



Shropshire

ISSUE 380 AUGUST 2017

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Your 16-page week
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UFTOWN!
FOLK



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Get inspired by the arts at Stoke-on-Trent's Big Feast

A programme of events designed to give people the chance to experience and be inspired by the arts is taking place in Stoke-on-Trent during the August Bank Holiday weekend (Friday the 25th & Saturday the 26th).

The Big Feast festival presents two days of free-to-view street shows for all the family to enjoy.

Entertainment includes a 'fabulously fiendish fox' playing music, a hitman-turned-healer offering holistic services in a taxi, and a performance by an out-of-this-world urban astronaut suspended 20ft in the air.

To check out the full line-up of events, visit appetitestoke.co.uk

Groove On Down The Road in Wolverhampton

Young people from Wolverhampton and Birmingham are set to reimagine the magical story of The Wizard Of Oz in a new stage production.

Set in 'a fantastical urban world', Groove On Down The Road is this month being presented at Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre by leading hip-hop dance ensemble ZooNation. The company is inviting audiences to join Dorothy - complete with ruby sneakers - for a high-energy hip-hop dance version of L Frank Baum's famous tale.

The production shows at the Arena on Thursday 31 August and Friday 1 September. It then visits Birmingham Hippodrome from Wednesday 27 to Friday 29 September.



Theatre on lookout for talented girl performers

Talented girls from across Shropshire are next month being given the chance to audition for Theatre Severn's pantomime production of Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs

(showing from 29 November until 7 January). The open audition takes place at the theatre on Tuesday 12 September. To be eligible, applicants must be aged between nine and 15 on 1 September.

Further information is available at theatre-severn.co.uk and via the venue's box office (01743 281281), where tickets to attend the production can also be purchased.

Legacy projects get green light as Telford turns 50

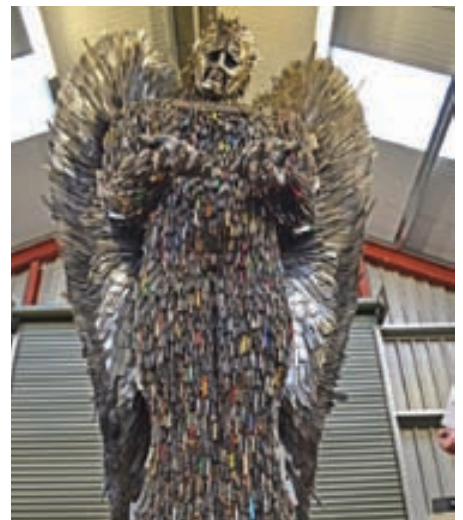
A proposal to create a range of lasting legacy projects celebrating Telford's 50th anniversary next year has been given the green light. The projects will cost a total of £2million, with Telford & Wrekin Council keen to canvas residents' views about the kind of projects they would like to see developed.

Commenting on the announcement, the Council's leader, Councillor Shaun Davies, said: "This is a great opportunity to create a lasting legacy that reflects the community's views, and to help communities run their own 50th anniversary celebration."

Shropshire attraction receives peace award

Shropshire's British Ironwork Centre has been awarded the prestigious Rotary International Peace Award for its Save A Life, Surrender Your Knife weapons amnesty project. The Peace Award annually recognises an individual or organisation that has contributed 'to the furtherance of peace and understanding throughout the world'.

The Ironwork project culminated in the creation of an angel sculpture made with weapons surrendered to 43 police constabularies across the country.



Wolverhampton artist's miniatures go on display

Microscopic artworks by Wolverhampton-born artist Willard Wigan are this month going on display at Birmingham's Museum of the Jewellery Quarter.

Willard Wigan MBE: In The Eye Of The Needle showcases 21 miniature works from the artist's collection which sit within the eye of a needle or on the head of a pin.

Showing from Friday 4 August to Saturday 28 October, the exhibition is being displayed in the museum's new commercial gallery space in the Smith & Pepper Tea Room.

Paw Patrol to the rescue in Brum

The hero pups of hit kids' TV show Paw Patrol are touring to Birmingham with a new live show.

Airing on the Nickelodeon channel, the television series follows the adventures of a team of rescue pups who save their town from everyday emergencies. The live show, Race To The Rescue, visits the city's Barclaycard Arena on Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 August.

To book tickets, visit pawpatrol-live.com/uk



Directing courses for West Mids deaf and disabled

A course for West Midlands-based deaf and disabled people who are interested in a career in directing has been launched by Birmingham Repertory Theatre and the Regional Theatre Young Director Scheme.

The free-to-attend Introduction To Directing will include weekly workshops with professional theatre directors and practitioners from The REP and further afield. It will focus on the skills and resources individuals will need in order to take work 'from the page to the stage', and to continue to develop their craft. The first workshop takes place on Wednesday 13 September, with the course running every week for 10 weeks.



Jersey Boys returns in new Wolverhampton Grand season

The return of smash-hit musical Jersey Boys and an on-stage dinner with Christopher Biggins are among the many highlights of the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre's brand new season.

Other shows of note stopping off at the venue include Crazy For You, Doctor Jekyll And Mr Hyde and Menopause The Musical.

A Grand Theatre production of Henry James' famous ghost story, Turn Of The Screw, also features. For more information about these and other shows at the venue, visit grandtheatre.co.uk. Tickets for all productions can be purchased by calling 01902 42 92 12 or via the Grand's website.

This Way Up!

An exhibition celebrating the artistic talents of people living in Wolverhampton and Staffordshire is on display at Wolverhampton Art Gallery until Sunday 27 August.

The works on show have all been produced by people who took part in the This Way Up creative wellbeing project.

Working with professional artists, participants had a rare opportunity to develop their art & design skills through a series of accessible, sociable and relaxed workshops. The artworks on display include printmaking, ceramics, jewellery design, painting, surface pattern and drawing.



A prehistoric adventure in the Potteries

A brand new interactive dinosaur show is this month visiting the Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent.

Dinosaur World is suitable for children aged three-plus and invites audiences to join an intrepid explorer in discovering a prehistoric world of impressively life-like dinosaurs. Triceratops, Giraffatitan and Seg-nosaurus are all present and correct, alongside every youngster's favourite flesh-eating monster, the Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Dinosaur World stops off at the Regent on Thursday 31 August and Friday 1 September.



British Ceramics Biennale heads for Stoke-on-Trent

The British Ceramics Biennale is returning to Stoke-on-Trent this autumn. The city's former Spode factory will be the main hub of the event, with venues in the cultural quarter of Hanley - including the Potteries Museum & Art Gallery - acting as a second hub. The UK's largest ceramics festival, the Biennale will be in Stoke from 23 September to 5 November. It will link with some of the city's key industry players, including Emma Bridgewater, Burleigh at Middleport Pottery, World of Wedgwood and Johnson Tiles. For more information, visit britishceramicsbiennial.com

Wolverhampton soul diva to make pantomime debut



Wolverhampton-born soul-singing superstar Beverley Knight will make her pantomime debut at the Birmingham Hippodrome this Christmas, starring as the Fairy Godmother in a spectacular version of Cinderella. Beverley will be joined in the show by Strictly Come Dancing's Danny Mac, Hippodrome panto favourite Matt Slack and one-time Hear'Say singer Suzanne Shaw. Ceri Dupree and Phil Randall take on the roles of The Ugly Sisters, with pantomime veterans The Grumbleweeds bringing their own particular brand of humour to proceedings. Cinderella runs at the Hippodrome from Tuesday 19 December to Sunday 28 January. To book tickets, visit birminghamhippodrome.com

Chill out this summer at SnowDome's ski and snowboard holiday camps

Getting all hot and bothered at the thought of having to keep the kids entertained for six long holiday weeks? If you are, then chill out - and head for Tamworth's SnowDome visitor attraction, where children aged between eight and 15 can have plenty of high-energy fun at special ski & snowboard holiday camps. Available either on a per day basis or in a week block (Monday to Friday), the camps are a great way to keep your youngsters occupied and active. For more information, visit snowdome.co.uk

Plans unveiled for a new £4million history centre in the heart of Stafford

The planning for a new £4million Staffordshire History Centre is well underway. The centre will be located in the heart of Stafford and hold historical records and collections up to 1,000 years old. Speaking about the project to staffordshirenewsroom.co.uk, Gill Heath, Cabinet Member for Communities at Staffordshire County Council, said: "With the architects and design teams now on board, we're starting to put some detail together on the activity programme and design of the centre. There's real energy and enthusiasm amongst our partners - and local history groups too - which is great. The project team are busy behind the scenes planning, and we hope to be able to share more detailed plans with the public in the autumn." More information is available at staffordshire.gov.uk/archives/ourvision



Major funding for Tamworth venue



Tamworth Borough Council's redevelopment of the town's Assembly Rooms venue has received a major boost from Arts Council England in the form of a £365,000 grant. The money will be used to help ensure the theatre's infrastructure and digital equipment is of the highest standard.

Craig Charles to DJ at Weekender



BBC Radio 6 Music presenter Craig Charles is one of the high-profile DJs confirmed to appear at next month's Birmingham Weekender. Along with David Rodigan (1Xtra) and Don Letts (6 Music), Craig will be inviting members of the public to take part in the event's Square Dance, produced in association with the Moseley Folk Festival and taking place in the city's Victoria Square from 22 to 24 September. For more information, visit birminghamweekender.com



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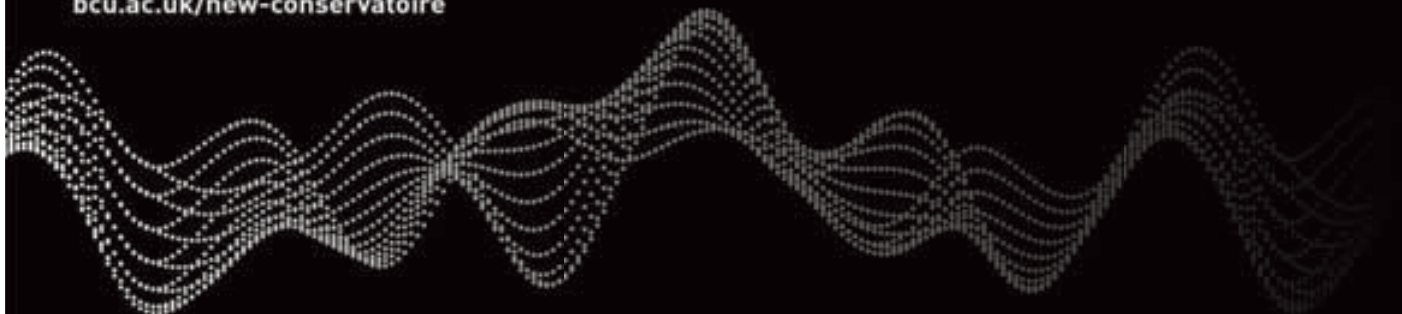


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BRASSED OFF

Wolverhampton Grand's chief executive talks about the theatre's first home-produced show since the 1970s



More than three decades after one of Britain's longest and bitterest industrial disputes, Wolverhampton Grand is set to revisit the aftermath of the UK's coalmine closures in a new production of *Brassed Off*.

Featuring Black Country legend Jeffrey Holland, a 67-strong community cast and a live local brass band, this hotly anticipated show will be the first to be produced in-house at the Grand in 40 years. We spoke to Chief Executive Adrian Jackson to find out more.

"I'd actually done the play before," Jackson explains, "and I knew from then that it's a great show to do with the community, which is something I wanted to replicate here. Also, it's a very musical play, so it will hopefully be very popular and accessible for audiences."

Outside his work managing major theatres (he previously led the Lichfield Garrick), Jackson is also a respected instrumentalist and conductor, making *Brassed Off* the perfect show for him to kickstart big plans to revive in-house production. Based on the film

of the same name and set in the fictional Yorkshire town of Grimley, the show follows the local colliery band's passionate conductor, Danny Ormondroyd (Jeffrey Holland), as he fights to keep his bandmates motivated and lead them to the National Finals. Meanwhile, Gloria Mullins (Clara Darcy) is sent back to her old hometown by British Coal to assess the profitability of its pit. Concealing from the miners her true purpose for returning, she ends up getting in deeper than she's bargained for, and finds herself playing flugelhorn with the band.

“ A lot of the cast have families who were directly involved in the strikes and the industry, so it’s something that’s still very present for them ”

Music featured in the show includes the William Tell Overture, Death And Glory, Danny Boy, Land Of Hope And Glory and Rodrigo’s Concierto de Aranjuez.

“The band is mostly made up of the City of Wolverhampton Brass Band, so they’re the core of it, but we’ve recruited other musicians as well. We wanted it to be a really big band with a massive sound. For the key cast members, we were specifically looking for actor-musicians, because it’s really important for a character like Gloria, say, that she can play her instrument really well. But actually, a lot of our other cast members have decided to start learning brass instruments as we’ve gone along, which is great!”

Although the show is set in Yorkshire and inspired by the real-life town of Grimethorpe, many of the cast members will have their own experiences to draw on. It might be less famous than those of Wales and the North East, but the Midlands did once boast its own strong mining tradition.

“People tend to think of mining as being in the north, but there were quite a lot of mining areas around the Black Country and the wider Midlands. A lot of the cast have families who were directly involved in the strikes and the industry, so it’s something that’s still very present for them. Although we haven’t explicitly relocated the story, the playwright, Paul Allen, has been working with us directly, so there may be some tweaks here and there.”

Virtually everyone who auditioned to be in the community cast now has a part in the final show. In today’s internet-driven, compartmentalised world, it can often feel as though we’ve lost a sense of shared history, experience and solidarity in our communities, so there’s something inspiring about a project that consciously works to bring together very different kinds of people from the same geographical area. That said, Jackson believes that same community spirit

which once characterised industrial towns is still there to be unearthed when it’s most needed.

“I think that whenever there’s a crisis, communities tend to rally together. People might not work in the same ways now, but we’ve seen with recent events in London and Manchester how hardship brings people together, so I think this story will really resonate emotionally with people.”

For Jackson, the local theatre is something that should be at the heart of any community. Since taking up the Chief Executive role in 2015, he’s been working hard to make the Grand a place that feels open and welcoming to everyone, with structural changes designed to accommodate more visitors and different kinds of performances, as well as diversifying the main stage programme.

Developing work in-house is just one of his ambitious goals, and *Brassed Off* particularly feels like a statement of intent, combining local input with quality drama and professional talent.

“The Grand has a really strong tradition of producing shows in-house, if you go back to the ’50s, ’60s and ’70s. But after the closure and reopening in the ’80s, at some point a decision was obviously made that this was no longer going to be a producing venue, and that it would only be receiving touring shows.

“Since I took over here, I’ve been looking to change that, and I think it’s brilliant that we’re now doing it. We have more projects lined up already, some of which will be community-based and some professional, so hopefully it will just continue to expand and grow.”

.....
Brassed Off runs at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Wed 23 August to Sun 3 September.



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REVIEW: The Royal Ruchi

Exceptional flavours and great service make for a majestic dining experience

Inspired by the feasting traditions of Moghul aristocrats and boasting 18th and 19th century Indian artefacts and treasures, The Royal Ruchi's aim is to offer 'a majestic dining experience' to all who visit.

Open from 5.30pm till late seven days a week, the restaurant offers an extensive à la carte menu featuring such dishes as hyderbadi lamb shank, north Indian garlic chilli chicken and salmon ka tikka. In addition, three or four times a year, they create a five-course fine-dining tasting menu - the first and only Indian restaurant in Staffordshire to deliver this concept.

Designed to tour real Indian regional flavours and directed by a Michelin-starred chef, we peered the mouthwatering tasting menu over a cold cobra.

The amuse bouche consisted of three elements: strawberry lassi, gol gappa and nimki snacks. A traditional, refreshing Punjabi

drink made with yogurt, the strawberry lassi was sweet yet delicate. The nimki snacks (flour crackers rolled in roasted cumin seeds) added an additional texture, whilst the gol gappa (famous Indian street snacks comprising crisp flour pancake spheres filled with chickpeas, yoghurt and tamarind chutney) added bursts of additional flavour and freshness.

The starter featured a trio of appetisers: Benarasi chilli paneer (cubes of cottage cheese and fresh baby corn tossed with chilli), a Delhi papad chaat (a popular fast-food snack across Delhi, with roasted papads topped with onions, tomatoes and spices, with a succulent chicken chaat filling) and a Lucknow chapli kebab (a handmade minced kebab in the shape of a patty and featuring ground beef, locally produced eggs and various spices). Beautifully presented, they were all extremely tasty and an exciting indication

of the standard of food that was to follow.

Next up was the fish course. Presented to us on a banana leaf was a piece of West Bengal tilapia. Infused with peppers, turmeric and carom seeds, it took its place alongside a piece of Kerala hariyali monkfish which had been cooked in the tandoor. Both elements were stunning. The tilapia was soft, bursting with complementary flavours and certainly the nicest I've tasted. The monkfish was cooked perfectly. We were seriously impressed!

Now, onto the main course. Undoubtedly the highlight of the evening, it featured: The Royal Ruchi's signature supreme chicken, marinated overnight in traditional Mughal spices; boneless lamb simmered with whole spices, mango pickle and red chillies; wok-tossed seasonal vegetables with khadai spices and moong chana daal - slow-cooked rich yellow lentils. The chicken was cooked to absolute perfection, falling off the bone at the slightest touch. The lamb dish showcased a thick, rich and downright beautiful sauce, and the meat itself was juicy and ten-

der. The daal and veg were also delicious and complemented the meat elements perfectly. Served with pulao rice and a freshly baked naan, it was a course well worth our two-hour round journey.

For dessert we enjoyed a platter comprising jalebi, gulab jamun, a fruit cocktail stick and vanilla ice cream. A popular sweet in South Asia, jalebi comes in the form of deep-frying maida flour batter, soaked in golden sugar syrup. Very sweet but very tasty! The gulab jamun is a milk-based dessert comprising powdered milk, flour, baking powder and ghee. These are formed into a dough, deep fried and coated in sugar syrup. With an almost sponge-like texture, it was a little less sweet than the jalebi and probably the highlight of the platter. The fresh fruit and ice cream were the perfect accompaniments to the sweet elements and brought a real sense of freshness to the dish.

All in all, our Royal Ruchi experience couldn't have been better. The food was incredible, the flavours exceptional and every course showcased excellent technical ability. The service was fantastic too, with the staff being both knowledgeable and friendly. I can't wait to return to sample some more of the outstanding cuisine that this gem of a restaurant has to offer.

Lauren Foster

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

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restaurant review | Jay Rayner**

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Shrewsbury gets new vegan Japanese eatery

A new Japanese vegan restaurant, wine bar & tearoom has opened on Shrewsbury's Fish Street. Itadakizen boasts an evening a la carte menu which includes tofu steak, harumaki and rice and noodle dishes. A sushi course is available for £20 and an omakase course, comprising five assorted appetisers, sushi, noodles, tempura and dessert, costs £25. The restaurant has a separate lunch menu and sells a variety of wine, beer and oriental alcoholic beverages, as well as soft drinks and teas.

Gin and vodka festival in Wolverhampton

The Outback nightclub in Wolverhampton is launching a gin and vodka festival, set to take place on Saturday 19 August. Attendees can enjoy a selection of 'the most flavoursome and unique spirits on the market, distilled with only the finest botanicals and grains from master distillers'. Tickets are £5 and include four bar samples.

Staffordshire pub reaches awards finals

A Barlaston pub relaunched in 2015 by a consortium including Men Behaving Badly actor Neil Morrissey has reached the finals of the Great British Pub Awards. The Plume of Feathers is vying with five other venues to be named best partnership pub. Commenting on the achievement, General Manager Luther Mattock told the Stoke Sentinel: "What we do, we do well. The food is simple pub food, but the quality and consistency is very good. "Bruce Mackie, the head chef, is very passionate, and his food really is one of the things that sets us apart. "We have a good offering of ale too, including The Morrissey Blonde, which is one of the top sellers." The Great British Pub Awards winners will be announced at a special event in London on 7 September.

Save the date - the tasty Telford Festival is back!

Telford Festival next month returns to Telford Town Park for a second year (QEII Arena, Saturday 2 & Sunday 3 September). Featuring over 100 food, drink and craft exhibitors, including Sofood!, Green Fields, Coopers Sausage Rolls, Powells Pies, Moyden's Cheese and Press De Cuba, the show's tickets are priced at £6 for adults, £2 for children and £13 for a family, with under-twos going free. Kids can enjoy getting mucky in the hands-on cookery area, learn circus skills in the big top, handle creatures large and small in the Exotic Zoo and have a go at go-karting and eating bugs. The gates open at 10am both days. For more information, visit telfood.co.uk



Attractions galore at the sixth Lichfield Food Festival

Lichfield Food Festival is back for a sixth year this month, taking place at venues across the city from Saturday 26 to Monday 28 August. Boasting over 225 market stalls, the free event also features street food, live music, children's activities and celebrity chefs, with Great British Bake Off stars Val Stones and Frances Quinn both in attendance.

New attractions for the 2017 edition of the festival are free cookery school classes for all ages and a gin & ale trail. From Prosecco to pies, tipples to truffles, gin to gluten-free indulgences and vegan to Vietnamese, Lichfield Food Festival is the place to head for this bank holiday weekend!

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Céline Dion

Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham,
Thurs 3 August

Best known for number one hit and Titanic theme tune *My Heart Will Go On*, five-time Grammy Award winner Céline Dion brings a live tour to the UK for the first time in eight years. Expect a multitude of smash hits from a 30-year career which has produced a staggering 250 million album sales.



Sam Brookes

Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury,
Sun 20 August

Former Sunday Times Breaking Act Sam Brookes is still one of the UK alt-folk scene's best-kept secrets. The London-based songsmith gained over five million Spotify plays for acclaimed 2014 album *Kairos*, as well as enjoying BBC Radio Two support from Dermot O'Leary. Brookes' new single, *My Girl Drinks Coffee*, is his first for over two years.



Kabantu

Church Stretton School, Shropshire,
Mon 7 August

Manchester five-piece Kabantu (meaning 'of the people') combine vocal harmonies from South Africa with Celtic reels, Brazilian samba and Balkan folk music.

Having previously performed in the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, and having won the Royal Over-Seas League Competition 2017, they use their music to fashion a bridge between countries and cultures, in the process creating an exuberant and joyful sound.

Regina Spektor

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sat 5 August

Russian-born American singer-songwriter and pianist Regina Spektor began classical piano training at the tender age of six. She self-released her first three records before signing to Sire Records, where she began achieving mainstream recognition. Spektor visits Birmingham in support of critically acclaimed seventh album *Remember Us To Life*.

Yes Lad

The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 2 August

After the success of pop-tastic debut single *Walk Away*, this new five-piece head out on their first ever UK headline tour. Showcasing classic yet modern pop, mentor Nigel Martin Smith says: "We've had three different line-ups and it's taken four years to get Yes Lad where I want them to be, but now they're ready and raring to go."

Reverend Peyton's Big Damn Band

The Robin, Bilston, Wed 16 August

"Over the years, our shows have gotten more dynamic," Reverend Peyton explains. "The ups are more up and the downs are more down. And that's important to me." America's foremost country blues outfit released new album *The Front Porch Sessions* earlier this year. "I really think it's one of the best things I've ever done," Peyton continues. "I'm interested in making hand-made American music - the goal is to be timeless."





THE OVERTONES

From pop and soul to doo-wop and crooning, there's no denying the appeal of the UK's 'favourite' five-piece vocal harmony group. Lauren Foster caught up with the band's Timmy Matley ahead of their mid-month Shrewsbury Flower Show gig...

You're playing Shrewsbury Flower Show this month. What can your audience expect from your Saturday evening performance?

We'll be there, looking sharp. The shoes are shined and everything's ready. I'm looking forward to sitting down and sorting out the set list - we're going to put a really strong set

list together. We're really looking forward to getting people on their feet - and for that time we're on the stage, we want everyone to get up, forget all their cares and worries, and just enjoy themselves.

You were discovered by a Warner Bros talent scout in London while singing in

your tea break...

It sounds a bit like a fairytale when you describe it like that, but that's what it is really. We'd been together four years as a group. We set up this small painting & decorating company, just so we could get some cash-in-hand work, and basically got overheard singing. We were invited down to

Warner Music, but it wasn't just a 'here's a five-album deal' type of thing. We got invited down and we got to sing for some of the guys there. Then they wanted to hear us on a record and see what we were like, so we recorded six songs - and that was like another audition round - and then, after that, we got offered the five-album deal. It was an absolute whirlwind, but it's so lovely waking up every day and just doing a job that, ultimately, is the best job in the world. I'm getting paid to do something I love to do, and I think that's all you can ask for in life.

How did you all originally meet?

We're all from different parts of the UK, but we all moved to London to fulfil our dreams, whatever that meant. There's so much going on in London in terms of music. I met the lads when we were on the auditioning circuit. Instead of auditioning for other groups, we decided to start our own. It was another four years before we got discovered, but you've got to put the work in.

There are five of you in the group. Do you generally have the same musical opinions when producing new material?

All of us are actually into different styles of music. The brilliant thing is that we all come together, and I think that formula works. These songs that we sing, they have a classic feel to them, but we like to give them the Overtones spin and make them feel a bit modern. The best way for us to get anything done is a show of hands - we always go with the majority. We're grown men and it's a lovely, natural way of working, which is great.

