

Birmingham

ISSUE 382 OCTOBER 2017

What's On

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thelist

Your 16-page week
by week listings guide

GET FIERCE!

performances, parties, politics
and pop...



METALLICA

heavy metal giants play
Genting Arena



EQUESTRIAN FUN

Horse Of The Year Show
returns to the NEC



Photo: Manuel Vason

20 October
- 12 November

**Feel-good, funny and
full of Yule-tide joy!**

Written and directed
by Debbie Isitt



**Fun for all the
family this autumn**



THE HUNDRED AND ONE
DALMATIANS

30 November
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By Dodie Smith
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on tour in support of new album
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It's time to get Fierce!

One of the UK's most respected festivals of live art is once again set to make its mark in Birmingham. Boasting an international reputation for agenda-setting curation, Fierce Festival embraces theatre, dance, music, installations, activism, digital practices and parties, with performances taking place in theatres, galleries and out-of-the-ordinary spaces across the city.

Commenting on this year's event, which takes place from 16 to 22 October, Artistic Director Aaron Wright said: "Fierce Festival serves up a wide snapshot of the hugely varied performance being made around the world today, from raucous NYC cabaret to hardcore Mexican body art.

"With a world in turmoil, the artists thrive Fiercely in the face of it all, offering us new models of living and the possibility of a queerer, brighter future."

For details of Fierce's full 2017 line-up, visit the event's website at wearefierce.org

Heartthrob Nigel back at the helm for Shrek tour

Former EastEnders heartthrob Nigel Harman will be taking the director's chair for Shrek The Musical when it visits Birmingham on its nationwide tour.

The show stops off at the New Alexandra Theatre from Wednesday 14 to Sunday 25 February. Tickets can be purchased by visiting atgtickets.com



Interactive Thinktank gallery given green light

Plans for a new £2million interactive children's gallery at Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum, have been given the green light. The news comes after the prospective project was awarded £1.4million from the Inspiring Science Fund, a partnership between the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and

Wellcome.

The new gallery, which it's hoped will open in early 2019, will quadruple Thinktank's dedicated area for the under-eights.



Hollywood beckons for Birmingham novelist

A Birmingham author's latest novel is being tipped for movie success.

Liam Brown's Broadcast has been snapped up by a major Hollywood studio. It tells the story of YouTube sensation David Callow, a man who agrees to take part in a revolutionary new online show called MindCast.

"I can picture Tom Hiddleston as the lead," says Liam, 34, who lives in Selly Oak with wife Simone and their two children. "The film option is very exciting. My first two novels were well received but not massive, so I've been a bit overwhelmed by the interest in this one."

New artist development project packing a Punch

A major artist development programme is set to provide exceptionally talented local musicians with the support, opportunities and infrastructure they need to forge successful careers.

Local music mavericks Punch Records say that their six-month Next Level project is their most innovative and intensive to date. The initiative will assist numerous singer-songwriters and live-event favourites, including Call Me Unique, Dee Ajayi and Sophia Lee Soul.

Commenting on the project, Ammo Talwa, CEO of Punch, said: "Birmingham is on the crest of a creative wave at the moment, and there is a category of artist that could maximise their potential with some infrastructure assistance that is currently lacking from the city, particularly at a high-industry level. Next Level seeks to be the solution to this problem."



Orchestra receives six-figure legacy

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) has received one of the largest legacy gifts in its 97-year history. The £800,000 legacy was left by a frequent CBSO concert-goer and supporting member who lived in Lichfield.

The money will support the CBSO's activity in the UK over an eight-year period. Commenting on the news, CBSO Chief Executive Stephen Maddock said: "Support from generous private funders enables us to maintain and build upon the CBSO's world-class artistic standards and the breadth of its work in the local community.

"Gifts from generous individuals, companies and trusts are all part of the mix - so too are legacies of all sizes."

Feeling well in Birmingham

The Wellbeing Festival is returning to Birmingham's NEC next month (3 - 5 November), with the organisation behind the show, Mind Body Spirit, this year celebrating its 40th anniversary.

The three-day event offers 'spiritual seekers' a safe place in which to commune and share their ideas, beliefs and philosophies.

Attractions at next month's show include a workshop programme presenting new ideas on relationships, awakening, inspired living, NLP, yoga, meditation, science and angels. New for this year is the Ceremony Space, an area in which visitors can focus on intimate ceremony-based experiences.

For more information, visit mindbodyspirit.co.uk



A season of Titanic entertainment at the Hippodrome

Massive West End shows Titanic The Musical, The Play That Goes Wrong, Evita and Stomp are all included in Birmingham Hippodrome's 2018 line-up of productions.

Commenting on the recently announced season, the theatre's Artistic Director and Chief Executive, Fiona Allan, said: "Indoor, outdoor, large-scale and intimate - the Hippodrome is making huge efforts to present shows for all ages, all tastes and all budgets. Looking through our autumn 2017/18 season, there are so many standout productions to choose from, so many memories to be made. Christmas again brings The Nutcracker, our 60th Anniversary pantomime and a wonderful children's show in the Patrick Centre - The Snow Dragon.

"Spring is fairytale season, with Matthew Bourne's Cinderella and Birmingham Royal Ballet's The Sleeping Beauty being followed by the spellbinding Wicked. On to Matilda then, over summer, and War Horse in the autumn. It's going to be an incredible year."

