Your FREE essential entertainment guide for the Midlands

LAURA MVULA - INTERVIEW INSIDE

Wolverhampton & Black Country

ISSUE 376 APRIL 2017

What's On

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presents two classic works in Wolverhampton

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DISNEY ON ICE
celebrating 100 years of magic at the Genting Arena

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CHRIS WOOD

THE AWARD WINNING
MUSIC & COMEDY
VENUE
IN SHROPSHIRE

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Shrewsbury theatre to stage first in-house show

Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn is this month presenting its first ever in-house production, with former Casualty and Strictly Come Dancing favourite Patrick Robinson taking the lead role.

Patrick will star as Macbeth in a brand new version of the Shakespeare tragedy.

The show will be directed by Loveday Ingram, a recent collaborator with the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Commenting on his involvement, Patrick said: "Playing the title role in Theatre Severn's first in-house production means that we're part of making history, and that's very exciting!'"

Macbeth shows in Theatre Severn's Walker Theatre from Tuesday 25 to Saturday 29 April. For ticket enquiries, phone 01743 281281 or visit theatresevern.co.uk.

Route confirmed for new Vélo Birmingham bike ride

Full details of the Vélo Birmingham 100-mile fully closed cycling road route have been announced.

The autumn event, taking place on Sunday 24 September and starting on the city's Broad Street, will take 15,000 cyclists on a 'breath-taking journey' from city to country, passing through Dudley, Herefordshire, Sandwell, Staffordshire and Worcestershire.

To find out more, visit vélobirmingham.com

Casting announced for Jack And The Beanstalk

One-time Pop Idol star Gareth Gates is taking the lead role in Wolverhampton Grand Theatre's 2017 pantomime production of Jack And The Beanstalk.

Gareth will be joined by Lisa Riley, Ian Adams, Adam C Booth and Black Country favourite Doreen Tipton, all of whom will be making a welcome return to the venue after starring in last year's panto production of Aladdin.

Jack And The Beanstalk shows at the Grand from Saturday 9 December to Sunday 14 January. Tickets are already on sale and can be booked in person, by phone on 01902 429212 or online at grandtheatre.co.uk.

Clare Balding to kickstart Shrewsbury Bookfest

Award-winning broadcaster, journalist and author Clare Balding kickstarts this month's Shrewsbury Bookfest.

Clare appears at the town's Prestfelde School on Friday 28 April to talk about her children's book, The Racehorse Who Wouldn't Gallop.

Other festival highlights include an interactive celebration of Harry Potter, a live drawing session with Horrible Histories illustrator Martin Brown and the chance to make your own Gromit model, courtesy of workshops run by Wallace & Gromit creators Aardman Animations.

The Shrewsbury Bookfest takes place at various venues around the town from Friday 28 to Sunday 30 April. A final event, CBeebies' Ben Faulks' Watch Out For Muddy Puddles, has been rescheduled to Sunday 7 May. Tickets for all events are available via shrewsburybookfest.co.uk or by phoning 0333 666 3366.

Wolves council releases artist's impression of new £55million development

An artist's impression of Wolverhampton's soon-to-be-built £55million Westside development has been released by the city's council.

The leisure-led mixed-use development will feature a multiplex 12-screen cinema, 50,000 square feet of additional leisure space, new restaurants covering 40,000 square feet, a multi-storey car park, 300 new city-centre homes and 50,000 square feet of retail and leisure space.

New book tells the story of popular Stourbridge park

A book exploring the proud heritage of Stourbridge's best-loved open space is now on sale.

Beauty For Everyone: The Story Of Mary Stevens Park explores the history of the park and features a number of rarely seen images of the area. The book is available, priced £7.99, from Mary Stevens Coffee Lounge and Oldswinford Coffee Lounge No92.

Sign-language family musical in Wolverhampton

The world premiere of the first ever sign-language musical for families takes place at Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre this month (Friday 7 & Saturday 8 April).

Oliver In The Overworld has been created for three to six-year-olds and features hand-crafted puppets, song, dance and fully integrated sign language.

The show is being presented by the well-established Krazy Kat Theatre Company and tackles the subjects of old age, its associated loss of mental facilities and children's abilities to assist in the resolution of conflict.

To book tickets, call 01902 321321 or visit wlv.ac.uk/arena-theatre

An 'open sesame' to more Potteries panto magic

One of the Potteries' favourite sons is once again making a welcome return to the region to star in pantomime.

Baddeley Green-born Jonathan Wilkes will be making his 12th Regent Theatre panto appearance when he takes the title role in a 3D-enhanced production of Aladdin this Christmas.

Jonathan will be joined by Christian Patterson (as Widow Twankey), who'll be appearing in his eighth Regent pantomime.

The show runs from Friday 15 December to Sunday 7 January. Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased by calling 0844 871 7649 or visiting atgtickets.com/stoke

Folk festival launches Room For All project

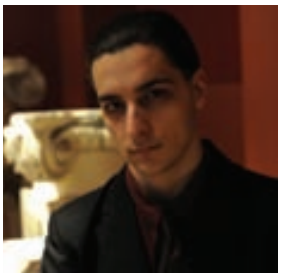
Shrewsbury Folk Festival has launched a project to celebrate cultural diversity and highlight the plight of refugees.

The initiative has been made possible by a £95,000 investment from Arts Council England. The new project, Room For All, will include a music commission featuring refugee musicians and a programme of education and outreach work in the county.

Commenting on the project, Festival Director Alan Surtees said: "We felt so despondent at the division, negativity and prejudice that surfaced during the Brexit campaign that we decided to try and bring some decency and optimism to the plight of refugees."

This year's festival runs from Friday 25 to Monday 28 August at the West Mid Showground. Tickets are available at shrewsbury-folkfestival.co.uk.

From past pupil to present-day performer



Talented musician Galin Ganchev will this month return to his old stamping ground of Shrewsbury School to perform a piano recital.

Galin, a former pupil at the school and a 'veteran' of more than 70 concerts in the UK, Bulgaria and Italy, will perform on Friday 28 April. The £15 ticket price includes a donation towards the pianist's continuing studies at the Royal Academy of Music. Tickets can be purchased via ticketsource.co.uk/shrewsburyschool or by ringing 01743 280812.

New Shrewsbury show tells the story of Ursula, the 'Naga Queen'

A new one-woman show, telling the true story of a Kensington debutante who ended up living amongst the head-hunting Naga natives of North East India, is being presented at Shrewsbury's Wightman Theatre next month.

Ursula, Queen Of The Jungle has been written by local author Chris Eldon Lee and stars Joanna Purslow (pictured below), who appeared at the Wightman venue last year in a hugely successful production of Shakespeare's Will.

"Ursula went out East to do a little anthropology," explains Chris, "but ended up organising the Nagas to ward off the threat of a Japanese invasion of India. Thus, she became the only combatant female officer in the British Army. This was not the 'done thing' of course, so she's been lost in army records ever since as a 'typist'. And so the legend of the 'Naga Queen' was born - a legend which became a strip cartoon in Girl Magazine."

The production, which is being premiered in Shrewsbury prior to featuring in this summer's Edinburgh Festival, shows at the Wightman from Wednesday 3 to Saturday 6 May.

Tickets can be booked online at wegottickets.com or thewightman.co.uk

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Put a Spring in your step

After what's felt like an eternal winter, warmer days are finally on the horizon. With that in mind, What's On has put together a list of its favourite spring walks in and around Shropshire, Staffordshire and Wolverhampton. Breathe in the fresh air, bask in the sunshine and revel in the beauty of the lush, green landscape...

Shugborough Park

The park provides four miles of walking and joins onto the Staffordshire Way. With the option of exploring the 900-acre National Trust Shugborough Estate, with its mansion house and delightful gardens, this is a great family day out. You're also on the edge of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), complete with miles of trails to explore.

Great Haywood, Stafford, ST17 0XB

Cannock Chase Country Park

This huge park has 3,000 acres for walking, cycling and running. Starting from the park's cycle-hire centre, the walking routes take you to Brindley Heath. Cannock Chase boasts a good variety of wildlife, including 800 fallow deer, and is a designated AONB.

Cannock, Stafford, ST19 5DT

Apedale Country Park

This 450-acre park, situated in Newcastle-under-Lyme, has a number of well-maintained footpaths leading to meadows, quiet woodland and silent pools. The Newcastle Way also passes through the park. The Silverdale Country Park is adjacent and a good option if you fancy extending your outing.

High Lane, Newcastle-under-Lyme, ST5 6AX

Severn Valley Country Park

This is a 126-acre park consisting of woodland, meadows and riverside banks with views over the River Severn. The park has numerous walks, starting out from the visitor centre and the river. With a picnic site nearby, this is a great day out for all the family.

Chapel Lane, Alveley, Bridgnorth, WV15 6NG

Attingham Park

The 8,000-acre Attingham Park is home to an 18th century mansion. There are walking trails to suit everyone and an organic walled garden to explore. Along the way, spot the deer and take some time to chill out and relax while surrounded by delightful scenery.

Attingham, Atcham, SY4 4TP

Wolverhampton Ring

This urban circuit, encompassing the city of Wolverhampton, is a hidden gem and runs for 29 miles along tracks, pavements, old railway lines and canal tow paths. A pleasant walk with not too many stiles or hills. There are cafes and pubs along the way too, as well as easy access by bus if you want a shorter walk.

Northycote Farm, Bushbury, WV10 7JF

Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre

The Shropshire Way passes right by the Discovery Centre, with one of its routes from the venue leading to the beautiful bluebell woodland of Sallow Coppice. There are four waymarked circular walks, allowing for exploration of the surrounding countryside and ranging in distance from two to 10 miles. Frequent guided walks also start out from the Centre.

School Road, Craven Arms, SY7 9RS

Carding Mill Valley

Situated in Church Stretton, Carding Mill Valley is an outdoor oasis. Starting from the National Trust's visitor centre, there are many signposted routes on offer. There's also a reservoir and waterfall walk. Fantastic views are available from the Long Mynd and hills such as Caer Caradoc.

Church Stretton, SY6 6JG

Hawkstone Park

Situated eight miles north of Shrewsbury, this spectacular park covers 100 acres and includes labyrinth-style pathways with ravines, arches, bridges, towering cliffs and follies, providing magnificent views of the Shropshire countryside. Other attractions include numerous atmospheric caves to explore, the remains of the Red Castle and the alluring Hawk Lake.

Weston-under-Redcastle, SY4 5UY

by Heather Kincaid

LAURA WHITMORE

talks about sinking her teeth into playing the lead in Peter James' Not Dead Enough...

What persuaded you to appear in this world premiere production of Peter James' Not Dead Enough, Laura?

I wanted to get back into acting. It was about finding the right team and the right role; something that had a bit of depth to it and which would be a challenge. I met Peter, Ian (Talbot, the director) and Joshua (Andrews, the producer), and I just knew it was a team I wanted to work with. I fell in love with the script and Peter's books. I've read a few of them, and it felt like the right thing to do. Plus, Cleo, my character, is a bit feisty - a strong woman. It's a role I can sink my teeth into.

The first two Peter James stage plays have been huge hits. Why do you think audiences are so enthralled by his stories?

They're based on reality. Everything Peter does is researched so well and based on some sort of truth.

Were you familiar with Peter's work before this?

I know his books from airports. I fly so much for work, and I'll go, "I must pick up a new book, what's in the top ten?" - and there's always one of his there, right at the top!

Explain a little bit about Cleo...

She wants a commitment from Roy (played by Bill Ward), who's the wrong man to want a commitment from. I think it's hard for a woman when there's an ex-wife or a past relationship, and there's so much uncertainty here. When is this woman going to come back? Is she dead? How do you deal with someone who's a ghost but is also real? It's not the easiest of times.

Cleo is very strong. I feel she's got a lot to prove, and she's in love with a guy who is probably not the best guy to be in love with. She's also quite headstrong and doesn't like to show vulnerability, which I don't either. There are a few times in the play where something happens and she doesn't want him to know because she'd rather deal with it herself. I quite like that. She's very stubborn, and I guess I am too.

You trained in drama, so what's it like revisiting that discipline after doing presenting work?

It's been ages since I did theatre, since I won a competition to be an MTV presenter about eight years ago. I did a few local productions in Dublin, and it's something I wanted to get back into. I suppose presenting is acting, in a way. And in doing Strictly Come Dancing, I found that I really enjoyed becoming a character for those few minutes while doing a dance. I found the acting part helped me get through the dancing. Growing up, I was obsessed with theatre and that 'live' feeling. Even more so than going to the movies, I loved watching live theatre, and I was very lucky that that was my little treat from my dad. My parents weren't together and once a week my dad would take me to see a play.

Any nerves?

More butterflies - but if you don't get butterflies, there's no point doing it.

What are you enjoying most about the tour?

The routine and the structure of it. When getting back into acting, the best thing you can do is theatre. I love working with a great team and a great director, and being a sponge and trying to absorb as much as I can. There's no better way to learn.

Will going home to Dublin be a special stop on the tour?

Absolutely - and it's a beautiful theatre. I moved to London eight years ago and I don't get home often. I'm really excited to have the opportunity to perform this play to a home crowd in Dublin. And to be able to have my mum and dad come to see it will be great.

Do you have any pre- or post-show routines or superstitions?

Pre-show and before doing live TV, I just like five minutes of time to myself. There's so much hustle and bustle, especially with live television, that it's nice to just disappear for a few minutes.

So you can act and dance - what's the one skill you don't have but wish that you did?

I wish I could play an instrument well. I play guitar badly, but I wish I was that person who could just pick up a guitar at a party and play any song.

Peter's stories are very scary. What are you scared of in real life?

I'm scared of showing vulnerability because in this industry you have to be quite strong.

Not Dead Enough plays at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury from Monday 8th until Saturday 13th May

What's On HIGHLIGHTS

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New addition to Shrewsbury's ever-expanding restaurant scene

The latest addition to Shrewsbury's ever-expanding culinary scene is Harvey's Of Fish Street.
The recently opened restaurant, which specialises in 'seasonal, locally sourced and fresh food', prides itself on providing an internationally inspired menu using 'the very best of British ingredients'.
The eatery offers a lunch choice menu and a snack menu throughout the afternoon, with a la carte dining featuring every evening and tasting menus on Fridays and Saturdays.

REVIEW: Plume Of Feathers
Potteries pub grub well worth savouring

Actor Neil Morrissey's recently refurbished Plume Of Feathers pub is located alongside the Trent & Mersey canal in Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent.

We were greeted with a smile and politely shown to our table. To start, we opted for the Three Birds On The Board sharing platter, which consisted of chicken liver pate with red onion chutney and garlic bread, chicken, halloumi and green chilli spring rolls and shredded Gressingham duck oatcakes served with hoisin sauce, cucumber and spring onion.

The pâté was delicious. It showcased a lovely creamy texture and was the nicest I've tasted in quite a while. The oatcakes and the spring rolls were tasty too - basic dishes that were executed well.

For our mains we decided to share the Three Little Pigs, from the chef's recommendations section of the menu, and the braised lamb liver special.
I started with the Three Little Pigs, which comprised a pork fillet Wellington, a BBQ pulled pork fritter, a black pudding hash brown, cider gravy, hispi cabbage and quince pickle.
The pork fillet Wellington was to-die-for and by far the highlight of the evening. The pork was soft, well seasoned and beautifully flavoured. The fritter and the hash brown tasted great too, although I'd happily have swapped them for extra Wellington, given the option.

The other elements of the dish worked nicely, helping to bring everything together.
From the other side of the table came the comment, 'This is the nicest liver I've ever tasted'.
We swapped plates and I excitedly tucked into my half, only to find that my partner had accidentally eaten all the liver and left me with kidney. As the menu didn't state that the dish also contained kidney, he'd assumed that all six pieces he could see - hidden underneath the thick and rather delicious gravy - were liver, so he'd quickly devoured his three!

I like kidney, so it wasn't an issue. However, I'd be lying if I said I wasn't slightly disappointed that I didn't get to try the exceptional liver.

The dish was served with a creamy, cheesy mash, bacon strands and salad.
We also shared some perfectly cooked onion rings - a pub classic!

Although both feeling suitably full, we managed to squeeze in dessert. I chose the New York-style baked vanilla cheesecake served with a poached pear compote. My partner opted for the soft chocolate fudge cake with crème Anglaise and a white chocolate sorbet.

Both dishes showcased great flavours and were a welcome end to the evening.

In terms of service, we were forgotten about a few times. Luckily we're relaxed diners, so it didn't bother us too much, and certainly didn't hinder our enjoyment of the evening in any way.

The restaurant was very busy, as was the packed bar area, which was playing host to the weekly quiz night. This resulted in the friendly waitresses being rushed off their feet throughout the duration of our stay.

All in all, Plume Of Feathers serves simple, well-executed dishes, is great value for money and boasts a relaxed dining atmosphere.

A children's menu is available on request, making it a perfect place for families and groups of friends alike.

If pub grub is your thing, be sure to check it out. *Lauren Foster*

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

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Cheese & Ale Festival returns to Stafford

This year's Stafford Cheese & Ale Festival takes place on Friday 16 and Saturday 17 June.
The popular event last year attracted more than 45,000 people, with a similarly impressive footfall expected for the 2017 edition of the show. Located in the town's Market Square, the festival features more than 40 food and drink exhibitors, a cookery theatre, alfresco bar and live entertainment.
For more information, visit staffordtowncentre.co.uk/cheeseandale

It's all about the gin in Stoke-on-Trent

The UK's biggest touring gin festival is this summer stopping off in Stoke-on-Trent for the first time.
Gin Festival Stoke, taking place at Victoria Hall in Hanley on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 June, will offer visitors the opportunity to sample over 100 different varieties of gin, learn about the history of 'Britain's favourite spirit', meet industry experts and enjoy live music.
"We absolutely love gin," says Jym Harris, who founded the festival with wife Marie, "so we started these events because we thought other people would want the same as us. We've been overwhelmed by the positive reception, and it's been fantastic to see so many people rediscover this amazing drink."
For more information, visit ginfestival.com

Little Dessert Shop opens in Telford

Wolverhampton's Little Dessert Shop is opening a branch in Telford this month.
The popular dessert parlour, which also has premises in Bloxwich, Wednesfield and West Bromwich, sells more than 60 different dishes.
Scoops of ice cream are available from £1.60 and cakes from £2.95.
The new Telford Shopping Centre branch will have room to seat approximately 65 people.

All-vegan eatery open for business in Brum

A new all-vegan eatery has opened in Birmingham.
Natural Healthy Foods' new café on Suffolk Street, Queensway, offers visitors a selection of gluten-free, hot and raw food and organic vegan options.
The new venue seats 54 people and stocks more than 1,500 products.

Thai restaurant opens in Birmingham's Brindleyplace

A new Thai restaurant has opened in Birmingham city centre.
Siamais (pronounced Siam-aze) serves modern Thai food with a twist. The eatery is the brainchild of young businessman Nishil Nathwani, who also owns Aluna Cocktail Bar by the water's edge at The Mailbox.

"Aluna has been a huge success as a 'mixology' specialist cocktail bar," says Nishil. "There, we combined sumptuous interiors, experimental cocktails and lively music, all designed to appeal to young professionals. And as a secondary offering, you can also choose from our Thai-inspired food menu. With Siamais, we've reversed the concept and created a magical restaurant as the primary offering. There's a completely curtained off, separate bar - with a choice of up to 60 cocktails - to complement the food."

International acclaim for talented Midlands bartender

A talented Birmingham bartender is in celebratory mood after winning a prestigious international competition.
Toby Heap, who works at The Edgbaston Boutique Hotel & Cocktail Lounge, scored his success in the jazz pop category of the Ysabel Regina Fusion Competition, a contest that focuses on the imaginative bringing together of drinks and music. Toby's winning drink, which he called Love In Vain, was inspired by Eric Clapton's Layla, Unplugged.

New monthly tour explores Brum city centre's culinary hotspots

A monthly 'food tour' has been launched in Birmingham. Described as 'a relaxed, guided walk with gastronomical flavour', the tour provides participants with the chance to sample offerings from the city's local independent restaurants, cafes and street food providers.
Commenting on the new initiative, its founder and host, Rhiannon Simpson, said: "The tour is like a lazy, grazing lunch with sites, facts and fun along the way. My aim is to engage guests, share stories about this fantastic city and promote the best local, independent food businesses."
The food tour's up-and-coming dates are Saturday 8 April and Saturday 6 May. Both tours take place in the city centre from midday to 4pm. To book a place, visit birminghamfoodtour.co.uk

What's On Readers' Awards

WINNERS announced...

With over 45,000+ votes cast in the **What's On Readers' Awards 2017** - we are delighted to announce your winners...

Midlands Large Theatre

WINNER
Birmingham Hippodrome
RUNNER-UP
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Midlands Arts Centre

WINNER mac, Birmingham
RUNNER-UP Warwick Arts Centre

Best Touring Musical

WINNER Mamma Mia!
RUNNER-UP Mary Poppins

Best Touring Play

WINNER The Full Monty
RUNNER-UP Of Mice & Men

Best Home-Produced Show In The Midlands

WINNER Gangsta Granny - Birmingham Stage Company
RUNNER-UP The Wind In The Willows - The Old Rep

Best Pantomime In The Midlands 2016/17

WINNER Aladdin - Wolverhampton Grand Theatre
RUNNER-UP Dick Whittington - Birmingham Hippodrome

Best Kids Show

WINNER Disney On Ice presents Frozen
RUNNER-UP Gangsta Granny

Best Amateur Dramatic/Operatic Group

WINNER Wolverhampton Musical Comedy Company (MUSCOM)
RUNNER-UP Old Joint Stock Musical Theatre Co.

Best Amateur Production

WINNER Legally Blonde - Stourbridge Amateur Operatic Society
RUNNER-UP Jekyll & Hyde - Bournville Musical Theatre Company

Best Dance Production

WINNER Birmingham Royal Ballet's The Nutcracker
RUNNER-UP Matthew Bourne's Sleeping Beauty

Best Classical Production inc Opera

WINNER WNO - Sweeney Todd
RUNNER-UP Birmingham Opera Company - Dido 'n' Aeneas

Best Orchestra/Choir

WINNER CBSO
RUNNER-UP Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra

Best Midlands Arts/ Cultural Festival

WINNER Birmingham Comedy Festival

RUNNER-UP International Dance Festival Birmingham

Best Exhibition

WINNER Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2016 - Wolverhampton Art Gallery
RUNNER-UP Inspire 16 - Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

Best Independent Cinema

WINNER Electric Cinema - Birmingham
RUNNER-UP Light House Media Centre - Wolverhampton

Best Midlands Comedian

WINNER Greg Davies
RUNNER-UP Joe Lycett

Best Midlands Comedy Break-through

WINNER
Sarah Johnson
RUNNER-UP
Tom Christian

Best Midlands Comedy Night
WINNER Comedy Carousel at The Glee Club, Birmingham
RUNNER-UP Comedy at Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

Best Midlands Music Venue
WINNER Symphony Hall - Birmingham
RUNNER-UP O2 Academy - Birmingham

Best Midlands Music Festival
WINNER Shrewsbury Folk Festival
RUNNER-UP Moseley Folk Festival

Best Midlands Musician
WINNER Laura Mvula
RUNNER-UP Libby Gliksman

Best Midlands Live Band
WINNER The Twang
RUNNER-UP Ned's Atomic Dustbin

Best Midlands Chef
WINNER Glynn Purnell (Purnell's, Bham)
RUNNER-UP Adam Stokes (Adams, Birmingham)

Best Midlands Food Festival
WINNER Ludlow Food Festival
RUNNER-UP Great British Food Festival - Shug-borough

Best Midlands Street Food Vendor
WINNER Buddha Belly
RUNNER-UP Vegan Grindhouse

Best Midlands Retail Shopping Centre
WINNER Bullring - Birmingham
RUNNER-UP intu Merry Hill - Brierley Hill

Midlands Entertainment Personality of the Year Award
WINNER Doreen Tipton
RUNNER-UP Julie Walters

And the winners in your region...

