8LG
01743 361672

HADLEY PARK HOUSE
Hadley Park, Telford TF1
6QJ 01952 677269

THE HAYWARDS At The



The Boathouse, Shrewsbury

Lion Hotel, Wyle Cop,
Shrewsbury SY1 1UY
01743 353107

HENRY TUDOR HOUSE
Barracks Passage
Shrewsbury SY1 1XA
01743 361666

HILL VALLEY HOTEL
Tarporey Road,
Whitchurch SY13 4HA
0844 879 9049

THE INN AT GRINSHILL
The High Street,
Grinshill, Shrewsbury,
SY4 3BL 01939 220410

KING & THAI Avenue Rd,
Broseley, Telford TF12
5DL 01952 882004

THE KNIGHTON HOTEL
Broad Street, Knighton,
Powys LD7 1BL 01547
520530

LA BÉCASSE 17 Corve St,
Ludlow, SY8 1DA 01584
872 325

LA DOLCE VITA 35 Hills
Lane, Shrewsbury SY1
1QU 01743 249126

LA LANTERNA The Old
Vestry, St Julian's
Church, Shrewsbury
SY1 1UH 01743 233552

LION & PHEASANT 50
Wyle Cop, Shrewsbury
SY1 1XJ 01743 770345

THE LION QUAYS Moreton,
Oswestry SY11 3EN
01691 684300

LOCH FYNÉ Talbot House,

Market Street,
Shrewsbury SY1 1LG
01743 277140

LUDLOW KITCHEN
Bromfield, Ludlow, SY2
2JR 01584 856020

THE MALTHOUSE The
Wharfage, Ironbridge
TF8 7NH 01902 433712

MORGANS 1 Bellstone,
Shrewsbury SY1 1HU
01743 239114

MR UNDERHILLS Dinham
Weir, Ludlow Shropshire
SY8 1EH 01584 874431

THE MYTTON & MERMAID
Atcham, Shrewsbury,
SY5 6QG 01743 761220

THE OLD ORLETON INN
Holyhead Rd,
Wellington, TF1 2HA
01952 255011

THE OLD RECTORY HOTEL
& RESTAURANT Lowe Hill
Road, Wern, Shropshire
SY4 5UA 01939 233233

THE PEACH TREE 21
Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury, SY2 6AE
01743 355055

THE PLUME OF FEATHERS
Harley, Shrewsbury SY5
6LP 01743 727360

PORTER HOUSE 15 St
Mary's St, Shrewsbury,
SY1 1EQ 01743 358870

**THE POUND AT LEEBOT-
WOOD** Leebotwood, Nr
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6ND 01694 751477

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Shenstone. WS14 0LQ
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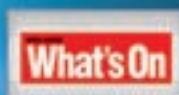
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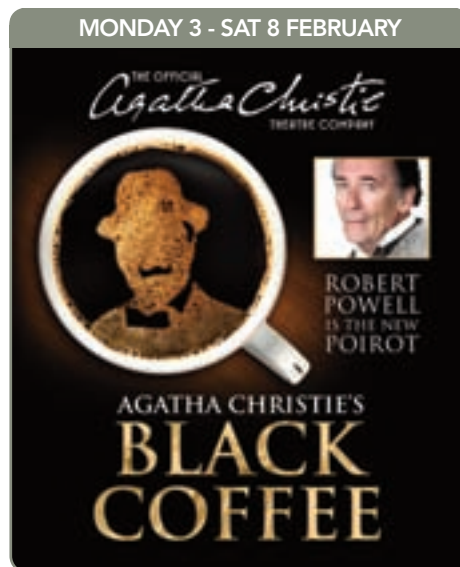
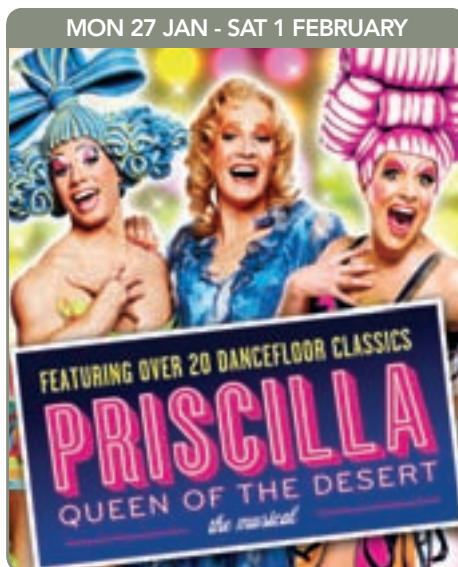
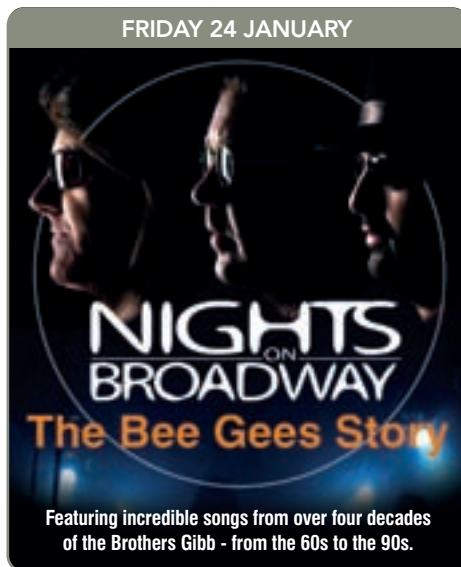


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