For information about the Hippodrome's full line-up of shows, visit birminghamhippodrome.com

Spooky goings on at top Brum theatre

Fancy some spine-tingling fun this Halloween?

If so, check out Birmingham New Alexandra Theatre's line-up of ghoulish goings-on during October.

Attractions include special movie screenings of Friday The 13th, The Rocky Horror Picture Show and Hocus Pocus. There's also the chance to enjoy a ghost tour around the venue, and to participate in a special 3am lock-in.

For more information, visit atgtickets.com

Fat Friends musical heading to Brum

The musical version of hit ITV1 drama series Fat Friends is coming to the Midlands.

Based on Kay Mellor's Bafta Award-winning show about a group of overweight pals as they struggle with the absurdities of modern dieting, the new stage adaptation features musical theatre star Jodie Prenger, former England cricketer Andrew 'Freddie' Flintoff and one-time Coronation Street favourite Kevin Kennedy (he played Curly Watts).

The production stops off at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday 3 to Saturday 7 April.





Birmingham festival promises something to SHOUT about

Birmingham's LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans) history comes under the microscope at next month's Shout festival of queer arts & culture, taking place at various venues across the city from 9 to 19 November.

As the nation marks 50 years since the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality, the annually held event is exploring the legislation's impact on local communities via a diverse programme of theatre, film, music, visual arts and more.

One of the highlights of the 2017 event is an exhibition by photographer Ian Sanderson, a member of the Birmingham Gay Liberation Front in the 1970s. Featuring dozens of images, on show for the very first time, *We Often Find It Necessary To Keep Our Homosexuality Quiet* documents a four-year history of protests, meetings, marches and social gatherings, covering the period between 1975 and '79... For a full programme of Shout events, visit shoutfestival.co.uk

Art, coffee and music at new city centre venue

A new cafe, record store and art space is set to open in Birmingham.

One of a growing number of independent coffee shops in the city centre, Cafe Artum is the brainchild of friends Jayson Wynters and Christy Lakeman.

"My wife used to have to wait for an hour when I was looking at records," says Jayson, in explaining the inspiration for the project, "so I thought something like a coffee shop would be a good idea. Vinyl's made a massive comeback in the past few years, but Birmingham has been the slowest to react to it. We believe a new record store is what's missing in the city - we haven't had a new one for 15 years."

Cafe Artum will open in Corporation Street in late November or early December.

Black Arts commissioning festival to celebrate African culture in the UK

Black Arts commissioning festival BASS makes a welcome return to Birmingham next month. The 2017 edition of the event focuses on the impact of African culture in the UK. From 2 November, locally based music company Punch Records will be hosting a series of events designed to provide 'a 360-degree view' of contemporary African arts. To find out more, visit punch-bass.com@bassbirmingham



Birmingham best city for Commonwealth Games 2022, says athletics legend

A former Commonwealth and European gold medallist - whose company is organising this month's first-ever Birmingham International Marathon (Sunday 15 October) - has expressed his delight at the city's success in being chosen to bid for the 2022 Commonwealth Games. Athletics legend Brendan Foster said: "It's the right time, in the right place, in a city that has all the facilities in place. "I'm convinced that Birmingham can take the next step and be awarded the Games. And when they are, they'll have the opportunity to host the best ever Commonwealth Games."

For further information, visit birmingham2022.com

Midlands venue gets ready for a rockin' Christmas

Rock'n'roll fans can expect to be 'all shook up' at Birmingham's Genting Arena this festive season, when tributes to Elvis, Bill Haley & The Comets, Buddy Holly, Ray Charles and Eddie Cochran visit the venue. Let's Have A Rock'n'Roll Party is promising to be 'the ultimate '50s and '60s extravaganza', taking place at the Genting on Friday 29 December. For more information about the show, visit gentingarena.co.uk

It's Bedlam at Birmingham Rep!

Birmingham Repertory Theatre is hosting a special showcase of theatrical productions as part of this month's Bedlam Arts & Mental Health Festival. The Wellbeing Discovery Day (Sunday 22 October) features a range of performances (including scratch and rehearsed readings), family-friendly activities and a marketplace where visitors can meet and talk to organisations working in the mental health field. Tutors from mac Birmingham will be on hand to offer a number of free participatory workshops, including yoga, mindfulness and photo-montage for wellbeing. The Bedlam Arts & Mental Health Festival takes place at various Birmingham venues from Tuesday 17 to Saturday 28 October.



PINK SARI REVOLUTION

Pink Sari Revolution is the world première of the true story of Sampat Pal and her fight for freedom in India. Based on the book by journalist Amana Fontanella-Khan, Curve Associate Director Suba Das is bringing Sampat's story to the stage following an extensive period of research and development both in the UK and India.

Tell us about your production of Pink Sari Revolution.

Pink Sari Revolution is a drama about an incredible woman, Sampat Pal, who has created one of the world's greatest feminist movements. She leads an army of 400,000 women in rural India who wear neon pink saris and say 'enough is enough'. The play is based on a documentary account of her 'Gulabi Gang' written by journalist Amana Fontanella-Khan. The story is about these women who have real strength and are standing up for their rights but also about the cost of saying no to the system.