What's your earliest musical memory?

I'd say when I first became aware that singing had emotion attached to it. My Auntie Janette, she's a really lovely lady. When we were kids, you've got your traditional Irish songs and my Auntie Janette would get up and sing. She has a really good voice. I would say I was six or seven, and the first time I heard her sing - I still remember to this day - it actually made me cry. I look back now and realise I was crying because it just moved me. Whether music makes you laugh, cry, smile or dance, it's always attached to emotions.

What do you do to prepare yourself pre-show?

I do a vocal warm-up before the sound check which will last around 15 minutes. I play it through my phone and the boys will join in.

Your voice is an instrument and you have to really take care of it. I won't be having a drink leading up to the show. I'd say the main bulk of getting ready for a show is making sure I've packed the right suit, shoes, tie or bowtie, and making sure I do a nice vocal warm-up.

What advice would you give to the young musicians of today who're trying to get themselves heard?

We got signed seven years ago, but even how people are being discovered has gone into another realm since then. It was YouTube at the time. Since YouTube you've got people being discovered on Instagram and all sorts of networks. You've got to get your music out there and put yourself out to wider audiences, such as the internet. Also, being a good singer is one thing, but you've also got to be a good entertainer. If you think of any of those living legends - your Stevie Wonder, your Chaka Khan, Céline Dion - these people have had careers spanning decades because they're entertainers as well as great singers. Getting out there in front of people is also important. There are some great open-mic nights around the country. Get out there, get that experience and get rid of those nerves. You can question yourself a lot when you're starting out, but it's a waste of time even listening to that. Throw yourself into it wholeheartedly and enjoy everything that you do.

Which artist has inspired you the most?

I went to see Stevie Wonder perform live three years ago and he was just incredible. He's just a music legend. All his music brings people together, and he really believes in the power of that. I feel that because of his music, my world is a better place. Stevie Wonder, for me, is such an inspiration. He's no spring chicken, but he can still sing it exactly how he did in his 20s.

What's the strangest experience you've had in terms of your fans?

I feel like I could set up a Tunnock's teacake afternoon with, like, 200 people! Basically, I tweeted that I really love Tunnock's teacakes because they remind me of going round to my nan's when I was a kid. Now, every time we're on tour, the fans give me Tunnock's teacakes. It's so sweet, and I really do enjoy them. It's really thoughtful. Sometimes, people are so excited to see you that they either clam up or they start crying, and it's just the sweetest thing. We just give them a lovely hug.

You like to knit in your spare time. What's your most impressive piece of work?

I love to knit! I really haven't moved on from scarves, but I know how to do the little stringy things at the end. I haven't advanced more than that, but I like to do it in the winter. It's actually really therapeutic.

What's been the highlight of your career?

Because I'm an Irishman living in the UK, and because I was very proud to be up there, it was when Gary Barlow asked us to do a 15-minute warm-up slot for the Diamond Jubilee concert. We got to experience that whole moment of being on that amazing stage. We weren't televised, but we were there with something crazy like two million people at Buckingham Palace, and we felt very proud to be there. We got invited to the palace afterwards for a cocktail and it was lovely. Prince William and Kate were there, and they were just wandering around. Not only that, there was Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney, Jessie J, Ed Sheeran - and this was going back to when we first started. It was such a special day. I just remember feeling like I was walking on clouds and wondering how it had all actually happened.

Finally, what does the future hold for The Overtones?

Well listen, I'm a very, very keen gardener, and I'm really excited to be at the Shrewsbury Flower Show. I love my garden! I post shots of it on my Twitter account. I've got a little veggie patch, a little seating area and a lovely flowerbed. It's all very manageable - and full of beautiful colours at the moment; so bright and vibrant. What does the future hold for The Overtones? We've got a really exciting announcement coming in the next few weeks. I know that's being really vague, but we're hoping, as always, to be releasing new music, to be on the road and to be enjoying what we do - it makes people really happy. You know, since I've been diagnosed with melanoma, I'm really, really taking care of my health. The plan is to be healthy and happy.

The Overtones play Shrewsbury Flower Show on Saturday 12 August.

Shrewsbury Flower Show takes place at the town's Quarry Park on Friday 11 & Saturday 12 August. Further information can be found on page 45

INTERVIEW



LULU

talks music, family
& beauty secrets...

“ When you have success at a young age - the pop star sort of thing - you think you're invincible, so it's a shock to see that you're not ”

How do you keep your shows exciting for you and the audience?

First of all, I've only been with this band for around four years, and that's helped shake things up. They're all younger than me, so there's a young energy, which I love. The great thing is that these guys are influenced by the same music that I was - and still am - but they have a new slant.

Where does your energy come from?

I guess I was blessed with a lot of energy, and I think if you're healthy you have a lot of energy. Some people love it, but some would prefer you to shut up and sit down. It's all about how you use your energy for the positive. And as you get older, it's about pacing your energy - and for that, I do meditation and Chi Gong.

What was the first concert you ever performed at?

It was in a theatre or small hall, and I was very, very young. I sang *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes* and forgot the words. I just repeated the first verse and wanted to die, but nobody mentioned it afterwards. I thought it was the worst thing I'd done in my whole life. I was probably about six! I remember that I had a sticky-out frock, and I think I was so pleased with myself that the excitement affected my memory!

What was the first concert you went to?

I remember going to a really dirty club to see Alex Harvey (*Shout*) when I was just about 13. I don't know if that was my first show. I wasn't allowed to go to those places because I was so young, but my mother wangled it so I could go. I used to sing in a band at the weekends, so the boys in the band had to look after me. Alex came backstage dressed in black leather, with jet-black hair, and sang *Shout*. It was the first time I'd ever heard it, and I went out the next day and bought the record by The Isley Brothers. The rest is history.

In 1966, you were one of the first female artists ever to play an Eastern bloc country. What was the experience like, considering you were only 17 or 18?

I was with The Hollies and it was scary. It was cold, the place was very rundown and there were bullet marks on buildings. There was debris and a lot of poverty. It was also memorable because when we did the concerts, there were guards everywhere, watching the audience to make sure they didn't stand up or get

excited. When they started to get excited, the guards slapped them down.

If someone had told your 15-year-old self that you had this life ahead of you, what would you have thought?

I would've said, 'Are you having a laugh?' because I've had such an amazing life! How could a 15-year-old have predicted the way my life was going to unfold? It's been a rollercoaster. I thought I was going to be a singing hairdresser who never left Glasgow!

Anything else you wish you'd known at the beginning of your career?

I wish I'd known I could write songs.

In your experience, what gets easier as you get older?

Most things become easier because I live from a position of having gratitude. I've become philosophical, and as tough as it is for me not to knee-jerk into a negative place when things go wrong, I always have a way of getting back and looking at acceptance of what is and what I can't change. It doesn't happen in a flash. It's a process, and I now have the support and the tools to process.

And what gets tougher?

Maintenance. It's a bitch! There's a big piece of acceptance in growing older. I look at myself and go, 'Oh my God!' You never really thought this would happen. When you have success at a young age - the pop star sort of thing - you think you're invincible, so it's a shock to see that you're not.

If you, Paul McCartney and Mick Jagger went on stage together, who do you think would be the last one standing?

I think that would be very difficult because you hear endless praise about Jagger doing his amazing run at the end of every gig The Stones play, and I don't see Macca giving up any time soon, so that would be a very tough race.

What makes you really proud?

At the weekend, I was with my son and my grandchildren. We were making birthday cards and a poster for their mum, who was about to return from a few days away with her girlfriends. It was such a sweet moment, and I sat back and thought, 'Wow, didn't Jordon do well, and I get to share it!'. That was a proud moment.

If a film were to be made about your life, who would you like to have play you?

Jennifer Lawrence.

Do you think today's young female bands and artists are under too much pressure to look good?

Yes! Now it's 'world domination or nothing', and that's tremendous pressure. And you'll be dropped like a hot potato if you don't sell a certain amount of records.

What are your 'must haves' in the makeup bag?

Good skin care. Thank God for TimeBomb. Before you put anything on your skin, it has to be in the best condition it can be. You have to make sure you're hydrated internally and externally and make sure you get lots of sleep so your face looks like it's alive instead of dead. You've got to - as opposed to a young person, where it doesn't really matter because they always look gorgeous. I have to have the right stuff underneath: good foundation, the right blusher and lots of eyelashes - and my favourite thing is to try and get the J-Lo lips! Really, for me, she just kills it. That's what I try to do, those luscious lips! Everything is off before I go to bed.

Who's given you the best advice about your voice?

I met Frank Sinatra in Las Vegas, and he asked if I made it a habit to warm up my voice, and if I did vocal exercises before a show, which I didn't back then. I was there with Maurice (Gibb), and Frank offered to teach me, but I never followed it up because I was too shy. And then, of course, I went off and hurt my voice, so now I'm religious about looking after it. So yes, Frank, I eventually took your advice!

Is there anyone you'd still like to work with or duet with?

Bruno Mars, Calvin Harris - and I'd love to do something with Steven Tyler from Aerosmith. And so many more!


Lulu plays Solihull Summer Fest on Saturday 26 August.

Other artists performing over the weekend include Peter Andre, Feeder, The Pigeon Detectives and The Wonder Stuff. For more details, visit solihullsummerfest.co.uk

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Shrewsbury Folk Festival

West Midland Showground,
Fri 25 - Mon 28 August

Shrewsbury Folk has certainly made an impression on the region's festival-goers - the well-established event was named Best Midlands Music Festival in this year's What's On Readers' Awards. It took second place in the Best Shropshire Festival category too, so congratulations are definitely in order!

A highlight of any folk fan's calendar, this four-day fest brings together centuries of musical tradition in one setting.

Steeped in history, the border town of Shrewsbury makes an ideal backdrop for the festival's mash-up of modern, medieval and everything between, where grassroots cultures collide in dynamic fusion styles.

Bring along the whole family for dance and workshops as well as live music.

Line-up includes: The Young'uns, The Unthanks (pictured), Loudon Wainwright III, The Transports, Jon Boden, Chris Difford, Oysterband, Le Vent du Nord, Sam Carter and Faith, Folk & Anarchy

Creamfields

Daresbury Estate, Halton, Cheshire,
Thurs 24 - Sun 27 August

Celebrating 20 years in 2017, Creamfields unleashes the energy of Cream's Liverpool club nights in the open space of Halton's Daresbury Estate. Cutting-edge live acts unite with world-class DJs in a hedonistic four-day dance party. Since launching in Winchester, the brand has evolved into an international phenomenon, beloved of ravers, trailblazers and experimenters the world over.

Line-up includes: Faithless (DJ set), Fatboy Slim, Annie Mac, Chase & Status (DJ set), deadmau5, Disciples, Andy C, Duke Dumont, Danny Howard, Eric Prydz, DVBBS, Gorgon City, Dusky, Hannah Wants, Idris Elba, MistaJam, Wilkinson, Pendulum and Stormzy



Farmer Phil's Festival

Gatten Farm, Ratlinope, Shropshire,
Fri 11 - Sun 13 August



Launched in a corner of one of Farmer Phil's fields near Shrewsbury, this boutique gathering aims to offer something for everyone, covering rock, dance, acoustic folk and everything between. Camping for the full week, from 7 to 14 August, is included in the ticket price. A brilliant opportunity to enjoy a summer getaway with the family.

Line-up includes: Ferocious Dog (pictured), The Quireboys, Rev. Peyton's, Doctor & the Medics, The Urban Voodoo Machine, Gaz Brookfield & the Company of Thieves, Rusty Shackles, The Bar-Steward Sons of Val Doonican, Talisman and Funke & the Two Tone Baby.

Brecon Jazz Festival

Various locations, Brecon, Wales,
Fri 11 - Sun 13 August

After a successful reinvention in 2016, Brecon Jazz continues with the smaller-scale, more collaborative and community-led approach which transformed past difficulties into an opportunity for positive change.

Expect headline performers, emerging talent, workshops and social and folk activities, all curated by Brecon Jazz Club.

Line-up includes: Annette Gregory (pictured) & Friends, Atsuko Shimada Trio, Gerard Cousins Project, Darius Brubeck Quartet, Nigel Price, Ross Stanley Trio and Hannah Vivian-Byrne Trio



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Lakefest

Eastnor Castle, Herefordshire,
Thurs 10 - Mon 14 August

Priding itself on putting family first, Lakefest's story began with a giant cider festival at Croft Farm Waterpark. Though expansion has led to a relocation to the beautiful Eastnor Castle, it retains its friendly, West Country vibe. This year, the festival goes Hawaiian, so bring your best beach-themed fancy dress and get ready for an eclectic line-up of music, BMX biking and more.

Line-up includes: Feeder (pictured), Wilko Johnson, The Charlatans, Alabama 3, Aswad, Turin Brakes, Imelda May, Seth Lakeman, Badly Drawn Boy and Roving Crows



Camper Calling

Ragley Hall, Warwickshire,
Fri 25 - Sun 27 August

Following a warmly received debut in 2016, Camper Calling returns to the stunning grounds of Warwickshire's Ragley Hall for its second family-friendly outing. This year's event boasts a superb line-up of Britpop legends and contemporary music stars, now covering three nights instead of two!

Line-up includes: Cast (pictured), Reef, Space, The Ordinary Boys, Musical Youth, Lucy Spraggan, Backbeat Soundsystem, Scott Matthews, Afro Cluster, Barbarella's Bang Bang, BETSY, The Undercover Hippy, CC Smugglers, The Elephant Trees, Lakuta, The Atlantic Players and Grafton Ash



Sunshine Festival

Fish Meadow, Upton-upon-Severn,
Worcestershire, Fri 25 - Sun 27 August

Back with a fantastic mix of big-name pop acts and retro favourites, the heart of England's 'favourite family festival' returns to Upton-upon-Severn for its eighth year. As well as featuring a line-up assembled to appeal to every generation, there's also a disco, karaoke and a range of fun activities for kids. Fancy dress is encouraged, with prizes for the best dressed.

Line-up includes: Paul Young, Blue, Sophie Ellis-Bextor (pictured), Atomic Kitten, Kim Wilde, Heatwave, Modern Romance, Jaki Graham, Sonia, The Wurzels and Union Gap (UK)

Green Man Festival

Brecon Beacons, Wales,
Thurs 17 - Sun 20 August

Known for its ethical business model and quality line-ups, Green Man has scooped up numerous awards and accolades during its 15 years in operation. Alongside an amazing array of folk, world, indie, electronic and psychedelic music, it also boasts literature, film, comedy, theatre, ceilidhs, all-night bonfires and secret gigs, all surrounded by the breathtaking beauty of the Brecon Beacons.

Music line-up includes: PJ Harvey (pictured), Ryan Adams, The Shins, Kate Tempest, Sleaford Mods, Ride, Shirley Collins, Conor Oberst, Saint Etienne, British Sea Power, Alasdair Roberts Trio,

Comedy line-up includes: Josie Long, Jarrod Christmas, Laura Lexx, Lolly Adefope and Rob Deering



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 Shrewsbury Folk Festival
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more acts to be announced! see website for latest...

www.shrewsburyfolkfestival.co.uk



V Festival

Weston Park, Staffordshire,
Sat 19 - Sun 20 August

Featuring an impressive line-up of world-class performers in one epic, cross-country weekend, Virgin's V Festival was born in 1996 when Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker hit on the idea of uniting musicians in two locations over two days.

Chart-topping acts of all genres join a host of comedy talent on stages in Staffordshire and Chelmsford, visiting one on Saturday and the other on Sunday.

Music line-up includes: Pink, Jay-Z, Ellie Goulding (pictured), Pete Tong & the Heritage Orchestra, Stormzy, Raye, Jason Derulo, Nadia Rose, Dizzee Rascal, Clean Bandit, Example & DJ Wire, Pink, Craig David, Jess Glynne, George Ezra, Madness, Ella Eyre, Busted, Sean Paul, and The Vamps

Comedy line-up includes: Joe Lycett, Joel Dommett, Lee Nelson and Seann Walsh

Pershore Jazz Festival

Pershore College, Avonbank, Pershore,
Fri 18 - Sun 20 August

From humble beginnings, Pershore College's annual jazz festival has achieved UK-wide renown, showcasing formidable musical talent on local, national and even international levels. Though the event errs on the side of the traditional, young musicians and audiences are encouraged to come along and share fresh ideas.

A friendly, not-for-profit get-together run by a passionate and dedicated team.

Line-up includes: Fret & Fiddle (pictured), Jeff Barnhart's Sweet & Hot, Clark Tracey Sextet, Dorine de Wit's Brit Band, Digby Fairweather's Half Dozen, John Hallam's Blue Three, New Orleans Heat, Slide by Slide, Graham Smith Shades of Jazz and Keith Nichols' Washingtonian



Towersey Festival

Thame, Oxfordshire, Fri 25 - Mon 28 August



Folk spirit goes to the heart of Towersey Festival, which traces its roots back to 1965, when local villagers united to buy a field from wealthy landowners.

After raising funds to drain, plough and re-seed the area, they started an event which has gone on to become one of the UK's finest folk festivals.

In honour of its origins, profits are paid back into village facilities and local charities.

Line-up includes: KT Tunstall (pictured), Newton Faulkner, Eliza Carthy & the Wayward Band, Foy Vance, Jon Boden, Lindisfarne, Show of Hands, The Blockheads, The Demon Barbers XL, The Spooky Men's Chorale, Kathryn Roberts & Sean Lakeman, Andy Cutting and Mawkin

Beermageddon

Stoke Prior Country Club, Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire, Fri 25 - Mon 28 August

Billed as the best-kept secret in British metal, Beermageddon returns to showcase the rising stars of the UK's alternative music scene. The music might be hard and heavy, but the set-up is comfortable and civilised, with indoor stages and facilities, hot food, affordable beers and free entry for under-14s who're accompanied by any paying adult. Beermageddon also boasts free camping.

Line-up includes: Outright Resistance (pictured), Totengefluster, Stahlsarg, Ace Of Spades, Zephyra, Warlord, Godslave, Aklash, Unlight, Wolfbastard, Acid Trial, Master's Call and Krysthla, Scars Of Sense, Countless Skies, Footprints In The Custard, Isarnos and Deep Throat Truama



Milton Jones

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,
Wed 30 August

With a style of humour that's mainly based around puns and one-liners, Milton Jones has established himself as one of Britain's most in-demand funnymen.

"If my comedy's working well, I put a cartoon in people's heads that surprises them," explains Milton. "So you start off and they're thinking one thing, then you surprise them by changing the ending as you go along. It's not political or particularly edgy, it's just daft. It's a sort of verbal practical joke, but some people really hate that.

Milton's gags include: "Militant feminists - I take my hat off to them. They don't like that," and "Recently, on a flight to America, all the way across my wife was going, 'Why don't you get an upgrade, why don't you get an upgrade?'"

"It took a bit of time, but in the end I got a better wife."



Three of the best...

Paul Tonkinson

Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury,
Wed 16 August; Regent Theatre,
Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 19 August

Time Out Comedy Award winner Paul has been a regular on the UK laughter circuit since the 1990s. He's perhaps best known from The Big Breakfast and The Sunday Show. Regularly booked by the UK Armed Forces, Paul was the first comic to perform in Iraq after the war officially ended. He's since used his experiences there as inspiration for his comedy. "When I told my wife I'd spent much of the time lying on the floor," he says, "all I got in response was 'well we all like a lie down, don't we?'"



Joe Bromehead

Jongleurs Comedy Club,
Birmingham, Fri 25 August

"Take a look at the video clips on my website," urges Joe Bromehead. "And if you like what I do, do tell me because, as all comedians are, I'm often crippled with self-doubt, seeking the approval of complete strangers in order to fill some kind of void in my soul!" Joe's feelings of self-doubt should certainly be on the decline nowadays, given how many of those 'complete strangers' - that's his audience we're talking about there - offer him the approval he's seeking whenever he plays a gig. A cheeky chappie with a penchant for props-led comedy, Joe's a real rising star on the UK comedy circuit and well worth a look.



Steve Hewlett

The Core, Solihull, Sat 5 August

The days when people delighted at the likes of Keith Harris fitting his hand up the bottom of a curious-looking puppet and seemingly making it talk are long gone. Well, at least until recently they were. But now there's one man in particular who's doing his bit to change the widely held view that ventriloquism acts are old hat, tired out and alarmingly frayed at the edges... That man is Steve Hewlett, Britain's Got Talent finalist 2013, whose most popular puppet partners include Chi Chi the dog, Pongo the skunk and cheeky old geezer Arthur Lager. Expect to meet all three. The puppets of Simon Cowell and Sinitta, which Steve used during his Britain's Got Talent run, might also get the hand-up-bottom treatment on the night.



Simon Amstell asks What Is This?

From writing and directing films to converting to veganism, and from finding love to taking spiritual medicine in a shamanic ritual, Simon Amstell has been on quite a journey since his Never Mind The Buzzcocks days. Following the broadcast of his critically acclaimed directorial debut on BBC Three, a new tour sees him return to stand-up with a fresh outlook inspired by his own personal and professional transformation. Ahead of its arrival in the Midlands in October, we asked him to shed a little light on the huge question that its title poses - What is this?

"I think this is a question that inevitably comes up at some point if what you do for a living is stand up on stage talking about yourself," he says. "At some point, you say, 'What is this? What am I doing? What are any of us doing? Why are we alive?' But I don't think it's an answerable question. In the end, I suppose the best you can say is, perhaps it doesn't matter."

Known for his candid, almost confessional style of comedy, Amstell is open about how his stand-up career began in part as a way of seeking validation - a kind of defence against his own anxieties. But with new work opportunities opening up to him, and his life now moving in a more positive direction, is stand-up something he'll continue to find time for? "It's a question I asked myself, because I definitely came to a place where I felt like I didn't need to have so much attention from people any more. But what I realised was that I quite enjoyed being funny and making people laugh, so now it comes from a place of real curiosity and joy. While I thought as a child that fame would make me safe, I discovered that it's actually connecting with people that makes me feel okay in the world. And I suppose all I've really wanted all along is the kind of intimacy that I was using stand-up as a way of avoiding."

This newfound intimacy is something he's still settling into - on some level there's a kind of baffled wonder to his question, 'What

is this?' But fans should rest assured that, while the impetus behind his new show might be different, his distinctive wry humour is still very much the same.

"All the stand-up I've done so far has been deeply personal in that I go up on stage and say terribly embarrassing things that I'm worried about saying out loud. If anything, this show goes even deeper, perhaps because I'm a bit older and it isn't just constant anxiety. I'm having to deal with things like happiness now..."

"Being in a relationship is a complicated affair. Where previous shows have dealt more with being lonely, I think there's a lot about intimacy here and being able to be in the moment with another human being without worrying."

The path to contentment hasn't only been by way of investing in another human being, however. In the depths of despair, Amstell acted on a recommendation to travel to Peru to take ayahuasca, an ancient psychoactive brew that many people - Amstell among them - swear has changed their lives.

"I was so desperate for something to make me feel better - or just to make me feel something - that the only moment when I felt a bit worried was when the shaman entered the room and I thought, 'Oh no, what have I done? These men are wearing matching outfits and I'm about to drink a vision-inducing plant medicine that I haven't researched enough! But apart from that, I felt very well looked after, both by the shaman and by the medicine herself."

Anyone who's seen his recent docu-drama, *Carnage*, will already be aware of his other major lifestyle change of late. While he owns that veganism perhaps isn't the most obvious subject for a sci-fi comedy, reviews have, perhaps surprisingly, been almost universally positive.

"We did everything we could to make it as funny as possible so that people wouldn't feel annoyed, because on the surface, what you eat is quite a personal thing. But what we discovered while making it was that we'd all just been indoctrinated by nonsense characters like Captain Birdseye and Ronald McDonald - not only into thinking that this is what we should be eating, but also that it's fun. Like, if you want to be happy, here is a Happy Meal. I felt very angry watching old adverts from my childhood, like I'd been tricked."

Set in 2067, the film imagines a future where



the killing of animals has been outlawed and young people look with horror on an older generation coming to terms with its meat-eating past. So does he really think that's where we'll be in 50 years, or is the film over-optimistic?

"I don't know. I think now all the information's out there on the internet, it's just going to get more and more awkward, so at some point there has to be a shift. But there's a quote I quite like from James Baldwin - 'I have to be optimistic because I'm alive.'"

In between testing out material for his show, Amstell's also been working on a second film (details of which remain tightly under wraps) as well as writing his first book, *Help*, which will combine past stand-up routines with general musings on "how to be a person in the world". So once it's published, is he worried that old Buzzcocks guests will be popping up to read bits of it out to him? Fittingly, the genuine laugh this prompts feels pretty validating.

"Oh that's funny! Yeah, that's fine. I welcome it!"

Simon Amstell's What Is This? shows at Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, on Saturday 7 October and Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday 15 October

INTERVIEW



REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL...

The ultimate Ian Dury and The Blockheads musical makes its debut at Coventry's Belgrade Theatre

In 1981, a cheesed off Ian Dury penned the provocative *Spasticus Autisticus* in response to the UN's International Year of Disabled Persons. Himself disabled, Dury reacted in typical sardonic fashion to what he saw as patronising appeals from various charities.