Wolverhampton & Black Country

Best Arts/Theatre Venue
WINNER Grand Theatre

Best Music Venue
WINNER The Civic Hall

Best Visitor Attraction
WINNER Black Country Living Museum

Best Event
WINNER Cosford Air Show

Best Gallery/Exhibition Venue
WINNER Wolverhampton Art Gallery

Best Independent Restaurant
WINNER Mad O'Rourkes - Dudley

Best Independent Cafe
WINNER The Old School Rooms

Shropshire

Best Arts/Theatre Venue
WINNER Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Best Live Music Venue
WINNER Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

Best Festival
WINNER Shrewsbury Food Festival

Best Visitor Attraction
WINNER Ironbridge Museums

Best Event
WINNER Shrewsbury Flower Show

Best Gallery/Exhibition Venue
WINNER Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

Best Nightclub
WINNER The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Best Independent Retailer
WINNER Battlefield 1403, Shrewsbury

Best Independent Cafe
WINNER The Bird's Nest Cafe, Shrewsbury

Best Independent Restaurant - Shrewsbury
WINNER Csons

Best Independent Restaurant - North Shropshire
WINNER Townhouse, Oswestry

Best Independent Restaurant - South Shropshire
WINNER The Kings Head, Bridgnorth

Staffordshire

Best Arts/Theatre Venue
WINNER Lichfield Garrick

Best Live Music Venue
WINNER Lichfield Guildhall

Best Festival
WINNER Lichfield Festival

Best Visitor Attraction
WINNER Alton Towers

Best Event
WINNER Lichfield Lumiere

Best Independent Restaurant N.Staffs
WINNER La Terraza Ristorante Italiano, Rugeley

Best Independent Restaurant S.Staffs
WINNER Olive Tree, Lichfield

English Touring Opera

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 10 & Tues 11 April

English Touring Opera travels to more regions and plays a greater number of venues than any other English opera company, presenting in excess of 100 performances every year. The company's stated aim is to make opera an accessible-to-everyone artform, an ambition it once again achieves with these two Wolverhampton shows.
Famous Puccini melodrama Tosca is directed by the award-winning Blanche McIntyre. Gilbert & Sullivan light opera Patience, meanwhile, comes complete with 'willowy poets, sighing maidens, hearty milkmaids and burly officers galore'.

Saint-Saens' Organ Symphony

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 7 April

One of French music's greatest living interpreters, Yan-Pascal Tortelier (pictured), picks up the baton to conduct the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra's performance of this powerful piece of music.
The work is considered to be an example of Saint-Saens at the very peak of his powers, and is presented on this occasion with Jonathan Scott on the venue's world-famous organ.
The concert also features a performance of a second epic French masterpiece, Roussel's sumptuous Evocations, a piece inspired by the composer's experience of Eastern culture.

Ex Cathedra: Bach's St John Passion

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 14 April

A favourite at Eastertide, Bach's St John Passion - a re-telling of Christ's betrayal and death - continues to be one of classical music's most profound experiences.
Performed by the Ex Cathedra Consort and Baroque Orchestra under the direction of conductor Jeffrey Skidmore, the work is on this occasion framed in its liturgical context, the concert also including congregational hymns, organ works, readings and two motets.

Murray Perahia: Beethoven's Emperor Concerto

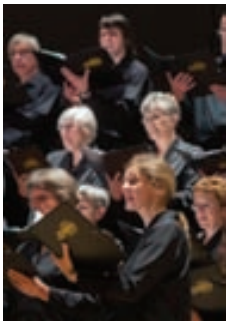
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 5 April

Murray Perahia is here reunited with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields for a concert that forms part of the American pianist's 70th birthday celebrations. The all-Beethoven programme features the composer's First Symphony and his Romance for violin and orchestra No1. But it's undoubtedly the Emperor concerto (his final piano concerto, written between 1809 and 1811) that will be the highlight of the evening.

Birmingham Bach Choir: Handel's Messiah

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Fri 14 April

One of the city's oldest musical groups here gets its collective teeth into the challenge of performing Handel's magnificent choral masterpiece, a work which tells the story of Christ's Nativity, Passion, Resurrection and Ascension.
Unquestionably the best-known section of the work is the rousing Hallelujah Chorus, one of the most famous pieces of Baroque choral music ever written.



British Police Symphony Orchestra: A Spanish Inspiration

Shrewsbury Abbey, Sat 8 April

Members of the British Police Symphony Orchestra (BPSO) take a night off from feeling collars to perform the latest concert in the Shropshire Music Season.
An amateur orchestra drawing its players from the UK's 44 police forces - and featuring members from locations as far apart as the Outer Hebrides and the Scilly Isles - the BPSO are here presenting a programme that celebrates the music of Spain.

New Model Army

The Robin, Bilston, Sat 1 April

Last year saw the release of Winter, New Model Army's first full studio album since their acclaimed long-player, Between Dog And Wolf, in 2013.
"Winter has a really strong identity," says lead singer Justin Sullivan. "It's very much the sound of people in difficult places, something that so many of us can relate to at the moment on a lot of different levels. It's much more of a band album than Between Dog And Wolf. We made a deliberate choice in mixing it to sound more aggressive and a little less polished."

Martin Stephenson

Morris Hall, Shrewsbury, Sat 1 April

Founder of The Daintees, Martin Stephenson has been singing and songwriting for more than 30 years, during which time he's also toured relentlessly.
He visits Shrewsbury this month as part of 2017's The Big Busk. All proceeds from his show will be donated to Shrewsbury Ark, a homeless shelter located in the town centre.

Nell Bryden

Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury, Thurs 20 April

In 2012, Brooklyn-born singer-songwriter Nell Bryden released Sirens - a song based on her experiences of living in New York in the aftermath of 9/11. The track caught the attention of many an artist - Gary Barlow, Jools Holland and Counting Crows among them.
Nell has since become a Radio Two listeners' favourite, gaining plenty of acclaim for her powerful, soaring vocals and accomplished songwriting.

The Bootleg Beatles

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 8 April

Formed in 1980 from the cast of the musical Beatlemania, the Bootleg Beatles remain one of the most popular tribute acts in the country, despite the emergence of numerous rivals. Their ongoing success is down to the accuracy of their portrayals, not only managing to look uncannily like the Fab Four but also sounding incredibly authentic.

Rat Boy

The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 28 April

Jordan Cardy - or Rat Boy, as he's better known - blends hip-hop, indie, punk, big-beat and electro-pop to create an anarchic live show. Away from his music, Cardy has a clothing line, SCUM, which mixes '70s gangster chic with in-vogue skatewear.

Bruno Mars

Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, Mon 24 - Tues 25 April

Grammy Award-winning singer, songwriter, record producer, voice actor and choreographer Bruno Mars became recognised as a solo artist after his vocals featured on B.o.B's Nothin' On You and Travie McCoy's Billionaire. Mars is one of the best-selling artists of all time, having sold in excess of 100 million singles and albums worldwide. His three albums to date are Doo-Wops & Hooligans, Unorthodox Jukebox and the hugely anticipated 24K Magic.

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SUMMER FESTIVAL GUIDE

As another summer approaches, we're already looking forward to the warm weekends of the 2017 festival season, promising pop parties, metal mayhem, indie extravaganzas and some folking good fun, along with (mostly) jazz, funk and blues. Over the winter, we asked you to vote for the best venues and events across the region - and now that the polls have closed, we can officially reveal a handful of the finalists. Here are your favourite music festivals, plus a few more to watch out for in the coming months.

Cheltenham Jazz Festival

Various venues, Wed 26 April - Mon 1 May

This six-day celebration ranks among the country's best-loved jazz events, attracting in excess of 20,000 visitors each year.
Taking place in the centre of Cheltenham, the festival brings together up-and-coming UK talent with international icons of the highest calibre. Previous star contributors have included Eartha Kitt, Van Morrison, Stephane Grappelli and Ornette Coleman.
And it's not just for die-hard jazz enthusiasts either. With its friendly atmosphere, diverse acts and mix of free and paid concerts, Cheltenham Jazz is a great way to introduce the uninitiated to what the genre has to offer.

2017 line-up includes: Laura Mvula, Gregory Porter, Jack Savoretti, Will Young, Paul Carrack, Ben Folds, Jamie Cullum, Rick Wakeman, Mica Paris & Booker T Jones

Swingamajig

The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham, Sun 30 April

Vintage glamour meets 21st century electronica in a show like no other, curated by Birmingham's very own Electric Swing Circus.
Set against the dramatic backdrop of Digbeth's railway arches in the city's old industrial heartland, Swingamajig fuses 1920s decadence with jungle, hip-hop, gypsy jazz and pounding electrobeats. Expect circus and cabaret, toe-tapping dance classes, spectacular showmanship, an extensive vintage market, well-dressed punters and an eclectic, off-the-wall array of sights and sounds.
Music line-up includes: The Correspondents, Featurecast, Electric Swing Circus, Freestylers & Sir Real, Sam & The Womp, Rhino & The Ranters, Dutty Moonshine, Mr Switch and C@ in the H@

Cabaret line-up includes: Miss Betsy Rose, Florian Brooks, Vicky Butterfly, The Flaming Feathers, Joe Black, Dr A Szydlo and Missy Malone

Shrewsbury Folk Festival

West Midlands Showground, Shrewsbury, Fri 25 - Mon 28 August

Voted the Midlands' Best Music Festival by you, our readers, Shrewsbury Folk has long been a firm fixture in any folkie's calendar. Some of the finest folk acts from across the UK and further afield gather here each year to share songs and stories, dancing and drinks. Steeped in history, Shrewsbury is the perfect setting for this celebration of centuries-old tradition, yet it's far from stuffy. With an emphasis on collaboration and a growing move towards inventive fusion styles, the folk scene is where you'll find some of the most interesting and original artists performing in Britain today.

2017 line-up includes: Chris Difford, Jim Moray, Jon Boden, The Unthanks, Sam Carter, Oysterband, The Young'uns, Loudon Wainwright III, Le Vent du Nord, The Rhenigan Sisters and The Transports

V Festival

Weston Park, Staffordshire, Sat 19 - Sun 20 August

Bringing together the biggest artists from across all genres, Virgin's V Festival has, over the last 20 years, blossomed into one of the UK's biggest and best-known music events.
Born in 1996 when Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker put forward the idea of playing in two outdoor venues over two days, V Festival is unique in taking place in two separate locations simultaneously. Chart-topping acts take to stages in Staffordshire and Chelmsford, visiting one on Saturday and the other on Sunday.

2017 line-up includes: P!nk, Jay Z, Rudimental, Pete Tong, Craig David, Ellie Goulding, Jess Glynne, Stormzy, George Ezra, Emeli Sandé, Jason Derulo, Madness and Dizzee Rascal

Godiva Festival

War Memorial Park, Coventry, Fri 7 - Sun 9 July

Among Coventry's claims to fame is being home to the UK's biggest and best *free* music festival.
"We've always been proud of the Godiva Festival," Councillor Abdul Khan told the Coventry Telegraph. "It brings a massive profile to Coventry as a city."
Over the years, the festival's hosted an array of big-name acts, from The Happy Mondays to Mercury Rev, The Enemy to Echo & The Bunnymen and Buzzcocks to The Boomtown Rats. With Coventry having now entered its City of Culture bid, expect a festival that's bigger and better than ever, with markets, a funfair, and family-friendly shows and activities in addition to a fabulous music line-up.

2017 line-up includes: The Darkness, Tom Clarke (The Enemy) and The Stranglers

The Acoustic Festival Of Great Britain

Uttoxeter Racecourse, Fri 2 - Sun 4 June

Standing out from the crowd of ever-louder electronic festivals, The Acoustic Festival of Great Britain marks a welcome return to the basics of good quality music.
Stripped back, unplugged performances are the focus of this relaxed, friendly event: beyond that, it's open to music of all genres. With a five-star-rated camping infrastructure, glamping options, seated food tents and kids' play areas, it's the perfect way to spend a lazy weekend with the family.

2017 line-up includes: Fairport Convention, Wishbone Ash, Nell Bryden, Hoosiers, Nick Harper, Seize The Day, Boy On A Dolphin, Ed Tudor-Pole, Bar-Steward Sons Of Val Doonican

Moseley Folk Festival

Moseley Park, Birmingham, Fri 1 - Sun 3 September

Tucked away behind the busy streets of Birmingham, Moseley Park is one of the city's many hidden gems. Each year, as the festival season draws to a close, it's transformed into an enchanting escape by one of the Midlands' best-loved music festivals.
Traditional folk & low-fi acoustic sets blend seamlessly with dreamy electropop, psychedelia and indie favourites against a magical backdrop of bright hippie colours, lush foliage and a beautiful lake. The perfect way to see out the summer.

2017 line-up includes: Laura Marling (pictured), Jose Gonzalez, Amy MacDonald, Kate Rusby, Shovels & Rope, Courtney Marie Andrews and John Moreland

Slam Dunk

NEC, Birmingham, Sat 27 May

Showcasing the best in contemporary emo, punk and ska, this three-stop touring festival last year moved its Midlands date from Wolverhampton to the NEC, allowing for easy access from across the country.
Linked to the Leeds-based club nights and indie record label of the same name, Slam Dunk takes place over the May bank holiday weekend and boasts more than 40 acts over multiple stages, as well as DJ sets, exclusive signings and a riotous afterparty to round things off.

2017 line-up includes: Enter Shikari, Don Broco, Bowling For Soup, Neckdeep, Less Than Jake, Reel Big Fish, Deaf Havana, Beartooth, Tonight Alive and We Are The Ocean

Birmingham Pride

Birmingham Gay Village, Sat 27 - Sun 28 May

It's 20 years since Birmingham Pride took a first tentative step onto the city's events calendar.
Plenty has changed since 1997's debut bash, not only with regard to the festival itself but also in terms of the LGBT community's national profile.
As usual, this year's event has plenty of great entertainment on offer. The line-up includes popular music acts performing on the main stage, the Manchester Airport-sponsored cabaret marquee, a dance arena, a women's arena and a host of community stalls. A Saturday lunchtime carnival parade through the city streets provides a lively and colourful curtain-raiser to a weekend of fun and partying.

2017 line-up includes: Dua Lipa, Basement Jaxx, Gabrielle (pictured), Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Jonas Blue, Jamelia, Louisa Johnson, Saara Aalto, M.O.

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SAT 27TH MAY 2017
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Bowling for Soup

NECKDEEP

Less Than Jake

Reel Big Fish

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BIRMINGHAM - THE NEC

NORTH
SUN 28TH MAY
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by Lauren Foster

Laura Mvula

Voted Best Midlands Musician in the What's On Readers' Awards 2017, Laura Mvula's road to soul-singing stardom started with the a capella group Black Voices. A Birmingham Conservatoire graduate, she started writing music while working as a supply teacher, and has recently written the score for the Royal Shakespeare Company's latest production of Antony And Cleopatra. Laura took time out from her busy schedule to big up her Brummie roots...

What's your earliest musical memory of performing, Laura?

It happens to be at the Midlands Arts Centre. When I was 11, I entered a competition where I gave my first piano recital, playing Gypsy Tango.

Equipped with the experience you've gained over the past 12 years as a professional musician, what advice would you give to your younger self as an undergraduate at Birmingham Conservatoire?

I would say, be yourself, work really hard and exercise more. I would've encouraged myself to have gotten better sleeping habits too.

What's surprised you most on your journey from Black Voices to where you are today?

Being able to perform to lots of people throughout the year and still feel passionate each time. I'm impressed with the progress in my voice. I'm not as nervous as a performer these days. I used to hate talking, full stop - both in between songs and in interviews - but now I quite like it.

Is there a single artist who's been your biggest inspiration?

At the moment my biggest inspiration is my younger brother, James. I went to see his first gig with his string quartet, Dixit, last Saturday. They totally blew me away. I bought their music on iTunes and I've been listening to it ever since.

Tell us about writing the score for Antony And Cleopatra at the RSC...

It's my very first composer gig - and so far, so good. We have opening night on Thursday [23 March], so I guess that will be judgement day. I don't really care what the critics say, as I know it's just a sublime production and I'm super proud of the music. The RSC has been such a joy to work with, and it's all been a superb learning curve for me. Off the back of this, I'd love to do more in theatre.

How did your involvement in the project come about?

The director, Iqbal Khan, was set on to my first album by his fiance, Kim, who's also a director. Iqbal just decided that he'd like to work with me, so I met up with him at Shoreditch House in London and he asked me whether I'd consider writing the music for Antony And Cleopatra. Of course I jumped at the opportunity. He was interested in my writing style and my philosophy that there are no rules - or if you do have rules in writing, then just break them.

You're up for Soul Artist Of The Year in the Jazz FM Awards. How important are such nominations and, hopefully, subsequent award wins?

Awards kind of mean everything and nothing at the same time. I try to be appreciative of any acknowledgement, but at the same time, I've sort of given up chasing awards. I realised that the most important thing for me is writing music that connects with people. As long as I see evidence of that, which I do every day, then I'm okay.

Amongst your many collaborations, is there one which remains the most memorable?

I think my collaboration with The Metropole Orkest, which was directed by Jules Buckley, the conductor. We recorded an album together at Abbey Road which is basically an orchestral version of my first album. I think we did two days, or maybe longer, but it was such a special experience for me. My brother and sister were playing in the orchestra also. As far as my career goes, that will remain one of my highlights.

What's your favourite memory of being a Birmingham Conservatoire student?

I would say meeting my ex-husband. I remember the day I met him. We had to sing in the chorus - the whole year group. I would also say my final recital. That was the first time I gave a singing performance.

Do you have any plans to visit the new venue when it opens this summer?

Yeah, I'd love to, if I get the invite. It would be amazing to play there as well! If I ever have children, I'd love them to go there too.

What are you most proud of as a Brummie?

My schools, my Brummie accent, Cannon Hill Park and Aston Villa.

So is Birmingham still home?

Not any longer. I live in London out of peer pressure, but my mum still lives in Birmingham.

Finally, what would you like to say to the readers of What's On who voted you Midlands Musician 2017?

I just want to say a really big, genuine thank you. It means so much to even be considered. Big up Birmingham!

Laura plays Cheltenham Jazz Festival on Wednesday 26 April.
For more information and tickets, head to cheltenhamfestivals.com

Andy Parsons: Peak Bullsh*t

Evesham Arts Centre, Fri 7 April; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Sat 8 April; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 27 April; The Old Rep, Birmingham, Sat 13 May; Huntington Hall, Worcester, Fri 19 May; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 28 May

With complimentary reviews including such observations as 'what he lacks in hair, he more than makes up for in originality', Andy Parsons is a sharp and topical comedian who's well known from TV show Mock The Week and topical monthly podcast, The Slacktivist Action Group.

"If I have to summarise the new show," he says of Peak Bullsh*t, which tours to the Midlands in the coming months, "it's asking, has the world gone mad, what it means to be British in 2017, what it means to be a patriot - and is it true that we only like immigrants if they can win us gold medals at the Olympics?"

Andy's big bag of jokes includes: "If you've been affected by any of the issues raised in tonight's episode of EastEnders, they must have been acting better than they usually do."

Marcel Lucont's Whine List

The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton, Thurs 6 April; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 27 April

Marcel Lucont's current touring show is described by the French flaneur's publicist as "a kind of self-help group where everyone potentially leaves more depressed. Expect louche musings, deadpan wit and Gallic superiority."

It's a description which will undoubtedly chime with people when they go to see the show - although leaving at the end of the evening feeling 'more depressed' really isn't an option; Lucont is way too amusing for that.

British comedian Alexis Dubus is the man behind Marcel, and has been performing as the wine-drinking, sexist philosopher for many a year now. Not surprisingly given that fact, he wears the character like a comfy old slipper.

Angela Barnes

Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffordshire, Thurs 6 April; The Comedy Loft, B'ham, Fri 14 - Sat 15 April

When her inspirational dad died in 2008, Angela Barnes decided to follow the advice he'd given her and launch a career in stand-up comedy.

And judging by the success which has followed, she certainly made the right decision.

A BBC New Comedy Awards winner, Angela recently took over as the host of Radio Four Extra's topical sketch show, Newsjack. "As a self-confessed lifelong radio comedy nerd," she said of her new role when it was announced in December, "I don't think 'dream job' is too strong a phrase. Hopefully there'll be some interesting stories to get stuck into - heaven knows 2016 was a bit of a slow burner on the news front..."

Rob Deering

Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury, Wed 26 April

Rob Deering has successfully built on the benefit of having a face that was made for comedy by turning himself into a rather splendid example of a professional comedian. He's been described as a man with 'clownish physicality' and 'easy charm' - and it's on the back of such qualities that he's nurtured a small army of hugely dedicated fans, all of whom are utterly addicted to the pleasures of an evening in the company of his razor-sharp wit. Jokes include: "I used to be in a very tidy rock band. OC/DC."

Rob Auton: The Sleep Show

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 23 April

Although Rob Auton recognises he's been lucky in life, he nonetheless finds day-to-day living a bit of a struggle. "I find it really hard to look at the news because it has such a bad effect on me," he explains. "That's why my shows tend to be about topics where my judgment hasn't been clouded."
The topics he's chosen so far have been 'yellow', 'the sky', 'faces', 'water', and now, sleep'. This one-subject-per-show approach distinguishes Auton from other stand-ups, many of whom tend to prefer a more scattergun strategy when it comes to the business of being funny.

Rich Hall's Hoedown

Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon, Wed 19 April; Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Sat 22 April; Stourbridge Town Hall, Fri 19 May; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 26 May

His official biography somewhat less than modestly describes American funnyman Rich Hall as 'a comic genius' - albeit a 'grouchy, deadpan' one.
With much of his comedy focusing on making fun of life across the pond in his homeland, Rich is best known for his creation of Otis Lee Crenshaw, a bourbon-swilling redneck jailbird from Tennessee whose many wives have all been named Brenda.
Publicity for this latest touring show - 'a mash-up of music, comedy and gratuitous coloration' - reveals the following: 'Performing will be Rich's regular band of talented and chronically unemployable urchins. The floor will reek of liquor and spent dreams.'

Russell Brand: Re:Birth

Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 13 April; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 9 May

This new touring show is Russell Brand's first since becoming a dad. "How do we make sense of the madness of our lives once we become parents?" he asks, in explaining his motivation for Re:Birth. "What am I going to tell my daughter about conformity and responsibility? What happens if she grows up to be like me or, worse, date someone like me?..."
Bursting onto the scene via Big Brother's 'Big Mouth' spin-off show, Brand has had no trouble finding a spotlight in which to stand over the last few years.
His more high-profile exploits have included an ill-starred marriage to Katy Perry, an offensive voicemail call to the Fawlty Towers actor Andrew Sachs and his controversial decision to urge people not to vote in the 2015 general election.

Russell Kane: Right Man, Wrong Age

Stourbridge Town Hall, Sun 30 April

This man's official publicity blurb has included the following: "Love. Race. Politics. Class. Strap in for some super-speed sunderings and inconvenient sociology in an hour of self-soiling merriment that will leave you with rickets."
In short, Russell Kane is a very funny man - and it's not just his publicist who thinks so. Kane's been drawing a crowd since bursting onto the scene way back in 2004, serving up liberal doses of high-quality humour in an act which also features some considerably weighty and thought-provoking material.
His latest touring show, Right Man, Wrong Age, is described as 'a performance about growing up, growing down, and why farts will always be funny'.

I am what I am!

John Partridge talks about the message behind La Cage aux Folles which returns to the Midlands next month...

La Cage aux Folles is coming to Birmingham and Wolverhampton as part of it's first ever tour of the UK. Presented by Bill Kenwright, the lavish new production of the award-winning musical extravaganza stars John Partridge as Albin/Zaza, Adrian Zmed as Georges and Marti Webb as Jacqueline. What's On caught up with John in rehearsals to talk about his role as the lead in the highly anticipated hit Broadway musical.

You've starred in La Cage aux Folles since early January. How has it been going and what has the crowd reaction been like?

It's been going fantastically. Even though it's never toured before, we've had the most amazing response to the show and it just feels so wonderful.

With the current rise of right-wing conservatism and extremism in both Europe and the United States, do you think the story of La Cage is particularly relevant right now. There's a strong comparison to be made between Anne's father in the show, a right-wing politician, and Donald Trump?

Yes, it's definitely very topical. The story of La Cage aux Folles is just as relevant as it was when it was first performed on Broadway in the 80s as it is now, if not more so. We haven't had one show where there hasn't been a standing ovation and that's because they're applauding the message and the essence of the show. That's why it is just so heartwarming for us.

What would you say the true message of the show is?

That you can be whoever you want to be no matter what race, religion, or sexuality you are. We all have to learn to accept, celebrate, acknowledge and respect each other's differences. We need to realise that we are all individuals living together so we have to all get along.

What is it like singing the iconic song 'I Am What I Am'?

For an actor like me, getting to stand up on stage and share that moment with the audience is completely life-affirming and the response that I've had has been absolutely wonderful.

There must be quite a lot of preparation involved for your role as a drag queen. What is it like playing Albin/Zaza?

It's exhausting for want of a better word! I have to get to the theatre a good two hours before the show starts to start putting on my make up. After a song called 'A Little More Mascara' I transform from a man into a woman which is all done by illusion really because I already have all of the make up on from the start. I just unveil myself more and more as the show goes on. I have to shave everywhere because, as a lady, you cant have any of the unwanted hair that seems to be all over my body. This is a real female illusion so I have three pairs of tights, spanks, padding and gaffer tape for tucking. In the first half alone I have 14 costume changes, some of which are only 90 seconds long. The costumes are completely out of this world - it's such an opulent and fabulous show.