The book focuses on the Gulabi Gang's 2010 campaign to free falsely imprisoned teenager Sheelu Nishad after she was raped by a prominent local politician. How are you tackling the difficult issues brought up by this?

As a director, there's something very interesting about the idea of how you present violence, and certainly sexual violence, on the stage. I don't believe that theatre is there to be gratuitous; I think theatre is there to plant images and ideas. The greatest thing

you can do when making theatre is encourage the audience to use their imagination. That's where something affects you totally and touches you the most. In terms of what we're presenting, we are not shying away from the reality that the piece is motored by the very specific case that Sampat Pal became obsessed with. However, it's not going to be a production in which an audience will see sexual violence enacted on stage. I'm not interested in confronting audiences with that or asking actors to delve into that in a rehearsal room – I don't think we need to show the issue. It's a very serious, real experience.

Why is this story so important to you?

Sampat Pal is an incredibly inspirational woman; an iconic woman who has created one of the world's greatest and most vibrant feminist movements. She was married off at the age of 12, taught herself how to read, write and sew so that she could be economically independent. From those impoverished origins in one of the most lawless parts of India, she has achieved extraordinary things and even became one of The Guardian's '100 most important women

in the world'.

I read Fontanella-Khan's book several years ago and when I heard about the Arts Council's Reimagine India funding to encourage cultural work between British and Indian organisations, I immediately felt like there was an opportunity to take this story that I've been so excited about and find a way to make a show. We've also received support for this production from the British Council's UK/IN 2017 programme and English Touring Theatre. This funding enabled us to go out and spend time with Sampat Pal both in her home and out on the campaign trail. I'm slightly in love with her! She's a force of nature; the most charismatic, extraordinary, fire-cracker of a human being you could ever imagine.

It's a real responsibility, when you meet somebody, you're telling a story about a real human being. The complexity as a theatre maker is then digging into that and knowing that we will create a show that does raise questions about whether she has always done the right thing.

Pink Sari Revolution is more than just a show about terrible things that happen far away; we know that these things take place all around the world and that's why this story is



so important and urgent to tell.

With two years in development, what has the process been to create the production so far?

One of the starting points for this play was our research and development process in India way back in December 2015. It felt like the only way to conceive of making this show would be to travel to India. Living with Sampat Pal and meeting with extraordinary Indian artists gave us a real sense of what this story means to the people in India.

All we had were ideas; we didn't know what the take up would be for the show. Artistically, reaching out to communities here in the UK felt so important because it is a daunting thing to be a young man wanting to tell this story about South Asian women. I met with book clubs and local Indian women community groups to discuss the story and what it means from their perspectives. Part of our process is turning all the facts and all the information we have into a story about a world that probably feels very alien and remote to so many of us, and turning that into a really human, exciting, theatrical drama.

Who have you met so far and who are you bringing along on this production?

A really important element of developing the show has been working with the Indian playwright Purva Naresh, an extraordinary feminist political voice from India. It felt so important for this piece to be written by a woman who is living through these realities and who is so passionate and angry and with so much social work in her own day-to-day life. Her family are from the biggest city near to Sampat Pal, she grew up hearing about her and the 'Gulabi Gang'.

We are also working with Tim Lutkin who is an Olivier award-winning lighting designer, Designer Isla Shaw, and Aakash Odedra (who recently won the Amnesty International Freedom of Expression award) as our Movement Director. It's a world-class, international team telling a global story.

This is a very powerful story, what do you hope audiences in the UK will take from it?

Pink Sari Revolution is a very specific story about this place and this moment in time in India, but it's also universal. The issues that sit at the heart of this are 'what does it mean

to be a woman?', 'what does it mean to be a protestor?', 'what does it mean to say "no"?', and 'what does it mean to say "this is enough"?'. Female rights, protests, resistance – they're themes that obsess everyone right now. We are all living in the shadow of not quite knowing whether our society works for us – that's not just in India, that's right here too. It's everywhere. What I hope is that this story of an amazing woman in India will unlock a wider conversation here in the UK. Sampat was leading thousands of women and men marching in pink a decade before the Women's Marches in Washington and across the world this year. Our hope is this tale of truth and resistance might in some way empower audiences in the UK and beyond.



Pink Sari Revolution runs at the Belgrade Theatre Coventry from Wednesday 11 to Saturday 21 October



Birmingham
Museums

HALLOWEEN at Birmingham Museums

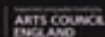
**SPOOKY FUN
FOR ALL
THE FAMILY**

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- Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum
- Museum of the Jewellery Quarter
- Weoley Castle Ruins
- Aston Hall
- Blakesley Hall
- Sarehole Mill
- Soho House

birminghammuseums.org.uk/whats-on

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thinktank
Birmingham science museum

Spooky Science Week

Mon 23 – Fri 27 Oct

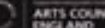
- Science of Fright Live Show
- Spooky Science Busking
- Wicked Witch Storytelling

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A CHRISTMAS CRACKER!

Birmingham Repertory Theatre is getting into the Christmas spirit this month by staging the world premiere of *Nativity! The Musical*. Based on the popular UK film franchise, the show is written and directed by Debbie Isitt, who also created the movies...