But while he might have had little time for campaigns painting disabled people as helpless victims, he was more than ready to support those he deemed worthy - among them the groundbreaking performance company Graeae, which, nearly 40 years after its founders met in Coventry, continues to be one of the most dynamic, innovative and exciting forces in British theatre today.

Years after Dury's death, the company now pays tribute to its illustrious patron with a show that's inspired by his music - and heading for the Coventry Belgrade Theatre next month.

Set in 1979 at the height of Ian Dury & The Blockheads' fame, *Reasons To Be Cheerful* follows the attempts of teenager Billy and his best mate Colin to get Billy's terminally ill dad to a Blockheads gig for a "final, fantastic night out". Along the way, there's romance, music and mishaps galore as Billy's crush, Janine, joins the crew, the car breaks down en route, and the characters perform their own riotous renditions of Blockheads hits. In the words of Graeae's Artistic Director, Jenny Sealey, musical this may be, but conventional "musical featah" it is not.

First staged in 2010, the show went on to tour again in 2012, after an excerpt featured at the London Paralympics Opening Ceremony. Since then, concert versions have toured both nationally and internationally, but this new production will be the first in a while, and may also be the last...

"The gang still loves doing it, but they're getting older now," says Sealey. "It's a very high-energy show, and I'm not sure how much longer they'll be able to do it, so we decided we'd try one last time for a full UK

tour. We're calling it the last ever tour of *Reasons To Be Cheerful*, although in my heart I don't think it will be. I think right now, given the state of our world, we all need a reason to be cheerful."

Best known for its radical approach to accessibility, Graeae puts features like signing, captioning and audio description at the heart of its productions, making them part of the story for everyone to enjoy, instead of sidelining them as added extras.

"Every Graeae show is different," continues Sealey. "We never add access on. It comes from looking at the script, who the characters are and what we're trying to say, and thinking about what access brings to that."

"In this show, a lot of the songs are really fast, and the lyrics often have names and places in them, which would have to be finger-spelled if you signed them. Obviously that doesn't read very well in theatre, so we came up with this concept where Colin has made a series of short films with the lyrics and images, so there are still pictorial representations of the words for deaf people who find reading English difficult. But interestingly, we've actually had a lot of hearing audience members saying that it's brilliant having the lyrics in writing because they hadn't previously picked up on everything. Some of the songs are also signed - signing is really embedded within the choreography - and also because Colin is deaf in the story, him and Billy sign to each other.

"For blind audiences, we've got Pickles, who uses a 1970s payphone to talk to the audience through their headsets - and throughout the play, other characters will come over and say hello. And because it's live, if something goes really tits up on stage, they can also relay what's happened."

With Sealey having been deaf herself since the age of seven, directing a musical might not seem like the most obvious choice. Like

the rest of her team, however, she's someone who relishes a challenge.

"It's funny! It is a bit bonkers, but you know, I've also recently done an opera for the first time, which is even more ridiculous. But it's been really interesting to re-educate myself and re-learn how to feel music."

Although she lost her hearing before the Blockheads formed, Sealey was nevertheless a big fan in her youth, owing partly to her sister's help - and even more to her dad's disapproval.

"On Top Of The Pops, Ian Dury always had a microphone in front of his mouth, which made it even harder to work out what he was saying, but my sister was brilliant! She'd spend hours writing down the lyrics so that I could have access to music. But also my dad hated Ian Dury, so of course that made me like him even more."

With her memories of the punk era, Sealey sees clear parallels between the time the play is set and our own austerity Britain, pointing to things like pressure on public services, reinforced class divisions and the exploitation and dismissal of young people. These links perhaps go some way to explaining the show's enduring, cross-generational appeal.

"It's been extraordinary. I remember the first time we did it, all these men in suits arrived and it seemed bizarre. But as soon as the music started, their ties were undone, their jackets were off and they were drumming away - once a punk, always a punk, I suppose! But I think a lot of the songs have real resonance again now, and what's also been brilliant is that we've had a whole load of young people who're on their phones downloading the music as soon as they leave the theatre."

.....
Reasons To Be Cheerful shows at Coventry's Belgrade Theatre on Friday 8 & Saturday 9 September



Miss Saigon

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 23 September

If you're a fan of *Les Misérables*, bag yourself a seat for *Miss Saigon* asap - just like *Les Mis*, it's written by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg.

Focusing on an American GI and his romance with a young Vietnamese woman, the story unfolds against the backdrop of the American evacuation of Saigon in 1975, at the end of the Vietnam War.

"This new production is geared to an age where we're seeing a lot of cinema and glossy HBO-type shows," explains Associate Director

Jean-Pierre Van Der Spuy, "so it's very cinematic and epic in scale. It's quite brutal and gritty in places, and it feels very real."

Van Der Spuy makes a strong case for *Miss Saigon* being a more accessible work than its famous cousin, *Les Misérables*.

"It's very relatable and much closer in terms of our history. People know what the context is - they get who the characters are and why they're there, without it needing to be explained. I also think that, even though it's a period piece, it has a lot to say about where we are in our world today. Sometimes looking at something through a slightly different prism is good for people, and that's why we need to be telling these stories now."

Mother's Ruin: A Cabaret About Gin

The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 31 August - Sunday 3 September

Story and song combine in a theatrical cabaret that stops off in 18th century London, the Australian bush, a few New York speakeasies and the jungles of Peru.

At its heart is the story of gin, presented by two of Australia's rising cabaret stars via the contribution of numerous characters, from sailors and barmaids to bootleggers and master distillers.

The show comes complete with music originally performed by, among others, Amy Winehouse, Nina Simone, Martha Wainwright, The Popes and The Pretenders. It visits Birmingham direct from the Edinburgh Fringe.

Brassed Off

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 23 August - Sat 2 September

This lively stage adaptation of the award-winning movie of the same name is the Grand Theatre's first in-house show for more than 40 years.

The lifeblood of Grimley's community is threatened when its pit looks set for closure, leaving 1,200 miners redundant.

With the future of the colliery's close-knit brass band also shrouded in uncertainty, conductor Danny Ormondroyd is determined to see that the ensemble continue to play, and that they do so regardless of loyalties, political pressure and other issues - namely, the arrival of an attractive new flugelhorn player named Gloria Mullins... Hi-de-Hi's Black Country-born Jeffrey Holland stars.

Murder In Bloodford Village

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 25 - Mon 28 August

Murder-mystery company Big Adventures' latest offering includes a picnic from Masterchef Simon Smith - a fun touch that says much about the ensemble's imaginative approach to their work. They've been in business for 17 years now, and are justifiably proud of the fact that all of their clients have re-booked them - an impressive record that speaks volumes for the quality and level of professionalism they bring to their shows. This latest offering sees the peace and tranquillity of Bloodford village shattered by the murder of millionaire resident Charles Van Mortem.

It's up to the audience to solve the case, so be sure to take along your thinking cap...




Miss Saigon

Until Sat 23 Sep
From £30



LANDSCAPES

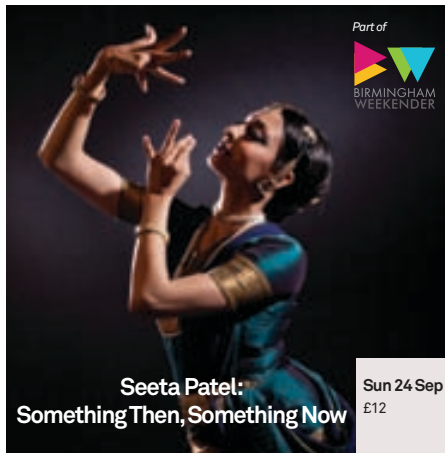
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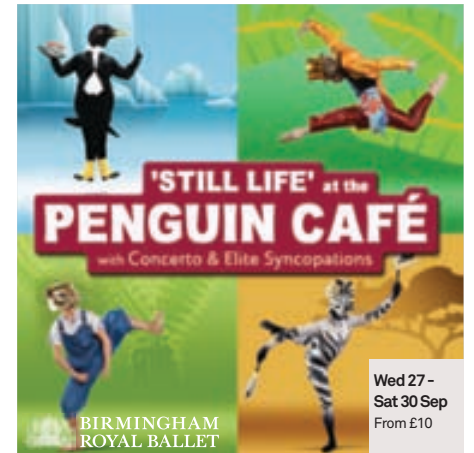
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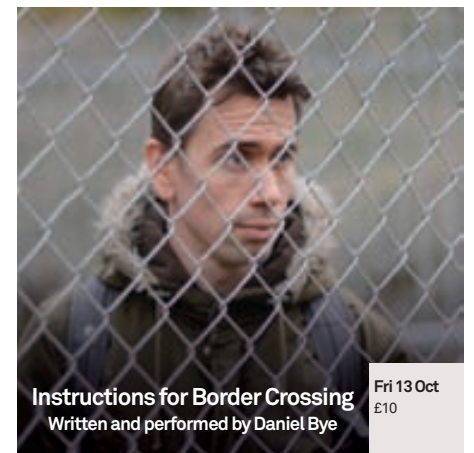
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The Railway Children

Malvern Theatre, Tues 22 - Sun 27 August; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 11 - Sat 16 September

Edith Nesbitt's famous tale, best known from the 1971 film version, tells the gentle story of an Edwardian family whose life is unexpectedly turned upside-down.

Days stretch endlessly for Bobbie, Peter and Phyllis in their new home of Three Chimneys, a house near a railway in a Yorkshire village.

Mysteriously separated from their father, the children set about the business of carving out a new way of living for themselves. They pass their time by watching trains on the nearby railway line, waving to the passengers and enjoying the company of Albert Perks, the station porter.

They also get to know an old gentleman who regularly takes the 9.15 train, but are unaware of the remarkable impact that he's set to have on their future happiness...



Dracula: The Bloody Truth

Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 15 - Wed 16 August

Audience members as young as eight could well be saying 'fangs for the advice' after watching this cautionary tale about the dangers of vampires.

Presented by highly regarded theatre company Le Navet Bete, it follows the desperate and comic - attempts of Dracula's nemesis, Professor Abraham Van Helsing, to warn the audience not to tangle with the prince of the undead.

Sound advice, we'd say, and delivered with plenty of family-friendly laughs along the way. It's probably best to pack some garlic, though - just in case...



The Secret Garden

The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Sat 5 - Sat 12 August

Frances Hodgson Burnett's classic children's story centres on the character of young orphan Mary Lennox. Sent from India to England at the age of 10 to live with her uncle, she finds herself residing in a bleak ancestral manor in Yorkshire.

Life for Mary seems dull and boring - until, that is, she makes the startling discovery of a hidden garden...

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Trespass

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 15 - Sat 19 August

Casualty favourite Rebecca Wheatley takes top billing in this latest production of Welsh playwright Emlyn Williams' supernatural tale.

Christine's belief that her husband's unexpected death is simply a hiatus in their relationship sees her hiring an Italian medium to bring him back to life.

But the reassuring Saviello may not be all that he seems to be...

Exploring some unusual aspects of the supernatural, theatre company Talking Scarlet warn that their production 'may well have you looking carefully around your bedroom before you reach out for the light switch'.

Strictly Eric

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Mon 21 August - Sat 2 September

New Vic favourite Eric Smith here makes a welcome return to the stage, this time to assist Arthur Strictly in organising the 1969 World Ballroom Championships in Blackpool...

Actor David Graham's delightfully dysfunctional character has certainly earned his place in the hearts of New Vic audiences down the years, having made his first appearance at the venue way back in 1999. And this latest comic adventure in the hugely popular franchise looks certain to see Uncle Eric further ingratiate himself with the theatre-going Potteries public.

A selection of memorable Swinging '60s numbers should ensure that the evening provides plenty of toe-tapping fun for Eric's legion of dedicated fans to enjoy.

Salomé

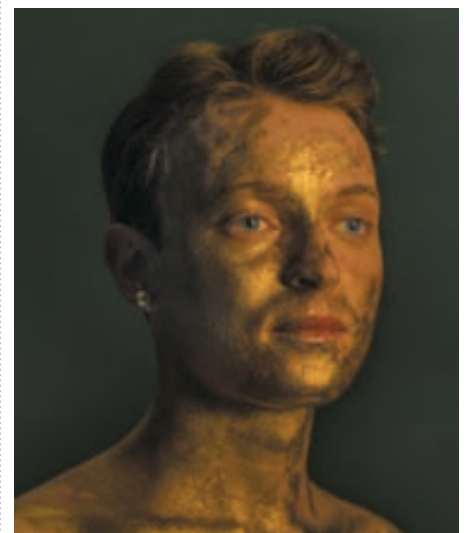
Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Wed 6 September

Oscar Wilde's lyrical drama, written in French and originally banned in England, recounts in a single act the biblical story of Herod Antipas's daughter, Salomé.

Sexually rejected by imprisoned prophet Jokanaan (John the Baptist), her lust-driven desire for vengeance sees her demanding his head on a silver platter as reward for her performing the dance of the seven veils...

Wilde was incarcerated in Reading Gaol at the time of his play's Paris premiere in 1896; it would be 35 years before it received its first public performance in England.

Presented by the RSC to mark the 50th anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality in England and Wales, the production features nudity and scenes of a sexual nature.



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Landscapes

Birmingham Hippodrome, Wed 9 - Sat 12 August

Widely hailed as a truly mesmerising work of theatre, this 50-minute, non-verbal show is set inside a beautiful white dome and visits four lovingly realised landscapes - the desert, the rain-forest, the ocean and Antarctica.

It's presented by the award-winning two-person 35-year-old Mimika Theatre company. Bringing together puppets, an original musical score and impressive visual effects, the show is a celebration of the atmosphere, rhythms, sounds and movements of the natural world.

"Our work is always gentle and highly original," explains Mimika. "Performances integrate movement, puppetry and unusual theatrical effects. We attempt to combine traditional and contemporary techniques to create an experience that's rich in content and detail."

The show is suitable for children aged four to 11.



The Wiggles Big Show

Birmingham Town Hall,
Wed 2 - Thurs 3 August

"We love touring the UK," says founding Wiggle Anthony Field. "It's the favourite part of our year. We're all looking forward to seeing our old friends, as well as meeting some new ones."

And friends certainly aren't in short supply for the Australian fab four, who've taken the children's entertainment world by storm over the last few years.

Although they've only come to significant international attention relatively recently, The Wiggles are actually more than a quarter of a century old. Expect to get wiggling to classic hits such as Hot Potato, Do The Propeller! and Rock-a-Bye Your Bear.



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Ariel On The Cliff

mac, Birmingham, Thurs 24 August

Cloud Cuckoo Land describe their show as 'a celebration of all things breezy', bringing together puppetry, sensory storytelling, original acoustic music, movement interaction and 'big deep breaths'.

Standing front and centre of the production is the daydreaming Ariel, perched at the top of a cliff from where she introduces airborne chums Buzz the Bee and Squawk the Seagull. But when her down-to-earth friend Pebble spots storm clouds on the horizon, the race is on to help Ariel's pals return to the safety of their homes... A commission by the Royal Shakespeare Company and Birmingham's Stan's Cafe, the show is suitable for children aged between two and six.

Dogs Don't Do Ballet

The Core, Solihull, Thurs 31 August

This big-hearted adventure is a late replacement for Dotty The Dragon, whose wings have sadly been unable to fly her to the Midlands this month.

Based on the award-winning children's book by Anna Kemp and Sara Ogilvie, Dogs Don't Do Ballet tells the delightful story of Biff, a marvellous mutt who'd prefer to be wearing a tutu and dancing to Swan Lake than doing typical dog things like scratching his fleas and weeing on lampposts. Music, songs and handcrafted puppets are cleverly combined in a show that's described as 'a perfect treat' for children aged between three and seven.

The Tiger Who Came To Tea

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Fri 4 - Sun 6 August; Malvern Theatre, Thurs
24 - Sun 27 August; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Wed 13 - Sat 16 September

The tea-guzzling tiger is back in town, dropping in on Sophie and her mum just as they're settling down for an afternoon cuppa...

Adapted by David Wood OBE from Judith Kerr's 1968 book, this 55-minute show comes without an interval, features singalong songs and boasts plenty of magic - not to mention a big, stripey tiger, of course!

Suitable for youngsters aged three and older.

Half Moon Presents Three

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 15 August

This collaboration between Yorkshire-based performers Wrongsemble and the long-established Half Moon theatre company has been designed as a pop-up show, allowing it to be performed in all manner of venues and locations.

The production features a trio of fairytales - Rumpelstiltskin, Goldilocks and Grimm's Three Wanderers - and brings together flamboyant performances, original singalong songs, live music and impressively inventive storytelling.

Suitable for kids aged between three and eight, the show lasts for 50 minutes (with no interval) and is followed by an interactive 'meet the performers' session.



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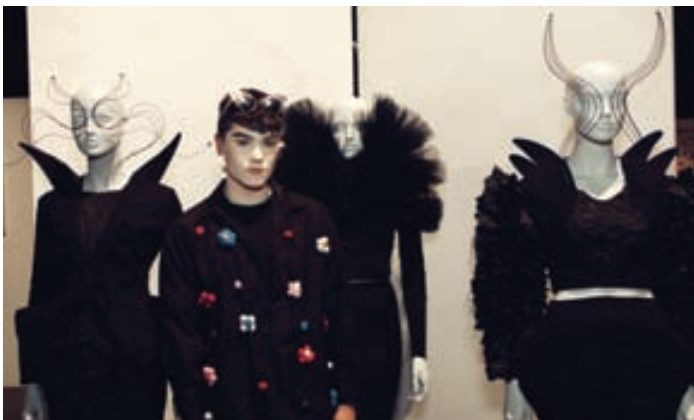
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REACH FOR THE STARS!

What's On visits Birmingham's Ormiston Academy to find out how dreams are made...



Ever pictured yourself treading the boards in the West End? Or perhaps you'd prefer to dress stages than perform on them? Or maybe you're interested in operating the lights that keep the stars shining? Whatever your talents, if you dream of a career in showbiz, Birmingham Ormiston Academy (BOA) might just be the place to start rehearsing.

Each year, young hopefuls aged between 14 and 19 join the school to study specialised GCSE and A-Level-equivalent Pathway courses in subjects ranging from dance to digital arts. Six years after the school first opened, BOA is now beginning to claim big success stories, with former students embarking on their first jobs in the industry. Among them is Musical Theatre Pathway alumnus Alexandra O'Reilly (pictured below), currently working on *Mamma Mia!* in the West End.

"I just started my contract in May, and it's been going really well so far," says O'Reilly.



Alexandra O'Reilly

"The cast are great and I'm having the best time living in London!"

After leaving school in 2014, O'Reilly earned himself a full scholarship at Laine Theatre Arts. He wasted no time in gaining as much experience as possible, training from 8.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday, working on professional events and training under top choreographers like Matthew Flint, Andrew Wright and Stephen Mear. But while hard work, ability and a bit of good luck certainly helped him land such fantastic opportunities, he still feels that the support and education he received at BOA played a big part in his making a success of them.

"I learned so much while I was at BOA - there was a whole combination of things that really helped me to grow as a performer. The teachers were brilliant, especially singing with Mr Bannon."

"I think the key advantage for students who

come here is the amount of time they get to spend on their chosen subject," explains Assistant Principal and Head of Performing Arts Michael Penn. "In Keystage Four, they spend seven hours a week on their Pathway subject, and in Keystage Five, that goes up to 14 hours, which is more than any other place I know of around here. Plus, there are the industry experts they get to work with, and the shows they do. Our students have done curtain-raisers for Matthew Bourne, and they've performed at *Move It* at London's ExCel Centre.

"It's a slightly longer day. The students start at 9am and finish at 4.15. But the school is usually open until quite late in the evening because there'll be students using the practice rooms and recording studio. They'll be doing the radio show or rehearsing for performances even after the day is over. This year, with the exception of exam period, there's been a show on pretty much every week in one department or another. It's non-stop!"

Alex O'Reilly's success isn't unusual. Other musical theatre alumni have already gone on to bag roles in shows such as *The Wind In The Willows* and *Matilda*. And it's testament to how much students value their time at the academy that when things take off, they tend to stay in touch.

"We have a dedicated Alumni Association, which is growing at the moment," Penn continues, "and we do encourage them to let us know what they're doing. This year, we've also had ex-students come in to do workshops with current students and talk to them about how to go onto the next stage. One of them is doing artist recruitment and development in the music industry, and she had some amazing stories to tell about the people she'd been working with."

Students who decide that performing might not be for them often discover unexpected routes into the industry. Take Amy Stutz, for example - a prominent arts and lifestyle blogger and communications assistant at Birmingham Hippodrome.

"When I left, I went to study journalism," explains Stutz. "I then continued blogging and started reviewing all around the country, and have even been flown out to Berlin to review shows twice! I think BOA helped in the sense that I got a 360-degree look at the industry. Working with professional directors and learning the craft gave me an appreciation of the way everything in theatre is created."

Stutz may have started out with a view to becoming a performer, but others are investigating different options from the moment they enrol, with technical and digital arts courses

proving so popular that two new dedicated academies are now in the works. But as much as anything, it's the emphasis on things like teamwork, independence and creativity that leave students well-equipped for the world of work, as well as ensuring they have a fantastic learning experience.

"Students here are really mature," says Penn. "They work really well together across all different disciplines, and you'll see a creative approach to all the subjects they have to do. So even with core subjects like English and maths, if you go into one of those lessons, you might see them using roleplay or video recordings to learn the topics."



Amy Stutz

"It's completely different to studying at a generic school because it's so much more creative and individual," O'Reilly agrees. "One memory that always sticks in my mind was soon after I started, when someone was playing a guitar in the cafe. Other people started joining in, till eventually pretty much the whole school was there singing along!"

"I loved BOA!" Stutz gushes. "We all formed really close bonds because we were in such an intense learning environment together. It was hard work, but I met some of my best friends there, people who are now friends for life. People can't really understand BOA unless they go there, as people will be singing on the stairwell and tap dancing in the canteen!"

To find out more about Birmingham Ormiston Academy, visit their website: boa-academy.co.uk

FEATURE

A photograph of four men standing on a white, ornate spiral staircase. The men are dressed in dark clothing, including jackets and trousers, and are wearing sunglasses. They are holding onto the metal railings of the staircase. The background shows a light-colored building facade with a vertical pipe on the right side. The overall tone is cinematic and moody.

OCEAN COLOUR SCENE

Ocean Colour Scene frontman Simon Fowler chats to What's On ahead of the band's headline performance at new Birmingham festival Beyond The Tracks...

Ocean Colour Scene are headlining brand new festival Beyond The Tracks next month. What can your audience expect from your Saturday evening performance?

We'll be doing all the songs that people hopefully know. It's the audience's day out, isn't it? It's the audience's gig, so we'll oblige.

You'll be sharing the stage with the likes of Maximo Park, The Coral and The Twang. Who are you most looking forward to seeing?

Carl Barat is there, isn't he? I've never met Carl, so I'm looking forward to meeting him. Steve knows him a bit. I know that he and Pete (Doherty) grew up listening to us, which is quite amusing! So yeah, I'll go and give him some tips on taking drugs - like, "don't take them, young Carl."

The band are well known on the festival circuit. Do you have a favourite festival?

Oh blimey! I quite like the one at Punchestown in Ireland - it used to be called Oxegen. That's really nice - it's at a race-course and it's got the poshest facilities of any festival I've ever been to. Glastonbury I always used to find terrifying, just because it's Glastonbury. It's a bit like playing the Albert Hall - it's the Albert Hall, however hard you try to pretend it isn't! I like festivals; I think there's a lot less pressure. We played at a castle up near Chepstow last weekend, which was nice.

Last year you played a series of special gigs around the UK to celebrate the 20th anniversary of your hit 1996 album, Moseley Shoals. The tour included dates at Moseley Park and Birmingham's Irish Centre. What's it like playing to a home crowd? Do the shows feel more special?

They've always been lovely to us, Birmingham. There's always a word around that Birmingham is a dull audience, but I've never found that - ever. I think that comes from people who're in dull bands. We've always gone down great in Birmingham. This was our launch pad. The Jug of Ale, as it was, in Moseley was our HQ, and the first time I met Liam was down there. It's always been special to us. Even before that, in my bands before that, the Irish Centre was always a great place, and before that, the Barrel Organ. When you were in a local band, you knew that once you arrived at the Barrel Organ, you'd made it! Next stop, the NEC! Birmingham's always been special to us. We're all

from the area, so there's a hell of a lot of people we know in the city, and we have the Birmingham sensibility, I think. Not too much of a show-off.

You took the anniversary tour to Australia, too. What was it like playing there for the first time?

We're actually going back there at the end of the year. We're doing Australia and New Zealand this time. We've been together for 28 years, and how the hell we'd never played in Australia before, I just don't know. They were really, really welcoming, so basically we're going back and playing much bigger venues because those gigs were only 800-capacity venues and they sold out literally within an hour. We had no idea that was going to happen!

Why do you think Ocean Colour Scene have managed to survive for so long?