Have you always been a fan of the show?

I first saw the show in 1987 at the London Palladium when I was 14 and it became the soundtrack to my youth. I never thought in a million years that I'd be able to be a part of this wonderful show. It's an honour to sing these songs and bring this show to life. When we took the show to Wimbledon, 10 of the original cast members came to watch us which was just wonderful. It felt like a real La Cage

by Lauren Cox

aux Folles family and it's great to be a part of that.

You did a lot of musical theatre before you starred as the lovable Christian in Eastenders. Does it feel good to really be getting back in to it?

Yes, it's all about progression for me. It's about learning and continuing to grow and develop as an actor whether that be on television, in musical theatre, performing in a one man band, singing in concerts or through any other medium within the arts. Right now I'm learning a lot about being a lady! That's not something I ever thought I'd say.

Do you have a preference between television and theatre?

They're both very different. With theatre you get an instant reaction from an audience so you know straight away whether or not they're enjoying it. There's nothing better than holding an audience in the palm of your hand and being able to hear a pin drop followed by an applause. It's an instant buzz. Television is different because you're not necessarily sure how it's going to be received and sometimes you have to wait as long as eight months before you even see it, but I like and respect both platforms and mediums.

Musical theatre must get pretty exhausting doing up to eight shows a week for months on end. How do you make each show as exciting as the first?

You have to be disciplined. It's very tiring to give your all that many times a week but your training and professionalism guide you through. I trained at the Royal Ballet School from the age of nine to 16 and that really helps. You also have to work a little bit harder for some audiences because they all vary from city to city. So, in a way, you have to adjust your performance to fit those venues and cultures.

You've performed in Birmingham a number of times with CATS, Miss Saigon and in panto. What is the Birmingham audience like?

The audience in Birmingham is always great, warm, and very much up for it. I absolutely can not wait to get Zaza into the Hippodrome to have some fun with the Brummie crowd because I know they will be really receptive to it.

You were also in Birmingham over Christmas performing in Chicago. How do the roles differ?

They are very different shows but in some ways they aren't that dissimilar. Billy Flynn and Zaza are both showmen, or rather one showman and one showgirl. Billy is quite the consummate showman so I'm sure if anyone could give Zaza a run for her money it would be Billy. In fact, I think they're a match made in heaven. Zaza Flynn, who knows?

Are you looking forward to coming back to Brum in May?

Yes, I love being in Birmingham. I'm from the North West so it's close enough to my home that I get to see my family and my mum, who is suffering with dementia. I have lots of friends in and around Birmingham now too so it's great that I can catch up with them, even though with eight shows a week I barely get any time off. I love performing at the Hippodrome because it's a great venue to play. It's a beautiful theatre so I'm really looking forward to getting back and performing there again.

La Cage aux Folles plays at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 16 to Saturday 20 May and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 27 June to Saturday 1 July

Bubbly Black Girl...

Kirsten Childs' intelligent, quirky and hugely entertaining comedy this month heads to Coventry's Belgrade Theatre

On 15 September 1963, four girls were murdered in an infamous Ku Klux Klan terror attack in Birmingham, Alabama. The bombing marked a major turning point in American racial politics, contributing to the passing of the Civil Rights Act the following year.

But not everyone was au fait with the movement at the time. A combination of fear, denial and internalised racism prevented many from reacting, at least openly, to the event. Among them is Kirsten Childs' semi-autobiographical heroine Viveca Stanton, the title character in her Offie Award-nominated musical, The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin. Fully aware that any one of those dead girls might have been her, Viveca decides that she'll protect herself by 'being white'. Assuming the unthreatening nickname 'Bubbly', she restyles herself as a giggling optimist floating through life, shielded from its harsh realities by relentlessly positive thinking.

Following a run at London's Theatre Royal Stratford East, this intelligent, quirky and hugely entertaining comedy heads for Coventry's Belgrade Theatre this month.

"I think at a young age, Viveca is very sheltered," says Karis Jack, who plays her, sharing the role with co-star Sophia Mackay. "She's not necessarily aware of all the things that some of her school friends are aware of."

Partly, this is down to background and protective parenting. As a middle-class girl living in LA, Viveca doesn't witness the kind of direct violence that would have been a daily reality for many in the '60s. Yet throughout her life, she's still subtly undermined by stereotyping and discrimination. Rather than confronting this head-on, however, her father encourages her to keep smiling and try to ignore what's happening. Her mother, on the other hand, is not convinced that's healthy.

"That conflict creates a dichotomy within the child," explains Trevor A Toussaint, who plays Daddy. "She starts wondering, 'Who am I? What's wrong with me aspiring to be like a white person? Why are black people telling me that I'm wrong?' I think the reason this show really resonates with people is because it's about that whole question of, 'Am I good enough?'"

In Act One, this dichotomy is represented through Viveca's conversations with her Chitty Chatty - a talking, white-skinned doll in a frilly dress with bright blue eyes and flowing blonde hair, which she favours over her short-haired black doll, dressed in a pair of red dungarees.

"As a young girl, Viveca aspires to be like Chitty Chatty," says Jessica Pardoe, who brings the doll to life on stage. "It's actually based on a test that was done with children where they were given two dolls of different colours and asked which they preferred. There are recordings of these kids speaking really openly about it and it's quite shocking."

Known as the Clark Test, this experiment was initially run in the late 1930s by psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark. Regardless of their own race or background, the vast majority of children expressed a preference for the white doll, selecting it as "good" and "pretty" while the black doll was picked out as "bad" and "ugly". The evidence this provided of internalised racism came to be used in the landmark 1954 Civil Rights case Brown v Board of Education, credited with ending segregation in American schools. Yet more than half a century later, repeat experiments have continued to show similar results, and not only in the US.

In Act Two, meanwhile, Viveca's internal conflict is physically depicted when Jack, who plays her as a child and teenager, joins the adult Viveca - as played by Mackay - on stage, representing the character's unspoken inner thoughts.

This isn't the only way Viveca changes over time. Spanning four decades of history, the show sees her try on multiple guises, from taking tips from her Black Panther schoolmate to hanging out with a crowd of hippies, and from working as a typist to giving big-shot directors what she thinks they want in dance auditions. And then there are the desperately

by Heather Kincaid

inappropriate boyfriends...

“My character is a very different sort of person than Viveca has ever met before,” says Llandyll Gove, who plays the magnificently named Cosmic Rainbow. “It doesn't really matter to him who she is or what colour she is. But there's a really cringeworthy scene where he meets her mum. I suppose in his head, he's trying to be on their level and say the things that he thinks they would want to hear.”

“Lucas believes he is a sexy, smooth, charismatic guy who will get any lady he wants if he does his chat-up lines, and it works for him with Viveca,” says Ashley Joseph, who plays the self-styled lothario. “It's all based on something that his grandma told him when he was a kid, which he probably didn't fully understand at the time.”

In many respects, Lucas functions as a warped mirror image of Viveca, breezing through life responsibility-free, having constructed a persona that protects him from worrying about the world around him. This realisation is a big step towards Viveca’s eventual awakening.

“The important part of the title is that she sheds her chameleon skin,” says Jay Marsh, who plays her nice-guy next-door neighbour Gregory. “Everyone is a bit of a chameleon - you're different when you're with your friends to when you're at work. We all put up these fronts to be accepted.”

“It's very much about identity,” agrees Matt Dempsey, who plays the young Viveca's unconsciously racist old ballet teacher, as well as the slightly creepy Broadway doyen, Director Bob. “Yes, race is a very deep-rooted theme, and it’s Kirsten writing about what she felt, but that struggle with identity is something that we can all relate to.”

It's not just Viveca who changes with the times either. The show also features a fabulous and totally unique score that echoes pop trends through the decades, from ’60s Motown to ’80s power ballads.

“It's really interesting and not like anything I've ever done before, especially in terms of how it was put together,” says Shelley Williams, who plays Viveca's lighter-skinned ballet classmate Yolanda, as well as Lucas' “evil” Granny. “Kirsten didn't write notated music, so she recorded herself singing each line of the harmonies on different tape recorders, and then put them all together.”

“People who know their music will be able to hear how complex the harmonies are,” adds Gove, “and I think maybe someone who wrote music wouldn't have written them like that. It's quite challenging - sometimes every line could almost be a separate song.”

Above all, though, this is a show that's thoroughly good fun, underlined by a wicked sense of humour which emerges partly from the musical theatre conventions which Viveca's artificial cheeriness simultaneously exploits and subverts. It's also a classic coming-of-age tale, with all the usual comically clumsy awkwardness of adolescence.

“Despite the fact that it's so layered, and that's the beautiful thing about it, it still is a really fun night out,” says Williams. “There are some great numbers, great singing, and at the evening shows, we can hear the audiences laughing all the way through. People are going away having had an amazing time, and that's really important to us.”

The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin shows at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Wednesday 5 to Saturday 15 April

Gary Delaney

Solihull's king of the one-liner talks Twitterati, visualisation, and why Midlands audiences are amongst the best...

In a meme-dominated era, half the country seems to fancy themselves comedians on the internet. But though Twitter offers users the possibility of fleeting fame for one good gag, social media stars fall as quickly as they rise. And as the pros like Gary Delaney will tell you, sustaining that success is where the real hard graft comes in, from slogging through the touring admin to making sure he writes enough to use online and in live sets.

Solihull's own king of the one-liner is among those who've made the most of the new medium, ideally suited to the pithy, well-formed jokes he favours. But there are difficulties, too. Ahead of his forthcoming stand-up show at the Old Rep Theatre, we spoke to Delaney about the internet, memory palaces and how to craft the perfect show.

"When I started on Twitter back in 2008, nobody was putting jokes on it, and other comics thought I was mad for giving away material for free," explains Gary. "But I very quickly built up a decent base on there, and when I did my first Edinburgh show in 2010, about a quarter of the tickets were sold to people who had seen my stuff online. Now everybody puts jokes on Twitter, it's nowhere near as effective."

Being drowned out by Twitterati vying for attention isn't the only pitfall for a

creative on social media today. As Twitter use has expanded and his followers have swelled in number to more than 60,000, Delaney's had to be more circumspect about what he shares, so as not to spoil material for his gigs. Moreover, he's had run-ins with other websites publishing his jokes without consent and failing to credit him as the original author.

“Many years ago a comic would have 20 minutes of killer jokes that would serve them for their career. Unless they did them on Saturday night telly, they could carry on using them in the clubs for years and nobody would know or mind because audiences changed so much. Now your best stuff gets burnt really quickly because even if you've never shared it publicly yourself, other people will put it online. It's frustrating, but I think on balance I've probably gained more in marketing than I've lost in material, and ultimately something that forces you to keep writing a junkload of new material helps make you a better writer.”

In the case of a comic who trades on quickfire wordplay, “junkload” might well be an understatement. Each new show contains around 200 jokes sifted out from literally thousands of discarded ideas.

“It takes me about three years to write a new show, so I don't feel any shame in trying to squeeze two years out of a tour! I'm basically always trying to write jokes, though I do it a bit more attentively when I've got to get a new show together. The jokes themselves just come from things I hear - I used to carry a notebook around but now I just jot things down in my phone.

“Every week or two, I'll book myself into a new-material night somewhere - often the Birmingham Glee or the Manchester Comedy Store. Then I'll take my list of ideas, pick maybe 20 or 30 that I think have legs, write them up into proper jokes and read them out on the night to find the best ones. From there, I'll get it down to about the best third, which I'll start dropping in at the beginning of current tour shows, and then I'll probably lose another two-thirds. So it's roughly the best third of the best third that actually end up in the show.”

Writing them is one thing, but remembering 200 unconnected jokes while up on stage without a prompt is quite another. For comedians who tell stories or deal with themes or issues, at least one thought will follow naturally from another. But for a one-liner specialist like Delaney, the pressure's even greater.

“I don't actually have a great natural memory, but I knew a few comics had explored this before, and I read up on memory systems, mainly in a book called Moonwalking with Einstein. You know how on Sherlock he has his 'Memory Palace'? Well, it's exaggerated in that, but they're actually a real thing. It's what the Greeks and the Romans used to use before printing, when academics had to learn these huge amounts of data.

“It's all based on visualisation. The human brain is still a caveman's brain, which is why it's much easier for us to learn locations than numbers and words. So you take what you already know, and you map what you want to learn onto it. When I do a show, every joke is stored in my head as a mental image of different points around my house, beginning with when I wake up in bed in the morning, and ending with when I walk out of my front door. I'm pretty sure every one-liner comic uses some variation on this. It probably takes me about five hours to fully memorise a show, but once you've got it, you have a bit of freedom to move around within that.”

This flexibility is crucial for a stand-up, particularly in terms of playing to different sorts of audiences. Delaney is a firm believer in the idea that a good comedian should be able to perform to different crowds in different sorts of venues.

“For me, there's a certain core of about 70 to 80% of a set that always works and is there for everyone, like a skeleton that you can flesh out with additional material. Some crowds are a bit more arty and prefer things more subtle and highbrow; others like things a bit ruder and darker. Personally I like to have a bit of both because it gives texture to the show, but often I'll lean a bit more one way or the other. The biggest laughs come when an audience finds you 'cheeky', and that's not always going to be the same point.”

Of course, when you're trying to edit down, it helps to be married to a successful comedy colleague. In 2013, Delaney married Sarah Millican, and while testing material out on loved ones is a “wearying” rookie error, having someone to come along with you to new-material nights and give constructive criticism is a definite bonus.

“Generally you already know whether something has worked or not anyway, so the most useful notes are suggestions for how you might fix something that didn't quite work, or even just noticing that the reason a certain joke didn't land was because somebody opened a door at the back of the room and nobody heard the punchline.”

Originally hailing from near Birmingham, and having performed his first professional gig in Moseley, it's perhaps not surprising that the West Midlands (along with his wife's native North East) is among his favourite places to tour.

“Comics always say their favourite crowds are whoever they're trying to sell tickets to, but I do genuinely look forward to Brum, Coventry, Newcastle and Sunderland because they're really fun and up for it. Nobody's so up their own bottom that they take things seriously and get offended, but they're still sharp enough to get something that's a little bit subtler, so that gives you more variety in the sort of jokes you can do.”

Gary Delaney plays the Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, on Thursday 6 May

'Absolutely electrifying!' - READ THE ★★★★★ REVIEW AT WHATSONLIVE.CO.UK

Billy Elliot

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 29 April

Based on the hit movie of the same name, Billy Elliot is set in the north east of England against the backdrop of the historic 1980s miners' strike.

Billy wants to be a dancer but feels that he must keep his ambition secret, to avoid the disapproval of his struggling family...

The award-winning show - it's bagged 10 Tonys and five Olivier Awards - features the iconic music of Sir Elton John and is here visiting the Midlands as part of its first ever UK tour.

"Billy Elliot tells two different stories about trying to overcome adversity," says Scott Garnham, who plays Billy's older brother and local strike ringleader, Tony. "One is about a little boy trying to escape his environment, the other is about the strike. And where one succeeds, the other fails spectacularly.

"When we take the show to places near mining communities, I feel like they really get what we're trying to say with our story. In Sunderland, you could see fully-grown men crying in the audience when we talked about how there'd be no pits left in 10 years' time."

To Sir, With Love

The REP, Birmingham,
Tues 25 April - Sat 6 May

ER Braithwaite's novel is best known from its 1967 film version, which saw Hollywood heavyweight Sidney Poitier crossing the Atlantic to star as a black rookie teacher trying to make a difference in a rough East End school. Lulu co-starred as one of the students and enjoyed a massive hit with the movie's title track. Adapted for the stage by East Is East playwright Ayub Khan-Din, the play is here being presented by The Young REP.

The Testament Of Mary

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham,
Wed 12 - Sat 15 April

Three-time Booker Prize nominee Colm Tóibín's 2013 novella is here adapted for the stage and presented by the production team behind the venue's immersive promenade show, A Passion For Birmingham.

Years after Christ's death, his mother Mary is under pressure to support the claim that her son was the Messiah. But Mary is grieving for her loss, and can't bring herself to believe that the child she bore was actually the Son of God...

Noise

The Old Rep, Birmingham,
Thurs 13 -
Sat 15 April

"Noise discusses topics in the LGBTQ community and emphasises the importance for communication and connection," explains its writer, Thomas Moran. "It follows the story of two young boys who, in the midst of the madness of their first year at university, begin a relationship. It's a heartwarming story of love, loss and togetherness."

Moran has turned to crowdfunding to help get this particular show on the road.

Noise follows on from his previous project, a short film funded by O2 which he wrote, directed, filmed and edited himself.

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Out Of Order

New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Mon 10 - Sat 15 April

Take a cast of familiar television faces and a storyline that involves a government minister, a dead body and some truly delightful lingerie, and what do you get?...
A Ray Cooney farce, that's what.
Cooney's best-known work is long-running West Ender Run For Your Wife, the success of which has led to the 84-year-old playwright being labelled 'the master of farce'.
Shaun Williamson (EastEnders, Extras) and Sue Holderness (Only Fools & Horses, Green Green Grass) top the bill in this retitled revival of the 1980 show, Whose Wife Is It Anyway?

Private Lives

Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Tues 25 - Sat 29 April

Written in 1930 with all of his humourous élan, Private Lives is one of Noel Coward's sharpest comedies. It tells of a divorced couple - Amanda and Elyot - who meet each other again on their second honeymoons in Deauville, and begin to consider dumping their new loves to try and rekindle their relationship.
Typically replete with Coward one-liners, Private Lives is a cynical portrayal of married life, infidelity, selfishness and insecurity.

Ready Or Not

mac, Birmingham, Wed 5 - Thurs 6 April

Kali Theatre further enhance their reputation for championing groundbreaking new stagework by South Asian women with this touring production of Naylah Ahmed's pacy political thriller. Telling the story of a retired and tormented teacher who takes hostage an idealistic young Muslim, the show contemplates the way in which feelings of fear and paranoia are nowadays enhanced by the distorted version of reality presented in blogs, chatrooms and via the 24-hour global news cycle.

Julius Caesar

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 9 September

This bloody story of conspiracy and murder, noble intentions and ignoble actions begins the RSC's Rome season.
When Caesar is assassinated by a group of prominent senators, one of his staunchest supporters, Mark Antony, manages not only to turn the crowd against the conspirators but also to defeat them in battle...
Angus Jackson returns to the directorial chair following his sell-out RSC productions of Oppenheimer (2014) and last year's Don Quixote.

Fracked!

Malvern Theatre, Mon 24 - Sat 29 April

Political satirist Alistair Beaton makes a welcome return with this provocative new comedy. Retired academic Elizabeth decides it's time to take action when the idyllic English village in which she lives is threatened by an energy company intent on drilling for shale gas. By comparison, Elizabeth's husband Jack is intent on leading a quiet life...
One-time Likely Lad and New Tricks favourite James Bolam stars alongside Last Tango In Halifax's Anne Reid.

The Underground Man

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Fri 21 - Sat 22 April

Mick Jackson's 1997 Booker-shortlisted novel is here adapted by Nick Wood. It tells the story of William John Cavendish Scott-Bentinck, an eccentric English aristocrat well known both for his reclusive behaviour and his curious development projects. It was one such project - an extensive network of underground tunnels - that inspired the title shared by the original novel and this subsequent play.

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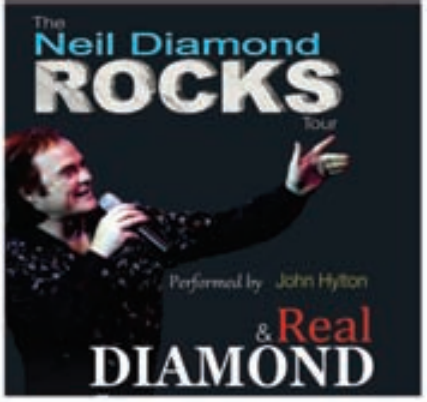

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What's On

Mamma Mia!

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 18 - Sat 29 April 2017; Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, Tues 6 - Sat 24 February 2018

This legendary show is of course a nicely contrived vehicle for the chart-topping music of 1970s Super Troupers Abba.
The Swedish Fab Four scored mega-hit after mega-hit with catchy numbers including Waterloo, Dancing Queen, The Name Of The Game, The Winner Takes It All and Take A Chance On Me, all of which are present and correct in this blockbuster offering.
A 2008 movie version of the show received a thumbs up from many if not most of Mamma Mia!'s adoring fans - despite former James Bond star Pierce Brosnan having rather unwisely been given a Licence to Sing...

Sunny Afternoon

The Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, Tues 18 - Sat 22 April

This clever homage to Swinging '60s superstars The Kinks has been wowing audiences and critics in equal measure since opening in the West End in 2014 - so much so, in fact, that it won the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Musical.
Adapted from Joe Penhall's book, with an original story by Kinks guitarist, vocalist and songwriter Ray Davies, it features plenty of the band's best-known tunes, including iconic tracks You Really Got Me, Waterloo Sunset, Dedicated Follower Of Fashion, All Day And All Of The Night and Lola.

The Emperor's New Clothes

Lichfield Garrick, Tues 11 April

Stuff And Nonsense Theatre Company pride themselves on presenting shows that are 'energetic, thought-provoking and playfully mischievous'.
Their adaptation of this much-loked cautionary tale certainly ticks all of those boxes.
When a clothes-loving emperor declares he hasn't a stitch to wear - despite owning a wardrobe 'the size of Paris' - two 'designers' create an outfit that will see him making quite a spectacle of himself... The show is suitable for children aged three-plus.

Dial M For Murder

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Fri 28 April - Sat 20 May

Frederick Knott's erotic tale of betrayal, passion and murder is best known from its 1954 Alfred Hitchcock-directed film version starring Ray Milland and Grace Kelly.
When Tony becomes convinced that wife Sheila is having an affair, he devises a means of having her murdered while at the same time ensuring he has a watertight alibi. But not everything goes according to plan...

Up Pompei

Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, Thurs 6 - Fri 7 April

Ambient Night Productions make a welcome return with this stage adaptation of the cult television series starring Frankie Howerd.
The half-hour comedy show was originally screened in the late 1960s and saw Howerd - in the guise of his character, a slave named Lurcio - regularly breaking the fourth wall and speaking directly to the audience.
The stage show contains adult humour that may not be suitable for young children, so parental discretion is advised.

The Verdict

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 18 - Sat 22 April; Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, Tues 2 - Sat 6 May

Barry Reed's novel scored such a hit that it was made into an Oscar-nominated movie a mere two years after being published. Paul Newman and James Mason starred.
When washed-up lawyer Frank Galvin takes on a medical malpractice case that nobody thinks he can win, he finds unexpected salvation from the addiction to drink that's ruining his life...
Well-known television actors Clive Mantle (Casualty) and Jack Shepherd (Wycliffe) take top billing in this Middle Ground Theatre Company adaptation of the book.

Twitter Art Exhibit 2017

The ArtsHouse 14 Rother Street Stratford upon Avon CV37 6LU

Charity Sale of postcard sized art from around the world

OPENING NIGHT SALE: 1 April 2017 6-9pm
Exhibition 2-19 April 2017

Opening Times:

2 Sun	1-6	12 Wed	10-4
3 Mon	10-4	13 Thur	1-4
4 Tues	10-4	14 Fri	10-4
5 Wed	10-4	15 Sat	2-6
6 Thur	10-4	16 Sun	1-4
7 Fri	10-4	17 Mon	10-4
8 Sat	2-6	18 Tues	10-4
9 Sun	10-4	19 Wed	1-4
10 Mon	10-4		
11 Tues	10-4		

Twitter Art Exhibit is an annual global charity art sale which is held in a different country each year to help fundraise for a chosen charity. In 2017 TAE is, for the first time, in England and supporting Molly Olly's Wishes who help children with terminal and serious illnesses through making their 'wishes' come true and supplying therapeutic toys and books.

All the postcard sized art on sale has been donated by artists from around the world (this year 1000 pieces of art have arrived from 60 countries!). Come along and view some beautiful art and, by buying it, help support children and their families going through the darkest of times.

www.twitterartexhibit.org
www.mollyolly.co.uk

#tae TWITTER ART EXHIBIT

Molly Olly's wishes

LETS ROCK SHREWSBURY

THE RETRO FESTIVAL

27th May 2017 | The Quarry

BILLY OCEAN ABC TONY HADLEY
HEAVEN 17 NICK HEYWARD
NIK KERSHAW T'PAU THE REAL THING
ALTERED IMAGES BROTHER BEYOND JAKI GRAHAM

The 80s returns to Shrewsbury as The RETRO Festival comes to The Quarry on Saturday 27th May 2017. **Let's Rock Shrewsbury!** offers a huge line-up of artists to bring you the very best of the 80s, and with an action packed day of general retro madness, there's loads to do for everyone at this Family Friendly Festival.