In the world of Birmingham-born, Coventry-based writer and director Debbie Isitt, the past 10 years have been a bit like the White Witch's Narnia in reverse: it's always Christmas and only occasionally winter. But with three Nativity films now behind her, a fourth one in the works and a hotly anticipated stage musical version premiering at the Birmingham REP this month, is the Queen of Britain's festive-film scene starting to tire of Christmas every day? Not likely.

"I just love it!" she exclaims. "I really genuinely love Christmas and I always have, so doing it all the time is brilliant!"

And really, you'd have to love it. If you're the sort of person who wants to tear your own ears off the second shops start playing carols in November, best not to even imagine writing Christmas songs the whole year round. On the other hand, if you're coming to see *Nativity! The Musical* this autumn, you'd better be ready for a lot of them, since the stage show features all the songs from all the films plus about as many new ones.

"It really does change the dynamic. It gives you much more insight into the characters and their backstories. And the emotions are more intense, like with the love story between Mr Maddens and Jennifer - it feels even bigger now because they're singing duets.

"Hollywood Are Coming is the big Act One song. When Mr Poppy overhears the rumours and spreads them around town, that grows into a great big feelgood song. And there's a really sweet song towards the end of the first act, which is the letter to Santa. So there's a lot of variety."

As in the films, the child cast is made up of ordinary children with no professional acting training, all of them from around the West Midlands. Of course, an all-singing, all-dancing live show is a more demanding ask of primary school-aged kids than a film that can be cut, re-shot and edited - particularly given Isitt's signature improvisational style.



Is it all starting to feel as crazy as one of the nativities in her stories?

"A little bit! And it can only get crazier. A lot of the things we did in the film are more difficult to get working on stage - like the flying. But that's what makes it fun. It's so boring just to find your mark and say your line. In this case, everyone knows the story, so they can steal lines from the film, but they can also change them and add new ones. It's been a bit of trial and error in rehearsals, but they'll no doubt keep coming out with things that surprise me every night.

"We've got 27 children in total, split up into three teams of nine: there's an Oakmoor nine, a St Bernadette's nine and an understudy nine, and they rotate. So there's an awful lot for them to learn, and it's a big challenge to make sure all the teams are getting enough attention and aren't forgetting which school they're in. But they'll all be virtuoso performers by the time they're finished with us!"

As if that weren't enough to keep the crew on their toes, there are also plans involving live animals.

"Obviously if it was left up to me, I'd be saying, 'Yes, bring camels and walk them through the auditorium!' Unfortunately, in theatre, there are lots of health-and-safety rules, which is probably a good thing for the animals. But there will be something - I won't say what!"

It'll be alright on the night, as they say. And even if it's not, in a story like this, it's all part of the charm, adding to the comedy that's made the films such a resounding commercial success.

"It was a big surprise to me that the first one became as well-loved as it did. I think part of that is the fact that the children get an opportunity to see themselves reflected on the big screen, which is so rare! The great thing about adapting something they already know is that they're so excited to be part of it. They all come in talking about how much



they love the films, and you get the feeling that they're living their dream, which just lifts the whole rehearsal. It's fantastic!"

Isitt's unusual way of working is partly a product of her own acting training. As a directionless 16-year-old, she was "sent to Coventry - literally!" to do an acting course, based on her mum's suggestion that she was "quite dramatic". Though she soon turned to writing and directing with her own company, *Snarling Beasties*, that grounding is still manifest in the respect she has for actors, and in her lack of preciousness about her scripts - for her, it's more about the subtext anyway.

Yet for all her success since, she's never felt the lure of London. On the contrary: from local schools to Coventry Cathedral, she's proud to be showing the nation what the Midlands has to offer.

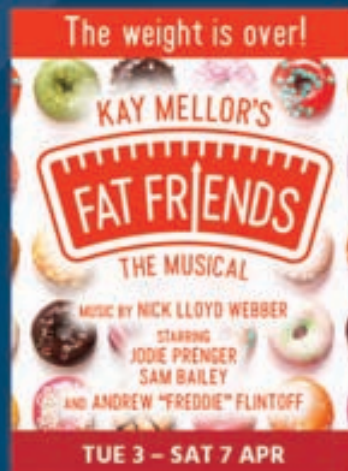
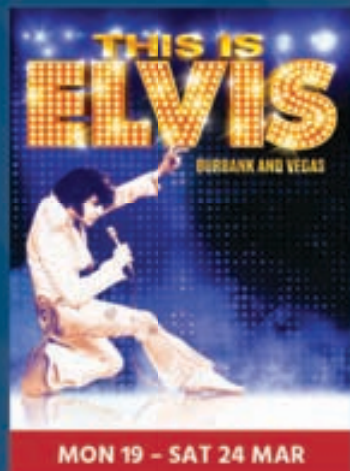
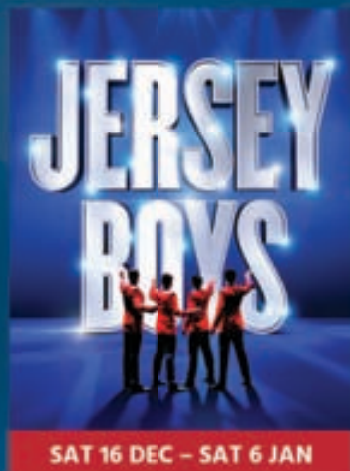
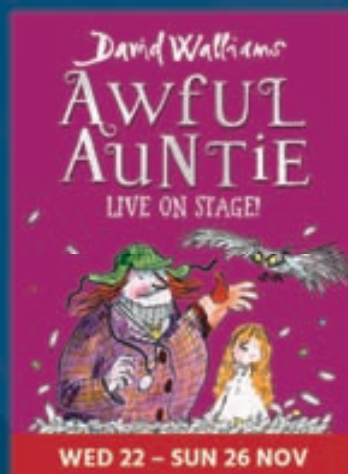
"It's a brilliant region because it has everything I need. In terms of locations, we have the most diverse landscape, from big cities to beautiful countryside. We also have really diverse communities, and I like to work with a lot of non-actors - adults as well as children.