The crowd - our crowd. Also, we've never been fashionable. If you're fashionable, by the very nature of that statement, you're going to not be fashionable in a year, or maybe even six months. We've never been fashionable, we've always been a traditional rock, blues, folk band who you either like or you don't. People have stuck with us, and it's our crowd who've kept us together. We're not going to make an album that's going into the top 10 anymore, but we go and play to 12,500 people, and I think we treasure that more now than chasing the charts. I don't even know how they work now! I don't know how you can have nine singles in the top 10! It's just nonsense. That means nothing to me at all. So we'll play to our crowds and Ed Sheeran can have 10 songs in the top five.

If you could go back in time to Ocean Colour Scene's inception, is there anything you would do differently?

I'd write more, that's all. I wouldn't change anything, really. There are probably arguments that we could've avoided, but that's the way life is. I wouldn't change the fact that we struggled for seven years because that's when we learned to do what we do, and that's when we learned to be a band. It does you good being punched in the face once or twice, so long as you don't lose your teeth.

What's your first musical memory?

A load of old singles my older brother used to listen to that were like family heirlooms -

things like Speedy Gonzales by Pat Boone. My favourite early song was called Seven Little Girls (Sitting In The Back Seat). Google it - it was probably dreadful. It was by a band called The Avons, and that was about 1960. It was my favourite record, and my brother and I had an argument. I'd have been about five and he'd have been seven, and he threw the single across our lounge. It hit a chair leg and shattered. That's my earliest musical memory.

What's the biggest change you've seen in the music industry over the years?

The way that records are now almost a by-product that allows you to tour. You used to make an album - looking back at it, at ridiculous costs - and then you would tour to promote that album. It's the other way round now. Unless you're a mega-selling, streaming person, I wouldn't like to start a band now and have to work out what to do. Having said that, I've never used a computer, I've never streamed - I don't even know what that really means - so if I was a young person now, I'd have grown up with a different mentality. Album art, album covers, who gives a toss about them anymore, but that used to be one of the things that made an album so special. Opening it up on the bus home, reading the credits. There's none of that now. Christ, I'm sounding old, aren't I?!

What's the most memorable performance of your career?

Obviously supporting Oasis at Knebworth was pretty special - and petrifying! One of my proudest moments was when we played the Albert Hall in February '97. There it was, our name, up in lights at the Albert Hall, and I walked in and thought, 'Jesus Christ, we've done it!' Another memorable moment was the first time we played the NEC. That was pretty remarkable.

What does the future hold for Ocean Colour Scene?

I need to write and we need to record an album!



Ocean Colour Scene play the Saturday headline slot at Beyond The Tracks, which takes place from Friday 15 to Sunday 17 September at Eastside City Park, Digbeth, Birmingham.

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A Ghost Story CERT 12a (92 mins)

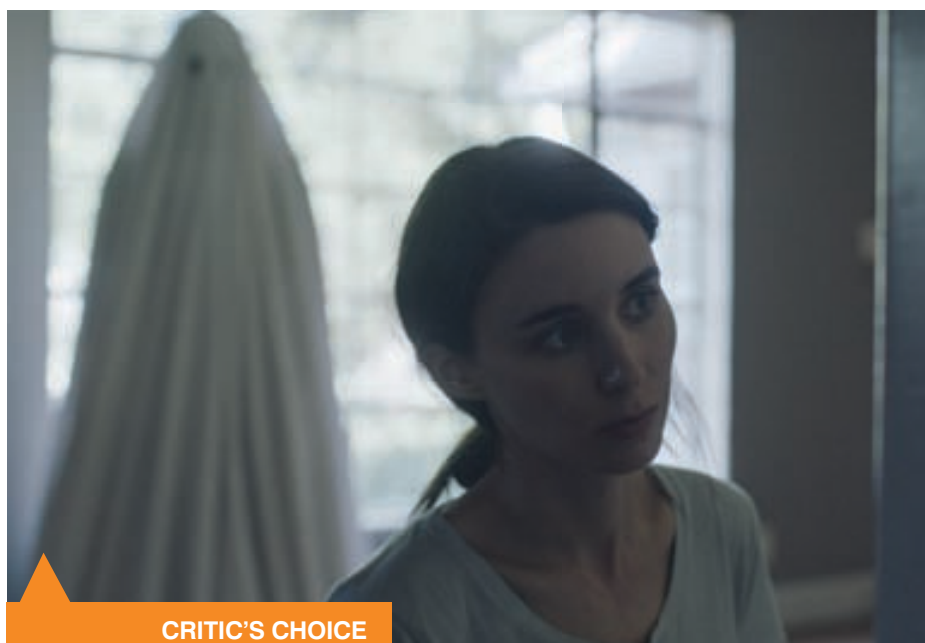
Starring **Casey Affleck, Rooney Mara, Will Oldham, Sonia Acevedo**
Directed by **David Lowery (USA)**

This year Casey Affleck won the Oscar for best actor.

Here, he's teamed up with double Oscar nominee Rooney Mara, with whom he previously co-starred in the 2013 crime drama *Ain't Them Bodies Saints*, reuniting them both with the writer-director David Lowery. A fiercely personal meditation on loss, grief and time itself, *A Ghost Story* is unlike any film you'll see this year. And like most works of singularity, it is likely to divide viewers. Is it a profound, daring and cosmic-altering experience or a self-indulgent and pretentious vanity project?

Either way, one won't forget the single take in which Rooney Mara devours the better part of a large pumpkin pie.

Released Fri 11 August



CRITIC'S CHOICE

Film highlights released in August...



Valerian And The City Of A Thousand Planets

CERT 12a (137 mins)

Starring **Dane DeHaan, Cara Delevingne, Clive Owen, Rihanna, Ethan Hawke, Rutger Hauer**
Directed by **Luc Besson (France)**

Adapted from the sci-fi comic Valérian And Laureline, this big-budget French blockbuster is set in the 28th century. There, a handsome pair of special operatives are dispatched to the multicultural metropolis of Alpha, populated by species from all over the universe. But there's a dark force there causing a right rumpus and threatening the very future of the cosmos. FYI: The original comic was a major inspiration for *Star Wars*.

Released Wed 2 August

The Emoji Movie: Express Yourself

CERT PG

With the voices of **TJ Miller, James Corden, Anna Faris, Maya Rudolph, Steven Wright, Christina Aguilera, Patrick Stewart**
Directed by **Tony Leondis (USA)**

Set in the mysterious world of your mobile phone, this comedy from Sony Pictures Animation explores the emotional status quo of your regular emoji. Actually, there's nothing regular about Gene, an emoji with a whole gamut of emotions. Of course, he just wants one facial expression like everybody else... Jumping into a parallel universe like those explored by such groundbreaking cartoons as *Wreck-It-Ralph* and *Inside Out*, this has the potential to rock.

Released Fri 4 August



Maudie CERT 12a (116 mins)

Starring **Sally Hawkins, Ethan Hawke, Kari Matchett**
Directed by **Aisling Walsh (Ireland/Canada)**

Maud Lewis was one of Canada's foremost folk artists, who recorded the Nova Scotia landscapes of her childhood. But before then she was an arthritic cleaning lady beset by unsubstantiated local gossip. This is her story.

Released Fri 4 August

Film highlights released in August...

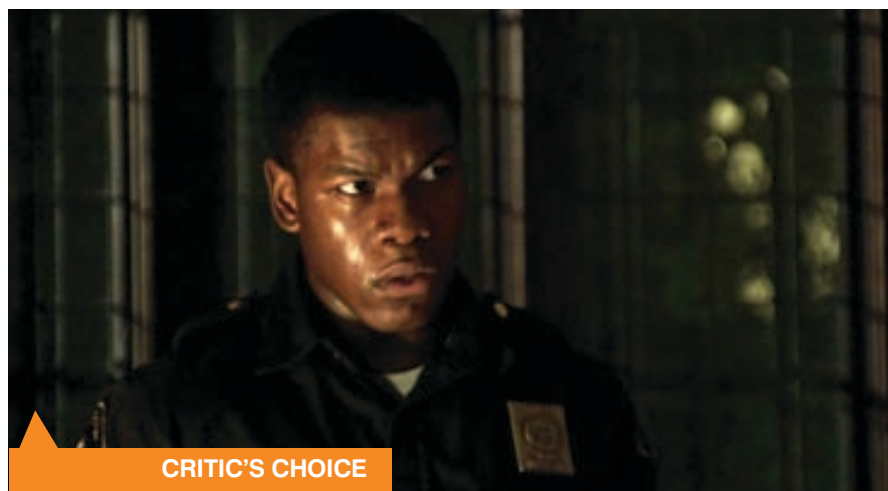
Detroit CERT 15 (143 mins)

Starring **John Boyega, Will Poulter, Algee Smith, Jason Mitchell, John Krasinski, Anthony Mackie, Jack Reynor**
Directed by **Kathryn Bigelow (USA)**

On 25 July in 1967, the Detroit police force responded to a call stating that a group of gunmen had been seen near the Algiers Motel. The events that followed are chronicled in this drama focusing on the police brutality that fanned the flames of the notorious Detroit riots. There is already Oscar

buzz for the film, which is helmed by Kathryn Bigelow, the first female director ever to receive an Academy Award (for *The Hurt Locker*). Besides the incendiary subject matter, further controversy should arise from the fact that the two leading characters are played by English actors, namely John Boyega and Will Poulter. Boyega, who was born in London, previously played Finn in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

Released Fri 25 August



6 Days CERT 15 (94 mins)

Starring **Jamie Bell, Abbie Cornish, Martin Shaw, Mark Strong, Emun Elliott, Tim Pigott-Smith**
Directed by **Toa Fraser (UK)**

It was six days that placed the SAS at the centre of the global consciousness. When, in April of 1980, Arab gunmen stormed the Iranian Embassy in London, the British Army was forced to act with both tact and precision.

Released Fri 4 August



Atomic Blonde CERT 15

Starring **Charlize Theron, James McAvoy, John Goodman, Til Schweiger, Eddie Marsan, Sofia Boutella, Toby Jones**
Directed by **David Leitch (USA)**

For *Atomic Blonde* read Lorraine Broughton (Theron), arguably the best female spy M16 has ever produced. It's now the Cold War and in 1989 Broughton is dispatched to Berlin to investigate the murder of a fellow spy. Based on the 2012 graphic novel *The Coldest City*.

Released Wed 9 August

England Is Mine

CERT 15 (94 mins)

Starring **Jack Lowden, Jessica Brown Findlay, Laurie Kynaston, Adam Lawrence, Jodie Comer**
Directed by **Mark Gill (UK)**

The son of Irish Catholics from Dublin, Steven grew up in Manchester and in the 1970s found himself out of work. He then joined the punk band *The Nosebleeds* (as a vocalist) and went by his surname, Morrissey. This is his story at the time - before he went on to form *The Smiths*.

Released Fri 4 August



The Nut Job 2: Nutty By Nature CERT PG

Featuring the voices of **Will Arnett, Katherine Heigl, Maya Rudolph, Bobby Moynihan, Bobby Cannavale, Peter Stormare, Jackie Chan**
Directed by **Cal Brunker (SouthKorea/USA/Canada)**

Surly, the purple squirrel, must motivate the other animals of Liberty Park to stop the mayor's scheme to bulldoze their home to make way for a dubious amusement park. Let's just hope this is more endearing than the crude and cacophonous first film.

Released Fri 11 August

Pawn Sacrifice

CERT 12 (112 mins)

Starring Tobey Maguire, Peter Sarsgaard, Liev Schreiber, Michael Stuhlbarg, Lily Rabe, Robin Weigert

Directed by Edward Zwick (USA/Canada)

Another film set during the Cold War, this one focuses on the chess champion Bobby Fischer (Tobey Maguire). Here, the grandmaster challenges the Soviet Empire (and Boris Spassky) at a highly sensitive time for the two superpowers. Interestingly, production on the film was completed in December of 2013.

Released Fri 11 August

Overdrive

CERT 12a

Starring Scott Eastwood, Freddie Thorp, Ana de Armas, Gaia Weiss, Simon Abkarian
Directed by Antonio Negret (France/USA)

The brothers Andrew and Garrett Foster are car thieves and decide to try their hand in pastures new in the South of France. But there they come to the attention of a local crime lord (Simon Abkarian), who decides to utilise their skills for his own ends...

Released Fri 11 August

The Dark Tower

CERT 12a (95 mins)

Starring Idris Elba, Matthew McConaughey, Tom Taylor, Katheryn Winnick, Jackie Earle Haley, Dennis Haysbert
Directed by Nikolaj Arcel (USA)

A sort of Western-cum-fantasy-cum-horror film-cum-sci fi adventure, The Dark Tower would appear to have something for everyone. Idris plays The Gunslinger, who's on his way to an alternative dimension in pursuit of the eponymous structure. The tower, you see, holds the secret to preventing the entrée of Hell. Based on the literary series by Stephen King.

Released Fri 18 August



Rough Night

CERT 15 (101 mins)

Starring Scarlett Johansson, Kate McKinnon, Jillian Bell, Ilana Glazer, Zoë Kravitz, Demi Moore
Directed by Lucia Aniello (USA)

In the tradition of Bridesmaids, Sisters, Bad Moms, et al, here comes another American movie in which its female protagonists are

not above a bit of bad behaviour. Here, five best friends from college reunite for a bachelorette weekend in Miami and accidentally kill a male stripper. It's played for laughs, of course.

Released Fri 25 August

Final Portrait

CERT 15 (90 mins)

Starring Geoffrey Rush, Armie Hammer, Clémence Poésy, Tony Shalhoub, James Faulkner, Sylvie Testud
Directed by Stanley Tucci (UK)

The American writer and art lover James Lord (Armie Hammer) agrees to sit for his friend, the celebrated Swiss painter Alberto Giacometti (Geoffrey Rush). He's told the portrait will only take a few days to complete, but creativity doesn't always work to a schedule...



Released Fri 18 August

The Hitman's Bodyguard

CERT 15 (118 mins)

Starring Ryan Reynolds, Samuel L Jackson, Gary Oldman, Salma Hayek, Élodie Yung, Joaquim de Almeida, Richard E Grant
Directed by Patrick Hughes (USA)

Michael Bryce (Reynolds) is considered to be the best bodyguard in the world. He's then asked to escort the hitman Darius Kincaid (Jackson) from England to the International Court of Justice in The Hague. But Kincaid happens to be Bryce's mortal enemy... It's not going to be easy.

Released Fri 18 August

American Made

CERT tbc

Starring Tom Cruise, Sarah Wright, Domhnall Gleeson, Jayma Mays, Jesse Plemons, Lola Kirke
Directed by Doug Liman (USA)

Inspired by the life of the TWA pilot Barry Seal, who became a drug smuggler, this should restore Tom Cruise's standing with his fans after the diabolic The Mummy. After all, director Doug Liman exhibited his knack for action with The Bourne Identity and the entertaining Cruise-starrer Edge Of Tomorrow. We live in hope.

Released Fri 18 August

Logan Lucky

CERT tbc

Starring Channing Tatum, Adam Driver, Seth MacFarlane, Riley Keough, Katie Holmes, Katherine Waterston, Hilary Swank, Daniel Craig
Directed by Steven Soderbergh (USA)

Three brothers called Logan set out to pull off an elaborate heist during the Coca-Cola 600 race at the Charlotte Motor Speedway in North Carolina. More importantly, the comedy marks the return of director Steven Soderbergh after he announced his retirement in 2013.

Released Fri 25 August



The colours of South Asia

Utsav and the many jewels in its crown...





Incredible dancing, fabulous food, fascinating stories and an upcycled elephant: as India marks 70 years of independence in 2017, Birmingham erupts in a colourful explosion of music, food and live performance in celebration of Utsav - The Year of South Asian Culture.

Halfway through the year, Utsav (meaning festival or celebration in Sanskrit) is now well underway, with big events like the Birmingham Indian Film Festival and ZEE Mela now behind us. But if you've yet to join the fun, don't worry - the party continues with a series of shows, festivals and exhibitions throughout summer and autumn. Chairing the Utsav committee and co-directing this year's South Asian-themed Birmingham Weekender is Sampad Artistic Director Piali Ray.

"The initial idea for Utsav came from Birmingham City Council after David Cameron met with the Indian prime minister two years ago and named 2017 as the India-UK Year of Culture," she explains. "A lot of the UK is celebrating that, but because we have such a diverse South Asian population in Birmingham, we decided to broaden it out further."

Comprised of several arts organisations and community groups, the Utsav committee has been working to promote engagement with food, fashion, sports and history as well as the arts. News and events listings are uploaded to a dedicated Wordpress site, where anyone can request the inclusion of an event. Crucially, while it focuses on celebrating South Asian contributions to the city, the project also aims to highlight shared cultural heritage across all of Birmingham's communities.

"We want to make sure that Birmingham as a city connects with Utsav, and not just South Asian communities," says Ray. "Because this is a very lively, vibrant city, there are all sorts of offerings to choose from, and in the same way as with fashion and food, there are a lot of artists now who are taking on and sharing



influences with each other. Things are much less monocultural and more multilingual now, and it's exciting to see how those influences are shaping the creation of new work, whether it's in dance, music, theatre or visual arts."

Interactive and community-led elements are helping to open up cultural experiences to new audiences, allowing people to take ownership of projects. Earlier this year, for example, local schoolchildren had the chance to design and decorate sculptures for Birmingham Children's Hospital's Big Sleuth trail, the follow-up to 2015's Big Hoot, which this year takes the endangered South East Asian Sun Bear as its inspiration. But the jewel in the Utsav crown looks set to be the return of Birmingham Weekender, which begins with the transformation of Victoria Square into a three-day, participatory dance experience.

"There will be dancing at all times from Friday afternoon until Sunday evening, with professional dancers to help you learn the routines," says Ray. "We'll be starting with warm-up yoga sessions from 9am, and then there will be various different styles throughout the day, from bhangra, hip-hop and contemporary through to ballet, Bollywood and kathakali."

Later, the Colours Of Birmingham - Rangeeli parade will combine dance, music and dhol drumming with flags and patang kites created by community groups, as well as the amazing Harminder, a mechanical Indian elephant constructed from recycled materials. Punjabi singing sensation Hans Raj Hans will then perform a concert at Town Hall for the big Sunday finale.

Meanwhile, as part of its current Connecting Stories exhibition, the Library of Birmingham is taking participation a step further, encouraging people to share images, artefacts and stories, as well as running a series of family fun days with performances, mehndi, face-painting and crafts.

"One of the projects I've been working on is

called Brumpeeps," explains Community Engagement Co-ordinator Harpreet Kaur. "It started with us commissioning a photographer to spend a few days in the library, taking pictures of visitors from all ages and backgrounds to be displayed in the exhibition. There's also an element where people can take their own photographs, upload them to Twitter with #Brumpeeps, and see them instantly projected into the exhibition."

Curated in collaboration with the British Library, Connecting Stories delves into Britain's relationship with South Asia over the last 400 years, beginning with the origins of the East India Company. But within the context of a bigger international picture, it also homes in on specific local stories, from the time that Gandhi visited Selly Oak, to the 1970s Rock Against Racism concerts.

"I think to some extent we're used to seeing things about the history of Britain and India over the last 100 years," says Kaur, "but this is a really good opportunity for people of all ages and backgrounds to find out how much further back that relationship goes, to really challenge our thinking and become more curious about history. I hear a lot of debates amongst young people today about the perspectives that different histories are coming from, who's telling the stories and what gets left out, so what we're really hoping is that people will come and respond. We know that we haven't told a complete story, so we want people to write messages and tell us what's missing and what they think."

"Later in the year, we're also going to be running free workshops on using archives, conducting oral histories and curating exhibitions. Part of the point of all this is that we want to encourage people to think about leaving things in our archives, because the more material we have from different sorts of people, the better and more representative the stories we're able to tell in future will be."

.....

Birmingham Weekender takes place at various locations across the city from Friday 22 to Sunday 24 September

Connecting Cultures shows at the Library Of Birmingham until Sat 4 November

To find out more about Utsav events across Birmingham visit utsavyearof-southasianculture2017.wordpress.com



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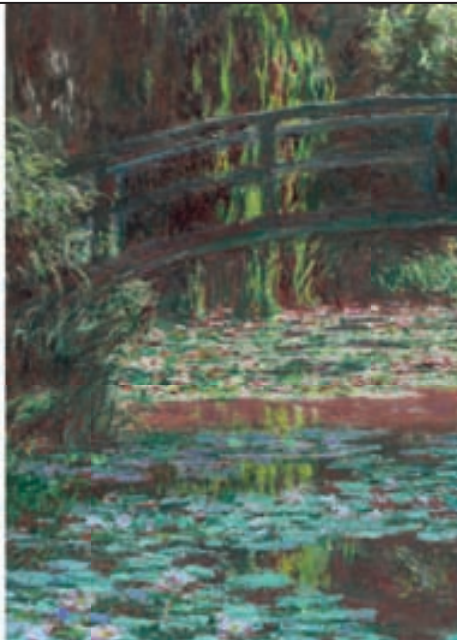


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Connecting Stories: Our British Asian Heritage

Library of Birmingham, until Sat 4 November

The important role which South Asian culture has played in forming Britain and Birmingham's history and identity comes under the microscope in this partnership project from the Library of Birmingham and the British Library.

Exploring Britain's enduring connections with South Asia - from historical trading links to the impact of migration and settlement in the 20th and 21st centuries - the display comprises photographs, letters, posters, paintings, documents and ephemera. Highlights include a letter signed by Mahatma Gandhi pledging support during the Great War, and photographs showing protests and counter-protests in 1960s and '70s Britain.

Dinosaur Art

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until Sun 8 October

Cutting-edge science and art merge in an exhibition celebrating the work of four palaeoartists, all of whom either have been or will be published by Titan Books. Via its championing of the work of John Sibbick, Luis Rey, Robert Nicholls and

Mark Witton, the display explores the evolution of images created during the 1970s and '80s, a period which has become known as 'the dinosaur renaissance'. Accompanying the paintings are items from the collection of Victorian medic Dr John Fraser, a Wolverhampton-based amateur collector who bequeathed his 9,000 fossils to the art gallery in 1911.

More Real Than Life

The Barber Institute, Birmingham, until Sun 24 September

Early photographic studio portraiture is explored in this fascinating new exhibition, curated in partnership with the National Portrait Gallery and University of Birmingham MA Art History & Curating students.

The display focuses on mid-19th century photographic developments, including the use of different techniques, backdrops, props, costumes and poses.

The innovations enabled public figures, from Oscar Wilde through to Queen Victoria, to fashion and promote their own identities.



Photo credit: Oscar Wilde by Napoleon Sarony, 1882 © National Portrait Gallery, London



Draw New Mischief

Paccar Room, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Fri 15 September

This free exhibition celebrates more than two centuries of political cartoons inspired by Shakespeare.

Presented to coincide with the RSC's current season of Rome-themed plays, Draw New Mischief showcases historical works from key political moments in time.

Featured contemporary cartoons include Peter Schrank's 2015 depiction of Ed Miliband and Nicola Sturgeon as the star-

crossed lovers Romeo and Juliet, and Morten Morland's April 2016 cartoon of David Cameron as Hamlet, gazing at Boris Johnson's skull.

The RSC has also commissioned five cartoonists to create brand new works.

The cartoonists are using Shakespeare's Rome plays to respond to political events which occur during the period that the exhibition is on show.

The Company's Rome season features productions of Julius Caesar, Antony & Cleopatra, Titus Andronicus and Coriolanus.

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Bruce Airhead

Featuring workshops, demonstrations, exhibitions, shows and over 300 professional artists and performers, the International Festival Of Glass celebrates 50 years of studio glass worldwide...

The International Festival of Glass is a real community event. As well as celebrating Stourbridge's heritage of industrial glassmaking, it also acknowledges the development of the studio glass movement 50 years ago and highlights the current challenges and opportunities facing contemporary makers. Over 300 professional artists and performers are taking part in this year's festival. The event includes the prestigious British Glass Biennale exhibition, participatory workshops, lectures,

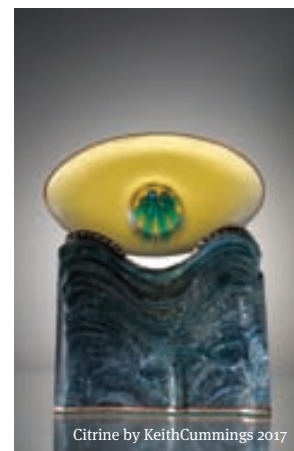
- open studios, storytelling, eurythmy and music.
- International and British glass artists will be demonstrating, exhibiting, presenting and selling, while the drama and dynamism of the hot shops ensures that they are always among the event's most popular attractions.
- Here, we take a look at some of the major elements of the festival, and what visitors can expect to discover in Stourbridge's Glass Quarter over the August bank holiday weekend.



Jacque Pavlosky - 1467 Roundals



Martin Janecky Heads



Citrine by Keith Cummings 2017

Theme for 2017

This year's theme of Glass For Good celebrates the ways in which glass is making a positive difference to the world.

The festival illustrates how glass is being used creatively in therapeutic contexts - such as working with military veterans in Seattle - giving a voice to victims of domestic violence or abuse, and supporting the survivors of the Grenfell Tower disaster.