For that extra special day out our VIP tickets allow access to a funky 80s themed VIP enclosure, where you can kick back and relax in our comfy chill out zone or enjoy the outdoor seating area.

Fancy dress is recommended, but not compulsory!

For further information and to book tickets: www.**letsrockshrewsbury**.com and at **Theatre Severn**

www.**letsrockshrewsbury**.com

Child Bereavement UK

Lori Hopkins: The Explorer

mac, Birmingham, Wed 12 April

The Explorer of the title is a hand-carved string puppet who, having crash-landed on an unusual island inhabited by wild beasts, finds herself involved in all manner of adventures - one of which sees her experiencing a rather bumpy elephant ride!
Puppeteer Lori Hopkins is the woman pulling the strings in a show that's followed by an interactive question-and-answer session for youngsters aged between three and eight.

Winnie And Wilbur

**The REP, Birmingham,
Fri 31 March - Sat 22 April**

There's magic aplenty to enjoy in this brand new show. And why wouldn't there be, given that one of its two lead characters is a spell-casting witch? Winnie's her name and waving a magic wand is her game - as is wearing bright stripy tights, eating pumpkin soup and adoring her big black cat, Wilbur...
Bringing to life the picture-book characters created by Valerie Thomas and Korky Paul, Mike Kenny's stage show features songs, laughs and slapstick fun for children aged three and older.

Fantastic Mr Fox

**Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Tues 18 - Sat 22 April**

Roald Dahl's much-loved story follows the desperate efforts of three 'greedy, smelly, horrid' farmers to do away with the fox who regularly steals food from their farms.
But Boggis, Bunce and Bean have bitten off more than they can chew in trying to outwit the fantastic Mr Fox...
The show is suitable for children aged five-plus.

Monstersaurus

Bridge House Theatre, Warwick, Tues 11 April

Having created a whole world of whacky inventions and incredible monsters, young inventor Monty doesn't know what to do with them all...
The creators of Aliens Love Underpants make a welcome return with this brand new and 'monster-ously good show', which comes complete with original music and plenty of audience participation.

The Little Mermaid

**The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford,
Mon 10 April**

'A brand new musical pantomime adventure' is how this stage adaptation of the famous Hans Christian Andersen story is being described. It's presented by the globe-trotting Panto Company, visiting the Midlands after recently completing a sell-out tour of China. Expect 'stunning' scenery, 'eye-catching' costumes, 'fantastic' songs and loads of audience participation.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

The Core, Solihull, Thurs 13 April

Eric Carle's 1969 story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar has been translated into more than 60 languages, selling in excess of 52 million copies.
This stage version of Carle's much-loved tale is presented alongside three other popular children's stories by the same author - The Artist Who Painted A Blue Horse, Mister Seahorse and The Very Lonely Firefly. The show features no fewer than 75 'lovable' puppets.

Elmer

mac, Birmingham, Sat 15 - Thurs 20 April

Suitable for children aged three-plus, this lively production tells the story of a patchwork elephant who determines to hide his 'true colours' in an effort to blend in, only to find that he feels happiest when he's simply being himself. The faith-based Riverside Performing Arts ensemble is the company behind this latest stage presentation of David McKee's much-loved creation

The Tap Dancing Mermaid

Malvern Theatre, Wed 5 Apr; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Sat 15 April

Puppets, original live music and (of course) tap dancing all feature in this critically acclaimed touring production for youngsters aged three and older. A one-woman show originated by Tessa Bide, it sees the Moon recounting the story of a tap dancer shuffling and stomping on the boardwalk to the sounds of the sea. But one moonlit night, the dancer meets a mysterious boy swimming in the ocean, and her life is changed forever...

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BALLET theatre uk

ALICE [In WonderLand]

April 2017
20th - Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa
21st - The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury
May 2017
4th - Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock
5th - The Swan Theatre, Worcester
June 2017
1st - The Core, Solihull
3rd - The Palace Theatre, Redditch

www.BalletTheatreUK.com

dx DanceXchange

April at DanceXchange

Thursday 6 - Friday 7 Apr, 8pm
James Cousins Company
ROSALIND
Shakespeare's heroine re-imagined
"A soulful search for gender identity"
JAKARTA POST

Wednesday 26 - Thursday 27 Apr, 8pm
Joli Vyann
IMBALANCE
Circus, acrobatic skills and athletic dance
THE HERALD ★★★★
FEST MAG ★★★★

Tickets from £8
50% off Season Offer – see website

DanceXchange at The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome
0844 338 5000 dancexchange.org.uk

Pasha Kovalev

Lichfield Garrick, Sun 2 April
Grand Theatre, W'hampton, Sun 9 April
Royal Spa Centre, Thurs 13 April
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 17 April
Prince Of Wales Centre, Wed 19 April
Malvern Theatre, Fri 19 May
The Core, Solihull, Tues 23 - Wed 24 May
Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Thurs 25 May

The romance of the rumba, the joy of the jive and the power of the paso doble are brilliantly exemplified by Strictly star Pasha Kovalev in this brand new touring show.

Pasha is joined by four talented dancers and his long-time dance partner Anya Garnis, herself a former Strictly star, for an evening that sees the much-loved performer bringing together 'experiences in dance with those in life'.

Alice In Wonderland

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 7 April; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington, Thurs 20 April Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 21 April; Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, Thur 4 May; The Swan Theatre, Worcester, Fri 5 May; The Core, Solihull, Thurs 1 June; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Sat 3 June

Leicestershire-based Ballet Theatre UK have built their impressive reputation on producing accessible stagework inspired by classical dance, theatre, popular culture and literature.

The company's currently touring take on Lewis Carroll's much-loved children's book is brimming with wit, humour and charm. And as you'd expect, it also comes complete with the story's familiar cast of out-of-this-world characters, including the White Rabbit, the Mad Hatter and the Queen of Hearts.

Out Of This World

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 25 - Wed 26 April

A 'woozy descent into the depths of a medically induced coma' is chronicled in this genre-defying piece from Mark Murphy. The acclaimed writer and director once again brings to bear his trademark blend of original text, special effects and aerial choreography to pay an action-packed visit into the dark recesses of the human mind.

Described as 'both intense psychological thriller and heartrending medical drama', the 80-minute show is performed without an interval by Murphy's critically acclaimed V-TOL company.

Rosalind

DanceXchange, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 6 - Fri 7 April

Winner of the inaugural New Adventures Choreographer Award in 2011, James Cousins' ensemble visit the region with a show created in collaboration with Korean dancers and artists. The piece follows its eponymous central character - a courageous woman modelled on the headstrong heroine of Shakespeare's As You Like It - as she embarks on a journey of self-discovery in a modern-day metropolis.

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BASEMENT JAXX
jonas BLUE
Gabrielle
Sigala.
LOUISA JOHNSON
SOPHIE ELLIS-BEXTOR
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Guardians Of The Galaxy Vol. 2 CERT tbc

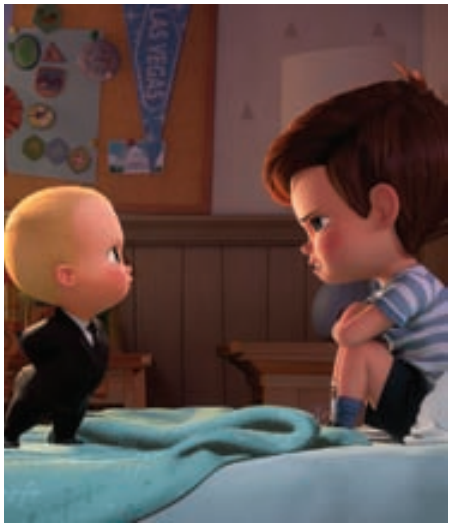
Starring **Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana, Dave Bautista,** with the voices of **Vin Diesel, Bradley Cooper, and Kurt Russell, Karen Gillan, Elizabeth Debicki, Sylvester Stallone, Glenn Close** Directed by **James Gunn (USA)**

The fifteenth film in the so-called Marvel Cinematic Universe, this tongue-in-cheek intergalactic joyride continues where the last one left off. Cosmic cop Peter Quill (Chris Pratt) is still trying to sort out his genealogy, along with the irascible racoon Rocket (voiced by Bradley Cooper) and the walking tree 'Baby Groot' that sounds like Vin Diesel. It's different. The first film was a blast of fresh air and will be a hard act to follow, but at least the original writer-director, James Gunn, is back at the helm. Gunn was hoping to talk David Bowie into a cameo, but that was not to be.

Released Fri 28 April

CRITIC'S CHOICE

Film highlights released in April...



The Boss Baby CERT U (97 mins)

With the voices of **Alec Baldwin, Miles Bakshi, Steve Buscemi, Jimmy Kimmel, Lisa Kudrow, Tobey Maguire** Directed by **Tom McGrath (USA)**

Like policemen, animated characters just seem to get younger and younger. The protagonist of this cartoon is a baby in a suit with a briefcase. But can he stop the shenanigans of the CEO of Puppy Co. from undermining the primal force of love? Based on the picture book by Marla Frazee.

Released Fri 7 April

City Of Tiny Lights

CERT **15 (110 mins)**

Starring **Riz Ahmed, James Floyd, Billie Piper, Cush Jumbo, Roshan Seth** Directed by **Pete Travis (UK)**

The city in question is London, a teeming multicultural metropolis and the beat of Asian private eye Tommy Akhtar (Ahmed). When a prostitute goes missing, it leads Tommy into a very dangerous world of religious fanaticism. Based on the 2005 novel by Patrick Neate.

Released Fri 7 April

Going In Style CERT 12a (96 mins)

Starring **Morgan Freeman, Michael Caine, Alan Arkin, Joey King, Matt Dillon, Ann-Margret** Directed by **Zach Braff (USA)**

Bearing in mind the age of the septuagenarian thieves who broke into the jewellery vault in London's Hatton Garden in 2015, this grey-haired heist comedy is not so far-fetched. The actor Zach Braff previously directed Garden State and Wish I Was Here.

Released Fri 7 April

Film highlights released in April...

Fast & Furious 8

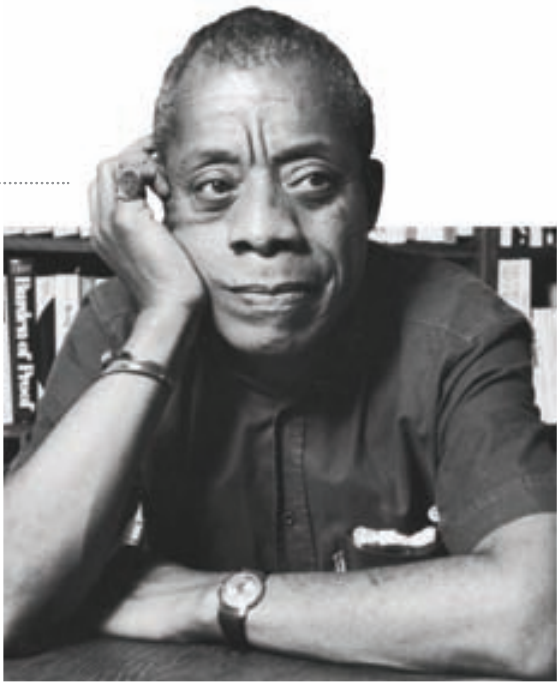
CERT **tbc**

Starring **Vin Diesel, Dwayne Johnson, Jason Statham, Michelle Rodriguez, Tyrese Gibson, Chris Bridges, Nathalie Emmanuel, Kurt Russell, Scott Eastwood, Charlize Theron, Helen Mirren** Directed by **F. Gary Gray (USA)**

It's hard to imagine how Universal Pictures could have upped the ante of Furious 7, but they've had a go. Here, they've thrown a couple of Oscar-winning actresses into the mix and made Dominic Toretto (Vin Diesel) a bad boy. The latter is seduced into a world of crime by a mysterious woman and is forced to betray those closest to him – and all off the back of his honeymoon with Letty (Michelle Rodriguez). Who would have thought that Dom could be so weak? The new director is F. Gary Gray, the force behind the critically applauded Straight Outta Compton, and locations include Iceland, Cuba, Atlanta, Cleveland and New York City. The last film, Fast & Furious 7, is now the sixth highest-grossing movie of all time.

Released Fri 14 April

CRITIC'S CHOICE



I Am Not Your Negro

CERT **tbc**

Narrated by **Samuel L. Jackson**
Directed by **Raoul Peck (USA/France)**

Nominated for the Oscar for best documentary, Raoul Peck's film traces the history of racism in modern America through the recollections of the civil rights leaders Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. The words are provided by the late, great James Baldwin, adapted from his unfinished memoir Remember This House.

Released Fri 7 April

A Quiet Passion

CERT **12a (128 mins)**

Starring **Cynthia Nixon, Jennifer Ehle, Duncan Duff, Emma Bell, Keith Carradine, Jodhi May** Directed by **Terence Davies (UK/Belgium)**

Britain's critically favoured filmmaker Terence Davies now turns his attention to the life of Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), the reclusive American poet. The reviews so far have been extremely positive.

Released Fri 7 April

Raw CERT 18 (88 mins)

Starring **Garance Marillier, Ella Rumpf, Rabah Naït Oufella, Laurent Lucas, Joana Preiss** Directed by **Julia Ducournau (France/Belgium)**

At veterinary college, a vegetarian is forced to undergo a carnivorous hazing ritual. Afterwards, she discovers that she has developed a liking for human flesh... An award-winner at both the Cannes and London film festivals, Raw nevertheless caused a rumpus when it screened in Toronto. Paramedics were called out to treat a couple of more sensitive viewers.

Released Fri 7 April

Table 19 CERT 12a (87 mins)

Starring **Anna Kendrick, Craig Robinson, June Squibb, Lisa Kudrow, Stephen Merchant** Directed by **Jeffrey Blitz (USA)**

Eloise McGarry (Anna Kendrick) was to be the maid of honour at her friend's wedding when the best man changed his mind. She's then relegated to Table 19 at the reception, along with all the other outsiders that the happy couple hoped wouldn't turn up. The romcom did not receive kind reviews from the American press.

Released Fri 7 April

Peppa Pig: My First Cinema Experience

CERT **U (73 mins)**

With the voices of **Harley Bird, Macey Danger, Morwenna Banks, David Mitchell, Jo Brand**
Directed by **Mark Baker (UK)**

Peppa does get around. Here, the peripatetic pig visits London and meets the Queen and also pops down to Australia to catch up with her old friend Kylie Kangaroo. Not so much a cinematic experience as nine short episodes strung together. Expect a few nursery rhymes.

Released Fri 7 April

Unforgettable

CERT **15 (100 mins)**

Starring **Katherine Heigl, Rosario Dawson, Geoff Stults, Isabella Rice, Cheryl Ladd**
Directed by **Denise Di Novi (USA)**

Mentally unstable, recent divorcee Tessa Connover (Katherine Heigl) sets out to make the life of her former husband and his new fiancée absolute hell. Expect some pretty strong sex.

Released Fri 21 April

The Sense Of An Ending

CERT **15 (108 mins)**

Starring **Jim Broadbent, Harriet Walter, Michelle Dockery, Emily Mortimer, Matthew Goode, Charlotte Rampling**
Directed by **Ritesh Batra (UK/USA)**

A man facing old age looks back on his past and braces himself for the permutations of what has gone before... Based on the critically acclaimed novel by Julian Barnes.

Released Fri 14 April

Their Finest CERT 12a (117 mins)

Starring **Gemma Arterton, Sam Claflin, Bill Nighy, Jack Huston, Helen McCrory, Eddie Marsan, Richard E. Grant**
Directed by **Lone Scherfig (UK)**

In the early 1940s, a team of filmmakers get together to make a propaganda picture in the hope of boosting British morale. Based on Lissa Evans' 2009 novel Their Finest Hour and a Half. From the director of An Education, One Day and The Riot Club.

Released Fri 21 April

Rules Don't Apply

CERT **12a (127 mins)**

Starring **Warren Beatty, Lily Collins, Alden Ehrenreich, Annette Bening, Alec Baldwin, Matthew Broderick, Candice Bergen** Directed by **Warren Beatty (USA)**

Howard Hughes (Warren Beatty) applies strict rules to his staff: nobody in his employ is allowed to dally with an actress. But then Hughes' driver Frank (Alden Ehrenreich) meets the gorgeous Baptist virgin Marla Mabrey (Lily Collins) who is on the brink of appearing in the movies...

Released Fri 21 April

Heal The Living

CERT **12a (104 mins)**

Starring **Tahar Rahim, Emmanuelle Seigner, Anne Dorval, Bouli Lanners**
Directed by **Katell Quillévéré (France/Belgium)**

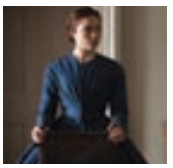
Accidents will happen. Here, the victim of a car crash draws different people together over the prospect of an organ transplant. Based on the award-winning 2014 novel by Maylis de Kerangal.

Released Fri 28 April

Lady Macbeth CERT tbc

Starring **Florence Pugh, Cosmo Jarvis, Paul Hilton, Naomi Ackie, Christopher Fairbank**
Directed by **William Oldroyd (UK)**

In nineteenth-century Northern England, a young woman is sold into marriage with a middle-aged man. Subjected to a subordinate role in the household, and not subjected to any carnal pleasure, young Katherine finds her thoughts turning to murder... This is not the first film adapted from Nikolai Leskov's 1865 novella, but it is the first in English. And the critics have liked it enormously.



Released Fri 28 April

The Promise CERT 12a (133 mins)

Starring **Oscar Isaac, Charlotte Le Bon, Christian Bale, Daniel Giménez Cacho, Shohreh Aghdashloo, Tom Hollander**
Directed by **Terry George (Spain/USA)**

In 1914, during the final days of the Ottoman Empire, a love triangle plays out between an Armenian medical student (Oscar Isaac), an Armenian-born woman raised in France (Charlotte Le Bon) and an American journalist (Christian Bale). From the director of Some Mother's Son, Hotel Rwanda and Reservation Road.

Released Fri 28 April

Works Of Mercy

The Barber Institute, Birmingham, Fri 7 April - Sun 21 May

Italian-born Birmingham-based photographer Attilio Fiumarella has used a 17th century painting by Caravaggio as his starting point for this thought-provoking exhibition.

Caravaggio's depiction of the seven corporal acts of mercy in traditional Catholic belief has inspired Fiumarella to create a series of dramatic images.

His 14 photographs depict homeless people and prostitutes from the streets of Portugal's second city, Porto.

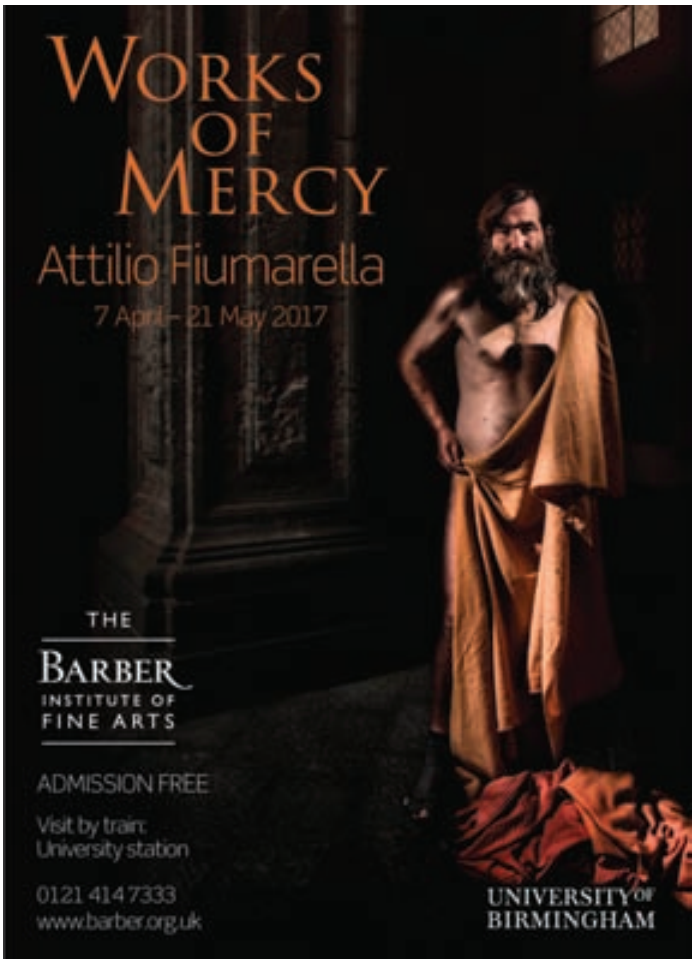
Revealing the constant interplay of light and dark, body and spirit, male and female, life and death, Fiumarella uses his subjects' nakedness or semi-nakedness to highlight their vulnerability. In so doing, he encourages the viewer both to feel compassion for the individuals and to reflect on the values of contemporary society.

Wildly British

Shire Hall Gallery, Stafford, 1 April - 2 July

Lauren van Helmond often utilises unconventional materials when creating her artwork. She takes her inspiration from visits to Heritage sites and the decorative objects she observes during museum visits.

This latest exhibition sees Lauren taking the viewer for 'a surreal wander through the British wilderness'. She does so via a series of paintings, 2D and 3D illustrations and a number of embellished sculptural creations.



I Want! I Want!: Art & Technology

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Sat 1 April - Sat 30 September

The contribution of artists to the social, cultural and technological revolution of the last 20 years is the subject matter of this curated selection of works from the Arts Council Collection.
Taking its title from a print of the same name by visionary artist William Blake, the exhibition includes work by Rachel Maclean, Julian Opie, Ed Atkins, Rose Finn-Kelcey, Thomson and Craighead.
Key loans from other major collections are also featured in the show, which contains adult themes.

Brick Wonders

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, 7 April - 4 July

Although for most people Lego bricks are simply a toy with which to keep small children entertained, for some - including Brick Wonders' exhibitor Warren Elsmore - they're an enjoyable modelling medium.
The versatility of the bricks is much in evidence in Warren's new exhibition, which features models of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
Modern constructions and natural wonders - including the Great Barrier Reef - are also featured in a show that boasts in excess of 70 hugely impressive models.

Oliver Beer

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, until Sun 4 June

A 're-animation' of a scene from Walt Disney's The Jungle Book takes pride of place in this most-comprehensive-to-date exhibition of work by British artist Oliver Beer.
Reanimation (I Wanna Be Like You) was created with the involvement of 2,500 Birmingham children - ranging in age from early years to 13 - each of whom drew a single film still. These were then put in order according to the children's ages, meaning that the animation becomes increasingly 'grown up' as it proceeds.

Thirty-one-year-old Beer has developed an international reputation through his use of film and sculpture - mediums via which he explores his preoccupation with both the physical properties and emotional value of objects.

Ann Sutton: On The Grid

The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent, until Sun 27 August

Developing a reputation for producing cutting-edge work back in the 1960s and '70s, Stoke-born textile artist Ann Sutton remains at the forefront of her craft.
This touring exhibition sees her using the grid as a starting point from which to create three-dimensional drawings - or 'spacial drawings', as she calls them.
"The two-dimensional qualities of drawing were there to be challenged," Ann explains. "Why shouldn't the lines lift off the surface and work with each other, and against each other? The viewer is needed: the slightest movement, even of the eyes alone, results in changing imagery."

Rhyme Around The World

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery, until Sun 7 May

Seven Stories, The National Centre for Children's Books, is the organisation behind this new touring exhibition for pre-school kids.
The display explores verse gathered from across the globe - with a particular focus on nursery rhymes, the most familiar form of children's literature - and provides lots of opportunities for youngsters to play and learn.
There's plenty of delightful artwork to enjoy too, including contributions from Axel Scheffler, who's best known for his numerous book collaborations with Julia Donaldson.

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Disney On Ice Celebrates 100 Years Of Magic

Genting Arena, Birmingham, Wed 12 - Sun 16 April

Get your skates on for the return of Disney's ever-popular ice spectacular, complete with high-energy music, glittering sets and dramatic choreography.

This particular theatrical extravaganza features over 50 of the Mouse House's most popular stars, including Frozen's Anna, Elsa and Olaf, and characters from Mulan, The Lion King and Pinocchio.

Disney/Pixar favourites from Finding Nemo, The Incredibles and Toy Story also take a spin on the ice, in a show that pays homage to a century's-worth of storytelling magic.

Animal-themed Easter Holiday Activities

Across various Ironbridge Gorge Museums sites, Sat 8 - Sun 23 April

There's plenty of 'animal magic' for Easter visitors to enjoy at Ironbridge Gorge Museums.

Themed family activities include Enginuity workshops to make 'sticky critters' and build 'wicked wings', egg dancing and an Easter bonnet parade at Blists Hill Victorian Town (where visitors can also meet working horses and learn about pigs), and animal-themed workshops at the Jackfield Tile and Coalport China museums.