"At the moment we still don't really have the financial support to keep a lot of our skilled people here. But the great thing about touring this show is that you get to go around the country talking about the Midlands. I think that's really important. Now, every time I start a new project, people are keen for me to keep working here because they know it's vital that everyone has a voice and that we don't just keep repeating the same kind of messages with the same people."



Nativity! The Musical is at Birmingham REP from Friday 20 October to Sunday 12 November. Debbie Isitt's adaptation of 101 Dalmatians also shows at the REP, from Thursday 30 November to Saturday 13 January.

COMING SOON TO THE NEW ALEXANDRA THEATRE



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Lavish new restaurant & cocktail bar set to open in Birmingham's Selfridges store

The award-winning San Carlo is this month opening its new Fumo restaurant, champagne & cocktail bar on the fourth floor of Birmingham's Selfridges store.

Affording stunning views of the iconic Bullring, the £1million venue will feature a uniquely shaped grand marble bar.

Fumo's all-day menu will serve Italian small plate dishes to share, using only the finest ingredients from the produce markets of Milan and Sicily. The bar will specialise in cocktails and Laurent Perrier Champagne.



REVIEW: The Canal House

Reasonably priced new eatery is also the perfect venue for beer connoisseurs

The Canal House opened its doors to the public in August. Located in the former James Brindley pub and owned by The New World Trading Company - the brand behind popular cocktail haunt The Botanist - the venue boasts two floors, an outdoor seating area and a gin distillery that sits in the middle of the upstairs bar. In addition, guests are able to relax in Brindley's brew room, study, lounge or drawing room, whilst listening to the sounds of live music every night.

Offering an impressive selection of traditional pub food, the menu draws from various cultures and includes deli boards, rotisserie, sandwiches and hanging kebabs.

On arrival, I ordered a Bygone Porn Star - a blend of fresh passion fruit, pineapple juice, lemon, passion fruit liqueur and vanilla vodka, served with a shot of prosecco. My partner opted for a pint of Budweiser Budvar. We also ordered a portion of pork crackling served with homemade apple & fig ketchup.

The ketchup featured in my starter too, taking its place alongside rotisserie pork and black pudding fritters served with homemade piccalilli. The fritters were cooked perfectly and showcased a delicious, meaty flavour. The homemade piccalilli acted as the perfect accompaniment.

If meat isn't your thing, stuffed romero pepper, homemade hummous and baked camembert also feature on the menu.

My partner chose the duck rillette served with fig chutney and baked granary toast. The duck rillette was to a high standard, the fig chutney sweet and delicious.

For the main event, we shared salt & pepper pork (served with

apple sauce) and lamb kofta (served with piri piri sauce) hanging kebabs. Both were presented with seasoned chips. The salt & pepper pork was cooked to absolute perfection. Juicy, succulent and full of flavour, it was the highlight of my evening (along with the cocktail!). The lamb kofta, however, was a tad on the dry side, the piri piri quite watery.

We didn't have dessert, but for anybody who fancies one, options include baked chocolate chip cookie dough, sticky toffee pudding, grilled pineapple and a beer and cheese board.

As well as a stunning cocktail menu, The Canal House features over 60 unique ales and three temperature-controlled tanks, making it the perfect venue for any beer drinker. The menu is reasonably priced for a city centre eatery and the service was fantastic. The canalside location is a real plus too, and it's a venue I'll certainly return to in the future to sample another cocktail or three. *Lauren Foster*

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

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Bottomless Dinner Party opens in Brum

A new night featuring pizza and alcohol has been launched in Birmingham.

The Bottomless Dinner Party, located in Bierkeller Birmingham, offers bottomless prosecco and mimosas and unlimited pizza and fries at £20 per head, for two hours between 5pm and 9pm every Friday.

A DJ is on hand to provide the entertainment, playing everything from club classics to house remixes of chart favourites.

Top chef unveils wine collection

Following a launch event at his Birmingham Steakhouse Bar & Grill last month, award-winning chef Marco Pierre White has created a new and exclusive wine collection.

The wines have been created alongside celebrated wine-maker Jean-Luc Colombo and are exclusively available at Marco's UK restaurants.

Authentic Bulgarian cuisine on the menu

A restaurant serving authentic Bulgarian cuisine and a selection of impressive signature dishes has opened in Birmingham city centre.

Located on Suffolk Street Queensway, Bulgarian Village Kitchen uses products that come directly from Bulgaria.