Unique elements of the festival

The UK's last remaining maker of glass-eyes, Jost Haas, demonstrates his skills at the festival, while Latvian Karlis Bogustovs unites glass art with skateboarding, making glass skateboard ramps and demonstrating how to use them. Karlis is best known for his glass piano, which will be in evidence at the festival.

A mass-participation project celebrating the international Fused Glass community will see the creation of a huge stretch of glass bunting, with a photo gallery and a few words by each contributor. It's hoped that the total length of bunting might set a new world record.

Heritage

In the Quarter's brand new museum of glass at White House Cone, local historian Charles Hajdamach and Steve Piper unlock some of the secrets of the production of engraved glass and rock crystal.

Also contributing to the heritage strand of the festival is David Wilkinson, the UK's premier chandelier maker, who'll be taking his audience on a journey into the world of ornamental lighting. Six heritage walks around Amblecote and Wollaston reveal secrets of the hidden past, while Black Country raconteur Graham Fisher launches an update of his bestselling book, *Jewels On The Cut*.

Exhibitions

The flagship British Glass Biennale is the most prestigious selling show of contemporary glass in the UK, with £100,000 in prizes awarded since its inception in 2004.

Work by 63 artists is included, reflecting the latest techniques, trends and topical issues. The Biennale is one of 17 exhibitions in the festival, with over 285 professional artists represented.

Family fun

Families can meet the Dudley glass recycling team at Red House Glass Cone to find out where all the glass goes, and can also explore the history of the Cone in the company of costumed interpreters. There's the chance for visitors to decorate jam jars, try their hand at fusing glass, have a go at engraving, enjoy a storytelling afternoon, make a giant, chalk stained-glass window and learn how to develop pin-hole photographs. A special 'teenage market', award-winning children's entertainment, traditional games and numerous craft activities further add to the family-friendly line-up of fun.

Hands-on attractions

Caroline Jariwala, one of the Creative Black Country's 100 Masters, creates a series of four new mosaics using a historic kaleidoscope of coloured waste glass unearthed locally.

The windows will depict four of the main trades and resources of the Coalbourn Brook Valley - coal mining, fire clay mining, glassmaking and the Stourbridge canal.

The Glass Hub, meanwhile, is bringing its Minimelt furnace from Wiltshire. It will host a rolling programme of demonstrations with guest artists, as well as offering visitors the opportunity to make their own unique glass baubles... There are lots of workshops and drop-in sessions to enjoy too, providing people with the chance to learn about glassblowing, stone carving, fused glass and glass engraving.

World premiere Vitrescence: Becoming Glass

Standing 100ft high, the 18th century Redhouse 'Glass Cone' chimney is the last of its kind in Europe.

In its cathedral-like interior, award-winning singer, composer and sound artist Andy Garbi stages a site-specific audiovisual event that celebrates and explores the nature of glass. Designed to react with the unique acoustics of the structure, Vitrescence is part installation and part performance. It features a state-of-the-art 7:1 surround-sound system, live-action glass work and instruments alongside manipulated choral voice, strings and the sounds of glass blowers. The show lasts for approximately 45 minutes but is not suitable for small children. **Red House Glass Cone, Saturday 26 August.**

Prizes

The British Glass Biennale has 10 awards, including the People's Prize and a young collectors prize. Children can also vote for their favourite piece and win a glass artwork to start their own collection. Entry to the Biennale post-festival is free. The prize winners will be announced at the exhibition's closing party on 9 September.

Therapeutic use of glass

Blind and profoundly deaf artist Julie Coakley has developed a unique way of creating 3D glass sculptural drawings containing over 100 individual elements of glass.

Julie's workshop will allow visitors to have a go at bending glass strings to help her create a new glass sculpture... The inspirational Hot Shop Heroes: Healing With Fire programme in the US has been supporting some of America's wounded soldiers by teaching them to blow glass. Working in a hot-shop is known to provide physical benefits for people suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. Project leader Patricia Davidson shares her experience of the programme, and is accompanied by war veteran Michael Daley. Patricia and Michael are in town to help launch a similar programme for UK veterans...

The festival also includes an exhibition by young people with learning difficulties and autism, illustrating the way in which working with glass helps them develop their skills, concentration and sense of self-esteem.

Finale performance

Circus Raj, a 'supergroup' of elite street circus performers hailing from Rajasthan, 'take the ancient, mystical and magical circus format to even greater heights'. The show is performed at the **Ruskin Glass Centre on Monday 28 August at 7pm.**

The International Festival Of Glass takes place at the Glass Quarter in Stourbridge from Friday 25 to Monday 28 August.

For further information, visit www.igf.org.uk

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Events previews from around the region



Shrewsbury Flower Show - full of fun, flowers and fireworks!

Quarry Park, Shrewsbury, Fri 11 & Sat 12 August

The Shrewsbury Flower Show is one of the country's premier horticultural festivals.

Recently winning the Best Shropshire Event category in the What's On Readers' Awards, the show delivers a diverse programme of entertainment for the whole family to enjoy.

Highlights of the two-day event include guest spots from celebrity chefs and gardeners, arena acts, showjumping, workshops, a children's area, competitions and impressive floral displays.

Both days are brought to a close with a magnificent fireworks display. Top billing the 2017 edition of the show are The Overtones. The five-piece harmony group are promising to wow their Shropshire audience with an eclectic mix of doo-wop, Motown, modern-day R&B and pop. Guests appearing at this year's Flower Show include MasterChef judge

John Torode, garden designer and TV personality Joe Swift, celebrity gardener Penny Meadmore and Shropshire-based actor John Challis, best known as Boycie from BBC TV comedy series *Only Fools And Horses* and *The Green Green Grass*.

The London Community Gospel Choir and the Royal Signals Motorcycle Display Team, The White Helmets, will also be in attendance at the event.

Commenting on this month's show, Chairman of the Shropshire Horticultural Society's Arena Committee, Andrew Rhodes, said: "We're delighted to be able to offer our visitors something different this year. The Overtones have enjoyed a succession of major achievements, including performing in front of 250,000 people at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Concert, and we look forward to welcoming them to our show on Saturday the 12th."



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ABBA TRIBUTE BAND SWEDE DREAMZ



Saturday 19th August 7:30pm

From the opening beats of Waterloo to the final notes of Thank You For The Music, Swede Dreamz will take you on a journey through some of ABBA's greatest and most memorable hits including Dancing Queen, Mamma Mia, Take A Chance On Me, SOS, Fernando, Chiquitita, Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!, Knowing Me Knowing You, Money Money Money and many, many more.

TICKET PRICE
£20

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Events previews from around the region



Art In The Park Jephson Gardens, Royal Leamington Spa, Sat 5 - Sun 6 August

Leamington's Art In The Park festival is expected to attract in excess of 5,000 visitors when it makes a welcome return this month. The 2017 edition of the event features exhibitions of paintings, ceramics, textiles and sculpture, with numerous bands presenting a feast of music. This year's festival theme, The Three Graces, has been selected to celebrate Leamington's historic

elephants, Wilhelmina, Haddie & Trilby, and to add some circus-related fun to proceedings. Commenting on the festival, organiser Carole Sleight said: "With the range of art and activities on offer, we know that visitors will get a huge amount of value from the weekend and leave with many great memories, new skills and inspirational ideas."

Tall Tales: Cinderella Story Tour And Craft

Aston Hall, Birmingham, Fri 4 August

With its comical Ugly Sisters, matchmaking fairy godmother, drop-dead-gorgeous Prince Charming, super-cute mice and fits-one-foot-only glass slipper, Cinderella can justifiably lay claim to being the most popular of all fairytales. And young visitors to Aston Hall can this month enjoy hearing all about Cinders' search for love, courtesy of this special interactive storytelling event. Back by popular demand, Tall Tales offers visitors the chance to meet the girl herself, see her kitchen, help equip her with everything she needs, try on her glass slipper, make a magic wand and join in the dancing at Prince Charming's ball. The event is suitable for children aged between three and eight, with each storytelling experience lasting approximately 45 minutes. Spaces are limited, so pre-booking is essential.

Insomnia61

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 25 - Mon 28 August

The UK's biggest gaming festival has settled nicely into its new home at the NEC, having relocated there a couple of years back after outgrowing Coventry's Ricoh Arena. A four-day event combining 'all the best bits of video-gaming', Insomnia61 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. Special guests on this occasion include YouTube favourites Syndicate, Yammy XOX and iBallisticSquid.



Magic: Grand Prix

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 11 - Sun 13 August

More than 3,000 gamers will be descending on Birmingham for this major event. Magic: The Gathering is a trading card game played in at least 70 countries. "Magic's deep strategy, compelling worlds and rich visuals have drawn in 20 million players worldwide," says show organiser Trevor Baker. "This diverse collection of people comes together to find common ground in their shared love of the game."

The BMW Car Club National Festival

British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire, Sun 13 August

The largest gathering of its kind in Europe, this ever-popular festival features attractions including a large motor sport display area, a rolling road, family entertainment, a Pirelli stand, Concours winners and trade stands.

The British Showjumping National Championships

Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, Tues 8 - Sun 13 August

The British Showjumping National Championships this month come to Warwickshire for the fourth time. The event is one of the summer highlights on the showjumping calendar and features the prestigious International Stairway League Final (Sunday 13 August), at the end of which the British Showjumping National Champion will be crowned. The six-day event also features the Stoneleigh Horse Show, taking place for a third consecutive year, and offers plenty of competitions, indoor performances, hospitality and shopping opportunities for visitors to enjoy. And just to make popping along an even more appealing idea, entry to the show is free.

Oswestry Balloon Festival

British Ironworks, Oswestry, North Shropshire, Sat 26 - Mon 28 August

Oswestry is a town with more than its fair share of ballooning history, so it's no surprise that there's an annual festival to celebrate the fact. Weather permitting, there will be sunrise and late-afternoon flights on both days of the show. There'll also be a spectacular evening 'glow', which will see tethered baskets power their burners to music, to light up the inflated balloons. A balloon race is scheduled for the Sunday of the festival. The event is raising funds for Wrexham's Nightingale House Hospice, which provides a specialist palliative care service for patients with life-limiting illness, including many from Shropshire.



Summer holiday fun at Tamworth Castle

From Norman fort to stately home to 21st century museum, Tamworth Castle stands as a physical record of almost a millennium's-worth of history.

The castle is currently home to unique artefacts from the Staffordshire Hoard and offers some fascinating insights into the Anglo-Saxon era from which they date.

Summer holiday visitors to the venue can learn about Saxon battle tactics and try their hand at archaeology (15 - 17 August), as well as sampling life in medieval times (22 - 24 August).

For those fancying something a bit more 'magical' in nature, a special trail provides an opportunity to say hello to gallant knights, help make a giant's armour, discover a wishing tree and maybe even spot a mischievous pixie or two (until 11 August).



I Want I Want! Stories Of 1975

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Sun 20 August

Get out your platform shoes, pull on your flares and get ready to party like it's 1975 at this one-day-only event.

Featuring items from the gallery and the Arts Council Collection, this 'warm and welcoming reminiscence session' takes a look back to the flamboyant days of yesteryear, recalling the 1970s through a celebration of the decade's music, art and fashion.

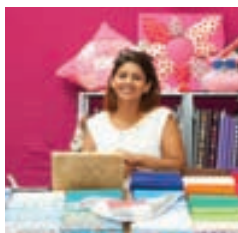
A free drop-in session suitable for all ages, Stories Of 1975 is also a dementia-friendly event.

Festival Of Quilts

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 August

Bringing together a unique blend of exhibitors, galleries, practical workshops and in-depth lectures, the Festival Of Quilts is Europe's largest celebration of patchwork and quilting.

Commenting on the show, Jonathan Burton, Portfolio Director, said: "The festival offers a truly inspirational showcase of quilt-making, with the finest skills on display. It's a place for beginners through to professionals to share ideas, learn new skills and meet with others who're equally passionate about the world of patchwork and quilting."



Creative Car Factory at Coventry Transport Museum

until Wed 30 August

If you're looking for ways to keep the kids occupied this summer holiday, check out these special workshops at Coventry Transport Museum. There's one taking place each week for six weeks - so that's half a dozen days when you know your youngsters will be kept busy and entertained!

The workshops provide children with the chance to design, create and try out their own fantasy car. They can then add their favourite features to the museum's full-size car design.

Participants can attend all six workshops - each focusing on a different stage of car manufacture - or join in for just a single session, during which they can make a car part to take home.

The workshops are suitable for children aged three-plus, but all ages are welcome to attend.



Summer late openings

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley,
Every Friday during August

Families visiting BCLM on any Friday in August will have even longer to immerse themselves in 300 years of Black Country history, with the venue staying open until 8pm. Meet costumed characters, join in with street games and explore the museum's selection of shops and houses. If you've never visited BCLM before, this is a great opportunity to become one of the approximately 300,000 people who're welcomed through its gates every year. The venue has been open for 34 years now and is the UK's third most visited open-air museum.

Other attractions on the 26-acre site include an underground mine, a fairground, a school and a pub, all offering visitors the chance to step back in time to a bygone era.



Land Of Legends

Avoncroft, Bromsgrove,
Mon 14 - Fri 18 August

This is just one of numerous events organised by Avoncroft for its summertime visitors. Providing 'a week of folklore and local legends', the presentation invites participants to explore the grounds in search of 'the mythical beasts that dwell within'.

Other Avoncroft attractions this month include a traditional games challenge, summer building activities, a bake-off themed week and an archaeological dig.

Urban Safari

The Roundhouse, St Vincents
Street, Birmingham,
Mon 7 - Wed 9 August &
Fri 25 - Mon 28 August

Birmingham's historic Roundhouse building offers an ideal base from which to explore the city's canal network - and there's no better way of doing so than by booking yourself a place on the Urban Safari. Participants get to travel on a heritage narrowboat into the heart of the canal system, enjoying a towpath tour of the local wildlife while learning about numerous myths and legends associated with Birmingham.

The Classic Motorcycle Festival

Donington Park Racing Circuit,
Derby, Fri 4 - Sun 6 August

This Donington favourite once again features appearances by 1998 500cc British Grand Prix champion Simon Crafar, guest starring at the event for the fifth year running.

Festival regular Steve Parrish makes a welcome return too, at an event that features parades, massive display areas and up to 50 races across its three days.

Blists Hill In Steam

Blists Hill, Ironbridge Gorge, Sat 19 - Sun 20 August

Now here's an event to be all steamed up about! Visitors across the two days can take advantage of a rare opportunity to get up close and personal with an array of Victorian steam-powered machines, all of which will be in their full working splendour. Highlights include the venue's replica of Trevithick's 1802 Coalbrookdale locomotive and a 1903 Wallis & Stevens road roller named Billy. There's also the Merry Weather fire pump and the Fielding oil engine to admire, with other attractions including portable and ploughing engines, the Blists Hill Ironworks steam hammer and a number of guest engines.



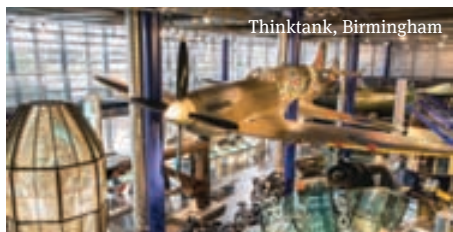
The Western Motorhome Show

Three Counties Showground, Worcestershire,
Fri 18 - Sun 20 August

Featuring four nights of camping and country & western music, The Western Motorhome Show is this month hosting more than 3,000 motorhomes, caravans, campervans and tents, including 450 new and used outdoor leisure vehicles. Other attractions include the Lonestar Re-Enactment Group - providing living history displays - hundreds of accessory stalls and numerous western entertainers, among them The Dolly & Kenny Show, Boxcar Kelly & The Rail-rovers and Steve Cherelle as John Denver.



ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS THIS AUGUST!



Thinktank, Birmingham



Blists Hill, Ironbridge



Drayton Manor Theme Park

The Midlands is home to an abundance of enjoyable and exciting places to visit, catering for people of all ages and from all walks of life. Whatever you're looking for to keep the kids entertained this summer, you're sure to find somewhere and something that fits the bill.

Our What's On directory features just a small handful of some of the best places to visit across the region this summer. Check out whatsonlive.co.uk for more details...

Birmingham

ASTON HALL This 17th century red-brick mansion hosts many family activities throughout the season, Aston, Birmingham, B6 6JD

BBC BIRMINGHAM Go behind the scenes of some of your favourite TV shows with informative and entertaining tours, The Mailbox, Birmingham, B1 1RF

BECKETT'S FARM Hosts a number of family events throughout the year, including cookery classes for young and old, with a farm shop and restaurant on site, Wythall, Birmingham B47 6AJ

BIRMINGHAM BACK TO BACKS Restored 19th-century courtyard of working people's houses, Hurst Street, Birmingham, B5 4TE

BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS Spanning 15 acres, with four glasshouses hosting a variety of climates, from tropical rainforest to arid desert, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3TR

BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY Explore over 40 galleries displaying various eras of art, with a diverse exhibition programme on offer, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham, B3 3DH

BLAKESLEY HALL Discover a fine Tudor house and beautiful gardens just a few miles from the heart of the city, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RN

CADBURY WORLD Discover the origins of everyone's favourite sweet treat, from the cocoa beans in the Aztec jungle to the making of Cadbury confectionery today, Bournville, Birmingham, B30 2LU

CANNON HILL PARK Opened in 1873, the park is made up of 80 acres of formal parkland and 120 acres of conservation and woodland plantation, Moseley, Birmingham, B12 9QH

EASTSIDE PARK Birmingham's first central city park in over 130 years, situated only a stone's throw from the Bullring Shopping Centre and New Street Station, Birmingham City Centre, B4 7AP

LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM A major cultural destination, providing a dynamic mix of events, activities and performances, resources and access to expert help for learning, information and culture, Centenary Square, Birmingham, B1 2EA

LICKEY HILLS COUNTRY PARK Covering 524 acres, the park is a place for family fun, whether that be walking the dog, cycling, horse riding, or maybe just for the views and a cup of tea, Rednal, Birmingham, B45 8ER

MAC A huge range of theatre, music, comedy, plays for children, dance, creative and craft courses, family shows, film and free exhibitions on offer, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, B12 9QH

MUSEUM OF THE JEWELLERY QUARTER The museum tells the story of Birmingham's renowned jewellery and metalworking heritage, Hockley, Birmingham, B18 6HA

NATIONAL SEA LIFE CENTRE Featuring over 1,000 creatures and 60-plus displays, including a million-litre underwater tropical tank, Nemo's Kingdom, turtle breeding and much more, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HL

RESORTS WORLD Boasting the largest casino in the UK, a shopping mall, restaurants and cinemas, Birmingham, B40 1NT

SAREHOLE MILL A 250-year-old working watermill famous for its association with Lord Of The Rings author JRR Tolkien, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD

THINKTANK SCIENCE MUSEUM Over 200 interactive exhibits on science and discovery, including a programme of workshops, shows and demonstrations, and a digital Planetarium, Millennium Point, Birmingham, B4 7XG

Shropshire

ATTINGHAM PARK An elegant 18th century mansion house with Regency interiors. Set within an expansive deer park, there are riverside walks, a woodland sculpture trail and family events to enjoy, Shrewsbury, SY4 4TP

CARDING MILL VALLEY Covering almost 5,000 acres, with stunning views of the Shropshire and Welsh hills. An important place for wildlife, geology and archaeology. Church Stretton, SY6 6JG

CHOLMONDELEY CASTLE A Gothic castle - a product of the early 19th century - that stands on a high rise above a lake. The castle is surrounded by lawns, a variety of mature trees and gardens. Whitchurch, SY14 8AH

IRONBRIDGE GORGE MUSEUMS The Shropshire site of the birth of the Industrial Revolution has been designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, with 10 award-winning museums. Ironbridge, TF8 7DQ

RAF COSFORD The museum houses one of the largest aviation collections in the UK. Over 70 his-

toric aircraft are displayed in three wartime hangars on an active airfield. Shifnal, TF11 8UP

SEVERN VALLEY COUNTRY PARK An oasis of calm and beauty on the banks of the River Severn, this award-winning, 51-hectare country park is a place for quiet enjoyment of the countryside. Bridgnorth, WV15 6NG

SHREWSBURY MUSEUM & ART GALLERY Housed within the town's grade II Victorian Music Hall and one of the country's rare 13th century mansions, featuring a broad range of artefacts alongside a rolling programme of contemporary art. Shrewsbury, SY1 1LH

TELFORD STEAM RAILWAY A heritage railway located at Horsehay and formed in 1976. The railway is operated by volunteers on Sundays and Bank Holidays. Telford, TF4 2NF

THE BRITISH IRONWORK CENTRE Boasting a varied collection of beautifully decorative metal items, some of which are faithful reproductions of ironwork no longer seen today. There's also a collection of animal sculptures to admire. Oswestry, SY11 4JH

THE QUARRY PARK Shrewsbury's 29-acre parkland hosts numerous events throughout the year, including the Shrewsbury Flower Show 12-13 August, SY1 1RN

Staffordshire

AERIAL EXTREME Ever fancied swinging about, high up in the trees? Now's your chance with Aerial Extreme's tree-mendous course at the Trentham Estate. All ages are guaranteed a bucketload of fun. How much can you handle? Trentham, ST12 9HR

ALTON TOWERS Enjoy a mind-blowing mix of fantastic rides and attractions, offering unlimited fun for kids of all ages, families and thrill-seekers. Alton, ST10 4DB

BIDDULPH GRANGE COUNTRY PARK Originally part of a larger Biddulph Grange Estate, this is a 73-acre wooded hillside site with a large lake, ponds and meadows, Stoke-on-Trent, ST8 7TZ

CENTRAL FOREST PARK Located in the heart of Stoke, Central Forest Park is a green space providing facilities for walking, cycling, dog walking, informal sports and skateboarding. Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 6BB

CHURNET VALLEY RAILWAY Take a journey back to



Coventry Transport Museum



Black Country Living Museum, Dudley



Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

the classic days of railway travel on a rural line that passes through beautiful countryside known as Staffordshire's 'Little Switzerland'. Froghall, ST10 2HA

DRAYTON MANOR THEME PARK A definite stop-off venue for thrill-seekers, featuring, as it does, all manner of white-knuckle rides. Also offers a range of rides that are somewhat less challenging. And with a zoo on site, it's a venue that's got plenty for kids and adults of all ages to enjoy. Tamworth, B78 3TW

HANLEY PARK Hanley Park and the adjacent Cauldon Grounds are open to the public. Features include three play areas: toddler, sensory and adventure (including aerial slide). Shelton, ST1 4DX

PEAK WILDLIFE PARK Large walk-throughs allow you to come face to face with exotic and endangered animals from across three continents. Leek, ST13 7QR

THE POTTERIES MUSEUM & ART GALLERY Exhibits include the world's greatest collection of Staffordshire ceramics, a World War Two Spitfire, decorative arts and natural history, along with items from the Staffordshire Hoard. Hanley, ST1 3DW

THE WEDGWOOD MUSEUM The home of one of the most interesting ceramic collections in the world. The galleries tell the story of Josiah Wedgwood, his family, and the company he founded over two centuries ago. Stoke-on-Trent, ST12 9ER

Warwickshire

BADDESLEY CLINTON A secluded estate set in the heart of the Forest of Arden. With guided talks, walks through the gardens and activities for children such as pond dipping and garden trails. Warwick, B93 ODQ

BRITISH MOTOR MUSEUM The museum features the world's greatest collection of classic, vintage and veteran British cars. Gaydon, CV35 0BJ

CHARLECOTE PARK This grand 16th century country house comes complete with deer park and is a property of the National Trust. Warwick, CV35 9ER

COTSWOLD WILDLIFE PARK Set in 160 acres of parkland and gardens, Cotswold Wildlife Park now has one of the UK's largest zoological collections. Burford, OX18 4JP

COVENTRY MUSIC MUSEUM Activities to interest and delight youngsters, and a studio in which visitors can try their hand at composing and music-making. CV2 4ED

COVENTRY TRANSPORT MUSEUM The museum houses the largest publicly owned collection of British vehicles in the world. Now fully open after a £9.5million redevelopment programme. CV1 1JD

HATTON ADVENTURE WORLD An attraction for families with children up to the age of 12. Hatton, CV35 8XA

HERBERT ART GALLERY & MUSEUM A family-friendly museum, with activities that run throughout the school holidays. Coventry, CV1 5QP

KENILWORTH CASTLE A vast complex of ruined fortifications and palatial apartments spanning over five centuries. CV8 1NE

RAGLEY HALL Family entertainment, with an adventure playground, 3D maze, boating and a woodland walk. Alcester, B49 5NJ

SHAKESPEARE BIRTHPLACE TRUST Six unique properties - Shakespeare's Birthplace, Harvard House, Hall's Croft, Anne Hathaway's Cottage, Mary Arden's Farm & Shakespeare's New Place.