There's also an exotic zoo to visit, complete with snakes, spiders, iguanas and other creepy crawlies.

Check out Ironbridge Gorge's website for the full programme of activities.

Who Do You Think You Are? Live

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 April

The world's largest event of its kind brings together some of the country's most renowned experts in family history, all of whom will be on hand to help visitors with ongoing research or offer advice about how to start an investigation into a family tree.

Other attractions at this latest edition of the popular show include the chance to catch up with Casualty and Strictly Come Dancing favourite Sunetra Sarker, and to go behind the scenes of hit BBC Two series The Victorian Slum.

MotorFest

Weston Park, Staffordshire, Sun 16 - Mon 17 April

Up to 1,000 vehicles, including American classics, classic tractors and stationary engines, feature in this 29th edition of the popular Midlands motor event. Other attractions at the 2017 show include trader and autojumble stalls, a special Easter egg hunt for youngsters, and an interactive arena timetable featuring vehicles from the 1940s to the 1980s.

Vintage music specialists The Glamophones and five-piece rock and soul band The Quik Beats perform live, and there's also the ever-popular Decibel Duel to enjoy, a competition aiming to find the loudest vehicle at the event. Ear plugs at the ready...

130th Flower Show

Shrewsbury Flower Show

Friday 11th & Saturday 12th August 2017

Flowers, Fireworks & Entertainment

with Celebrity Chef John Torode and TV Gardener's Joe Swift & Penny Meadmore

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IRONBRIDGE.ORG.UK

EASTER FAMILY FUN 8 - 23 APRIL

FROM:

MEET THE ANIMALS!

At Blists Hill Victorian Town

TO:

ANIMAL MAGIC!

Exotic Zoo comes to Enginuity

10 AWARD WINNING ATTRACTIONS
IN A WORLD HERITAGE SITE

The Antiques For Everyone Spring Fair

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 6 - Sun 9 April

The 90-year-old English Ceramic Circle provides the feature exhibition at this latest edition of Antiques For Everyone, presenting a display of diverse ceramics from 1640 to 1970. The ever-popular event features more than 200 dealers showcasing their wares. With items ranging in price from as little as £10 right up to £100,000, the four-day fair offers the perfect opportunity to mix the antique with the modern by picking up some unusual gifts.

The Harlem Globetrotters

Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, Fri 14 April

The Harlem Globetrotters have been playing exhibition basketball games for the best part of a century, participating in more than 20,000 matches in 100-plus countries.
This year's touring show boasts a star-studded roster (subject to change) featuring Big Easy Lofton, Ant Atkinson, Hi-Lite Bruton, Thunder Law, Bull Bullard and Cheese Chisholm. Female stars TNT Lister and Ace Jackson also take part. Slam-dunkin' fun is a guarantee.

Insomnia60

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 14 - Mon 17 April

The UK's biggest gaming festival has recently relocated to Birmingham's NEC, having outgrown its previous home at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry.
Insomnia60 is a four-day event combining 'all the best bits of video-gaming'.
The show features LAN gaming halls, a huge exhibition hall, special guests 'doing cool interactive content', large-scale eSports tournaments and a wide selection of activities tailored to gamers of all ages.
Live music on this occasion comes from Years & Years, Chase and Status, Wretch32, Jaguar Skills and Disciples.

Spring Horse Trials

Weston Park, Staffordshire, Sat 8 - Sun 9 April

A well-established element of Weston Park's annual events calendar, the horse trials take place twice a year, in spring and autumn, and incorporate dressage, cross country and show jumping. Commenting on this month's event, joint organiser Janet Plant said: "We've been very lucky with the weather and, between wet days, have put out Weston's courses. The team is really enthusiastic about the April event, and we've had such fun putting 59 portable fences out. It's a real buzz and privilege to design on such a fabulous estate."

Shropshire Scale Modellers' Show

RAF Museum Cosford, Shropshire, Sun 2 April

The well-established Shropshire Scale Modellers return to Cosford this month for their annual show, laying out their intricately detailed models of aircraft, cars, bikes and trucks in the spaces between the venue's on-display collection of aircraft and military vehicles.
The 2017 event has more than 100 modelling clubs and traders in attendance, and provides a wide range of materials and kits for enthusiasts of all ages and abilities.

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Tamworth Castle

Plan your family day out at Tamworth Castle

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday 8th to Friday 21st April

Ruby the Castle Dragon has hidden her eggs from the dastardly dragon hunter. She has been very clever and disguised them, but now she cannot find them! Can you help her spot the eggs around the Castle?

Storytelling with Ruby

Saturday 29th April to Monday 1st May

The storyteller will enchant your children with tales of knights, dragons and princesses. We'd love you to come in your favourite costume and don't forget there's great craft activities too.

St. George's Day

Saturday 22nd April

Celebrate St George's Day in style with fun indoor and outdoor events. Enjoy a Medieval experience with living history at the Castle, play games, learn about weaponry & armour. There's archery, Medieval jousts, street entertainers, an encampment, children's Medieval activities and much more.

Dragon Hunt

Saturday 27th May to Friday 2nd June

Ruby, Tamworth Castle's resident dragon has invited her brother, Hafgrim, to come and stay but he has managed to get himself lost. Help us find him and take part in some fun activities, avoiding the cunning dragon catcher. Great fun for all the family.

LOTTERY FUNDED heritage lottery fund

Tamworth Borough Council

For more information please call 01827 709 618
www.tamworthcastle.co.uk
Tamworth Castle, The Holloway, Tamworth, Staffordshire B79 7NA

St George's Day Celebrations

Tamworth Castle, Staffs, Sat 22 April

There's an interesting job opportunity for animal lovers at this year's St George's Day event - the chance to incubate a dragon egg!
The egg belongs to the new-for-2017 interactive dragon, a highlight among highlights at the ever-popular annual get-together.
The 2017 line-up of entertainment also includes jousting, archery, a living history camp, water and land zorbing and bungee trampolines. There's a dedicated 'children's zone' too, complete with a Robin Hood nerf shootout and an eight-foot inflatable jester. Walkabout characters, a medieval fashion show, children's pottery-making workshops and a puppet show telling the story of the dragon-slaying Beowulf also feature.

Festival Of Power

Santa Pod Raceway, Northamptonshire, Fri 14 - Sun 16 April

Promising a memorable weekend for families and dyed-in-the-wool drag racing fans, Santa Pod's three-day Easter celebration boasts a bumper package of entertainment. As well as enjoying spectacular racing by two and four-wheeled vehicles, visitors to the event can also look on as a huge array of cars and motorcycles hit the national championship trail. Off-track programming includes monster trucks and stunt displays, funfair rides and a family circus.

The Holi Rave Festival

No21 Digbeth, Birmingham, Sat 15 April

The chance to chase friends and strangers with coloured powder is the top attraction at this popular festival.
The two-day event is now in its third year. Signifying the Hindu victory of good over evil, the end of winter and the arrival of spring, the Holi festival is celebrated as a thanksgiving for a good harvest by the Punjabi community.
Other festival attractions include top DJs, live music, performances by dhol drummers and Bollywood dancers, free face-painting, henna tattoo artists, '80s retro film screenings, a fancy-dress competition, 'bonkers' game shows like Bhangra Bingo and Play Your Uncle Ji's Cards Right and a mini Indian street-food bazaar.

Egg-citing Easter Activities

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, Sat 8 - Sun 23 April

As usual the Black Country Living Museum is, er, *eggs*-tending its programme of entertainment for the Easter holiday period.
As well as all the usual attractions, including the chance to experience life in an 1850s coal mine and attend a Victorian school lesson, the venue is also hosting an Easter egg hunt across its 26-acre site.
Traditional egg-rolling contests, a selection of eggy craft activities, an Easter quiz, street games and the chance to grab a freshly baked hot cross bun from the bakery also feature.

Shakespeare's Birthday: Knights And Nymphs Garden Party

Hall's Croft, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 22 April

Tales of birthday boy William Shakespeare are recounted by a Tudor storyteller at this unusual garden party, an event which younger visitors are invited to attend dressed either as a knight or a nymph.
Family fun including face painting and a 'delicious' barbecue also feature in this lively celebration of the Stratford bard's 453rd birthday.

Play In The Place

Burton Market Place, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffordshire, Sat 15 April

This one-day event is the highlight of the Brewhouse's three-week Burton Children's Easter Festival, an event which brings together theatre, workshops and numerous activities.
Included in the Play In The Place line-up is family-friendly street theatre, a 'giant balloon' show, a performance by comedy duo Floggit & Skarper, workshops for pre-school-age children and the chance to experience the topsy-turvey delights of an anti-gravity box.
There's a special show for three to eight-year-olds to enjoy too, as Egg Box Theatre present an interactive adventure about the moon.

Discover Birmingham Museums

Birmingham has the best museum collection of any city in England, all housed in nine wonderful locations.

Beautiful, scientifically important, exotic, humdrum, quirky or bizarre, they all have one thing in common – **they tell stories about Birmingham.**

Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum

Explore the Planetarium, outdoor Science Garden and NEW Spitfire Gallery.

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery FREE ENTRY

From Renaissance masterpieces, to the largest find of Anglo-Saxon gold ever discovered - the Staffordshire Hoard; uncover fascinating glimpses into Birmingham's vibrant past.

Sarehole Mill

One of the only two surviving watermills in Birmingham. Discover the idyllic childhood haunt of J.R.R. Tolkien.

Soho House

Elegant Georgian home of industrialist Matthew Boulton, and meeting place of the Lunar Society.

Blakesley Hall

Visit one of Birmingham's finest timber-framed Tudor houses.

Aston Hall

Experience the splendour of this magnificent 17th-Century Jacobean mansion and relive its role in the English Civil War.

Museum of the Jewellery Quarter

Step back in time to a perfectly preserved jewellery workshop.

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Birmingham Museums

Your week by week listings guide
April 2017

the list

We're Going On A Bear Hunt at Stafford Gatehouse Theatre - Friday 21 April

Music I Comedy I Theatre I Dance I Film I Events I Visual Arts I and more!

What's On

Sat 1 to Sun 9 April

The Amazing Bubble Man at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Sun 9 April

Mon 10 to Sun 16 April

Russell Brand at Victoria Hall, Hanley

Thurs 13 April

Mon 17 to Sun 23 April

Spring Into The Park at Telford Town Park

Sat 22 April

Mon 24 to Sun 30 April

Raymond Froggatt at the Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

Sun 30 April

THROUGHOUT APRIL

Visual Arts

Bilston Craft Gallery

NEW DISCOVER DINOSAURS A new family-friendly exhibition exploring the prehistoric world of the dinosaurs, Sat 8 Apr - Sun 13 Aug

Newcastle Borough Museum & Art Gallery

NEW OPEN ART AND CRAFT EXHIBITION 2017 Featuring artwork from both professional and non-professional artists. Prizes will be presented to selected artists, and visitors will get to vote for their favourite piece of artwork, Sat 1 Apr - Sun 4 June

New Art Gallery - Walsall

IDRIS KHAN This major survey exhibition by Walsall artist Idris Khan draws on a range of interests, including classical music, the history of art, literature, philosophy and religion, until Sun 7 May

Potteries Museum & Art Gallery - Stoke-On-Trent

ARNOLD BENNETT: IN LIFE AND ART Dipping into the museum's world-class Arnold Bennett collections of artwork, personal possessions and clothing, photographs, documents and ephemera, this exhibition provides new perspectives on the man and his life, until Sun 2 July

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

RHYME AROUND THE WORLD Featuring artwork by much-loved, bestselling and acclaimed illustrators, including Robert Ingpen, Shirley Hughes, Axel Scheffler, Emily Gravett, Mini Grey, Jessica Ahlberg and Polly Dunbar, until Sun 7 May

The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

NEW CROCHET CLUB: BURTON YARN FESTIVAL Local crochet and knit designer Tilley Bancroft, aka Lime Green Lady, is working with her award-winning group of crocheter's from Burton-upon-Trent to create a yarn version of the town, Sat 8 - Sat 29 Apr

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

GUY SHERWIN: LIGHT AND PAINT 2017 Experience colours, shapes and movement in this latest work by filmmaker and artist Guy Sherwin, until Sun 2 Apr

A CURIOUS TURN Moving mechanical sculpture is brought to life in an exhibition featuring 30 pieces of extraordinary automata, until Sun 21 May

BACK TO BLACK An exhibition of artwork by contemporary Black British artists for Black History Month, until Sun 31 Dec

Other VISUAL ARTS

SHROPSHIRE ART SOCIETY EXHIBITION Showcasing the work of Karen and Barry Lowe, until Sat 1 Apr, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

WORKS BY BAMBER HAWES Bamber is an idiosyncratic abstract artist producing work via many different media, until Sat 1 Apr, VAN Gallery, Shrewsbury

TIME AND THE BYWAYS An exhibition of drawings and paintings by Simon Dorrell, until Sat 1 Apr, Silk Top Hat Gallery, Ludlow

NEW THE BIRMINGHAM WATERCOLOUR SOCIETY Exhibition of work by Society members, Sat 1 - Thurs 27 Apr, Weston Park, Nr Shifnal

NEW A TIME IT WAS BY PHIL LOACH Nostalgic photographic exhibition by Phil Loach, a staff photographer for a range of local weekly newspapers, Sat 1 Apr - Sun 11 June, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

NEW COSTUME & KIT... A STEP BACK IN TIME A display of costumes and equipment from the world of re-enactment, Sat 1 Apr - Sun 25 June, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

NEW ABSTRACT PAINTINGS: MARTIN LEWIS A solo exhibition will feature a selection of Martin's most recent works,Thurs 6 Apr - Mon 8 May, Qube Gallery, Oswestry

NEW ANGELA HARDING Showcase of new work by artist Angela Harding, Sat 8 Apr - Sat 13 May, Twenty Twenty Gallery, Much Wenlock

NEW LOST IN WONDER BY ROBERT BRIDGSTOCK Exhibition by oil painter Robert, whose work often depicts animals, Sat 8 - Sun 23 Apr, Museum of Cannock Chase

NEW HENRO JAPANESE ART EXHIBITION Sat 22 Apr, Chirk Castle, Wrexham

NEW TWO VIEWPOINTS Exhibition of work by equestrian artists Alison Wilson and Glynis Mills, Sat 29 Apr - Tues 30 May, Weston Park, Nr Shifnal

NEW TRENT VALLEY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY EXHIBITION 2017 A new collection of members' photographs, taken during the past year and incorporating a wide range of subjects, including wildlife, landscapes and portraits, Sat 29 Apr - Sun 18 June, Museum of Cannock Chase

NEW TOTALLY SWEDISH Exhibition by Swedish artist Lena Jarl Churm, Sun 30 Apr - Sat 13 May, The Bear Steps Gallery, Shrewsbury

Gigs

FIRES THAT DIVIDE Sat 1 Apr, The Slade Rooms, W'hampton

JORJA SMITH Sat 1 Apr, O2 Academy, B'ham

80S PARTY NIGHT WITH JOHNNY 2 BAD Sat 1 Apr, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Shropshire

MARTIN STEPHENSON Sat 1 Apr, Morris Hall, Shrewsbury

THE GRAND THEATRE'S GREAT GATSBY NIGHT Sat 1 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

NEW MODEL ARMY Sat 1 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

GHOST Sat 1 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

CREEPER Sat 1 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SYNERGY Sat 1 Apr, Havana Republic Bar and Restaurant, Shrewsbury

CULT FICTION & MOTLEY CRUDE Sat 1 Apr, Route 44, Birmingham

CHRIS QUINN Sat 1 Apr, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

ABBAMANIA Sat 1 Apr, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, Staffs

CARO EMERALD Sat 1 - Sun 2 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GOODNIGHT LENIN Sun 2 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TEMPLES Sun 2 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

MAGENTA Sun 2 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

AT LAST THE ETTA JAMES STORY A two-hour narrative concert starring Vika Bull, Sun 2 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

THE KYLE GASS BAND Mon 3 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

IDLES Mon 3 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

NO PETTICOATS HERE Mon 3 Apr, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

MONA Mon 3 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

HANNAH PEEL Mon 3 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

GAVIN JAMES Mon 3 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HAVOK, WARBRINGER, GOROD & EXMORTUS Mon 3 Apr, The Rainbow Venues, B'ham

BILLY OCEAN Mon 3 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GREG RUSSELL & CIARAN ALGAR Mon 3 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

ATTILA Tues 4 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KING NO ONE Tues 4 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BLAENAVON Wed 5 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE GOOD SINNERS Wed 5 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

DANNY BRYANT Wed 5 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

BERNIE TORME Thurs 6 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

TOSELAND Thurs 6 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

NE-YO Thurs 6 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

FEMI TEMOWO Thurs 6 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SEVEN DRUNKEN NIGHTS Fri 7 Apr, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

THE KINGS OV LEON Fri 7 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

STONEBRIDGE Fri 7 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CHINA TANKS Fri 7 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

BROKEN WITT REBELS Fri 7 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BLACKBERRY SMOKE Fri 7 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

FLEETWOOD BAC Fri 7 Apr, The Robin, Biltson

HANNAH & BRIAN Fri 7 Apr, Havana Republic Bar and Restaurant, Shropshire

SSEX PISTOLSS Fri 7 Apr, Route 44, B'ham

REBECCA NASH ATLAS Fri 7 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MY BABY Fri 7 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

DIRTY WHITE BOYZ Sat 8 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

TAKEN Sat 8 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

HIS WAY Sat 8 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE SHOWHAWK DUO Sat 8 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MOOMIN Sat 8 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE ANNUAL MAYORAL CHARITY ROCK FESTIVAL Sat 8 Apr, The Slade Rooms, W'hampton

THE USUAL SUSPECTS Sat 8 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

NIBBS & EDDY Sat 8 Apr, Havana Republic Bar and Restaurant, Shropshire

ELKIE BROOKS Sat 8 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THE STUMBLE Sat 8 Apr, Lichfield Guildhall

TOM HILL'S 70'S JAZZ FUNK MACHINE Sat 8 Apr, The Hive Shrewsbury

RAY PRINCE GOSPEL BAND AND SURGE ORCHESTRA Sat 8 Apr, mac, Birmingham

JOHN MAYER'S INDO JAZZ FUSION Sat 8 Apr, mac, Birmingham

THE BOOTLEG BEATLES Sat 8 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SOUNDS OF THE GLENN MILLER ERA Sun 9 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

FRET AND FIDDLE Sun 9 Apr, Lichfield Guildhall

THE MUFFIN MEN Sun 9 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

MELANIE C Sun 9 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

Classical Music

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL CHORUS The Darwin Ensemble Chamber Orchestra present Mendelssohn's great oratorio based on the biblical account of the prophet Elijah, a work that has been popular since its premiere in Birmingham in 1846, Sat 1 Apr, LIchfield Cathedral

RUISI QUARTET Programme includes works by Haydn, Janacek, Wolf & Debussy, Sat 1 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY Featuring David Wynne (conductor) & Kevin Gill (piano). Programme includes works by Chopin, Pearsall, Brahms, Elgar, Faure, Parry, Whitacre, Tavener & Joubert, Sat 1 Apr, Ladywood ARC, St John's & St Peter's Church, Birmingham

HALESOWEN ORCHESTRA: NEW WORLDS Featuring Andrew Birdsall (leader) & Thomas Jarvis (conductor). Programme includes works by Dvorak & Rimsky-Korsakov, Sat 1 Apr, Cornbow Hall, Halesowen

CARDUCCI STRING QUARTET Featuring Julian Bliss (clarinet). Programme includes works by Beethoven, Weber & Mozart, Sun 2 Apr, The Lion Hotel, Shrewsbury

MURRAY PERAHIA Programme comprises Beethoven's Emperor Concerto, Wed 5 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SENIOR CITIZENS ORCHESTRA CONCERT Thurs 6 Apr, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

CBSO PERFORM RACHMANINOV'S THIRD Featuring Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (conductor) & Oliver Janes (clarinet). Programme also includes works by Weinberg & Copland, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE LEO QUARTET With Liz Larner Featuring Liz Larner (guitar), Byron Parish & Elizabeth Golding (violins), Amy Fawcet (viola) & Kate Setterfield (cello). Programme comprises Ivor McGregor's Guitar Quintet, Fri 7 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

BBC PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA Featuring Yan Pascal Torterlier (conductor), Jonathan Scott (organ) & the CBSO Chorus. Programme includes works by Roussel & Saint-Saëns, Fri 7 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MUSIC THROUGH THE AGES: THE EASTER SPECTACULAR Sat 8 Apr, St Matthew's Church, Walsall

BRITISH POLICE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Richard Jenkinson (conductor). Programme includes works by Ravel, Rimsky-Korsakov, Falla, Saint-Saens & Chabrier, Sat 8 Apr, Shrewsbury Abbey

OPERA BOYS Sun 9 Apr, Prince of Wales Centre, Cannock

Comedy

IVO GRAHAM, GEOFF NORCOTT, BOBBY MAIR & KIRI PRITCHARD-MCLEAN Sat 1 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JOJO SMITH, EDD HEDGES & DAVID LONGLEY Sat 1 Apr, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

STAND UP COMEDY SHOWCASE Sat 1 Apr, mac, Birmingham

ROFL COMEDY CLUB Sat 1 Apr, The Old Post Office, Burton-upon-Trent

SEANN WALSH Sat 1 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

KEITH FARNAN, MIKE NEWALL, FUNMBI OMOTAYO & DARRELL MARTIN Sat 1 Apr, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

NICK DOODY, MIKE WILMOT & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 6 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

IVAN BRACKENBURY, NATHAN CATON, ROLAND GENT & TOM GLOVER Thurs 6 Apr, The George Hotel, Lichfield

ANGELA BARNES, TUDUR OWEN, BOBBY MURDOCK, ROLAND GENT & DAVE WILLIAMS Thurs 6 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

KUM-N-AVALOFF COMEDY NIGHT Thurs 6 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

BRIAN CONLEY Thurs 6 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

MARCEL LUCONT Thurs 6 Apr, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

MICKEY SHARMA, TANYALEE DAVIS & JOHNNY SORROW Fri 7 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

LAURA LEXX, ADDY VAN DER BORGH & RUSSELL HICKS Fri 7 Apr, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

MARCEL LUCONT Fri 7 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SUZI RUFFELL, KEVIN GILDA, RAY PEACOCK & MICHAEL FABBRI Fri 7 - Sat 8 Apr, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

NICK DOODY, MIKE WILMOT, JONNIE PRICE & COMIC TBC Fri 7 - Sat 8 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LAURA LEXX, RUSSELL HICKS & COMIC TBC Sat 8 Apr, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

ROB BECKETT Sat 8 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

ROFL COMEDY CLUB Sat 8 Apr, The Old Post Office, Burton-upon-Trent

ANDY PARSONS Sat 8 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

Theatre

TALES AND TONIC Opportunity to preview the work-in-progress being produced by The REP's brightest new talent, until Fri 7 Apr, The REP, B'ham

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA Iqbal Khan returns to the RSC to direct Shakespeare's tragedy of love and power, until Thurs 7 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ONE LOVE: THE BOB MARLEY MUSICAL Premiere of a new musical focusing on a defining period in the life and career of Bob Marley, until Sat 15 Apr, The REP, Birmingham

BILLY ELLIOT The smash-hit West End musical stops off in Birmingham as part of its first UK tour, until Sat 29 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

JULIUS CAESAR Angus Jackson directs Shakespeare's epic tragedy, as the politics of spin and betrayal turn bloody and brutal, until Sat 9 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE EMPTY NESTERS' CLUB John Godber's story of empty bedrooms, fresher's flu, boyfriends, long goodbyes, motorway service stations and trips to Ikea, Tues 28 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

BUDDY - THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY Award-winning musical which tells the story of how Buddy Holly changed the face of popular music forever, Tues 28 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

MADE IN DAGENHAM Sutton Coldfield Musical Theatre Company present an amateur staging of the West End musical, Tues 28 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

FUNNY GIRL Touring production of the much-loved musical, which brought global fame to Barbra Streisand 50 years ago and boasts some of the most iconic songs in film and theatre history, Tues 28 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT Featuring Joe McElderry in the lead role, Tues 28 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE ADDAMS FAMILY Presented by students and staff from the Music & Dramatic Arts team at Shrewsbury Sixth Form College, Wed 29 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, Shrewsbury Sixth Form College

SHROPSHIRE DRAMA FESTIVAL Showcasing 'the best theatrical talent from around the county' and featuring numerous one-act plays each evening, Thurs 30 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, The Belfrey Theatre, Wellington