The head chef has over 30 years' experience of working in some of Bulgaria's most renowned restaurants.

The menu features chicken hearts smothered in butter, sesame chicken nuggets with garlic sauce, tripe soup, a range of charcoal-grilled meats and traditional clay-pot dishes, marinated pork shank and traditional bean soup. For more information, visit bulgarianvillagekitchen.co.uk

Top Birmingham cocktail bar expands with £1.4million refurb

One of Birmingham's most-loved cocktail bars has recently opened a second room, following a £1.4million refurbishment. Located in Piccadilly Arcade, Be At One can now welcome up to 550 cocktail lovers through its doors. The popular venue has one of the longest lists of available cocktails in the industry. Favourites include blended specialities such as the sweet & salty popcorn-topped Popster, the superfood-packed Beetroot Retox and reimagined classic the Gin Re-Fashioned. Commenting on the company, co-founder Steve Locke said: "Be At One is a cocktail institution, providing great service, an unbeatable party atmosphere and, most importantly, a pretension-free attitude."



Sutton venue Brewhouse & Kitchen opens new beer garden

Sutton Coldfield's Brewhouse & Kitchen has launched a brand new beer garden.

The Hop House Garden features a fire pit, a pizza oven shack, a 15-litre serve-yourself keg table, outdoor games, and cosy, covered areas with WiFi and individual power sockets.

The arrival of the pizza oven shack means the venue can now offer a pizza menu. The menu features everything from the classic Margherita to numerous 'more adventurous' options, including

Thai Me Up - siracha thai chicken, red onion, red chilli and crispy bean sprouts.

Commenting on the new facilities, Melvin Symmons, General Manager at Brewhouse & Kitchen Sutton Coldfield, said: "There's nothing quite like this in Sutton, and we can't wait for customers to come and enjoy the delights of the new pizza shack, cosy up next to the outdoor fire pit, and pour themselves a pint of our brand new beer from the Keg Table!"

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BLONDIE

We spoke to the band's drummer Clem Burke ahead of their Birmingham show...

Blondie's 11th album, *Pollinator*, was released earlier this year. Can you tell us a bit about it?

We're all really happy with it, and I think it's the record that Blondie fans have been waiting for. I mean, I think the chemistry of the band really comes across. The three other guys in the band, Tommy, Lee and Matt, have been with us for quite a while, along with me, Chris and Debbie. The idea was to go in and record all the basic tracks together and really have the sound of the band come across. The last couple of albums that we did, the songs were there but they were done in a different method. They were more computer-generated, and then we found when we went to do the songs in our show, we would have to rearrange them and make them band performances. We kind of felt that people were a lot more receptive to the songs when they actually heard the band playing them. We kind of have a history of doing cover songs, starting with things like Denis and Hanging On The Telephone, which was by a band called The Nerves. Tide Is High is by The Paragons and was written by John Holt. I think we have a knack of taking other people's songs and making them sound like Blondie songs, so that's what we decided to do with *Pollinator*. We're really, really happy with the way it's turned out, and I think it's definitely one of our best albums. Blondie fans are all really happy with it too - we're just trying to get other people to hear it. It was received really well and went in the charts at number four here in the UK. We're having a good time playing a handful of songs from *Pollinator*, along with the expected songs, in the current Blondie show,

so it's been good. The album has given us the impetus to want to continue, so we're going to be making another record. Everything's great within the band, and we're really looking forward to the UK tour.

What's the meaning behind the album's title - *Pollinator*?

Deb came up with the name, but it has to do with the fact that we're kind of infusing other people's music with our music - and then along came the bee crisis. A weird twist of fate - we were supposed to be doing a gig in London the day after the tragedy in Manchester, and of course everything stopped the next day. We weren't really aware of the worker bee symbol of Manchester, so that kind of came to light too. And then I was looking at GQ and there was a guy in a Gucci suit with bees all over it. Bees all of a sudden seem to be kind of trendy - unbeknown to us, as we were really in our own little bubble when we came up with that idea.

You started playing drums for Blondie in 1975. How did that come about?

We were all hanging out in New York City in a club called Club 82. It was kind of like a dance club that had glam rock bands on one night a week, whether it be New York Dolls or Teenage Lust or other bands. I had a band called Sweet Revenge and Deb and Chris had a band called The Stilettoes, and we were all on that scene. It was kind of like the last hold-out of glam rock. Everything kind of moved South West a block or so. People like Bowie informed British punk rock, so the Bowie, Lou Reed thing was going on and that

kind of transitioned into a more bohemian, William Borrows, Andy Warhol, Patty Smith vibe. It was all kind of coming together at that point during the mid-'70s.

Why do you think the band remain so popular?

The music is the legacy of the band and obviously Debbie's image opened the door for the band, and she's still a lovely, very beautiful woman. Her looks overshadowed her musical ability, her lyrics and everything. Musically, to me, she's more like Bowie or Jim Morrison, not really like the obvious other blonde singers. Culturally in the mid-'70s there was a lot of really significant stuff going on in New York that was only really influencing the people who were there. We were the sound of New York in a way. We were being influenced by our peers, by certain artists, different areas of the city, the whole hip-hop thing. The internet is a big help now. I think we're the first generation where our whole band life is on the internet as far as performances and photos go. For younger people, that kind of lets them connect the dots on what Blondie was all about and what was going on. You look at a photo of Debbie from 1976 and it looks very modern, but you look at a photo of somebody from Bon Jovi in the '80s and it doesn't look very modern. The Velvet Underground and Andy Warhol had a lot to do with influencing Blondie. They were an underground phenomenon at the time. I think Blondie's music stands up. I think *The Pollinator* record is a great record, and I'm not just saying that because it's the most recent one - it's definitely one of our better albums.