STONELEIGH ABBEY Visitors to the Abbey can learn about the house's history through a guided tour of the West Wing. CV8 2LF

STRATFORD BUTTERFLY FARM A unique opportunity to watch hundreds of the world's most spectacular butterflies flying around. Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 7LS

WARWICK CASTLE Experience over 1,000 years of history at Warwick Castle. Aside from visiting the castle itself and looking at the battlements, towers, turrets and interiors, there are also jousting shows, the Horrible History show and Time Tower to keep you entertained. CV34 4QU

Wolverhampton & Black Country

BANTOCK HOUSE MUSEUM Restored to its Edwardian glory, Bantock House sits within 43 acres of parkland, with activities for all ages. Wolverhampton, WV3 9LQ

BILSTON CRAFT GALLERY A lively programme of changing exhibitions featuring the best of contemporary ceramics, glass, jewellery, textiles, metal, woodwork and more. Wolverhampton, WV14 7LU

BLACK COUNTRY LIVING MUSEUM A tribute to the traditional skills and enterprise of the people that once lived in the heart of industrial Britain, Dudley, DY1 4SQ

DUDLEY CANAL TUNNEL TRUST Guided boat trips through the tunnels, accompanied by videos, life-like reconstructions and stunning music and light shows. Dudley, DY1 4SB

DUDLEY CASTLE AND ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS Home to more than 1,300 animals, with up to 200 species. At the heart of the site sits the ruins of an 11th century castle. Dudley, DY1 4QF

HIMLEY HALL & PARK An 18th century building set in 180 acres of Capability Brown-landscaped parkland. Dudley, DY3 4DF

RED HOUSE GLASS CONE A heritage site with 225 years of glass, industrial and social history within its walls. Stourbridge, DY8 4AZ

SANDWELL PARK FARM A fully restored working Victorian farm with grazing meadows, a traditional farmyard, walled kitchen gardens, Grade II listed buildings, a small museum and award-winning tea rooms. West Bromwich, B71 4BG

WIGHTWICK MANOR & GARDENS A manor house filled

with an important collection of Pre-Raphaelite and Arts & Crafts pictures and furnishings. Wolverhampton, WV6 8EE

WOLVERHAMPTON ART GALLERY Explore more than 300 years of art, including regular world class touring exhibitions. Wolverhampton, WV1 1DU

Worcestershire

AVONCROFT MUSEUM A fascinating museum of historic buildings spanning seven centuries, rescued from imminent destruction and carefully rebuilt, timber by timber or brick by brick, on a beautiful open-air site in the north of Worcestershire, Bromsgrove, B60 4JR

BERRINGTON HALL Created by architect Henry Holland, the hall is one of a small number of his buildings to survive intact. As well as being able to explore the family rooms and servant quarters, guests can take part in activities or relax by the lake, Nr Leominster, HR6 0DW

BROCKHAMPTON ESTATE Set in 1,700 acres of estate, the romantic Manor House dates back to the late 14th century and is accessible via a small gatehouse and over a moat, Nr Bromyard, WR6 5TB

CROFT CASTLE Located deep in the heart of the Herefordshire countryside, surrounded by 1,500 acres of historic woodland, farm and parkland. Home to the Croft family for nearly 1,000 years, this castle has many intriguing stories to uncover. Yarpole, Nr Leominster, HR6 9PW

CROOME PARK Explore what remains of a secret wartime air base and discover how thousands of people lived and worked there during the 1940s. Worcester, WR8 9DW

EASTNOR CASTLE DEER PARK Set within the dramatic beauty of the Malvern Hills and surrounded by a beautiful deer park, arboretum and lake. Ledbury HR8 1RL

HAMPTON COURT CASTLE Originally formed by the merging of two manors, Hampton Court was remodelled in the 1830s/40s. The castle and grounds offer a great location for adventure and events. Leominster, HR6 0PN

HARTLEBURY CASTLE A Grade I listed building which was built in the mid-13th century as a fortified manor house. Kidderminster, DY11 7XZ

SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY A full-size standard-gauge railway line which runs regular steam-hauled passenger trains, for tourists and enthusiasts alike, between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth, a distance of 16 miles. Bewdley, DY12 1BG

THE MALVERN HILLS A wide variety of walks, from short and gently graded slopes to more strenuous options. WR14 3EY

WITLEY COURT One hundred years ago, Witley Court was one of England's great country houses, hosting many extravagant parties. Today, it's a spectacular ruin, the result of a disastrous fire in 1937. Great Witley, WR6 6JT



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OF
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Your week by week
listings guide
August 2017

the list

Maz O'Connor, Shrewsbury Folk Festival, 25-28 August

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

What's On

Tues 1 to Sun 6 August



Wonderland continues to show at Wolves Grand
until Sat 5 August

Mon 7 to Sun 13 August



Comedy Of Errors shows at Shrewsbury Castle
Tues 8 August

Mon 14 to Sun 20 August



Tile Decorating Workshops at Jackfield Tile Museum
Tues 15 August

Mon 21 to Thurs 31 August



The Big Feast takes over Stoke-on-Trent city centre
Fri 25 - Sat 26 August

THROUGHOUT AUGUST

Visual Arts

Bilston Craft Gallery

DISCOVER DINOSAURS New family-friendly exhibition exploring the pre-historic world of dinosaurs, until Sun 13 Aug

New Art Gallery - Walsall

SOHEILA SOKHANVARI Soheila is an Iranian-born artist whose multidisciplinary work weaves layers of political histories with bizarre, humorous and mysterious narratives that are then left to the viewer's own sensitivity to complete, until Sun 3 Sept

PEOPLE'S CHOICE Featuring the voting public's favourite works from the Permanent Collection, until Sun 25 Feb 2018

Potteries Museum & Art Gallery - Stoke-On-Trent

ANN SUTTON: ON THE GRID Touring exhibition bringing the work of Ann Sutton back to her Stoke-on-Trent roots and showcasing a new body of work inspired by her travels, until Sun 27 Aug

ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOM OF MERCIA Exhibition of pieces from the world-famous Staffordshire Hoard, until Sun 31 Dec

FIRST WORLD WAR REPLICA TRENCH until Sun 11 Nov 2018.

MINI MUSEUM Reflecting all the collections held by the museum, this family-friendly exhibition asks visitors about their favourite objects and how they would like to see them displayed, Sat 29 July - Sun 3 Sept

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

ANTARCTICA: LIFE IN A HOSTILE LAND Insight into our relationship with the most hostile continent on Earth, until Sun 17 Sept

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

REMEMBER ME: CHARLOTTE HODES Visually powerful new work which consists of 120 individual, wall-mounted ceramic pieces, arranged to create a single image that combines elegant historic patterns with contemporary and digital imagery, until Sun 3 Sept

MINI WOLVES EXHIBITION The largest public art event ever to take place in Wolverhampton features 30 wolf sculptures which will be located at key city centre sites and in West Park. To celebrate the public art, schools across the city, along with 10 artists, have joined together to turn mini wolf sculptures into artwork, until Sun 17 Sept

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2017 Famous exhibition showcasing the world's very best nature photography, until Sun 1 Oct

DINOSAUR ART Exhibition championing the work of four palaeoartists, who merge cutting-edge science and art, until Sun 8 Oct

Other VISUAL ARTS

COAST Selection of prints and watercolours by Richard Bawden. Also includes works from Andy Lovell, Martin John Fowler, Marian Hill. Ceramics by James Campbell and Sarah Perry, plus new glass work by Charlotte Martin, until Sat 5 Aug, Twenty Twenty Gallery, Much Wenlock

SHROPSHIRE ART SOCIETY EXHIBITION Showcasing the work of Annette Hughes and Darryl Walker, until Fri 11 Aug, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

SUMMER OPEN EXHIBITION An annual exhibition showcasing work by regular artists and new talent and featuring a wide range of media and subject matter, until Sat 12 Aug, The Willow Gallery, Oswestry

A BRUSH WITH COLOUR Hagley Art Club members showcase their work, until Sun 3 Sept, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

ART OF THE COMMUNITY EXHIBITION Exhibition forming part of a celebration to mark the Trust's 50th anniversary, until Tues 2 Jan, Coalbrookdale Gallery, Ironbridge

NEW CHURCH STRETTON ARTS FESTIVAL EXHIBITION Tues 1 - Sat 12 Aug, Church Stretton School

NEW FLAT EARTH AND OTHER VIEWPOINTS Including artworks by Elizabeth Turner, Tues 1 - Sat 12 Aug, VAN Gallery, Shrewsbury

NEW QUBE OPEN ART COMPETITION Exhibition of shortlisted entries. This year's theme is New Horizons, Thurs 10 Aug - Mon 2 Oct, Qube Gallery, Oswestry

NEW UNTOLD: PARTITION Artwork exploring the history and culture of India and Pakistan, and marking the 70th anniversary of the partition of India, Fri 11 Aug - Sun 10 Sept, Banlock House & Park, Wolverhampton

NEW ANGIE LEWIN & ALEX MALCOLMSON Exhibition of work by artists Angie Lewin and Alex Malcolmson, Sat 12 Aug - Sat 16 Sept, Twenty Twenty Gallery, Much Wenlock

NEW EARTH: WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD? A 'stunning' visual journey across earth, sea and sky through spectacular light and sound projections, Sat 19 - Mon 28 Aug, Lichfield Cathedral



Yes Lad - The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent & O2 Academy, Birmingham

Gigs

YES LAD Wed 2 Aug, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

IAIN MATTHEWS Wed 2 Aug, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

ASOMVEL Wed 2 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

KNOXVILLE HIGHWAY Wed 2 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

CELINE DION Thurs 3 Aug, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

BELLEVEUE DAYS Thurs 3 Aug, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

HAMISH STUART Thurs 3 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

MORETALICA Thurs 3 Aug, The Robin, Wolverhampton

CALIBRE & DRS Fri 4 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE NAKED BEATLES Fri 4 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

OLLIE HUGHES AS ROBBIE WILLIAMS Fri 4 Aug, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

KING KRAB Fri 4 Aug, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

WHITE TYGER Fri 4 Aug, Route 44, Birmingham

THE BEAT BROTHERS Fri 4 - Sat 5 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

FARMHOUSE BLUES FESTIVAL Sat 5 Aug, Wheat Hill Court Farm, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

REGINA SPEKTOR Sat 5 Aug, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

YES LAD Sat 5 Aug, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE SMITHS UTD Sat 5 Aug, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

PLANET ABBA Sat 5 Aug, Church Stretton School, South Shropshire

CANDID, GIANT PARTY & MONDAY CLUB Sat 5 Aug, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE SIX ON FIRE Sat 5 Aug, Route 44, B'ham

THE DECADES BAND Sat 5 Aug, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

SUNSHINE FRISBEE LASERBEAM Sat 5 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MAETLOAF & THE NEVER NEVERLAND EXPRESS

Sat 5 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

LOU WHATLING Sat 5 Aug, Havana Republic Bar and Restaurant, Shrewsbury

SUNSHINE BLOOM, MALONE, CATCHING KILLERS & SOLITAIRE Sat 5 Aug, The Flapper, B'ham

REAL TO REEL - MARILION TRIBUTE Sat 5 Aug, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

DON CARLOS Sat 5 Aug, O2 Academy, B'ham

IMAGINAERUM Sun 6 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

SOUL CITY Sun 6 Aug, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

AVERSIONS CROWN, VENOM PRISON, ABANDONMENT & SAMSARA Sun 6 Aug, The Flapper, Birmingham



Lou Whatling - Havana Republic, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

BRASS BANDS IN THE GARDENS Pull up a deck chair and listen to the wonderful sounds of this local band! Until Sun 13 Aug, Trentham Estate, Stoke-on-Trent

4 GIRLS 4 HARPS Tues 1 Aug, Church Stretton School, South Shropshire

INTERNATIONAL PIANO WEEK Tues 1 - Tues 8 Aug, Moreton Hall, Oswestry, Shropshire

FRITH PIANO QUARTET Programme includes works by Mozart, Fauré and Dvořák, Wed 2 Aug, St Laurence's Church, Church Stretton, Shropshire



BISYOCC LUNCHTIME CHAMBER CONCERT Fri 4 Aug, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Shropshire

HARMONIEMUSIK Their programme will include Arnold's Trio, Handel's Trio Sonata (Gmin), Bozza's "Trois Pièces pour une musique de nuit", Sammartini's trio sonata for treble recorders and harpsichord, Stravinsky's 3 pieces for solo clarinet and Françaix Wind Quartet, Fri 4 Aug, St Laurence's Church, Church Stretton, South Shropshire

NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN Featuring Thomas Adés (conductor). Programme includes works by Francisco Coll, Thomas Adés & Stravinsky, Fri 4 Aug, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

NATIONAL SCOUT & GUIDE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Programme includes works by Vaughan Williams, Copland & Walton, Fri 4 Aug, mac, Birmingham

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ORCHESTRAS OF GREAT BRITAIN Featuring Natalia Luis-Bassa (conductor). Programme includes works by Holst, Bizet, Sibelius, Prokofiev & Marquez, Sun 6 Aug, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

ROBIN MORGAN, ANDY WHITE & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 3 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROBIN MORGAN, ANDY WHITE, TREVOR CROOK & LUKE TOULSON Fri 4 - Sat 5 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ALEX BOARDMAN, JAMES DOWDESWELL & JAMES GILL Fri 4 - Sat 5 Aug, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

LUKE BENSON, JIM SMALLMAN, GEOFF INNOCENT & QUNICY Sat 5 Aug, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

JOHN SIMMIT, SLIM, TAMEKA CAMPBELL & VICTOR DANIEL Sat 5 Aug, mac, Birmingham

Theatre

VENUS AND ADONIS Artistic Director Gregory Doran revives his unique version of Shakespeare's kaleidoscopic poem, using narration, music and puppetry, until Fri 4 Aug, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

WONDERLAND Wendi Peters, Dave Willets & Kerry Ellis star in Frank Wildhorn's musical adaptation of Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures In Wonderland & Through The Looking Glass, until Sat 5 Aug, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

TITUS ANDRONICUS Bloody and brutal play in which the decay of Rome reaches violent depths, until Sat 2 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

SALOMÉ Oscar Wilde's lyrical drama, written in French and originally banned in England, recounts in a single act the biblical story of Herod Antipas's daughter, Salomé, until Wed 6 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA Shakespeare's tragedy of love and power, until Thurs 7 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

JULIUS CAESAR A bloody story of conspiracy and murder, noble intentions and ignoble actions, until Sat 9 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

VICE VERSA Phil Porter's comedy romp, until Sat 9 Sept, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

MISS SAIGON Cameron Mackintosh's acclaimed new production of Boublil & Schönberg's legendary musical, until Sat 23 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE DREAMING Musical version of A Midsummer Night's Dream, Mon 31 July - Sat 5 Aug, Lichfield Garrick

SIDE SHOW Musical about acceptance, love and embracing one's uniqueness, based on the true story of two conjoined twins, Tues 1 - Fri 4 Aug, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

CHOPPING CHILLIES Mystical one-woman tale of loss, love & soul food, written and performed by Clair Whitefield, Thurs 3 Aug, Church Stretton



Wonderland - Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

School, South Shropshire

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's unconventional love story, Thurs 3 Aug, Warley Woods, Smethwick

THE WILL Foppish Theatre present Marivaux's classic comedy, which exposes the price of true love, Fri 4 Aug, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

PETER PAN Chapterhouse Theatre Company present an all-new staging of JM Barrie's magical adventure, Fri 4 Aug, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

WEST END ON TOUR! Musical classics from London's West End, with songs by Sondheim, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Cole Porter & Andrew Lloyd Webber, Fri 4 Aug, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

TINA TURNER'S STEAMY BINGO Laugh, dance and play to win as Tina spins her cage of balls to a high-energy '80s soundtrack, Fri 4 Aug, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TEA Family show based on Judith Kerr's much-loved children's book, Fri 4 - Sun 6 Aug, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SECRET GARDEN Frances Hodgson Burnett's timeless tale for all the family, Sat 5 - Sat 12 Aug, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

THE PRINCESS AND THE PIG Rural touring theatre company Folksy Theatre present a musical adaptation of Jonathan Emmett's tale for children, Sun 6 Aug, The Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

CIRCUS RAJ Featuring dancers, illusionists, aerialists and rope walkers, Sun 6 Aug, mac, Birmingham

TWELFTH NIGHT Rain Or Shine present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedy, Sun 6 Aug, Wenlock Priory, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

Dance

LET'S NACHO Showcase of work from Bollywood Dreams Academy students, Sat 5 - Sun 6 Aug, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

URJA! Aaja Nachie's Let's Dance present an evening of dance and music featuring a range of genres fused with Bollywood style, Sun 6 Aug, mac, Birmingham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

DESPICABLE ME 3 (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, until Thurs 3 Aug; Electric Cinema, Birmingham, until 3 Aug; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 4 - Thurs 10 Aug

DUNKIRK (12a) Drama/History. Starring Tom Hardy, Cillian Murphy. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, until Thurs 3 Aug; Electric Cinema, Birmingham, until 3 Aug; Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 4 - Thurs 10 Aug

THE BEGUILED (15) Drama. Starring Nicole Kidman, Colin Farrell. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, until Thurs 3 Aug; mac, Birmingham, until Tues 8 Aug

BASIL THE GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Vincent Price, Barrie Ingham. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 1 Aug

IRMA LA DOUCE (15) Comedy/Romance. Starring Jack Lemmon, Shirley MacLaine. Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 1 Aug

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WED 3 AUG + SUPPORT HYMM
"LOUDER THAN MOTORHEAD..."
ASOMVEL

THU 4 AUG METALLICA TRIBUTE
MORETALLICA
+ SUPPORT SOUTHFALL
+ WINTER STORM

FRI 5 AUG + LUSTY SPRINGFIELD
THE NAKED BEATLES
FAREWELL SHOW

SAT 6 AUG 40th ANNIVERSARY 'SAT OUT OF HELL'
MAETLOAF
& THE NEVER
NEVERLAND EXPRESS

THU 19 AUG A NIGHT OF VINTAGE
STATUS QUO 1968 - 1980 WITH
JOHN COGHLAN'S QUO

FRI 11 AUG + SUPPORT ANIMAL SILENCE
FLASH - TRIBUTE TO QUEEN

SAT 13 AUG REGGAE SUMMER SPECIAL
UB40
TRIBUTE - ULTIMATE 40
BOB MARLEY
TRIBUTE - LEGEND

SUN 13 AUG
CLAYSON & THE ARGONAUTS

WED 14 AUG FROM BROWN COUNTY, USA
REVEREND PEYTON'S BIG DAMN BAND
+ MARSHALL SOCIAL CLUB + JO CARLEY
AND THE OLD DRY BRUINS

THU 17 AUG + SUPPORT DEBBANE
REMODE
TRIBUTE TO
DEPECHE MODE

FRI 18 AUG A NIGHT OF SOUL & MOTOWN
SOUL JUNCTION

SAT 19 AUG
SUSPICIOUSLY ELVIS
50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE KING'S
DEATH

SUN 19 AUG DAMES OF DARKNESS
BENEDICTO (AUSTRIA), ENEMY OF
BEAUTY (GREECE) - A SOUND OF
THUNDER (USA) - DARKNESS - CONTROL
THE STORM - DARKEST OBSESSION (UK)
- A CLOCKWORK OPERA - FRESHY

THU 24 AUG
CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIEW

FRI 25 AUG ROCK DOUBLE
FRED ZEPPELIN + DIZZY LIZZY

SAT 26 AUG 'GET IT ON'
T.REXTASY

SUN 27 AUG MARCHESTER DOUBLE
OASIS
TRIBUTE - DEFINITELY MIGHT BE
STONE ROSES
TRIBUTE - ADORED

WED 28 AUG
BLACKHEART ORCHESTRA
DIVING FOR ROSES TOUR 2017

THU 29 AUG
ROCK NIGHT
W.M.D
+ PHOENIX
+ RISING
+ INCLUSIVE
+ BUCKERPUNCH

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13 SEPT

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£22.00

20 SEPT

PAUL ZERDIN: ALL MOUTH
£19.50

23 SEPT

MR DARCY LOSES THE PLOT
£20 - £22.50

10 - 14 OCT

WAIT UNTIL DARK
£23 - £27.50

24 OCT

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WHAT'S ON AT THEATRE SEVERN...

TUESDAY 12 - SATURDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

Wedding Singer
Based on the hit film

Join the party of the year at this hilarious musical based on the smash hit Adam Sandler film.

CASTING BY
MARK GIBSON
MUSIC BY
JOHN MALKOVIC
BOOKED BY
JANE ROBERTS
CASTING BY
JENNIFER GARDNER COMPTON

SUNDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

SEVERN JESTERS
COMEDY CLUB USA

DISCOVER THE NEW STARS OF STAND-UP AT THEATRE SEVERN'S POPULAR COMEDY CLUB. MC DAN NIGHTINGALE, EL BALDINIHO, NICK DOODY & SALLY ANNE HAYWARD

FRIDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

TAP FACTORY

International hit-show for all ages, fusing urban tap dance, explosive percussion, comedy and unbelievable acrobatics.

SUNDAY 8 OCTOBER

LEE NELSON
Serious Joker
LIVE STAND UP TOUR 2017

Due to huge demand, Lee's brand-new, best ever stand-up show has been extended into autumn 2017. You've seen him sneaking into places he shouldn't be, now come and see him where he most definitely should be: LIVE on stage.

WEDNESDAY 18 - SATURDAY 21 OCTOBER

David Walliams
AWFUL AUNTIE
LIVE ON STAGE!

"The Birmingham Stage Company's Gangsta Granny is truly brilliant, so I'm hugely excited that they're now bringing Awful Auntie to the stage. It promises to be a thrilling show and a total hoot - Wagner and I can't wait to see it!" DAVID WALLIAMS

CHECK THE **WEBSITE** FOR FULL LISTINGS



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SHOCK & GORE 2017 SHORT FILM SHOWCASE (18) Horror. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 1 Aug

MARTYRS (18) Horror. Starring Morjana Alaoui, Mylène Jampanoï. Foreign language, subtitled. Introduction from Alex Davis, author of Laugier's *Martyrs: A Personal Analysis*. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 1 Aug

MCLAREN (12A) Documentary. Starring Bruce McLaren, Sir Jackie Stewart. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Tues 1 - Thurs 3 Aug

CHURCHILL (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Brian Cox, Miranda Richardson. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 1 & Thurs 3 Aug; Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 1 & Thurs 3 Aug

FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM (12a) Adventure/Fantasy. Starring Eddie Redmayne, Katherine Waterston. Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 2 Aug

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS (12A) Comedy. Starring Matthew Modine, Russell Tovey. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Wed 2 Aug

VERY BAD THINGS (18) Comedy/Crime. Starring Christian Slater, Daniel Stern. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Wed 2 Aug

WONDER WOMAN (12A) Action/Adventure. Starring Gal Gadot, Chris Pine. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Wed 2 - Thurs 3 Aug

TAXI DRIVER (18) Crime/Drama. Starring Robert De Niro, Jodie Foster. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 3 Aug

GENOCIDAL ORGAN (15) Animation/Sci-Fi. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 3 Aug

ENGLAND IS MINE (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Jack Lowden, Laurie Kynaston. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, from Fri 4 Aug

LA LA LAND (12a) Comedy/Drama. Starring Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone. mac, Birmingham, Fri 4 Aug

HAMPSTEAD (12a) Drama. Starring Diane Keaton, Brendan Gleeson. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Fri 4 Aug

IT COMES AT NIGHT (15) Horror/Mystery. Starring Joel Edgerton, Riley Keough. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, from Fri 4 - Sun 6 Aug

ALONE IN BERLIN (12A) Drama. Starring Emma Thompson, Daniel Brühl. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 4 - Sat 5 & Tues 8 Aug

TRANSFORMERS: THE LAST NIGHT (12A) Adventure/Sci-Fi. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Anthony Hopkins. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Sat 5 Aug

MY LIFE AS A COURGETTE (PG) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Gaspard Schlatter, Sixtine Murat. mac,

Birmingham, Fri 4 - Tues 8 Aug

DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL (U) Animation/Comedy. Starring Alicia Silverstone, Tom Everett Scott. mac, Birmingham, Sat 5 - Wed 16 Aug

THE DEATH OF LOUIS XIV (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Jean-Pierre Léaud, Patrick d'Assunção. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Sat 5 - Wed 16 Aug

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Wed 2 Aug, showing at selected cinemas

VALERIAN AND THE CITY OF A THOUSAND PLANETS (12a)

6 DAYS (15)

THE EMOJIMOVIE (U)

ENGLAND IS MINE (15)

LAND OF MINE (15)

MAUDIE (15)

Events

SAND SCULPTORS Head to the lakeside activity area to see a stunning sand sculpture come to life at Trentham! Until Wed 2 Aug, Trentham Gardens, Stoke-on-Trent

DINOSAUR SCHOOL Until Fri 4 Aug, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

THRESHOLDS Go back in time to the dawn of photography with this new virtual reality artwork by Mat Collishaw, until Sun 6 Aug, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

OCTONAUTS OCTO-GLOW EXPLORERS A brand new deep-sea adventure where you can see the ocean in a whole new light, until Sun 13 Aug, National Sea Life Centre, Birmingham

DINOSAURS IN THE WILD Dramatic storytelling and high-end digital graphics and animatronics lie at the heart of this brand new show, until Wed 23 Aug, NEC, Birmingham



HANDS ON HISTORY: MEDIEVAL Get set for a summer packed with time-travelling fun! Until Sat 26 Aug, Stokesay Castle, Nr Craven Arms, South Shropshire