CYMBELINE Amateur production presented by Lichfield Garrick Youth Theatre, Thurs 30 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE All & Sundry present David Edgar's dramatic adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic horror story, Thurs 30 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT EVEN TRYING Birmingham Ormiston Academy's Year 13 Musical Theatre students present their version of Frank Loesser's satire, which looks at the rise and rise of J Pierrepont, who uses a little handbook to climb the corporate ladder from lowly window washer to high-powered executive, Thurs 30 Mar - Sat 1 Apr, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN Oscar Wilde's sparkling and witty assault on prejudice and hypocrisy, Fri 31 Mar - Sat 8 Apr, Hall Green Little Theatre, Birmingham

WINNIE AND WILBUR A new play based on the bestselling picture books created by Valerie Thomas and Korky Paul, Fri 31 Mar - Sat 22 Apr, The REP, Birmingham

MR DARCY LOSES THE PLOT Comedy duo Lipservice explore the world of women writers amid the domestic hustle and bustle of taking tea, choosing chintz and an attack of the vapours, Sat 1 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE GRAND THEATRE'S GREAT GATSBY NIGHT A party night of razzle dazzle, featuring some of the greatest dance music from the golden jazz era, Sat 1 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE KING LEAR Shifting Sands Theatre fuse improvisation, physical comedy and vibrant storytelling in a unique and humorous take on Shakespeare's classic tragedy, Sat 1 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

MMORPG Fusion of improvised comedy with table-top gaming in 'an epic, sprawling, open-world, entirely-made-up fantasy quest of the audiences own devising', Sat 1 Apr, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

MEET FRED Hijink Theatre tell the story of Fred, a regular guy who just wants to get on in life. The only problem is that Fred's a puppet, and that's where the dependency issues start, Mon 3 Apr, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

BROKE: THE MUSICAL An original musical, written by Level 5 Musical Theatre students, that follows a New York community of bankers, office workers and society misfits, set against the backdrop of the 1929 Wall Street Crash, Mon 3 Apr, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG Fawlty Towers meets Noises Off in this award-winning comedy, Mon 3 - Sat

8 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

BUCKET LIST Powerful story of one Mexican woman's fight for justice, Tues 4 Apr, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-on-Trent

A PICTURE OF YOU The Young Rep Seniors present Morgan Sproxton's drama, which centres around the 17th birthday party of Ashley Smith - an occasion that Ashley would've loved had he not died in Year 7, Tues 4 - Thurs 6 Apr, The REP, Birmingham

ALL OR NOTHING: THE MOD MUSICAL Following in the footsteps of other '60s jukebox musicals about The Beatles and The Kinks, All Or Nothing tells the story of mod favourites The Small Faces, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE The Repertory Players present an amateur staging of Joseph Kesselring's classic American comedy, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Apr, Stoke Repertory Theatre

INVINCIBLE Torben Betts' abrasive comedy about the class divide, Tues 4 - Sat 15 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ONE NIGHT ONLY The Viv Kelly Children's and Youth Theatre Groups join with the adult dancers of the Viv Kelly School of Dance & Theatre to present a celebration of music, dance and theatre, Wed 5 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

READY OR NOT Kali Theatre present Naylah Ahmed's story about a retired teacher who takes an idealistic young man hostage and embarks on a dangerous game of hide and seek with the truth, Wed 5 - Thurs 6 Apr, mac, Birmingham

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST Shropshire Youth Theatre present an amateur staging of Oscar Wilde's classic comedy, Wed 5 - Thurs 6 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BRIAN CONLEY - THE GREATEST ENTERTAINER (IN HIS PRICE RANGE) Comedy, sketches, songs and material from the screen and onstage, Thurs 6 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THE VISIT OF THE OLD LADY Newman University Drama Department present Friedrich Dürrenmatt's exploration of justice, morality and just how much money can buy, Thurs 6 - Fri 7 Apr, mac, Birmingham

UP POMPEII! Ambient Night Productions present a 'hilarious' romp through Pompeii, based on the popular TV series starring Frankie Howerd, Thurs 6 - Fri 7 Apr, Prince of Wales Centre, Cannock

WHEN WE WERE MARRIED Amateur staging of JB Priestley's comic farce, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 Apr, The Little Theatre Donnington, Telford, Shropshire

THE DOMINO EFFECT Stafford Gatehouse Youth Theatre bring Finn Kennedy's modern classic to life, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

SLEUTH Amateur staging of Anthony Shaffer's murder-mystery, Thurs 6 - Thurs 13 Apr, Oldbury Rep - Barlow Theatre, Dudley

SHEILA'S MHS Qualified counsellor Sheila returns with a one-woman show that takes a look at why life is too serious to be taken seriously, Fri 7 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

MYRA DUBOIS Rotherham's least celebrated daughter presents an evening of acid-tongued conversation, razor-sharp observation, song and dance... Fri 7 Apr, mac, Birmingham

OLIVER IN THE OVERWORLD Family musical which tells the tale of a little deaf boy who travels to the Overworld, the Land of Machinery, seeking the parts to mend the memory of his best friend Oliver the Grandfather Clock, Fri 7 - Sat 8 Apr, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

HYSTERIA London Classic Theatre present Terry Johnson's 'hilarious' farce, which explores the fallout when two of the 20th century's most brilliant and original minds collide, Fri 7 - Sun 9 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE DAY WAR BROKE OUT World premiere of a new musical revue by Paul Brammer, featuring songs, dances and sketches from WWII, Fri 7 - Sun 9 Apr, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

NAOMI'S WILD & SCARY Naomi is joined live on stage by some scary creatures, including a carpet python, an alligator snapping turtle, a giant centipede and a tarantula! Up-close handy cam action, a giant screen and loads of interaction, Sat 8 April, Birmingham Town Hall

THE AMAZING BUBBLE MAN Louis Pearl, aka The Amazing Bubble Man, fuses comedy and artistry with live music, audience participation and 'spellbinding' tricks... Sun 9 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Dance

PASHA KOVALEV: LET'S DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY Featuring the Strictly Come Dancing star, his spectacular dancers and special guest Anya Garnis, Sun 2 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

ARANGETRUM: CONFESSIONS OF A COCKNEY TEMPLE DANCER An autobiographical performance in which Shane Shambhu plays with the ways in which race, language, identity and culture are perceived, Wed 5 Apr, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

ROSALIND Presented by James Cousins Company and created in collaboration with Korean dancers and artists, this choreographed piece takes Rosalind's passion and eloquence beyond words, to somewhere only movement can transport you, Thurs 6 - Fri 7 Apr, DanceXchange, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

PASHA KOVALEV: LET'S DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY Featuring the Strictly Come Dancing star, his spectacular dancers and special guest Anya Garnis, Sun 9 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

REMEMBERING FRED Strictly's Alijaz and Janette perform steps and turns from the golden age of Hollywood's most celebrated dance routines, Sun 9 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

LION (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Nicole Kidman, Dev Patel. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton until Tues 4 Apr

FREE FIRE (15) Action/Comedy. Starring Brie Larson, Cillian Murphy. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, until Thurs 6 Apr

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE (12a) Drama/History. Starring Gillian Anderson, Michael Gambon. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, until Thurs 6 Apr

GHOST IN THE SHELL (15) Action/Crime. Starring Scarlett Johansson, Michael Pitt. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, until Thurs 6 Apr

HIDDEN FIGURES (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer. Stoke Film Theatre, Sat 1 Apr; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 7, Mon 10 - Tues 11 Apr

FIFTY SHADES DARKER (18) Drama. Starring Dakota Johnson, Jamie Dornan. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Sat 1 Apr

TRESPASS AGAINST US (12A) Crime/Drama. Starring Michael Fassbender, Brendan Gleeson. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, Sat 1 - Thurs 6 Apr

ELLE (15) Drama/Thriller. Starring Isabelle Huppert, Anna Consigny. Foreign language, subtitled. Light House Media Centre, Wolverahmpton, Sat 1 - Thurs 6 Apr

MOMMY (15) Drama. Starring Anne Dorval, Antoine-Olivier Pilon. Foreign language, subtitled. The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Sun 2 Apr

WHO'S GONNA LOVE ME NOW? (15) Documentary. Starring Saar Maoz, Alon. Foreign language, subtitled. Followed by post-film live stream Q&A, hosted by Julian Clary. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Sun 2 Apr

CASABLANCA (U) Drama/Romance. Starring Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 2 Apr

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN (15) Drama/Mystery. Starring Emily Blunt, Haley Bennett. Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire, Mon 3 Apr

SOME LIKE IT HOT (15) Comedy/Romance. Starring Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Mon 3 Apr

JACKIE (15) Drama. Starring Natalie Portman, Peter Sarsgaard. Stoke Film Theatre, Mon 3 Apr

THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS (12a) Drama/Romance. Starring Michael Fassbender, Alicia Vikander. Stourbridge Town Hall, Mon 3 Apr

MOONLIGHT (15) Drama. Starring Mahershala Ali, Shariff Earp. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Shropshire, Mon 3 & Wed 5 Apr; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, Fri 7 - Thurs 13 Apr

A UNITED KINGDOM (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring David Oyelowo, Rosamund Pike. Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs, Tues 4 Apr

TO CATCH A THIEF (PG) Crime/Mystery. Starring Cary Grant, Grace Kelly. Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, Staffs, Tues 4 Apr

FENCES (12a) Drama. Starring Denzel Washington and Viola Davis. The Stoke Film Theatre, Tues 4 Apr

HOMELANDS (U) Documentary. Starring MC Saskilla, Terri Walker. Followed by Q&A. mac, Birmingham, Wed 5 Apr

MERCHANTS OF DOUBT (12a) Documentary. Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs, Wed 5 Apr

AMÉLIE (15) Comedy/Romance. Starring Audrey Tautou, Mathieu Kassovitz. Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs, Thurs 6 Apr

SELMA (12) Drama/History. Starring David Oyelowo, Carmen Ejogo. The Highbury Theatre, Sutton Coldfield, Thurs 6 Apr

IT'S ONLY THE END OF THE WORLD (15) Drama. Starring Nathalie Baye, Vincent Cassel. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 4 - Wed 5 Apr; The Stoke Film Theatre, Thurs 6 Apr

PATRIOTS DAY (15) Drama/History.

Sunday 1 - Sunday 9 April

Starring Mark Wahlberg, Michelle Monaghan. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Fri 7 Apr

THE FITS (12a) Drama. Starring Royalty Hightower, Alexis Neblett. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 7 Apr

MOONLIGHT (15) Drama. Starring Mahershala Ali, Shariff Earp. Stoke Film Theatre, Fri 7 - Sat 8 Apr

SING (U) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Matthew McConaughey, Reese Witherspoon. Wem Town Hall, Shropshire, Fri 7 - Mon 10 Apr; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, Sat 8 - Thurs 13 Apr

Events

CSI - THE SCIENCE OF THE GREAT WAR A series of hands-on activities where visitors can learn about trench archaeology, the chemical development of poison gas and have a go at making their own periscopes, Sat 1 Apr, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

BLUEBELL WATCH See the woodlands spring into colour as you look for the first bluebell to raise its head this April. Will you spot the first one? Sat 1 - Sun 30 Apr, Attingham Park, Shropshire

SPRING LAMBING DAY Every year there's a new arrival on the day itself for those lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time, Sun 2 Apr, Walford Campus, Shropshire

SHROPSHIRE SCALE MODEL SHOW Around 70 model clubs are in attendance, plus some 40 traders selling everything needed to build the perfect model, whether it be a tank, car or boat, Sun 2 Apr, RAF Cosford, Shropshire

MINI BLACKSMITH EXPERIENCE Discover your hidden talents as a Blacksmith by taking part in this free mini workshop, Wed 5 Apr, The British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? LIVE The world's largest family history show, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 Apr, NEC, Birmingham

ANTIQUES FOR EVERYONE SPRING FAIR Refresh your home with stylish antiques and collectables, Thurs 6 - Sun 9 Apr, NEC, Birmingham

PHOTO SAFARI Individually or as a team, complete challenges linked to the Evolution Explored exhibition in Shrewsbury, Sat 8 Apr, The Hive Shrewsbury

JAW WARS How did we get our jaw and what do humans have in common with an ancient fish? Find out through fossils, skulls (including the sabre tooth) and insects, Sat 8 Apr, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

ART DECO PAINTING WORKSHOP Learn more about the art deco style of painting famously used by artists such as Susie Cooper and Clarice Cliff. Paint your own decorative plate to take home, Sat 8 Apr, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

SPRING HORSE TRIALS Incorporating dressage, cross country and show jumping, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Apr, Weston Park, Shropshire

NIMROD TOURS Climb on board the Nimrod and learn about its intelligence-gathering role in the Royal Air Force, Sat 8 - Thurs 13 Apr, RAF Cosford, Shropshire

EASTER CASTLE EGG HUNT Ruby the Tamworth Castle Dragon has misplaced her eggs - join the hunt to find them, Sat 8 - Fri 21 Apr, Tamworth Castle

ANIMAL THEMED HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES Two weeks of fun animal-themed activities, workshops and demos across the museum sites, Sat 8 - Sun 23 Apr, Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Shropshire

EGG-CITING EASTER ACTIVITIES Hop on over to the Black Country Living Museum, where a 'cracking' programme of Easter fun is ready and waiting, Sat 8 - Sun 23 Apr, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

EASTER HOLIDAY FUN Enjoy live shows from the resident magicians, ventriloquists and more, with giggles and games for the whole family, Sat 8 - Sun 23 Apr, Cadbury World, Bournville, Birmingham

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA Sat 8 - Sun 23 Apr, Park Hall Farm, Oswestry

EGGS-ELLENT EASTER Fun for all the family, Sat 8 - Sun 23 Apr, Drayton Manor Theme Park, Staffordshire

EXPLORERS QUEST Collect your explorers map and enjoy adventures on the estate. Complete all the challenges and receive a medal at the end, Sat 8 - Sun 23 Apr, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Stafford

EASTER HOLIDAYS AT WEDGWOOD Play with clay, decorate a Wedgwood Easter rabbit or take part in the egg hunt around Hem Heath Woods, Sat 8 - Sun 23 Apr, World of Wedgwood, Stoke-on-Trent

MEET THE BEEKEEPER Meet the resident beekeeper and find out how she looks after the colony of bees that live on the estate, Sun 9 Apr, Dudmaston Estate, Bridgnorth

DOUGIE MAC 5K RUN/WALK Fundraising event to support the work of Douglas Macmillan Hospice, Sun 9 Apr, World of Wedgwood, Stoke-on-Trent

What's on...

the place Oakengates Theatre TELFORD

Tuesday 18th April
THE LADYBOYS OF BANGKOK
Time: 7.30pm

Friday 21st April
MICHAEL ENGLISH
Time: 7.30pm

Wednesday 3rd May
HORRIBLE HISTORIES
Time: 2.00pm & 7.00pm

Thursday 4th May
THE SIMON AND GARFUNKEL STORY
Time: 7.30pm

Friday 5th May
PUPPETRY OF THE PENIS
18+
Time: 8.00pm

Tuesday 9th May
MIKE DENVER
Time: 7.30pm

Thursday 11th May
NEIL SANDS' MUSIC AND MEMORIES
Time: 2.00pm

Friday 12th May
ROY CHUBBY BROWN
18+
Time: 7.30pm

Thursday 18th May
KING OF POP
Time: 7.30pm

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TWC GP 01218

British Sea Power - O2 Academy, Birmingham

Gigs

MÉLANIE PAIN Mon 10 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

YOU ME AT SIX Mon 10 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TWELFTH DAY & EMILY MAE WINTERS Tues 11 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

STORMZY Tues 11 Apr, O2 Academy, B'ham

DR JOHN COOPER CLARKE Tues 11 Apr, The Wightman Theatre, Shrewsbury

CLASSIC ROCK USA Wed 12 Apr, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

DANNY CANNON & THE RAMRODS Wed 12 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

THE GOOD SINNERS Wed 12 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

GOSPEL CENTRAL Wed 12 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE WHO Wed 12 Apr, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

MARIE CLAIRE BERREEN Wed 12 Apr, The Red Lion Folk Club, B'ham

10CC Wed 12 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

HORSEBEACH Thurs 13 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PWR BTTM Thurs 13 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE ED SHEERAN EXPERIENCE Thurs 13 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

LEAH MCFALL Thurs 13 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

TWELVE FOOT NINJA Thurs 13 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

STEVE GIBBONS Thurs 13 Apr, The Robin, Wolverhampton

SMOKIN PILCHARDS Thurs 13 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

BRITISH SEA POWER Thurs 13 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JOHN MCCUSKER BAND Thurs 13 Apr, mac, Birmingham

THE SEARCHERS IN CONCERT Thurs 13 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

JANIS JOPLIN AND FRIENDS Fri 14 - Sat 15 Apr, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

OVER ATLANTIC Fri 14 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

WONK UNIT Fri 14 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

PETER MYLETT Fri 14 Apr, Irish Centre, B'ham

BURY TOMORROW Fri 14 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

DIZZY LIZZY Fri 14 Apr, The Roadhouse, B'ham

HOT 8 BRASS BAND Fri 14 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

QUARTZ Fri 14 Apr, Route 44, Birmingham

MERCURY Fri 14 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

ANDREW BROWNING AS GEORGE MICHAEL Fri 14 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

THE LIQUOR AND POKER BAND Fri 14 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

DAVE BUSBY Fri 14 Apr, Havana Republic Bar and Restaurant, Shrewsbury

BAD COMPANY UK Fri 14 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

RUBIO Fri 14 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stoubridge

SOUL LEGENDS Fri 14 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE RED LEMONS Fri 14 - Sat 15 Apr The Jam House, Birmingham

FRENCH MONTANA Sat 15 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

LES MCKEOWN'S BAY CITY ROLLERS Sat 15 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

CARDI B Sat 15 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

STANTON WARRIORS Sat 15 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

E3UK LIVE Sat 15 Apr, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

NEIL DIAMOND ROCKS Sat 15 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE COUNTERFEIT STONES Sat 15 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

IVOR & LYN'S CLASSIC ROCK NIGHT Sat 15 Apr, Route 44, Birmingham

SLADE UK Sat 15 Apr, Eleven, Staffordshire

BORN IN THE EIGHTIES Sat 15 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

CHAPTER XIII FESTIVAL Sat 15 Apr, The Rainbow Venues, B'ham

PAT BRESLIN Sat 15 Apr, Irish Centre, B'ham

DANNI G BAND Sat 15 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

EARL Sat 15 - Sun 16 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RICK ASTLEY Sat 15 - Sun 16 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GIGGS Sun 16 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MURIEL O CONNOR Sun 16 Apr, Irish Centre, Birmingham

DEFINITELY MIGHT BE & ADORED Sun 16 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

THE QUINPHONIC FESTIVAL 4 Sun 16 Apr, The Roadhouse, B'ham

CHRIS QUINN Sun 16 Apr, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

THIS IS ENGLAND OFFICIAL CLUB NIGHT WITH SHAUN AND GADGET Sun 16 - Mon 17 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Classical Music

PATIENCE English Touring Opera poke fun at the eccentric affections of barely-disguised Victorian celebrities, including Oscar Wilde and his followers, Mon 10 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by Howells, Bach, Mascagni, Wagner & Dupre, Mon 10 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

TOSCA English Touring Opera present Puccini's visceral depiction of love in the midst of a war-torn Rome, Tues 11 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN WITH LAURA VAN DER HEIJDEN Also featuring Julian Lloyd Webber (conductor). Programme includes works by Mozart & Tchaikovsky, Wed 12 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

CBSO: MAHLER'S FIFTH Featuring Edward Gardner (conductor) & Jean-Guihen Queyras (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn & Mahler, Thurs 13 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: GOOD FRIDAY BACH ST JOHN PASSION Featuring Ex Cathedra Choir & Baroque Orchestra, the Ex Cathedra Academy of Vocal Music, Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Jerry Budd (Evangelist), James Geidt (Jesus), Greg Skidmore (Pilate), Angela Hicks & Katie Trethewey (sopranos), Martha McLorinan (alto) & Bradley Smith (tenor), Fri 14 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR: HANDEL'S MESSIAH Featuring the Baroque Chamber Orchestra & Paul Spicer (conductor) Fri 14 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE STAFFORDSHIRE BAND: ST GEORGE'S DAY CONCERT Fri 21 Apr, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

A SCHUBERTIADE: AN EVENING WITH SCHUBERT & FRIENDS Featuring Claire Prewer (soprano), Benjamin Frith (piano) & Richard Jenkinson (cello), Sat 22 Apr, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

MOZART CLARINET QUINTET & CRUSELL QUARTET Sun 23 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

Comedy

ANNETTE FAGON, MAUREEN YOUNGER Wed 12 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

CHRIS RAMSEY Wed 12 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Shropshire

RUSSELL BRAND Thurs 13 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

SUZI RUFFELL, GARETH EDWARDS & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 13 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BILAL ZAFAR Fri 14 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CHARLIE BAKER Fri 14 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SUZI RUFFELL, GARETH EDWARDS, SOL BERNSTEIN & DAVE JOHNS Fri 14 - Sat 15 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ANGELA BARNES, MIKE WILMOT, MATT WELCOME & STEVE HARRIS Fri 14 - Sat 15 Apr, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

MARLON DAVIS, TOM LUCY, JELLYBEAN MARTINEZ & DAMION LARKIN Sat 15 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

ROFL COMEDY CLUB Sat 15 Apr, The Old Post Office, Burton-upon-Trent

ANDREW LAWRENCE Sat 15 Apr, mac, Birmingham

ALLYSON SMITH, JOE BOR & LIAM WITHNAIL Sat 15 Jongleurs Comedy club, Birmingham

Theatre

THE LITTLE MERMAID The Panto Company present a brand new staging of Hans Christian Andersen's story about a young girl who believes a better life awaits her out of the water, Mon 10 Apr, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

OUT OF ORDER Shaun Williamson, Sue Holderness, Andrew Hall, James Holmes & Arthur Bostrum star in a new staging of Ray Cooney's Olivier Award-winning comedy, Mon 10 - Sat 15 April, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

DREAMCOATS AND PETTICOATS West End sensation featuring rock'n'roll classics from Roy Orbison, The Shadows, Billy Fury and more... Mon 10 - Sat 15 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE CHRIS & PUI SHOW Interactive family show featuring songs, comedy sketches and a dash of magic... Tues 11 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES Stuff And Nonsense Theatre Company present an inventive romp through the classic tale of an Emperor who loves clothes more than anything, Tues 11 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THREE A retelling of fairytales and forgotten fables for children, Tues 11 Apr, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

HANSEL AND GRETEL Courtyard Productions fuse interactive puppetry, original song and humour to bring the classic children's tale to life,Tues 11 - Sat 15 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HAYWIRE Lichfield Players present an amateur staging of Eric Chappell's farce,Tues 11 - Sat 15 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

DICK & DOM LIVE A show of madcap challenges and audience-participation games, Wed 12 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THE EXPLORER New marionette show performed by puppeteer, Lori Hopkins, Wed 12 Apr, mac, Birmingham

THE TESTAMENT OF MARY Piecing together memories of Jesus' last days, Mary brings a mother's powerful perspective to a very complex and human story of turmoil and sacrifice, Wed 12 - Sat 15 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

NOISE Little Arden Theatre Company and Mr Millerman present Thomas Moran's 'frenetic' production about how we choose whether or not to cope, Thurs 13 - Sat 15 Apr, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

THE SCARECROWS' WEDDING Scamp Theatre present a heartwarming adaptation of Julie Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's bestselling book. Suitable for ages three-plus, Fri 14 - Sat 15 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

THE EASTER PRODUCTION Musical production telling the story of Jesus' death and resurrection through the eyes of those who experienced it, Fri 14 - Sat 15 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

THE TAP DANCING MERMAID Pigtails Productions present Tessa Bide's mystical story about a tippetty-tap dancer and her encounter with a 'watery' boy named Leo, Sat 15 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

TRES TRES CABARET Regular burlesque & cabaret show, Sat 15 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE MOON & ME Interactive adventure for children aged between three and eight, Sat 15 Apr, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

ELMER Adapted from the well-loved children's book by David McKee, Sat 15 - Thurs 20 Apr, mac, Birmingham

CIRQUE DU HILARIOUS Circus, slapstick, comedy and magic from Clive Webb and Danny Adams, Sun 16 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Dance

REMEMBERING FRED Strictly's Alijaz and Janette perform steps and turns from the golden age of Hollywood's most celebrated dance routines, Sun 9 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham

BODY OF LIGHT Darren Pritchard Dance fuse dance and projection effects in 'a beautiful little show for tiny people and big people too', Thurs 13 Apr, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

The Scarecrows Wedding - Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Circus Du Hilarious - Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

ICE AGE: COLLISION COURSE (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Ray Romano, Denis Leary. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Mon 10 Apr

MOONLIGHT (15) Drama. Starring Mahershala Ali, Shariff Earp. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Mon 10 Apr

SING (U) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Matthew McConaughey, Reese Witherspoon. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Mon 10, Wed 12 - Thurs 13 Apr

FINDING DORY (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Ellen DeGeneres, Albert Brooks. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Tues 11 Apr

THE JUNGLE BOOK (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Phil Harris, Sebastian Cabot. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 11 Apr

THE STUDENT (15) Drama. Starring Yuliya Aug, Viktoriya Isakova. Foreign language, subtitled. Stoke Film Theatre, Tues 11 Apr

DENIAL (12a) Drama. Starring Rachel Weisz, Tom Wilkinson. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 11 & Thurs 13 Apr

THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER (12) Crime/Drama. Starring Robert Mitchum, Shelley Winters. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Wed 12 Apr

HIDDEN FIGURES (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, Shropshire, Wed 12 Apr

STORKS (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Andy Samberg and Jennifer Anniston. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Wed 12 Apr

T2 TRAINSPOTTING (18) Drama. Starring Ewan McGregor, Ewen Bremner. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Shropshire, Wed 12 - Thurs 13 Apr

THE BFG (PG) Adventure/Fantasy. Starring Mark Rylance, Ruby Barnhill. Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, Staffs; Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Thurs 13 Apr

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE (12a) Drama/History. Starring Gillian Anderson, Michael Gambon. Stoke Film Theatre, Thurs 13 - Sat 15 Apr; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Shropshire, Fri 14 - Sat 15 & Mon 17 Apr

HARRY POTTER & THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN (PG) Adventure/Fantasy. Starring Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 13 & Sat 15 Apr

AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER (U) Drama/Romance. Starring Cary Grant, Deborah Kerr. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 14 Apr

THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE (U) Animation/Action. With the voices of Will Arnett, Michael Cera. Wem Town Hall, Shropshire, Fri 14 Apr; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, Fri 14 - Sun 23 Apr; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Shropshire, Sat 15, Mon 17 & Thurs 20 Apr

THE SPACE BETWEEN US (PG) Adventure/Drama. Starring Gary Oldman, Asa Butterfield. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 14 - Sat 15 Apr

THE FOUNDER (12a) Biography/Drama.