During Blondie's hiatus, you played drums for numerous musicians, including Bob Dylan, Iggy Pop and The Ramones. Can you tell us a little bit about that, and who did you enjoy working with the most?

The Eurythmics. I met Annie Lennox at a club in Piccadilly called Planets around 1980, when I was living in London. Lemmy was there, Michael Jackson was there. He was sitting on a chair next to me when Annie came over and started talking to me about the new band that she was starting up with Dave. So I went round to their place and had Sunday lunch, then recorded their first album with them in Germany. I had a great time with them - we became friends. With Iggy, that was a really amazing time. He was promoting this album party, I went on tour with him for six weeks and we opened for the Rolling Stones. Everything that's come about has been as a result of Blondie, whether that be Debbie's acting career or Chris' photography, me working with all these other people. It's good when people go away and do that stuff because they then bring it back into the band. Working with Dylan was unbelievable - just being in his genius presence. At the end of the day, the love of music is what really comes through. Whether it's Bob Dylan or a kid in a garage banging on a guitar, they're all doing it for the same

reason. It starts there and goes on from there. If I was a kid today, I'm not sure if I would choose the music business as a career, but then who knows?

How does life on the road now compare to back in the '90s, for example?

Well, it's easier now. Something like making a phone call back in the day was a big deal, trying to reach somebody in another country. Once again, technology has brought everyone together. The production's a lot easier. You live and learn. I was always into taking care of myself. I did this thing, the Clem Burke Drumming Project, which I got a doctorate for a few years ago from Gloucestershire University, and it's just about having a positive spin on what it means to be a musician. It studies all the mental and physical aspects of being on the road. That's a big part of the study - the endurance etc. It got a bit controversial because my stats were lining up with premier footballers half my age. I think we just try to take care of ourselves more now. I don't think I went to the gym or any of that back in the day because I was too hungover or whatever. That's the great thing about playing an instrument - as time goes on, it just gets better and better.

What's your first musical memory?

I started playing drums when I was quite young. For my generation, The Beatles on Ed Sullivan in the States was a turning point. I was too young for Elvis in terms of musical memories. Top 40 radio in the States, you'd have Frank Sinatra next to the Rolling Stones.

Blondie are bringing their UK tour to Birmingham this winter. What can audiences expect from your show?

We've been on the road in the States for the last seven weeks, touring with the band Garbage. Before that, we went to Australia, so the band is very road-worthy. We're playing a handful of songs from Pollinator along with the expected hits and some deeper Blondie cuts. A pretty well-rounded show. We're trying to make people aware of the Pollinator album. It's all go. Everyone is in a great space and enjoying performing, so it's going to be good. Along with Holland and Australia, this is where the initial success was with Blondie. The UK has always been a second home - we spend a lot of time here.

.....
Blondie play Arena Birmingham on Monday 13th November

Nick Mulvey

O2 Institute, Birmingham, Mon 9 October

Following a triumphant Glastonbury performance, British singer-songwriter Nick Mulvey embarks on a new tour in support of *Wake Up Now* - the follow-up to his standout debut album, *First Mind*.

Commenting on the new release, Nick says: "The songs look at the role of self-enquiry and our understanding of our predicament. I was ready as a writer to look outwards, and I think that was amplified by becoming a dad and having a greater sense of responsibility for my small part in the world."

Read the full interview with Nick online at whatsonlive.co.uk



London Grammar

O2 Academy, Birmingham, Mon 23 October

The Ivor Novello Award-winning London Grammar attract a truly mixed bunch of punters to their concerts, from bearded hipsters in skinny jeans to middle-aged art teacher types and all the tribes in between... This is a trio with music to appeal to all ages. Hannah, Dot and Dan burst onto the scene back in 2012 with *Hey Now*, a track originally posted on YouTube.

Since then, all traffic has been moving in pretty much the right direction, with sold-out shows becoming the norm.

They visit Birmingham to promote their second album, *Truth Is A Beautiful Thing*.



Photo credit: Herring and Herring

Metallica

Genting Arena, Birmingham, Monday 30 October

Now in their fourth decade of performing together, legendary American band Metallica produce music that blends fast tempos, instrumentals and aggressive musicianship.

It's a combination which catapulted them to the very top of the thrash metal tree, where they shared the sunlight with fellow giants

Slayer, Megadeth and Anthrax.

Career highlights include third album *Master Of Puppets* (1986), which achieved phenomenal popularity with the underground music community, and their eponymous fifth album (also known as *The Black Album*), released to much critical acclaim in 1991.

The heavy metal giants visit Birmingham this month in support of latest offering *Hardwired... To Self-Destruct*.