SUMMER POTTERY PAINTING Paint a piece of pottery made on site at the museum, until Sat 2 Sept, Gladstone



Fire, Furnace & Steam - Blists Hill, Ironbridge

Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

LET'S GET SPORTY! Discover how the Black Country kept fit, as you race, jump and skip your way through some traditional sports! Until Sun 3 Sept, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

FIRE, FURNACE & STEAM Celebrate the power and innovation behind the Industrial Revolution with a variety of events, workshops and trails across the museums, until Sun 3 Sept, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

LET'S MAKE ROBOTS WORKSHOP Assemble your own individual Drawbot, a robot with pens for legs that will draw for you, Fri 28 July - Fri 1 Sept, Birmingham Museum And Art Gallery

ENCHANTED CASTLE Follow the trail and see what magical adventures you get to enjoy, Mon 31 July - Fri 11 Aug, Tamworth Castle

SECRET SPY TRAIL Self-guided experience searching the hangars, Tues 1 - Thurs 31 Aug, Royal Air Force Museum, Cosford

SUMMER FUN DAY Featuring face-painting, balloon-modelling and Punch & Judy shows, Wed 2 Aug, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

DISCOVER MINECRAFT Explore and discover the world of Minecraft, Wed 2 Aug, RAF, Cosford

LITTLE SKIPPERS - WATERY WILDLIFE A 45-minute boat trip followed by things to make and do, Wed 2 - Thurs 3 Aug, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

DINOSAURS VS FAIRIES Kids' trail around the grounds of Himley Park, Thurs 3 Aug, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

BURWARTON SHOW Annual agriculture show featuring live arena events, displays, livestock and heavy horses, exhibitors and competitions, Thurs 3 Aug, Various locations in Bridgnorth

EKO SLEEPOVER Children can enjoy a magical sleepover in Pigg's Playbarn, organised by Educating Kids Outdoors, Thurs 3 - Fri 4 Aug, Apley Farm Shop, Shifnal, Shropshire

BAT WALK A walk around the gardens with the Staffordshire Bat Group, Fri 4 Aug, The Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

DUDLEY CASTLE AFTER DARK: AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN DUDLEY Sat 5 Aug, Dudley Castle

OSWESTRY SHOW Featuring Royal Signals Motorcycle display team The White Helmets and Bob Hogg Sheepdogs & Duck Display, Sat 5 Aug, Oswestry Showground

RADICAL RUN The UK's biggest children's obstacle course, Sat 5 Aug, Sandwell Valley Country Park

JUNIOR HERITAGE SKILLS WORKSHOP Take part in a range of traditional craft activities, Sat 5 Aug, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

FAMILY FUN WEEKEND Head over to Hawkstone Park for a day of family fun! Sat 5 - Sun 6 Aug, Hawkstone Park & Follies, Shrewsbury

UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS: BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR Sun 6 Aug, Weston Park, Nr Shifnal

SCIENCE FUN DAY Learn about some of the science experiments carried out by the Lunar Men during the 18th century, Sun 6 Aug, Soho House, Birmingham

MODEL TRAIN, TOY AND COLLECTORS FAIR Featuring die cast and collectable toys, model railways and more, Sun 6 Aug, National Brewery Centre, Burton upon Trent

CIRCUS RAJ Fast-moving 'extravaganza' of intrigue, feats of daring, music, laughter and surprises, Sun 6 Aug, mac, Birmingham



Death Angel - The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

Gigs

KABANTU Mon 7 Aug, Church Stretton School, South Shropshire
RACHEL HARRINGTON Tues 8 Aug, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham
DEATH ANGEL Tues 8 Aug, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton
GOSPEL CENTRAL Wed 9 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham
TREMBLING BELLS Wed 9 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
JOHN COGHLAN'S QUO Thurs 10 Aug, The Robin, Wolverhampton
HIGHTAIL, DEVIL'S REVOLVER & THEIA Fri 11 Aug, Route 44, B'ham
GOODNIGHT LENIN Fri 11 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
UK GUNS N' ROSES Fri 11 Aug, The River Rooms, Stourbridge
FLASH - A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN Fri 11 Aug, The Robin, Wolverhampton
HI-ON MAIDEN Fri 11 Aug, Eleven, Stoke on Trent
INNER CITY BIRMINGHAM Sat 12 Aug, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham
THE ROGUES Sat 12 Aug, Ludlow Brewery, Ludlow, Shropshire
CRIMSON STAR, BLANK PARODY, TYRANNOSAURUS NEBULOUS & GUNS FOR GIRLS Sat 12 Aug, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham
58 BLUES BAND Sat 12 Aug, Tamworth Castle, Staffordshire
TWISTED FUNK Sat 12 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
IVOR & LYN'S CLASSIC ROCK NIGHT Sat 12 Aug, Route 44, B'ham
KILLERSTREAM Sat 12 Aug, The River Rooms, Stourbridge
SKABUCKS Sat 12 Aug, The Roadhouse, Birmingham
ULTIMATE 40 - UB40 TRIBUTE Sat 12 Aug, The Robin, Bilston
A PROMISE TO FORGET Sat 12 Aug, The Flapper, Birmingham
THE JAM'D Sat 12 Aug, Eleven, Stoke on Trent

Classical Music

TIMOTHY END PIANO RECITAL Tues 8 Aug, Church Stretton School, Shropshire
PASSAMEZZO: IN PEASCOD TIME MUSIC, WORDS AND SONG FOR SUMMER AND THE HARVEST A collection of ballads, readings, madrigals, lutesongs, dance melodies and consort music from sixteenth and seventeenth century England, Fri 11 Aug, St Laurence's Church, Church Stretton, South Shropshire
THE KATONA TWINS The critically acclaimed guitar duo, Peter and Zoltán Katona effortlessly transfer from strictly classical, into more popular musical genres, Sat 12 Aug, Church Stretton School, South Shropshire
ORGAN PROMS Sat 12 Aug, Victoria Hall, Stoke on Trent

Comedy

MERCEDES BENSON, MAUREEN YOUNGER Wed 9 Aug, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham
JUNIOR SIMPSON, DAVID MORGAN & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 10 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham
JUNIOR SIMPSON, DAVID MORGAN & IAN COGNITO Fri 11 - Sat 12 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham
ROBIN MORGAN, THOMAS GREEN & DAVID LONGLEY Sat 12 Aug, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham
SCOTT BENNETT, ANDRE VINCENT, PIERRE HOLLINS & STEVE WILLIAMS Sat 12 Aug, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham



Theatre

MISS SAIGON Cameron Mackintosh's acclaimed new production of Boublil & Schönberg's legendary musical, until Sat 23 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome
PETER AND THE WOLF Interactive musical story for children aged between four and seven. Followed by craft session, Mon 7 Aug, The Library Of Birmingham
THE COMEDY OF ERRORS All-male theatre group The Lord Chamberlain's Men present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's farce, Tues 8 Aug, Shrewsbury Castle
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE Chapterhouse Theatre Company present the Jane Austen classic, Wed 9 Aug, Church Stretton School, South Shropshire
LANDSCAPES Mimika Theatre fuse puppetry with an original musical score and visual effects to present 'an intimate, magical experience for children', Wed 9 - Sat 12 Aug, Birmingham Hippodrome
TWELFTH NIGHT Rain Or Shine present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedy, Fri 11 Aug, Severn Valley Country Park, Bridgnorth, Shropshire
THE LION, THE WITCH & THE WARDROBE Little Arden Theatre Company present a new staging of the children's classic, Sat 12 Aug, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham
WEST SIDE STORY An amateur performance by The Arts Centre Telford (TACT), Sat 12 - Sun 13 Aug, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Shropshire
PAW PATROL LIVE! Action-packed, high-energy musical bringing the Nickelodeon characters to life, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Aug, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham
THE PRINCESS AND THE PIG Rural touring ensemble Folksy Theatre present a musical adaptation of Jonathan Emmett's tale for children, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Aug, Wightwick Manor, Nr Wolverhampton
SWINGING AT THE COTTON CLUB Action-packed show celebrating the music, dance and songs of the Cotton Club - New York City's legendary nightclub of the 1920s and '30s, Sun 13 Aug, Concord College, Acton Burnell, Nr Shrewsbury
TWELFTH NIGHT Folksy Theatre present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedy, Sun 13 Aug, Biddulph Grange Gardens, Staffs

Talks

TURNING THE INSIDE OUT Join Professor John Wigley of Birmingham City University to uncover the 'hidden city' of Birmingham - a city of history, diversity, manufacturing, innovation and art, Wed 9 Aug, Birmingham Hippodrome

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

CENTRE OF MY WORLD (TBC) Drama. Starring Bendix Hansen, Sarah Fuhrer. Foreign language, subtitled. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Mon 7 Aug
DESPICABLE ME 3 (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Mon 7, Wed 9 - Thurs 10 Aug
DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL (U) Animation/Comedy. Starring Alicia Silverstone, Tom Everett Scott. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Tues 8 Aug; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 11 - Sat 12 Aug
SING (U) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Matthew McConaughey, Reese Witherspoon. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Tues 8 Aug
G-FORCE (PG) Animation/Action. With the voices of Will Arnett, Penélope Cruz. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 8 Aug
HAMPSTEAD (12a) Drama. Starring Diane Keaton, Brendan Gleeson. Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Tues 8 - Thurs 10 Aug; Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 8 & Thurs 10 Aug
PETE'S DRAGON (PG) Adventure/Fantasy. Starring Bryce Dallas Howard, Robert Redford. Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 9 Aug
SWALLOWS AND AMAZONS (PG) Adventure/Drama. Starring Kelly Macdonald, Andrew Scott. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Wed 9 Aug
ROBINSON CRUSOE (PG) Animation/Adventure. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Thurs 10 Aug
GOODFELLAS (18) Crime/Drama. Starring Robert De Niro, Ray Liotta. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 10 & Sun 13 Aug
MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN (PG) Adventure/Thriller. Starring Roger Moore, Christopher Lee. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 11

Aug

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN (12a) Drama/History. Starring Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds. mac, Birmingham, Fri 11 Aug

TROLLS (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Anna Kendrick, Justin Timberlake. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Fri 11 Aug

THE BEGUILLED (15) Drama. Starring Nicole Kidman, Colin Farrell. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 11 - Sat 12 Aug

GIFTED (12a) Drama. Starring Chris Evans, McKenna Grace. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 11 - Mon 14 Aug

CARS 3 (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Owen Wilson, Cristela Alonzo. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 11 - Thurs 17 Aug

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Wed 9 Aug, showing at selected cinemas

ATOMIC BLONDE (tbc)

A GHOST STORY (12a)

ANNABELLE: CREATION (15)

LE DOULOS (12)

OVERDRIVE (tbc)

PAWN SACRIFICE (12)

TOM OF FINLAND (18)

Events

THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT Shropshire Youth Theatre workshop exploring 'the miniature and the massive' in the world of Jack And The Beanstalk, Mon 7 Aug, The Hive, Shrewsbury

SUMMER MAKE & TAKE AWAY WORKSHOPS Mon 7 - Tues 8 Aug, World of Wedgewood, Stoke-on-Trent

SENSORY COOKING WORKSHOP Tues 8 Aug, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms, South Shropshire

RIVER SAFARI Climb aboard the safari on the River Turn and hear tall tales from the resident storyteller, Tues 8 Aug, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

FAMILY INTRODUCTION TO FELT MAKING Tues 8 Aug, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

TILE-DECORATING WORKSHOPS Tues 8 Aug, Jackfield Tile Museum, Ironbridge, Shropshire

WONDERFUL WORLD OF WORDS - FAIRY-TALES Go in costume and make fairy-tale-inspired craft to take home, Tues 8 Aug, Museum of Cannock Chase, Staffordshire

HAVE-A-GO ARCHERY Wed 9 Aug, Shugborough Estate, Milford, Staffs

BEHIND THE SCENES IN THE CONSERVA-

TION STORE Wed 9 Aug, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton

I SPY Work to stop a simulated cyber-attack, Wed 9 Aug, RAF, Cosford

PRINCESS AND PIRATE TREASURE HUNT An opportunity for kids to dress up and find clues around the park, Thurs 10 Aug, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

THE FESTIVAL OF QUILTS Featuring curated galleries and over 300 companies selling their wares, Thur 10 Aug - Sun 13 Aug, NEC, Birmingham



VICTORIAN EMBROIDERY AND BRAIDING

Have a go at different types of needlework and braiding in this drop-in craft workshop. Make your own fabric creation to take home with you, Fri 11 Aug, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

LATE NIGHT OPENING WITH STREET DANCE & PE Show off your best moves! Fri 11 Aug, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

TUNNEL TEDS Take along your furry friend for a day of bear-themed fun on and around the canal, Fri 11 Aug, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

SHREWSBURY FLOWER SHOW One of the country's premier horticultural events, the show features a diverse programme of attractions and entertainment for all the family to enjoy, including appearances by TV personalities, celebrity chefs and singers, as well as spectacular arena acts, Fri 11 - Sat 12 Aug, The Quarry Park, Shrewsbury

ELLESMERE SUMMER FESTIVAL Featuring a craft market, art exhibition, canal traders, canal workshops, a classic car show, a charity market and lots more, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Aug, Various locations in and around Ellesmere, North Shropshire

BOWMAN ANTIQUES Up to 400 stalls, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Aug, Staffordshire County Showground

MAGIC GRAND PRIX One of the biggest open magic events in the world, Fri 11 Aug - Sun 13 Aug, NEC, B'ham

ART DECO PAINTING WORKSHOP Paint your own decorative plate to take home, Sat 12 Aug, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS Sat 12 Aug, Birmingham Hippodrome

OSWESTRY FUN DAY Oswestry Town Council and Oswestry Musical Theatre Company team up to present a day of activities, music and food, Sat



The Comedy Of Errors

Shrewsbury Castle, Tuesday 8 August

Shakespeare's forerunner to modern farce, *The Comedy Of Errors* is a superbly crafted catalogue of mistaken identity, adulterous liaisons and slapstick humour. Two sets of identical twins are separated during infancy. When their paths cross again later in life, all manner of confusions occur. Matters are further complicated by an irate courtesan, an insistent jeweller and a mad exorcist. Presented by all-male ensemble the Lord Chamberlain's Men.

12 Aug, Oswestry Cae Glas Park, North Shropshire

OPULENCE SHOW Enjoy a playful performance combined with comedy, sauciness and vintage glamour, Sat 12 Aug, The Wightman, Shrewsbury

PAW PATROL LIVE! Sat 12 - Sun 13 Aug, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

STEAM ON THE ROAD The very best of steam on the road and rails, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Aug, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster

CLASSIC VEHICLE RALLY Enjoy a drive through the scenic Shropshire countryside before arriving at Attingham Park to display your car, Sun 13 Aug, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

FUN DOG SHOW Sun 13 Aug, Various locations in and around Ellesmere, North Shropshire

ANTIQUE FAIR Sun 13 Aug, Bantock House & Park, Wolverhampton

BNBF MIDLANDS CHAMPIONSHIPS The Midlands' best natural bodybuilders battle it out, Sun 13 Aug, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

DONKEY RIDES & PETTING FARM Sun 13 Aug, Hawkstone Park and Follies, Shrewsbury

Waste, Megadeth, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 Aug, Catton Hall, Walton-on-Trent

BULLDOG BASH Line-up includes Bessie & The Zincbuckets, Big Red & The Grinners, The Dirty South and more, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 Aug, Shakespeare Country Raceway, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire

LAKEFEST Line up Includes, Feeder, The Charlatans, Wilko Johnson, Kila, Yak, Brooks Williams And Lightning Express, Moses, Alabama 3, Aswad, Turin Brakes, Renegade Brass Band, Erica, Colouring, Imelda May Seth Lakeman, Badly Drawn Boy, Roving Crows, Paul Tarry And To Close, Thurs 10 - Mon 14 Aug, Eastnor Castle Deer Park, Ledbury, Worcestershire

INNER CITY BIRMINGHAM Featuring The Flaming Lips, Sat 12 Aug, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham



WV1FEST The tribute act festival that brings you sets from the best rock and indie bands, without their costly ticket prices. And it's all family friendly...Sat 12 - Sun 13 Aug, West Park, Wolverhampton

Festivals

BLOODSTOCK OPEN AIR Line-up includes: Amon Amarth, Blind Guardian, Hatebreed, Municipal



Miranda Lambert - Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

Gigs

TOO MANY ZOOZ Mon 14 Aug, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MATT WOOSEY WITH: CHEWIE Mon 14 Aug, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

JOE MCELDERRY - SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES LIVE! Wed 16 Aug, Victoria Hall, Stoke on Trent

VO FLETCHER Wed 16 Aug, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE REVEREND PEYTONS BIG DAMN BAND Wed 16 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

JO HARMAN Wed 16 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

DR FEELGOOD Thurs 17 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

KIKAGAKU MOYO Thurs 17 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

REMODE Depeche Mode tribute, Thurs 17 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

LISTENER Thurs 17 Aug, The Flapper, Birmingham

DIIO - A TRIBUTE TO RONNIE JAMES DIO Fri 18 Aug, Route 44, Birmingham

DEXTA DAPS Fri 18 Aug, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE ROLLIN' CLONES Fri 18 Aug, National Brewery Centre, Burton upon Trent

DEFINITELY MIGHTBE Fri 18 Aug, The Sugarmill, Stoke on Trent

THE REPLICAS Fri 18 Aug, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

SOUL JUNCTION Fri 18 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

ONE NIGHT OF ELVIS Fri 18 Aug, Victoria Hall, Stoke on Trent

MIRANDA LAMBERT Fri 18 Aug, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

BLANK PARODY Fri 18 Aug, The Asylum, Birmingham

ROCKET Fri 18 - Sat 19 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

ABBA TRIBUTE NIGHT Sat 19 Aug, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

SUSPICIOUSLY ELVIS Sat 19 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

STRUMMER JAM Sat 19 Aug, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

ONE STOP BOOGIE Sat 19 Aug, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE PHONICS Sat 19 Aug, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

ARE YOU EXPERIENCED? Sat 19 Aug, Eleven, Stoke on Trent

SAM BROOKES Sun 20 Aug, Henry Tudor House, Shropshire

GOGO PENGUIN Sun 20 Aug, mac, B'ham

STEEL PAN FUSION Sun 20 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

EDWINA HAYES Sun 20 Aug, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

EDENBRIDGE Featuring Enemy of Reality, Sound of Thunder, Dakesis - Control the Storm, Darkest Obsidian, A Clockwork Opera & Fyresky, Sun 20 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

DEFEATER Sun 20 Aug, The Flapper, B'ham



Sam Brookes - Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (conductor) & Leila Josefowicz (violin). Programme includes works by Beethoven & Stravinsky, Sun 20 Aug, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

COMEDY CLUB 4 KIDS Sat 12 Aug, mac, Birmingham

PAUL TONKINSON, DAVE FULTON & MARK OLVER Wed 16 Aug, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

DAVE TWENTYMAN, DAVE HILL & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 17 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KIDS ENTERTAINMENT BRINGS FAMILY FUN TO GLEE - WITH BARBARA NICE, NEXT OF KIN, MY PARTY PACKAGE, INFINITI & JAY FOREMAN Fri 18 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DAVE TWENTYMAN, DAVE HILL, ANDRE VINCENT & COMIC TBC Fri 18 - Sat 19 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham

FREDDIE QUINNE, JULIAN DEANE, DALISO CHAPONDA & THE RAYMOND AND MR TIMPKINS REVIEW Fri 18 - Sat 19 Aug, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

JAMES REDMOND, RAY BADRAN & STEVE HALL Sat 19 Aug, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

COMEDY IN THE MET LINE UP TBC Sat 19 Aug, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

PAUL TONKINSON, SAM AVERY, DOUGIE DUNLOP & DAMION LARKIN Sat 19 Aug, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

Theatre

MISS SAIGON Cameron Mackintosh's acclaimed new production of Boublil & Schönberg's legendary musical, until Sat 23 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

DRACULA: THE BLOODY TRUTH Brand new comedy-theatre show transporting audiences from the Transylvanian mountains to the seaside town of Whitby, Tues 15 - Wed 16 Aug, Birmingham Hippodrome

TRESPASS Rebecca Wheatley, Judy Buxton, Michelle Morris & David Calister star in Emlyn Williams' supernatural tale, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Aug, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE Chapterhouse

Theatre Company present the Jane Austen classic, Wed 16 Aug, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT Amateur youth group production of Tim Rice & Andrew Lloyd Webber's biblical saga, Wed 16 - Sat 19 Aug, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

KANGAROO & THE BIG BAD BOOT Garlic Theatre take audiences on a 'fantastical' journey to the island of lost shoes and clowning, mime and beautifully crafted puppets, Fri 18 Aug, St Editha's Church, Tamworth

TWELFTH NIGHT Folksy Theatre present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedy, Fri 18 Aug, The Dorothy Clive Gardens, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

Dance

CATY WOMPUS Contemporary dance piece incorporating circus & parkour and set to an original bluegrass score performed live, Thurs 17 Aug, mac, Birmingham



Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

ALONE IN BERLIN (12A) Drama. Starring Emma Thompson, Daniel Brühl. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Mon 14 Aug; Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Thurs 17 - Fri 18 Aug

SPARK: A SPACE TAIL (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Jessica Biel, Patrick Stewart. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Mon 14 Aug

A MAN CALLED OVE (15) Comedy/Drama. Starring Rolf Lassgård, Bahar Pars. Foreign language, subtitled. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Mon 14 & Thurs 17 Aug

HOWARDS END (PG) Drama/Romance. Starring Chris Evans, McKenna

Grace. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Tues 15 - Thurs 17 Aug

THE BEGUILLED (15) Drama. Starring Nicole Kidman, Colin Farrell. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 15 - Thurs 17 Aug

THE PRODUCERS (PG) Comedy. Starring Zero Mostel, Gene Wilder. Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 15 Aug

THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT (U) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Peter Sallis, Helena Bonham Carter. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 15 Aug

TROLLS (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Anna Kendrick, Justin Timberlake. Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 16 Aug

BLACK BRITAIN ON FILM (12a) Documentary. With Q&A. mac, Birmingham, Wed 16 Aug

ELVIS: THAT'S THE WAY IT IS (U) Documentary/Music. Starring Elvis Presley, James Burton. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Wed 16 Aug

HARRY POTTER (12a) Adventure/Fantasy. An eight film marathon! Starring Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Wed 16 Aug

THE DARJEELING LIMITED (PG) Comedy/Drama. Starring Owen Wilson, Adrien Brody. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 17 Aug

SPARK: A SPACE TAIL (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Jessica Biel, Patrick Stewart. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Thurs 17 Aug

WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES (12A) Adventure/Drama. Starring Toby Kebbell, Andy Serkis. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Fri 18 Aug

WHITNEY: CAN I BE ME Documentary/Music. Starring Whitney Houston, Bobbi Kristina Brown. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 18 - Sun 20 Aug

HAMPSTEAD (12a) Drama. Starring Diane Keaton, Brendan Gleeson. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 18 - Sat 19 & Mon 21 Aug

CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS: THE FIRST EPIC MOVIE (PG) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Kevin Hart, Thomas Middleditch. mac, Birmingham, Fri 18 - Thurs 24 Aug

CARS 3 (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Owen Wilson, Cristela Alonzo. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Fri 18 - Sat 19 & Mon 21 Aug; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 18 - Sat 19, Mon 21, Wed 23 & Thurs 24 Aug

MAUDIE (U) Drama. Starring Ethan Hawke, Sally Hawkins. mac, Birmingham, Fri 18 - Thurs 24 Aug

THE EMOJI MOVIE: EXPRESS YOURSELF (PG) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of T J Miller, Anna Farris. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 18 - Thurs 24 Aug

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Wed 16 Aug, showing at selected cinemas

NAPPING PRINCESS (12a)

AN INCONVENIENT SEQUEL

THE DARK TOWER (tbc)

FINAL PORTRAIT (15)

THE HITMAN'S BODYGUARD (15)

THE ODYSSEY (tbc)

Events

MINECRAFT WORKSHOP Mon 14 Aug, The Hive, Shrewsbury

SUMMER MAKE & TAKE AWAY WORKSHOPS Be inspired by nature, get creative and make your own work of art to take home with you! Mon 14 - Tues 15 Aug, World of Wedgewood, Stoke-on-Trent

GROW Summer family activity event featuring favourite tales and things for the garden, Mon 14 - Fri 18 Aug, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre

SKI & SNOWBOARD CAMPS Mon 14 - Fri 18 Aug, SnowDome, Tamworth

DEER PARK SAFARI Take a tractor & trailer safari to find out more about the deer and wildlife that live in the park, Tues 15 Aug, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

ANIMATION WORKSHOP Tues 15 Aug, The Hive, Shrewsbury

TILE DECORATING WORKSHOPS Drop-in sessions, Tues 15 Aug, Jackfield Tile Museum, Ironbridge, Shropshire



WONDERFUL WORLD OF WORDS - HORRID HISTORIES Tues 15 Aug, Museum of Cannock Chase, Staffordshire

SAXONS AT THE CASTLE Find out what life was like for Tamworth residents during the Saxon era, Tues 15 - Thurs 17 Aug, Tamworth Castle

CREATING SPY BOTS Work with LEGO Mindstorms to build spy bots to solve problems and help James Bond keep Britain safe, Wed 16 Aug, RAF, Cosford



Earth: What A Wonderful World

Lichfield Cathedral, Sat 19 - Mon 29 August

When it comes to the presentation of wow-factor visual artwork at Lichfield Cathedral, award-winning company Luxmuralis have some exceptionally good form. The collaborative team of artists, who produce work across multiple media and presentation formats, were the creatives behind the cathedral's spectacular Christmas illumination show - an event that bagged a What's On Readers' Award earlier this year.