WHAT'S ON AT **THEATRE SEVERN**...

FRI 7 - SUN 9 APR

This Olivier Award-winning comedy and hilarious farce explores the fallout when the brilliant minds of Sigmund Freud and Salvador Dali collide.

TUE 11 - SAT 15 APR

TUE 11 APR

CBeebies' favourite double act is coming to town!

Incy Wincy, Twinkle, Old MacDonald, Humpty, Granny Humpty and many more of your favourite characters will be dropping in along with the toys - Tom, Momo, Teddington, Stuffy and Miss Mouse. Bring your own toy along too!

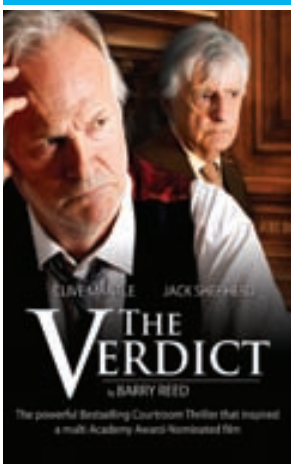
FRI 21 OCT

This musical journey intertwines some of the greatest songs ever written including I Feel The Earth Move, Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow, How Sweet It Is (To Be Loved By You), Fire & Rain, You Make Me Feel (Like A Natural Woman) and the beautiful You've Got A Friend.

SAT 15 APR

Performing all the hits as well as introducing new songs from the upcoming new album

TUE 18 - SAT 22 APR



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Lichfield Blues & Jazz Festival 2017

2nd-4th June

Climax Blues Band • Sticky Wicket & his Swing Orchestra
Chris Gumbley & Anything Goes • Remi Harris Trio
Masai Blues • Fred 'T' Baker
Emma Johnson Boogie Woogie Quartet
Dunnett Baxter Big Band • Callum Roxburgh 'Swing' Orchestra
Northbound • Lichfield Jazz All Stars • Blast Off
Lindy Hop dance workshop • Guitar workshop
+pop-up blues & jazz stage, free gigs & more!

Lichfield Guildhall • The George Hotel • Lichfield Sports Club
Wade Street Church • The George IV • The Angel Inn • The Scales

lichfieldarts.org.uk Box office: 01543 262223

Donegal House Bore Street Lichfield Staffordshire WS13 6LU info@lichfieldarts.org.uk

MOTORFEST

EASTER WEEKEND - SUN 16 + MON 17 APRIL

WESTON PARK, STAFFS | OPEN 10 AM - 4PM

UP TO 1700 CLASSICS ON DISPLAY

ADULTS £10 | CHILD 4-16 YRS £5

FAMILY TICKET (2+2) £25 CAMPING AVAILABLE

SAVE THE DATE
CATTON HALL CLASSIC MOTOR SHOW
30TH APRIL

PLUS LIVE ENTERTAINMENT FROM THE GLAMOPHONES (SUN ONLY) & THE QUIK BEATS (MON ONLY) / DECIBEL DUEL

SPECIALIST TRADERS / EASTER EGG HUNT / PLENTY OF FAMILY FUN..

FURTHER INFO OR TO ENTER YOUR VEHICLE VISIT

CLASSICMOTORSHOWS.CO.UK

TRADE & AUTOJUMBLE ENQUIRIES 07582 486209

IN ASSOCIATION WITH LANCASTER INSURANCE

Starring Michael Keaton, Nick Offerman. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, Fri 14 - Thurs 20 Apr

THE HANDMAIDEN (18) Drama/Mystery. Starring Min-hee Kim, Jung-woo Ha. Foreign language, subtitled. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 14 - Thurs 20 Apr

NEVER ENDING STORY (U) Adventure/Drama. Starring Noah Hathaway, Barret Oliver. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 15 Apr

WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT (U) Animation/Adventure. Starring Bob Hoskins, Christopher Lloyd. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 15 Apr

BACK TO THE FUTURE (PG) Comedy/Sci-Fi. Starring Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 15 Apr

KUBO & THE TWO STRINGS (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Charlize Theron, Art Parkinson. mac, Birmingham, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Apr

HARVEY (U) Comedy/Drama. Starring Jimmy Stewart. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 16 Apr

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 14 Apr, showing at selected cinemas

FAST & FURIOUS 8 (tbc)

THE SENSE OF AN ENDING (15)

THE HANDMAIDEN (18)

MULHOLLAND DRIVE (15)

Events

ANIMAL MAGIC Featuring a magic show, arty fun, animals and animal crafts, an animal treasure hunt and animal-themed films, Mon 10 Apr, Manor House Museum, West Bromwich

EASTER FUN Arts and crafts, bug hunting and spring activities for little ones, Mon 10 Apr, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

ART FOR A LIFETIME: ANCIENT EGYPTIAN TOMB SCENES AND FUNERARY GOODS Mon 10 Apr, Linden House, Wolverhampton

SPRING CRAFTS Mon 10 Apr, Dudmaston Estate, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

PASSPORT INTO SPRING TRAIL Travel from the dark days of winter into the new season of growth and revival, Mon 10 - Thurs 13 Apr, Dudmaston Estate, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

EASTER HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES Woodland adventures, bushcraft activities, pond dipping, raft racing, Easter egg rolling and gardening, Mon 10 - Fri 21 Apr, Fordhall Organic Farm, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

EASTER ACTIVITIES Take along an old sock and transform it into an Easter Bunny, Tues 11 Apr, Carding Mill Valley & The Shropshire Hills

WILD TIMES: BACK TO NATURE Leave the screens and technology behind and join the Wildlife Survival School for fun around the campfire, Tues 11 Apr, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

ANGLO-SAXON SEASONS AND FESTIVALS Discover some of the Anglo-Saxon Festivals of Mercia in the period 600 to 700AD, Tues 11 Apr, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

GO CANOEING! Canoe on the man-made river behind the mansion and see the gardens from a new perspective, Tues 11 Apr, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Staffordshire

CRAFT ACTIVITY - SPRINGTIME HAT Make your own Spring garden hat to wear, Tues 11 - Thurs 13 Apr, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

EASTER CRAFT: MAKE YOUR OWN SUNCATCHERS Use a variety of craft materials to create your own Easter-themed suncatchers, Tues 11 - Tues 18 Apr, Blakesley Hall, B'ham

GET GEOCACHING Explore Attingham as you hunt for hidden geocaches around the grounds, Wed 12 Apr, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

SPRING CRAFTS Wed 12 Apr, Dudmaston Estate, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

TALL TALES - CINDERELLA FAMILY STORY TOUR AND CRAFT An interactive telling of Cinderella, Wed 12 Apr, Aston Hall, Birmingham

DISNEY ON ICE CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF MAGIC Be charmed by a cast of over 50 Disney characters, Wed 12 - Sun 16 Apr, Genting Arena, B'ham

EASTER CRAFT: POMPOM PRINTING Use pegs, paints & pompoms to make printed Easter-themed cards, Thurs 13 - Thurs 20 Apr, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

EASTER EGGS-TRAVAGANZA Follow the Easter trail around the meadows, design an Easter bonnet, make a 3-D Easter egg, decorate a blossoming tree and lots more, Fri 14 Apr, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms, South Shropshire

THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS Featuring a star-studded roster that includes Big Easy Lofton, Ant Atkinson, Hi-Lite Bruton, Thunder Law & Bull Bullard, Fri 14 Apr, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

BCA CHEER AND DANCE BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS Featuring the British Cheerleading Association, Fri 14 - Sun 16 Apr, Telford International Centre, Shropshire

EASTER EGG HUNT Fri 14 - Mon 17 Apr, Benthall Hall, Broseley, Shropshire

Cadbury Easter Egg Hunts

Various dates from Sat 8 - Tues 18 April at Attingham Park, Shrewsbury; Carding Mill Valley, Church Stretton; Chirk Castle, Wrexham; Erddig Hall, Wrexham; Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton; Powis Castle and Garden, Welshpool; Sunnycroft, Wellington; Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton and Dudmaston Estate, Bridgnorth

Who better to organise an Easter egg hunt (or several) than those lovely people at Cadbury? The chocolate-making Birmingham company are this Easter coordinating more than 250 hunts at National Trust properties across the UK. And there's plenty more besides for egg-seeking families to enjoy on their fun-filled day out, from fighting fiery dragons and solving mysteries to helping friendly animals throw a carnival. And what's more, all participants will be rewarded with a sure-to-be-delicious Cadbury treat at the end of each completed hunt. Please check with individual venues for dates.

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA With daily bonnet competitions plus an Easter egg hunt around the venue, Fri 14 - Mon 17 Apr, Cadbury World, Bournville, Birmingham

EASTER AT EASTNOR Easter Treasure Hunt around the castle and grounds. Chocolate for everyone who takes part and a chance to win an enormous Easter egg, Fri 14 - Mon 17 Apr, Eastnor Castle Deer Park, Herefordshire

INSOMNIA60 Featuring the latest and greatest in games, interactive zones, music and live stage shows, Fri 14 - Mon 17 Apr, NEC, Birmingham

EASTER CHICK ENCOUNTER Join the farmers as they care for the newly hatched Easter chicks, Fri 14 - Mon 17 Apr, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Staffordshire

GO CANOEING! Canoe on the man-made river behind the mansion and see the gardens from a new perspective, Sat 15 Apr, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Staffordshire

HOLI RAVE Spectacular party of colours where friends and strangers chase each other with coloured powder, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Apr, No21 Digbeth, Birmingham

MOTORFEST Featuring classic cars, motorcycles, military 4x4s, performance cars, classic commercials, tractors and stationary engines, Sun 16 - Mon 17 Apr, Weston Park, Staffordshire

MEDIEVAL MERRIMENT Medieval music, dancing and talented re-enactors demonstrating the arts of archery and cookery in the Middle Ages, Sun 16 - Mon 17 Apr, Harvington Hall, Kidderminster

EASTER FAMILY FUN WEEKEND Sun 16 - Mon 17 Apr, National Brewery Centre, Burton-on-Trent

Holi Rave - Digbeth, Birmingham

Richard Ashcroft - Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

Gigs

PUMAROSA Mon 17 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

THE SOLID SILVER 60S SHOW Mon 17 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

DREAM THEATER Tues 18 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PALACE Tues 18 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

COAST TO COAST, BETTER THAN NEVER, PINE & LUKE RAINSFORD Tues 18 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

BLOOD RED THRONE Tues 18 Apr, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

MUSICAL MEDLEY Tues 18 - Wed 19 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

CIGARETTES AFTER SEX Wed 19 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE GOOD SINNERS Wed 19 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

PHOENIX RISING Wed 19 Apr, The Robin, Wolverhampton

JOHNNY LLOYD Wed 19 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SPLASHH Thurs 20 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

CHAINSKA BRASSIKA'S REGGAE CARNIVAL Thurs 20 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE ORIELLES Thurs 20 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE UNTHANKS Thurs 20 Apr, William Aston Hall, Wrexham

NELL BRYDEN Thurs 20 Apr, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

THE SHIMMER BAND Thurs 20 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JOSIENNE CLARKE & BEN WALKER Thurs 20 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

FRANKIE VALLI AND THE FOUR SEASONS Thurs 20 Apr, Genting Arena, Birmingham

RICHARD ASHCROFT Thurs 20 Apr, Barclaycard Arena, B'ham

80S PARTY NIGHT WITH JOHNNY 2 BAD Fri 21 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

MICHAEL ENGLISH Fri 21 Apr, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

BAD GIRLFRIEND & BRYONY WILLIAMS WITH SLEEP TERMINAL & LYCIO Fri 21 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

THE STAFFORDSHIRE BAND - ST GEORGE'S DAY CONCERT Fri 21 Apr, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

TAX THE HEAT Fri 21 Apr, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

SKABUCKS Fri 21 Apr, The Roadhouse, B'ham

THE BEE GEES STORY - NIGHTS ON BROADWAY Fri 21 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham

WHITE TYGER Fri 21 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

REJJIE SNOW Fri 21 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

INTO THE SHADOWS Fri 21 Apr, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

51 STONE Fri 21 Apr, Route 44, Birmingham

GAZ BROOKFIELD Fri 21 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE Fri 21 - Sat 22 Apr, The Jam House, B'ham

BLUES TRILOGY WEEKENDER Fri 21 - Sat 22 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ALEXIS TAYLOR - PRINCE TRIBUTE Sat 22 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

THE MOTHERS EARTH EXPERIMENT Sat 22 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE ORIELLES Sat 22 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

I Q, Sat 22 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

LICHFIELD GARRICK CHOIR CONCERT Sat 22 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

TALON - THE BEST OF EAGLES Sat 22 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

THE DECADES BAND Sat 22 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

REBEL REBEL (DAVID BOWIE) Sat 22 Apr, Route 44, Birmingham

THE KOOKS Sat 22 Apr, O2 Academy, B'ham

ANDY MILLS Sat 22 Apr, Havana Republic Bar and Restaurant, Shrewsbury

ARRANGING SONGS FOR PERFORMANCE - WITH GREG RUSSELL & CIARAN ALGAR Sat 22 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

WHALEBONE IN CONCERT Sat 22 Apr, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

THE TOWN Sat 22 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

GREG RUSSELL & CIARAN ALGAR Sat 22 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

LA VILLA STRANGIATO - THE SPIRIT OF RUSH Sun 23 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

LAURENCE JONES Sun 23 Apr, Lichfield Guildhall

BRUM BANDS UNITE Sun 23 Apr, Bilston Town Hall

Classical Music

THE STAFFORDSHIRE BAND: ST GEORGE'S DAY CONCERT Fri 21 Apr, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

A SCHUBERTIADE: AN EVENING WITH SCHUBERT & FRIENDS Featuring Claire Prewer (soprano), Benjamin Frith (piano) & Richard Jenkinson (cello), Sat 22 Apr, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

MOZART CLARINET QUINTET & CRUSELL QUARTET Sun 23 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

Comedy

TOADALLY FREE COMEDY! Mon 17 Apr, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

LAUGH OFF - COMEDY BATTLE Tues 18 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

MICK FERRY, DANNY MCLOUGHLIN & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 20 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DANNY BAKER Thurs 20 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

LUISA OMIELAN, SIMON EMANUAL & IGNACIO LOPEZ Fri 21 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

SEAN PERCIVAL, TOM LUCY, LUKE TOULSON & CAIMH MCDONNELL Fri 21 - Sat 22 Apr, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

MICK FERRY, DANNY MCLOUGHLIN, GUZ KHAN & ANDRE VINCENT Fri 21 - Sat 22 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY IN THE MET Sat 22 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

ROFL COMEDY CLUB Sat 22 Apr, The Old Post Office, Burton-upon-Trent

CHRIS RAMSEY Sat 22 Apr, William Aston Hall, Wrexham

REGINALD D HUNTER Sat 22 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

KEN DODD Sat 22 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

DANA ALEXANDER, GLEN MOORE & WINDSOR Sat 22 Apr, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

Theatre

BUCKET LIST Powerful story of one Mexican woman's fight for justice, told through physical storytelling, live instrumental music and song, Tues 18 - Thurs 20 Apr, The REP, B'ham

THE LADYBOYS OF BANGKOK Cabaret show featuring 16 of Thailand's most stunning Lady Boys, Tues 18 Apr, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford

THE FIRST HIPPO ON THE MOON Les Petits Theatre Company present a staging of David Walliams' space adventure for children aged three-plus, Tues 18 Apr, mac, Birmingham

MORGAN & WEST'S UTTERLY SPIFFING SPECTACULAR Magic show for kids which mixes brain-boggling illusion and good old-fashioned tomfoolery, Tues 18 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

MUSICAL MEDLEY Get Your Wigle On's young performers are back with an evening packed full of entertainment, Tues 18 - Wed 19 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ANNIE Amateur production presented by Lichfield Operatic Society, Tues 18 - Sat 22 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

SUNNY AFTERNOON Olivier Award-winning musical telling the story of one of Britain's greatest-ever bands, The Kinks, Tues 18 - Sat 22 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE VERDICT Clive Mantle and Jack Shepherd star in a new staging of Barry Reed's courtroom thriller, Tues 18 - Sat 22 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MAMMA MIA! The Abba-inspired feel-good musical returns to the Midlands... Tues 18 - Sat 29 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

MR BLOOM'S NURSERY - LIVE! Theatre for younger audiences, featuring song, play and plenty of interaction, Wed 19 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

TEECHERS Stage2 presents an amateur production of John Godber's take on life at a modern comprehensive, Wed 19 - Sat 22 Apr, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

CHRIS & PUI Songs, comedy and sketches for children from CBeebies' favourite double act, Thurs 20 Apr, Prince of Wales Centre, Cannock

CHAMPIONS OF MAGIC 2017 Direct from a hit season in London's West End, the world-class illusionists return with 'a spectacular night of mystery', Thurs 20 - Fri 21 Apr, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

WE'RE GOING ON A BEAR HUNT A vivid and noisy staging of Michael Rosen's award-winning book, Fri 21 - Sun 23 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

TAMBURLAINE Yellow Earth presents Christopher Marlowe's story of a lowly shepherd who rises to power and conquers half the world through sheer brutality and self-belief, Fri 21 Apr, Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

13 THE MUSICAL Amateur production from Get Your Wigle On, Fri 21 - Sat 22 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE GIRL FROM MARS The Martian invasion is moving to Birmingham with the arrival of 'the ultimate Britpop musical', Sat 22 April, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE WIZARD OF OZ Click your heels, clap your hands and journey over the rainbow, Sun 23 Apr, William Aston Hall, Wrexham

Dance

PASHA KOVALEV: LET'S DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY Featuring the Strictly Come Dancing star, his spectacular dancers and special guest Anya Garnis, Mon 17 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

PASHA KOVALEV: LET'S DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY Featuring the Strictly Come Dancing star, his spectacular dancers and special guest Anya Garnis, Wed 19 Apr, Prince of Wales Centre, Cannock

LORD OF THE DANCE: DANGEROUS GAMES With all the precision and thrills of the original, Lord of the Dance: Dangerous Games features new staging, cutting edge technology, new costumes and choreography, world champion acrobats and 40 of the world's most outstanding young performers all directed by Michael Flatley, Wed 19 - Sun 23 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ALICE IN WONDERLAND Ballet Theatre UK fuse captivating choreography, wit, humour and charm to present a unique take on Lewis Carroll's most famous tale, Thurs 20 Apr, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

DIVERSITY: GENESIS The 2009 Britain's Got Talent winners present the concluding part of their fantasy epic, which featured the much-acclaimed Limitless: The Reboot, Sat 22 Apr, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

Talks

AN EVENING WITH GEOFFREY BOYCOTT Boycott's 100th Hundred - The 40th Anniversary Tour, Thurs 20 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

POETS, PRATTLERS AND PANDEMONIALISTS An evening of poetry like you've never seen before. May contain strong language, Fri 21 Apr, Arena Theatre, W'hampton

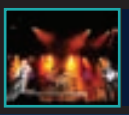
ONLY CONNECT WITH EMMA GANNON & OLIVIA SUDJIC Lively and thoughtful conversation about how we connect in the digital age, Fri 21 Apr, The Studio, Library of B'ham

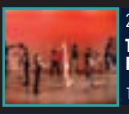
HONOUR AMONG THEBES Writer,

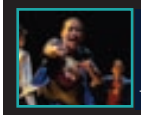
Diversity: Genesis - Barclaycard arena, Birmingham

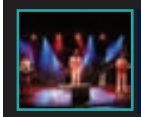
the brewhouse
arts centre & café bar

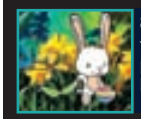
SPRING 2017


24 March, 7.30pm
GA GA
Tickets: £13.50

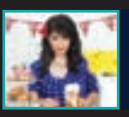

28 - 29 March, 7pm
The Brewhouse Youth Platform
Tickets: £7, £5 (Conc)

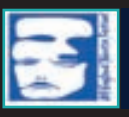

4 & 5 April, 7pm
Theatre Ad Infinitum: Bucket List
Tickets: £12 plus 'bring a friend for free'

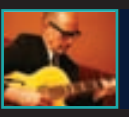

7 April 7pm
At Burton Town Hall
Bee Gees Fever
Tickets: £18 (Adv), £20 (OTD)


8 - 22 April,
Throughout Burton Town Centre
Burton Children's Easter Festival

18 - 22 April, 7.30pm
2.30pm Thu & Sat Mat
LTC Youth
Les Miserables Schools Edition
Tickets: £12, £10 (Conc. & Mat)


27 April, 8pm
Shappi Khorsandi 'Oh My Country!'
Tickets: £15, £13 (Conc)


29 April, 2pm & 7pm
All-England Theatre Festival - Quarter Finals
Tickets: £10, £15 both sessions


5 May 8pm
Andy Fairweather Low & the Low Riders
Tickets: £20

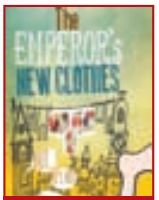
Box office:
01283 508100
BOOK ONLINE AT
www.brewhouse.co.uk
Brewhouse Arts Centre,
Union Street, Burton-upon-Trent,
Staffordshire DE14 1AA

LICHFIELD GARRICK
Theatre & Studio

APRIL HIGHLIGHTS

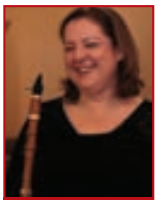
£15, £12 Students
THU 30 MAR - SAT 1 APR, 7.45PM,
Lichfield Garrick Youth Theatre presents
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
CYMBELINE
A wild, giddy and immersive production full of m isunderstandings, intimacies, betrayals and battles with heart-stopping poetry, electrifying live music and characteristic madness.

£22.50
SUN 9 APR, 7.30PM
THE SOUNDS OF THE GLENN MILLER ERA
Recapture the sounds of a bygone era with an unmissable evening of music and song...



£10.50, £9.50 Child
TUE 11 APR, 3.00PM
THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES
An inventive romp through the classic tale of an Emperor who loves clothes more than anything.
3+

£13.50, £11.50 Child, £41.50 Family,
WED 12 APR,
11.00AM & 2.00PM
DICK & DOM LIVE
Children's TV legends, Dick and Dom will be unleashed with a show that promises to get the whole family on their feet.
WARNING - You may get messy


£20, £15 Students
SAT 23 APR, 3.00PM
MOZART CLARINET QUINTET & CRUSELL QUARTET
Jane Booth is an internationally renowned performer and musicologist, working with the Academy of Ancient Music, the OAE and Tafelmusik.