The primary purpose of Luxmuralis is to provide access to visual artwork in public as well as unexpected places. This latest undertaking does just that, and is described by the company as 'a stunning visual journey across earth, sea and sky through spectacular light and sound projections'.

Check it out - we're confident you won't be disappointed.

FILM & MEDIA SKILLS WORKSHOP Thurs 17 Aug, The Hive, Shrewsbury

THE CLAY PIT: A PLACE TO PLAY Join the team of artists to explore clay in every state and get as messy as you dare! Thurs 17 Aug, The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

MEET THE ANIMALS ZooLab brings a selection of animals to the museum. Live animal shows and handling opportunities throughout the day, Thurs 17 Aug, Thinktank, Birmingham

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH CORNER EXOTICS Get up close and personal with a variety of exotic animals, Fri 18 Aug, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

MINECRAFT WORKSHOP Fri 18 Aug, The Hive, Shrewsbury

LATE NIGHT OPENING WITH CIRCUS SKILLS Fri 18 Aug, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

THE PET SHOW National event dedicated to the British public and their pets, Fri 18 - Sat 19 Aug, Staffordshire County Showground

BRIDGNORTH MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL Celebration of musical talent, Fri 18 - Mon 28 Aug, Bridgnorth Town Centre

FORGE EXPERIENCE DAY A hands-on

experience, learning how to forge, Sat 19 Aug, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

MINSTERLEY SHOW Shropshire's oldest & most prestigious agricultural show, Sat 19 Aug, Minsterley Showground, Shropshire

SPECULATIVE CAMERAS WORKSHOP Join artist Pete Ashton to hack cameras and rethink photography, Sat 19 Aug, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

VEGAN HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE EVENT Packed with stalls selling vegan foods, goodies and lifestyle products, plus info, films and inspirational talks, Sat 19 Aug, Stourbridge Town Hall

BLISTS HILL IN STEAM Sat 19 - Sun 20 Aug, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

INTERNATIONAL OWL WEEKEND Learn all about owls and have your picture taken with one, Sat 19 - Sun 20 Aug, Trentham Monkey Forest, Stoke-on-Trent

EARTH: WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD? Visual journey across earth, sea and sky via light & sound projections, Sat 19 - Mon 28 Aug, Lichfield Cathedral

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR Britain's biggest Toy Fair, Sun 20 Aug, NEC, B'ham

What's on...



Thursday 31st August, 7.00pm
BLACK MAGIC - THE LITTLE MIX SHOW



Sunday 3rd September, 2.00pm
THE THEO THE MOUSE SHOW



Friday 8th September, 7.30pm
FLEETWOOD MAC



Wednesday 27th September, 7.30pm
MARTIN HUGHES-GAMES & IOLO WILLIAMS - WILDLIFE ROAD TRIP



Friday 29th September, 7.30pm
THE 80S SINGALONG



Friday 6th October, 7.30pm,
ALL STAR SUPERSLAM WRESTLING



Sunday 8th October, 1.30pm & 4pm
MISTER MAKER AND THE SHAPES LIVE!



Wednesday 11th October, 8.00pm
ANDY PARSONS - PEAK BULLSH*T



Wednesday 25th October, 7.30pm
THE NUTCRACKER

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Mr Scruff - Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Gigs

THE NUMBER 12 LOOKS LIKE YOU & HEXIS Mon 21 Aug, The Flapper, Birmingham

RYAN HAMILTON & THE TRAITORS Tues 22 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CIRCUS VIII Wed 23 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE THREE DEGREES Thurs 24 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

ARIEL ON THE CLIFF Thurs 24 Aug, mac, Birmingham

KAKO Thurs 24 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham

CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIEW Thurs 24 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

GROVE STREET FAMILIES Thurs 24 Aug, The Flapper, Birmingham

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Fri 25 Aug, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

MR SCRUFF Fri 25 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FRED ZEPPELIN & DIZZY LIZZY Tribute to Led Zeppelin & Thin Lizzy, Fri 25 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

VICE SQUAD Fri 25 Aug, Eleven, Stoke on Trent

UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE Fri 25 - Sat 26 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham

DOORS ON FIRE Sat 26 Aug, Route 44, Birmingham

THE KILLERZ Sat 26 Aug, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

T-REXTASY Tribute to Marc Bolan and his band T-Rex, Sat 26 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

SWEDE DREAMZ Sat 26 Aug, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

SAX IN THE CITY: THE NOTEBENDERS Sat 26 Aug, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SUBLIME MUSIC Sat 26 Aug, Hare &

Hounds, Birmingham

BLACK BOMBERS, THE DE RELLAS & THE DREGS Sat 26 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DEVILFIRE Sat 26 Aug, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DEFINITELY MIGHT BE & ADORED Sun 27 Aug, The Robin, Bilston

WHITE TYGER Sun 27 Aug, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

Comedy

TOADALLY FREE COMEDY! Mon 21 Aug, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

JOHN FOTHERGILL, MATT REED & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 24 Aug, The Glee Club, B'ham

RUDI LICKWOOD, BARRY DODDS & JOE BROMEHEAD Fri 25 - Sat 26 Aug, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

JOHN FOTHERGILL, MATT REED, BRIAN HIGGINS & ALEX BOARDMAN Fri 25 - Sat 26 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JARRED CHRISTMAS, IAN COGNITO, ROGER MONKHOUSE & ANDREW BIRD Fri 25 - Sat 26 Aug, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

KOJO, WHITE YARDIE, MR BLAIR & COMICS TBC Sun 27 Aug, The Glee Club, Birmingham



Theatre

MISS SAIGON Cameron Mackintosh's acclaimed new production of Boublil & Schönberg's legendary musical, until Sat 23 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

STRICTLY ERIC Find out what happens when the New Vic favourite takes on the best ballroom dancers that 'Strictly' has to offer, Mon 21 Aug - Sat 2 Sept, New Vic Theatre, New-castle-under-Lyme

TWELFTH NIGHT Folksy Theatre present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedy, Tues 22 Aug, Martineau Gardens, Birmingham

MISS PICKLELILLY'S MAGIC SHOW Enchanting magic show for all the family, Wed 23 Aug, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

SLEEPING BEAUTY Stafford's very own summer pantomime, Wed 23 - Sat 26 Aug, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BRASSÉD OFF Jeffrey Holland stars in Paul Allen & Mark Herman's 'funny and life-affirming' tale of community spirit and triumph in the face of adversity, Wed 23 Aug - Sat 2 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

TWELFTH NIGHT Rain Or Shine present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedy, Thurs 24 Aug, Stokesay Castle, South Shropshire



ARIEL ON THE CLIFF A celebration of all things breezy, this gentle, warm show for family audiences mixes original acoustic music with sensory storytelling, puppetry, movement interaction and big, deep breaths, Thurs 24 Aug, mac, Birmingham

TWELFTH NIGHT Folksy Theatre present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedy, Thurs 24 - Fri 25 Aug, Wightwick Manor, Nr Wolverhampton

TINA TURNER'S STEAMY BINGO Laugh, dance and play to win as Tina spins her cage of balls to a high-energy '80s soundtrack, Fri 25 Aug, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

TIME IN MOTION The National Youth Ballet of Great Britain present a series of short dance works which take audiences on a 'compelling' journey through time, Fri 25 - Sat 26 Aug, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

MURDER IN BLOODFORD VILLAGE New interactive murder-mystery show. Ticket price includes a picnic by Masterchef Simon Smith, Fri 25 - Mon 28 Aug, Lichfield Garrick

PETER PAN Chapterhouse Theatre Company present an all-new staging of JM Barrie's magical adventure, Sat 26 Aug, mac, Birmingham

LITTLE RED Page-2-Stage Productions brings its madcap spirit and style to a new adaptation of a classic family story, Sun 27 Aug, Trentham Gardens, Stoke-on-Trent

THE FORGOTTEN TALES Parable Arts fuse captivating storytelling, unique characters and modern folk-song to present a series of Celtic adventures, Sun 27 Aug, The Hive, Shrewsbury

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

RED ROAD (18) Mystery/Thriller. Starring Kate Dickie, Tony Curran. mac, Birmingham, Tues 22 Aug

ZOOTROPOLIS (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Ginnifer Goodwin, Jason Bateman. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 22 Aug

DESPICABLE ME 3 (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Tues 22 Aug

MANHATTAN (12A) Comedy/Drama. Starring Woody Allen, Diane Keaton. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Tues 22 Aug

A MAN CALLED OVE (15) Comedy/Drama. Starring Rolf Lassgård, Bahar Pars. Foreign language, subtitled. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 22 & Thurs 24 Aug

ICE AGE: COLLISION COURSE (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Ray Romano, Denis Leary. Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 23 Aug

A WAY OF LIFE (15) Drama. Starring Stephanie James, Brenda Blethyn. mac, Birmingham, Wed 23 Aug

MOANA (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Auli'i Cravalho, Dwayne Johnson. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Wed 23 Aug

SLACK BAY (15) Comedy. Starring Fabrice Luchini, Juliette Binoche. Foreign language, subtitled. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Wed 23 - Thurs 24 Aug

BALLERINA (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Elle Fanning, Dane DeHaan. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Thurs 24 Aug

Monday 21 - Sunday 27 August



The Big Feast - various locations Stoke City Centre

TWIN TOWN (18) Comedy/Drama. Starring Llyr Ifans, Rhys Ifans. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 24 Aug

HUNGER (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Michael Fassbender, Stuart Graham. mac, Birmingham, Thurs 24 Aug

THIS IS SPINAL TAP (12a) Comedy/Music. Starring Christopher Guest, Michael McKean. Outdoor screening. mac, Birmingham, Fri 25 Aug

THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Will Arnett, Michael Cera. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Fri 25 Aug

THE BEGUILLED (15) Drama. Starring Nicole Kidman, Colin Farrell. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Fri 25 Aug

WILLIAMS (15) Documentary/Biography. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 25 - Sat 26 Aug

BEAUTY & THE BEAST (PG) Fantasy/Musical. Starring Emma Watson, Dan Stevens. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 25 - Sat 26 Aug

THE EMOJI MOVIE: EXPRESS YOURSELF (PG) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of T J Miller, Anna Farris. mac, Birmingham, Fri 25 - Thurs 31 Aug

A GHOST STORY (PG) Drama/Fantasy. Starring Caleb Couch, Sonia Acevedo. mac, Birmingham, Fri 25 - Thurs 31 Aug

THE NUT JOB 2 (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Will Arnett, Katherine Heigl. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 25 - Thurs 31 Aug

THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY (18) Western. Starring Clint Eastwood, Eli Wallach. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 27 Aug

THE LAST WORD (15) Comedy/Drama. Starring Shirley MacLaine, Amanda

Seyfried. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Sun 27 - Thurs 31 Aug

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Wed 26 July, showing at selected cinemas

AMERICAN MADE (tbc)

DETROIT (tbc)

HOTEL SALVATION (PG)

LOGAN LUCKY (tbc)

ROUGH NIGHT (15)

Events

SUMMER MAKE & TAKE AWAY WORKSHOPS Be inspired by nature, get creative and make your own work of art to take home with you! Mon 21 - Tues 22 Aug, World of Wedgewood, Stoke-on-Trent

COOKING WITH DINOSAURS Make a dinosaur mask and delicious dinosaur biscuits, then hunt down some Shropshire greens and make a salad worth sharing with a dinosaur, Mon 21 - Fri 25 Aug, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms, South Shropshire

SKI & SNOWBOARD CAMPS Mon 21 - Fri 25 Aug, SnowDome, Tamworth

AWESOME ANIMAL MESSY PAINTING - CHILDREN'S ART AND CRAFT WORKSHOP Get super messy making amazing animal pictures and prints using all sorts of weird and wonderful methods. Suitable for kids aged two to five, Tues 22 Aug, Selly Manor, Bournville

CIRCUS Circus spectacular, with plate-spinning, juggling, clowns and more, Tues 22 Aug, Birmingham Botanical

Gardens

JUNIOR WORKSHOP Create a metal and enamel flower, Tues 22 Aug, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

TILE DECORATING WORKSHOPS Drop-in sessions, Tues 22 Aug, Jackfield Tile Museum, Ironbridge

WONDERFUL WORLD OF WORDS - FURRY FRIENDS Tues 22 Aug, Museum of Cannock Chase, Staffordshire

MEDIEVAL LIVING HISTORY Discover what life was like in medieval times, Tues 22 - Thurs 24 Aug, Tamworth Castle

TEDDY BEARS' PICNIC Featuring entertainers, face painters and, of course, teddy bears! Wed 23 Aug, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

CODING 101 Learn how to create code for virtual environments as well as physical items, Wed 23 Aug, RAF, Cosford

LITTLE SKIPPERS - WATERY WILDLIFE A 45-minute boat trip followed by things to make and do, Wed 23 - Thurs 24 Aug, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

SUMMER WILDLIFE DAY Join the Staffordshire Wildlife Trusts team for summer-themed craft activities, Thurs 24 Aug, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

SLEEPING BEAUTY STORY TOUR AND CRAFT Join the king and queen for Aurora's Christening party, see the cradle the fairies cast their magic spells over, and the spindle that caused Sleeping Beauty to fall asleep, Fri 25 Aug, Aston Hall, Birmingham

THE WHALE Step inside a giant inflatable whale and enjoy the 'Mariner's Museum' of deep-sea wonders, Fri 25 Aug, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

I WANT! I WANT! CURATOR TOUR (BSL) Museum curators and experts guide you through the I Want! I Want! Art & Technology exhibition, Fri 25 Aug,

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

LATE-NIGHT OPENING WITH OVERSIZED GAMES Fri 25 Aug, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

THE BIG FEAST Free-to-view street shows, including a 'fabulously fiendish fox' playing music, a hitman-turned-healer offering holistic services in a taxi, and a performance by an urban astronaut suspended 20ft in the air, Fri 25 - Sat 26 Aug, Stoke-on-Trent City Centre

URBAN SAFARI Travel on a Heritage narrowboat into the heart of the canal system, Fri 25 - Mon 28 Aug, The Roundhouse, Birmingham

INSOMNIA61 The UK's biggest gaming festival, Fri 25 - Mon 28 Aug, NEC, Birmingham

GIN FESTIVAL Fri 25 - Mon 28 Aug, The Boathouse, Shrewsbury

WOLVERHAMPTON SECRET GIN FESTIVAL Sat 26 - Sun 27 Aug, The Grain Store, Wolverhampton

ATTINGHAM CAMP One-night fun-filled family-friendly camping spectacular, Sat 26 - Sun 27 Aug, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

OSWESTRY BALLOON FESTIVAL Sat 26 - Mon 28 Aug, The British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

LICHFIELD FOOD FESTIVAL Sat 26 - Mon 28 Aug, Lichfield

LITTLE RED Adaptation of the classic Brothers Grimm fairytale, Sun 27 Aug, The Trentham Estate, Stoke-on-Trent

BRIDGNORTH FOOD FAIR Annual food fair with over 30 traders displaying a wide range of hot and cold foods, locally produced wines, real ales and ciders, Sun 27 Aug, Bridgnorth High Street, Shropshire

MEDIEVAL COURTLY COMBAT Experience the lives of Stokesay's medieval residents, marvel at displays of archery, axe, mace and sword, and listen to stories of bygone days, Sun 27 - Mon 28 Aug, Stokesay Castle, Nr



Shrewsbury Steam Rally, Onslow Park, Shrewsbury

Craven Arms, South Shropshire
FAMILY FUN WEEKEND Featuring The Sooty Show, a magic show and a line-up of activities for visitors of all ages! Sun 27 - Mon 28 Aug, National Brewery Centre, Burton upon Trent
SHREWSBURY STEAM RALLY Sun 27 - Mon 28 Aug, Onslow Park, Shrewsbury
HOW TO BE A ROMAN SOLDIER Featuring battle drills, chariot races and a Gladiator school, Sun 27 - Mon 28 Aug, Wroxeter Roman City, Shrewsbury
PLANT HUNTERS' FAIR Thousands of plants from award-winning nurseries, Sun 27 - Mon 28 Aug, Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

Kasabian, Eminem, Liam Gallagher, Bastille and more, Thurs 24 - Sun 27 Aug, Richfield Avenue, Reading
SHAMBALA FESTIVAL A small family-friendly festival based in Northamptonshire, this diverse event features a variety of music, including rock, pop, folk and world, Thurs 24 - Sun 27 Aug, Northamptonshire
PRESTEIGNE FESTIVAL A focal point for those seeking musical nourishment and artistic discovery in the beautiful surroundings of the Welsh Marches, Thurs 24 - Tues 29 Aug, Presteigne Screen, Powys
CAMPER CALLING 2017 Line up includes: The Lightning Seeds, Reef, Cast, The Ordinary Boys, Space, Musical Youth, Lucy Spraggon and many more, Fri 25 - Sun 27 Aug, Ragley Hall, Alcester, Warwickshire
BEERMAGEDDON Line-up includes: Outright Resistance, Totengefluster, Godslave, Zephyra, Warlord UK and Stahlsarg, Fri 25 - Sun 27 Aug, Stoke Prior Country Club, Bromsgrove
SUNSHINE FESTIVAL Line-up includes: Paul Young, Blue, Sophie Ellie-Bextor, Atomic Kitten, Kim Wilde, Sonia, Heatwave, The Wurzels and Union Gap, Fri 25 - Sun 27 Aug, Fish



Jim Moray plays Shrewsbury Folk Festival

Meadow, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire
GREENBELT FESTIVAL Line-up includes, Kate Rusby, Joyride, Will Varley, 47 Soul, Aar Maanta, Alcuna Wilds, Apo & The Apostles, Chris Duckett, Cc Smugglers, Clean Cut Kid, Dan Donovan, Genevieve, Goan Dogs, Hardwicke Circus, Jess Morgan, Joanne Shaw Taylor, plus many more, Fri 25 - Mon 28 Aug, Boughton House, Kettering, Northamptonshire

SHREWSBURY FOLK FESTIVAL 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, Fri 25 - Mon 28 Aug, West Midland Showground, Shrewsbury
SHREWSBURY FAKE FESTIVAL Featuring fake band for britpop legends Oasis, rock gods Guns N Roses & alt-rock superstars U2, Sat 26 Aug, The Quarry Park, Shrewsbury

Festivals

CREAMFIELDS A large British dance music festival featuring DJs and live acts, Thurs 24 - Sun 27 Aug, Daresbury, Liverpool
READING FESTIVAL Line up includes



Tamworth Castle

Summer Holiday Events
For all the family

Tales of knights and princesses, enchantment, magical characters and history coming alive!

Storytelling

Tues 25th to Thu 27th July
11.30am-4.00pm

The storyteller will be in residence to tell tales of knights, dragons and princesses. Visitors are invited to come along dressed in their favourite costumes and listen to stories or have a go at telling their own. There will also be craft activities available for those who want to get creative.

Enchanted Castle

Mon 31st July to Fri 11th August
11.30am-4.00pm

Follow our marvellous trail through the Castle and see what magical adventures you encounter. Meet knights, help make the Giant's armour, discover the wishing tree and look out for the mischievous pixies! Lots to do and see, expect to be enchanted.

Saxons at the Castle

Tues 15th to Thurs 17th August
11.30am-4.00pm

Come and find out what life was like for those living in Tamworth during Saxon times. Try your hand at archaeology, learn about the warrior princess Aethelweald and Saxon battle tactics, then see if you can solve our runic puzzles!

Medieval Living History

Tues 22nd to Thurs 24th August
11.30am-4.00pm

Discover what life was like for our Medieval characters. Visit Lady Freville and learn about the activities that would fill her days. Encounter the laundress and help her prepare clothes for washing the medieval way and meet the Armourer to find out how maille was made and how medieval weapons were fashioned.





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

Gigs

- LOATHE & HARBINGER** Tues 29 Aug, The Flapper, Birmingham
- THE ACOUSTIC SESSIONS** Wed 30 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham
- SAM OUTLAW BAND** Wed 30 Aug, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
- BLACK MAGIC - THE LITTLE MIX SHOW** Thurs 31 Aug, The Place, Oaken-gates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire
- LATINMOTION PRESENTS DEL CAMINO** Thurs 31 Aug, The Jam House, Birmingham
- BOOTLEG RASCAL** Thurs 31 Aug, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham
- PARQUET COURTS** Thurs 31 Aug, O2 Institute, Birmingham
- RYLEY WALKER** Thurs 31 Aug, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth, B'ham
- THE BEACH BOYS BAND** Thurs 31 Aug, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

Comedy

MILTON JONES Wed 30 Aug, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre



DAVID HADDINGHAM & COMICS TBC Thurs 31 Aug, Station Pub, Sutton Coldfield

Theatre

- MISS SAIGON** Cameron Mackintosh's acclaimed new production of Boublil & Schönberg's legendary musical, until Sat 23 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome
- DINOSAUR DETECTIVES** Children's theatre production telling the story of Mary Anning, William Buckland & Gideon Mantell's first fossil finds, Tues 29 Aug, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire
- DINOSAUR WORLD** A brand new, interactive show taking audiences into un-chartered territories to discover a pre-historic world, Thurs 31 Aug - Fri 1 Sept, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent
- MOTHER'S RUIN: A CABARET ABOUT GIN** Hour-long theatrical cabaret featuring music originally performed by Amy

Winehouse, Nina Simone, Martha Wainwright, The Popes, The Pretenders and more... Thurs 31 Aug - Sun 3 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

Dance

GROOVE ON DOWN THE ROAD Zoo Nation's new adaptation of their critically acclaimed production, set in a fantastical urban world and telling the story of Dorothy's adventures with Toto, Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion on their journey to Oz, Thurs 31 Aug - Fri 1 Sept, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

- PRICK UP YOUR EARS (18)** Biography/Drama. Starring Gary Oldman, Alfred Molina. mac, Birmingham, Tues 29 - Thurs 31 Aug
- CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS: THE FIRST EPIC MOVIE (PG)** Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Kevin Hart, Thomas Middleditch. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Mon 28, Wed 30 & Thurs 31 Aug
- THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS (U)** Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Louis C.K., Eric Stonestreet. Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 30 Aug
- THE TIME OF THEIR LIVES (12a)** Comedy. Starring Joan Collins, Pauline Collins. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Thurs 31 Aug

Events

- HAVE-A-GO ARCHERY** Try your hand at archery with a qualified instructor, Mon 28 Aug, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire
- RIVER SAFARI** Climb aboard the safari on the River Tern and hear tall tales from the resident storyteller, Mon 28 Aug, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury
- SUMMER MAKE & TAKE AWAY WORKSHOPS** Be inspired by nature, get creative and make your own work of art to take home with you! Mon 28 - Tues 29 Aug, World of Wedgewood, Stoke-on-Trent
- DEER PARK SAFARI** Take a tractor & trailer safari to find out more about the deer and wildlife that live in the park, Tues 29 Aug, Attingham Park,



The Big Feast - various locations, Stoke City Centre

Shrewsbury

- WONDERFUL WORLD OF WORDS - COMEDY CAPERS** Tues 29 Aug, Museum of Cannock Chase, Staffordshire
- HANDS ON HISTORY: MEDIEVAL** Get set for a summer packed with time-traveling fun! Tues 29 - Thurs 31 Aug, Stokesay Castle, Nr Craven Arms, South Shropshire
- STORYTELLING IN THE COURTYARD** Folklore story of knights, chivalry, romance and bravery, Wed 30 Aug, Aston Hall, Birmingham
- VINTAGE TEA AND TOUR** Go on a factory tour led by one of the award-winning guides, Wed 30 Aug, Newman Brothers Coffin Works, Birmingham
- FAMILY WORKSHOPS INSPIRED BY NEWMAN BROTHERS** Wed 30 Aug, Newman

- Brothers Coffin Works, Birmingham
- SANDWELL SUMMER PLAY** A scheme for children with disabilities/SEN, including sports, crafts and days out, Wed 30 Aug, Jubilee Park, Tipton
- HANDSWORTH HERITAGE WALK** A walking tour focusing on the architectural heritage of Handsworth, Wed 30 Aug, Soho House, Handsworth, B'ham
- WHAT DID THE VICTORIANS DO FOR US?** Whistlestop tour explaining what the Victorians did for us, Thurs 31 Aug, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent
- THE BIG TREE CLIMB** Join The Great Big Tree Climbing Company to find out how to safely climb an oak tree, Thurs 31 Aug, Shugborough Historic Working Estate, Stafford



Hands On History: Medieval - Stokesay Castle, South Shropshire

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