3+
£14, £11.50 Groups
WED 10 1.30PM & 4.30PM **THU 11 MAY,**
10.30AM & 1.30PM
THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TEA - LIVE ON STAGE
A musical play adapted and directed by David Wood, based on the book by Judith Kerr.
Direct from a SMASH-HIT WEST END season

BOX OFFICE: **01543 412 121**
www.lichfieldgarrick.com
LICHFIELD GARRICK, CASTLE DYKE,
LICHFIELD, STAFFS, WS13 6HR

broadcaster & comedian Natalie Haynes presents a humorous history of Ancient Greece, Sat 22 Apr, The Studio, Cannon Street, B'ham

EVERYWOMAN Yardley MP Jess Phillips tells the truth about speaking the truth, Sat 22 Apr, The Studio, Library of Birmingham

BEETLE QUEEN WITH MG LEONARD Join the Waterstones-shortlisted author and poet as she talks about her books and her infectious enthusiasm for beetles, Sat 23 Apr, Thinktank, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL FINALE We Need To Talk About Kevin author Lionel Shriver looks at an America that's changing faster than fiction can imagine, Sat 23 Apr, Studio Theatre, Library of Birmingham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

A QUIET PASSION (U) Biography/Drama. Starring Cynthia Nixon, Jennifer Ehle. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Mon 17 - Wed 19 Apr; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 21 - Thurs 27 Apr

THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE (U) Animation/Action. With the voices of Will Arnett, Michael Cera. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, Shropshire, Tues 18 Apr

THE SALESMAN (12a) Drama/Thriller. Starring Shahab Hosseini, Taraneh Alidoosti. Foreign language, subtitled. Stoke Film Theatre, Tues 18 Apr

FENCES (12a) Drama. Starring Denzel Washington and Viola Davis. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 18 - Wed 19 Apr

MOANA (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Dwayne Johnson, Auli'i Cravalho. Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, Staffs, Wed 19 Apr

ELLE (18) Comedy/Drama. Starring Isabelle Huppert, Laurent Lafitte. Foreign language, subtitled. Stoke Film Theatre, Fri 21 - Sat 22 Apr

SWORD ART ONLINE THE MOVIE: ORDINAL SCALE (15) Animation/Action. Starring Rina Hidaka, Hiroaki Hirata. Foreign language, subtitled. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Wed 19 Apr

THE LOVE WITCH (15) Comedy/Horror. Starring Samantha Robinson, Jeffrey Vincent Parise. Stoke Film Theatre, Thurs 20 Apr

IVAN'S CHILDHOOD (PG) Drama/War. Starring Nikolay Burlyaev, Valentin Zubkov. Foreign language, subtitled. The Hive, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, Fri 21 Apr

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE (12a) Drama/History. Starring Gillian Anderson, Michael Gambon. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Fri 21 Apr

CINEMA PARADISO (PG) Drama. Starring Philippe Noiret, Enzo Cannavale. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Sat 22 Apr

SEVEN SAMURAI (PG) Adventure/Drama. Starring Toshirô Mifune, Takashi Shimura. Foreign language, subtitled. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 23 Apr

EASTER PARADE (U) Musical/Romance. Starring Judy Garland, Fred Astaire. mac, Birmingham, Sun 23 Apr

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 21 Apr, showing at selected cinemas

FINDING FATIMA (tbc)

THEIR FINEST (12a)

RULES DON'T APPLY (12a)

THE BELKO EXPERIMENT (tbc)

THE TRANSFIGURATION (tbc)

UNFORGETTABLE (15)

Events

EASTER POTTERY Make nests complete with birds, eggs and maybe a worm. Admission to parents & carers is free, materials and firing costs included, Tues 18 Apr, The Hive Shrewsbury

WILD TIMES: BACK TO NATURE Join the Wildlife Survival School for fun around the campfire, Tues 18 Apr, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

EASTER ACTIVITIES Take along an old sock and transform it into an Easter Bunny, Tues 18 Apr, Carding Mill Valley & The Shropshire Hills

PASSPORT INTO SPRING TRAIL Travel from the dark days of winter into the new season of growth and revival, Tues 18 - Thurs 20 Apr, Dudmaston Estate, Shropshire

NIMROD TOURS Climb on board the Nimrod and learn about its intelligence-gathering role in the Royal Air Force, Tues 18 - Sun 23 Apr, RAF Cosford Museum, Staffordshire

ANIMATION WORKSHOP Learn and develop stop-frame animation techniques to create an animation in a day, Wed 19 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

MINECRAFT MAGIC WORKSHOP Show off your best Minecraft skill. Friends and family are invited to view the last 30 minutes of the session, Wed 19 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

TALL TALES - SLEEPING BEAUTY FAMILY STORY TOUR AND CRAFT Join the king and queen for Aurora's Christening party, Wed 19 Apr, Aston Hall, Birmingham

GET GEOCACHING Explore Attingham as you hunt for hidden geocaches around the grounds, Wed 19 Apr, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

SPRING CRAFTS Wed 19 Apr, Dudmaston Estate, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

DIARY OF A WIMPY KID Make the tools to write your own diary, then write a funny diary story and enter the event competition to win a prize, Wed 19 Apr, Manor House Museum, West Bromwich

BIRDS IN A BOX WITH ZOE NEEDLE Create a decorative aviary box, Thurs 20 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

SCULPTURAL BIRD CREATIONS Mould, sculpt, paint and explore paper techniques using found papers and old books to create 3D sculptural birds, Thurs 20 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

ACORNS FIREWALK Evening of fun, fire and fundraising, Thurs 20 Apr, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SPRING CRAFTS Thurs 20 Apr, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

CREATIVE WRITING NATURE RAMBLE Children take part in a nature ramble before penning their own stories or poems inspired by the things they've seen and collected, Thurs 20 Apr, Dudmaston Estate, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

GO CANOEING! Canoe on the man-made river behind the mansion and see the gardens from a new perspective, Thurs 20 Apr, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Staffordshire

YOUNG DANCE MAKERS Learn the basics of contemporary dance, create choreography and have fun, Fri 21 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

SPRING INTO MUSIC CLASS A musical adventure using songs and sounds inspired by spring, Fri 21 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

'ALL ABOARD' DANCE Dance session to get you moving, Fri 21 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

STORYBOARDS, COMICS AND FLICK BOOKS Write a script, make a storyboard, animate it into a flick book, then make a comic, Fri 21 Apr, Manor House Museum, West Bromwich

THE BIG TREE CLIMB The Great Big Tree Climbing Company demonstrate how to safely climb an oak tree, Fri 21 - Sat 22 Apr, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Staffordshire

BIRMINGHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL: THE SPRING EDITION Featuring an eclectic range of talks, performances & workshops. Guest artists include best-selling American novelist Lionel Shriver & nature writer Jess Phillips, Fri 21 - Sun 23 Apr, various Birmingham locations including the Library Of Birmingham, Centrala Gallery & Birmingham REP

YARDLEY ARTS DAY A day of arts & craft activities, Sat 22 Apr, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

GET READY FOR ST GEORGE'S DAY Make a hat, flag and bunting, Sat 22 Apr, Manor House Museum, Wolverhampton

ST. GEORGE'S DAY Medieval living history in the castle, re-enactments in the castle grounds, Sat 22 Apr, Tamworth Castle

ZIGZAG ENSEMBLE Composing and improvising group for 12 to 18-year-olds, Sun 23 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

MUSIC MAZE Creative, participatory workshops for children aged between eight and 11, Sun 23 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

ST GEORGE'S DAY CELEBRATIONS Medieval re-enactment, children's entertainers, face painting and crafts in the 11th century castle courtyard, Sun 23 Apr, Dudley Zoological Gardens

SPRING FAIR Lambs, chicks, exotic animals, welly wanging, craft activities, a hay bale tunnel, tractor rides, games and stalls, Sun 23 Apr, Fordhall Organic Farm, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

DRIVE-IT DAY Motoring heritage celebration, including a wide display of classic vehicles, Sun 23 Apr, National Memorial Arboretum, Staffs

EASTER CHICK ENCOUNTER Join the farmers as they care for the newly hatched Easter chicks, Sun 23 Apr, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Staffordshire

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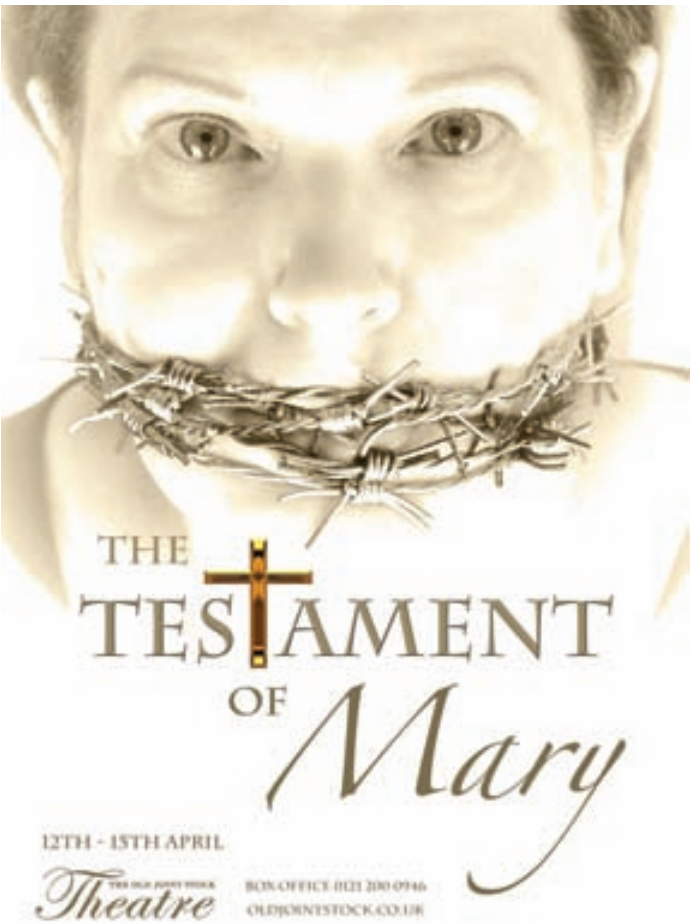
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Gigs

RATIONALE Mon 24 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

MY GIRL THE RIVER Mon 24 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

CHRIS DE BURGH Mon 24 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RAG'N'BONE MAN Mon 24 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

LYNNE HANSON AND THE GOOD INTENTIONS Mon 24 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BRUNO MARS Mon 24 - Tues 25 Apr, Barclaycard Arena, B'ham

MEAT WAVE Tues 25 Apr, The Flapper, B'ham

PETERS & DOG & DANIELLE CAWDELL Tues 25 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

THE ACOUSTIC SESSIONS Tues 25 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

LED ZEPPELIN MASTERS Tues 25 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SPECTRES Tues 25 - Wed 26 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CHAIN OF FLOWERS Wed 26 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE GOOD SINNERS Wed 26 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE UNTHANKS Wed 26 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HAPPYNESS Wed 26 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LAURENCE JONES Wed 26 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

KATHRYN ROBERTS AND SEAN LAKEMAN Wed 26 Apr, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

HMLTD Thurs 27 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

BENT LIFE Thurs 27 Apr, The Flapper, B'ham

DEL CAMINO Thurs 27 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

BEYOND THE BARRICADE Thurs 27 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

BLACK SPIDERS Thurs 27 Apr, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

PÖRK Fri 28 Apr, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

MAGIC AND THE MUSE Fri 28 Apr, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE QUIREBOYS Fri 28 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

FRED ZEPPELIN Fri 28 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

KEYWEST Fri 28 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

NIBBS & EDDY Fri 28 Apr, Havana Republic Bar and Restaurant, Shrewsbury

ARE YOU EXPERIENCED? Fri 28 Apr, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

RAT BOY Fri 28 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

LOBSTER SHACK Fri 28 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MIKE SKINNER & MURKAGE PRESENT TONGA Fri 28 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

IN2MINDS Fri 28 Apr, Route 44, Birmingham

THE SELECTER & THE BEAT FEAT. RANKING ROGER Fri 28 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

INTO THE SHADOWS Fri 28 Apr, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

PET SHOP BOYS TRIBUTE Fri 28 Apr, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

THE BEST OF BOY BANDS Fri 28 Apr, The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield

JAYWALKERS Fri 28 Apr, Lichfield Guildhall

ED SHEERAN Fri 28 - Sat 29 Apr, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

GROUPER Fri 28 - Sat 29 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

TENPOLE TUDOR Sat 29 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

MOTHER POPCORN Sat 29 Apr, Irish Centre, Birmingham

ULTRA 90'S Sat 29 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

KICK UP THE 80'S Sat 29 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

WARD THOMAS Sat 29 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

MORETALLICA Sat 29 Apr, Route 44, B'ham

CAMERON FORREST Sat 29 Apr, Havana Republic Bar and Restaurant, Shrewsbury

PINK FLOYDIAN Sat 29 Apr, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

CHRIS HELME Sat 29 Apr, Lichfield Guildhall

GAZ MAYALL Sat 29 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

SAX IN THE CITY: THE NOTEBENDERS Sat 29 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LYNNE HANSON AND THE GOOD INTENTIONS Sat 29 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

DANIEL O'DONNELL Sat 29 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

DEMENTIA AWARE FEST 2017 Sat 29 - Sun 30 Apr, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

RAYMOND FROGGATT Sun 30 Apr, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

DAVID RODIGAN & MIGHTY CROWN Sun 30 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SEAMUS MOORE Sun 30 Apr, Irish Centre, Birmingham

JERSEY 4 Sun 30 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

JAKE ISAAC Sun 30 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

HOUSE OF JEALOUS LOVERS Sun 30 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

SAM BROOKES Sun 30 Apr, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

THE SOLID SILVER 60S SHOW Sun 30 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE NEW GRASS CUTTERS Sun 30 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

MOJO FESTIVAL Sun 30 Apr - Mon 1 May, The Crown and Anchor Vaults, Bishops Castle, South Shropshire

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by J.S Bach, C. Pepusch, Elgar, A. Hollins & Mendelssohn, Mon 24 Apr, B'ham Town Hall

KRISTIINA ROKASHEVICH PIANO RECITAL Programme includes works by Schubert, Debussy & Bartok, Mon 24 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

CHOPIN PIANO CONCERTO WITH LOUIS SCHWIZGEBEL Also featuring Fabien Gabel (piano) & the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchesta. Programme includes works by Berlioz, Chopin & Franck, Wed 26 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BOCCHERINI STRING QUARTETS Featuring Gabriel Dyker & Amanda Lake (violins), Amy Thomas (viola), David Powell (cello) & Sally Morgan (double bass). Programme comprises Boccherini's Three String Quintets, Op.39, Thurs 27 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

CBSO FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSICS: BRITISH BLOCKBUSTERS Featuring Nicholas Dodd (conductor) & Mark Kermode (presenter), Fri 28 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GALIN GANCHEV PIANO RECITAL Fri 28 Apr, Alington Hall, Shrewsbury School

AN EVENING OF MUSIC & DANCE WITH BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET Featuring the Royal Ballet Sinfonia and with David Bintley as compere, Sat 29 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MARK PADMORE AND PAUL LEWIS Perform Schubert's Die Schöne Müllerin, Sun 30 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

ROB DEERING, JENNY COLLIER & MARK OLVER Wed 26 Apr, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury, Shropshire

STEVE WILLIAMS, ANGELA BARNES & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 27 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TEZ ILYAS Thurs 27 Apr, mac, B'ham

MIKE GUNN, ANDRE VINCENT Thurs 27 Apr, Station Pub, Sutton Coldfield

STEVE BEST & TOM APPLETON Fri 28 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

GEOFF BOYZ, LEAH SHAND, RYAN MCDONNELL & GEORGE RIGDEN Fri 28 Apr, National Brewery Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

MIKE WILMOT, BRENNAN REECE & PAUL MYREHAUG & MANDY KNIGHT Fri 28 - Sat 29 Apr, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

STEVE WILLIAMS, ANGELA BARNES, JAKE LAMBERT & ANDREW STANLEY Fri 28 - Sat 29 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RUDI LICKWOOD, JARLATH REGAN, SAM AVERY Fri 28 - Sat 29 Apr, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

SARA PASCOE Sat 29 Apr, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

ROFL COMEDY CLUB Sat 29 Apr, The Old Post Office, Burton-upon-Trent

RUSSELL KANE Sun 30 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

Theatre

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE FAMILY Join writer-performer and UK poetry slam champion Ben Norris as he battles against the country's most notorious service stations and the perils of lower-league football in search of the man who became his father, Mon 24 Apr, The REP, Birmingham

DOREEN'S GRAND NIGHT OUT Evening of satirical stand-up, music and sketches, Mon 24 - Tues 25 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

SEMI DETACHED Tower Players presents David Turner's domestic comedy, Tues 25 - Thurs 27 Apr, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock

MACBETH Loveday Ingram directs a new staging of Shakespeare's famous tragedy. Patrick Robinson stars, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LEGALLY BLONDE The award-winning Lichfield Garrick Youth Theatre present the West End and Broadway smash-hit musical comedy, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

ROCK OF AGES West Bromwich Operatic Society present an amateur production of the hit West End musical. Contains some sexual references and mild swearing, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

PRIVATE LIVES Noel Coward's comedy of manners, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Apr, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

TO SIR, WITH LOVE New staging of ER Braithwaite's powerful story, adapted for the stage by the writer of East Is East, Ayub Khan-Din, Tues 25 Apr - Sat 6 May, The REP, Birmingham

STREETS PAVED WITH GOLD BY VICTOR RICHARDS A short one-man play set in the present and exploring recent history from the 1950s onwards, Wed 26 Apr, Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

DOREEN'S GRAND NIGHT OUT Evening of satirical stand-up, music and sketches, Wed 26 Apr, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

ANYTHING GOES MAD COW present an amateur staging of Noel Coward's exuberant musical comedy, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE THEATRICAL NEWTON David Titley stars as David Garrick, one of 18th century England's most celebrated men of the theatre, Fri 28 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

SCORCHED Open Sky fuse new writing, visual physical theatre and period music to create 'the workings of a mind sinking into the sands of time', Fri 28 Apr, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

METHUSALEM Newman University presents Ivan Goll's groundbreaking play, blending Expressionism and Surrealism in a compelling fusion of realism and fantasy, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Apr, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

DIAL M FOR MURDER Frederick Knott's gripping drama, Fri 28 Apr - Sat 20 May, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

YAMATO: THE DRUMMERS OF JAPAN Brand new show described as 'visually spectacular, high-energy and explosive', Sat 29 Apr, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

600 PEOPLE Third Angel explore how we think about evolution and intelligence, belief and invention, communication and space travel, Sat 29 Apr, mac, Birmingham

DON'T DRIBBLE ON THE DRAGON Musical adventure about growing up and the importance of family, based on the new book by Steven Lee and featuring magic designed by the legendary Paul Daniels, Sat 29 Apr, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

CALL MR ROBESON - A LIFE WITH SONGS A rollercoaster journey through actor, singer and activist Paul Robeson's remarkable life, Sat 29 Apr, Chelmarsh Village Hall, Nr Bridgnorth, Shropshire

THE GIN CHRONICLES Vintage radio-style comedy which sees amateur detective John Jobling enlisting his housemaid to help him uncover the whereabouts of missing gin magnate Cornelius Juniper, Sat 29 - Sun 30 Apr, Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

ALL SHOOK UP The Arts Centre Telford (TACT) presents an American jukebox musical featuring the songs of Elvis Presley, Sat 29 - Sun 30 Apr, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

DON'T DRIBBLE ON THE DRAGON Musical adventure about growing up and the importance of family, based on the new book by Steven Lee and featuring magic designed by the legendary Paul Daniels, Sun 30 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Dance

IMBALANCE BY JOLI VYANN Combining acrobatic skills and athletic dance, this energetic, thought-provoking performance explores our obsessive dependence on technology, asking whether our lives are 'in' or 'out' of balance?, Wed 26 - Thurs 27 Apr, DanceXchange, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

A UNITED KINGDOM (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring David Oyelowo, Rosamund Pike. Stourbridge Town Hall, Mon 24 Apr

ELLE (18) Comedy/Drama. Starring Isabelle Huppert, Laurent Lafitte. Foreign language, subtitled. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrophire, Mon 24 - Tues 25 Apr

HIDDEN FIGURES (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer. Wem Town Hall, Shropshire, Tues 25 & Thurs 27 Apr

CERTAIN WOMEN (12a) Drama. Starring Michelle Williams, Kristen Stewart. Stoke Film Theatre, Tues 25 & Thurs 27 Apr

GODZILLA (18) Drama/Horror. Starring Takashi Shimura, Akihiko Hirata. Foreign language, subtitled. The Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 27 Apr

EDDIE THE EAGLE (PG) Biography/Comedy. Starring Taron Egerton, Hugh Jackman. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Thurs 27 Apr

PERSONAL SHOPPER (15) Drama/Mystery. Starring Kristen Stewart, Lars Eidinger. Stoke Film Theatre, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Apr

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (U) Fantasy/Musical. Starring Emma Watson, Dan Stevens. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Apr; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, Fri 28 - Sun 30 Apr

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 28 Apr, showing at selected cinemas

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY VOL. 2 (tbc)

LADY MACBETH (12a)

SUNTAN (tbc)

THE PROMISE (tbc)

HEAL THE LIVING (12a)

Imbalance By Joli Vyann

DanceXchange, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome, Wed 26 - Thurs 27 April

Former stunt man and circus artist Jan Patzke and ex-gymnast and dancer Olivia Quayle form Joli Vyann, a company whose new fusion style blurs the boundaries between dance and circus skills. Real-life couple Jan and Olivia here present the story of a relationship made dysfunctional by the impact of digital-age technology, in the process contemplating what people's obsessive dependence on their smart phones may be costing them in terms of human interaction.

Events

BETWAY PREMIER LEAGUE DARTS The world's top darts stars compete for the prestigious title, Thurs 27 Apr, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

DO IT YOURSELF Make your own bath bombs and body scrub, Thurs 27 Apr, Manor House Museum, West Bromwich

DONINGTON HISTORIC FESTIVAL One of Europe's biggest historic motorsport festivals, attracting hundreds of priceless machines dating as far back as the 1920s, Fri 28 - Sun 30 Apr, Donington Park Racing Circuit, Derby

THE VINTAGE NATIONALS Get-together of traditional hot rods and customs, Fri 28 - Sun 30 Apr, Santa Pod Raceway, Northants

EASTNOR CHILLI FESTIVAL All things chilli to try and buy, live music, bars, hot food, a children's cookery school, a chilli-eating competition and cookery demonstrations, Sun 30 Apr - Mon 1 May, Eastnor Castle Deer Park, Herefordshire

VINTAGE MARKET Featuring vintage finds and locally crafted handmade items, Sun 30 Apr - Mon 1 May, National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire

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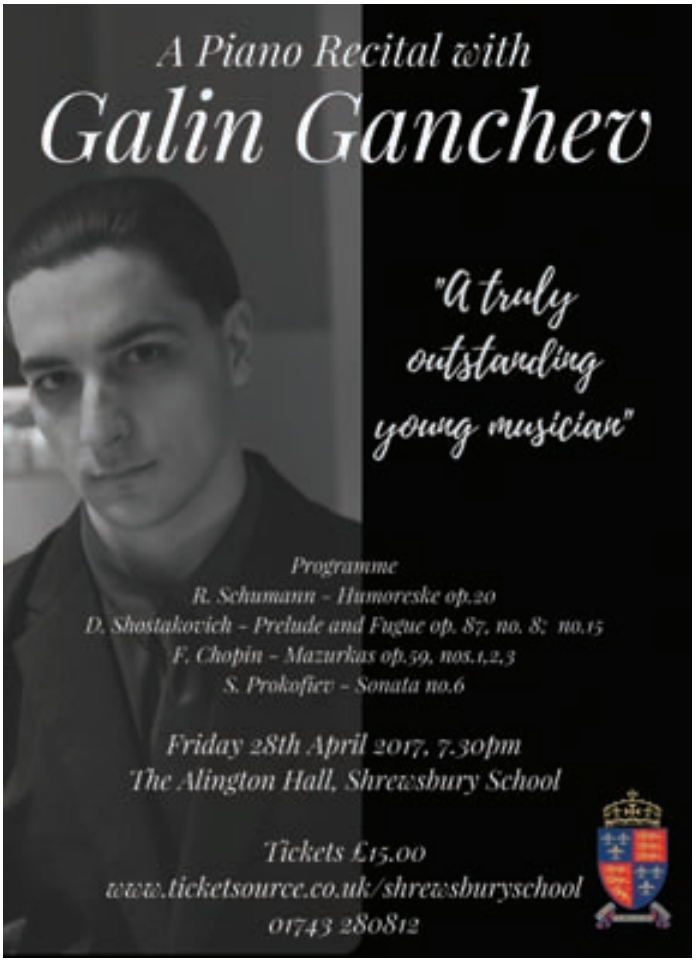
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