Gary Numan

O2 Institute, Birmingham, Wed 11 October

London-born electronic and industrial pioneer Gary Numan first entered the music industry as lead singer for new wave band Tubeway Army. He released first debut solo album *The Pleasure Principle* in 1979, scoring a number one hit with his most famous song, *Cars*. He visits Birmingham in support of his highly anticipated album, *Savage*.

The Young'uns

mac, Birmingham, Sat 21 October

Having won the Best Group gong at the BBC Radio Two Folk Awards in both 2015 and '16, The Young'uns have successfully cemented their position at the forefront of the English folk scene.

The talented Teesside trio return this month with an extensive UK tour and an eagerly anticipated new album, *Strangers*.

Michael Kiwanuka

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Mon 16 October

If critically acclaimed second album *Love & Hate* is anything to go by, singer-songwriter Michael Kiwanuka has managed to emerge in truly fine fettle from a four-year period of self-questioning and loss of confidence. Frequently compared to high-calibre artists including Marvin Gaye, Bill Withers and Van Morrison, Kiwanuka visits Birmingham to kickstart a new national tour.





GODIVA ROCKS

A brand new show is this month celebrating the musical heritage of Coventry. What's On chats to the man behind Godiva Rocks, local playwright Alan Pollock...

You've heard of Madchester, Merseybeat and the heavy metal movement forged in Birmingham, but would you know how to define the sound of Coventry?

In his latest show, Godiva Rocks, local playwright Alan Pollock sets out to do just that. In what may well be the world's first musical based around the songs of a single city, the One Night In November scribe now turns his attention to homegrown hits through the story of a young couple searching for the essence of Coventry music.

"It's hard to avoid acknowledging that 2-tone really nailed it," says Pollock. "With the exception of a few late-'60s bands, that was the first time that black and white united to make music here. That hadn't really happened at all during the '70s, but when it came along, it just seemed like such a natural expression of who we are in this melting-pot city, which is a big theme in the play."

Many locals do feel a sense of ownership over their ska heritage, so it was no surprise when the iconic Ghost Town topped a recent public poll to find our favourite Coventry number one. Yet from the electronic experimentation of Delia Derbyshire to launching what has become Britain's biggest free music festival, there's so much more to the Coventry music scene than The Specials.

"I didn't actually have to dig very deep to come up with loads of songs from here," continues Pollock. "I think if Liverpool and Manchester are at the top in terms of musical output, we're certainly in the top three or four. But the thing I hear people saying a lot in rehearsals is, 'I didn't know that was from

Coventry'. Lots of people don't realise, for example, that Funboy Three are basically a Cov band, that The Primitives and Panjabi MC were from Coventry, as was Frank Ifield, who had four number one hits before Elvis Presley had even had one! So there's a lot more than people think.

"There are one or two Specials songs in the show, but I felt like The Specials had already been celebrated elsewhere, so I wanted to get people to look at all the other stuff.

"Nobody's going to be disappointed - there will be something for everyone, from young people now right back to the '60s."

So why is it that this hotbed of musical invention has gone largely unrecognised until now? Well, one reason could be Coventrians' own self-perception. Unlike in London, Birmingham and powerhouses of the north, in Cov, we're quite a reticent bunch when it comes to extolling our own virtues. In fact, the biggest Coventry critics are almost always those who live here. To paraphrase Pollock at the Godiva Rocks launch, it feels as though we always wait for outside recognition before we'll acknowledge the merits of anything made here.

Trouble is, since the decline of our once-world-famous industry, such external affirmation has become increasingly rare. Nowadays, many people outside the Midlands would be hard-pressed even to say where Coventry is, let alone tell you anything about its cultural life, so if we're to be in with a chance of taking the City of Culture title, it's up to us to shout about what makes it special.

"Part of the point of doing this show about Coventry is getting people to be proud of stuff we've done. I've been unofficially involved with the City of Culture bid right from the start, and we talk about this a lot - getting people to be actively positive about what we've achieved."

And Pollock has certainly been doing his bit to celebrate Coventry for some years: neither this nor his controversial Coventry Blitz play One Night In November are his first time putting the city centre-stage.

"I've always found it fascinating. I grew up here, and even though I moved away for a while and lived all over the world, I found myself drawn back to the spirit of the place. Its history is so rich, and it's like a kind of symbol of the country as a whole, with its industrial background and its ups and downs. When my parents arrived in the early '60s, it had the highest average wage of any town in the country. Then it suffered badly in the '80s, but now we're starting to come back from that. So I've always seen it as a kind of place of resilience. Some of that is expressed in the music, and it's part of what I'm trying to extract and distil in this show.

"I'm extremely confident that we can win (City of Culture). I think if politics doesn't get in the way, ours is the strongest bid by a mile."

.....

Godiva Rocks plays at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Saturday 7 to Saturday 21 October.

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Basel Symphony Orchestra

Birmingham Town Hall, Tues 10 October

Celebrated cellist Sol Gabetta (pictured) here joins forces with the Basel Symphony Orchestra (BSO) to present a programme culminating in Beethoven's hugely intoxicating Seventh. British maestro Ivor Bolton is the man with the baton, having become the orchestra's conductor in 2016, the year during which the BSO celebrated its 140th anniversary. The concert also features performances of Ferruccio Busoni's Lustspiel Overture and Saint-Saëns' Cello Concerto.

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 25 October

Giuseppe Verdi's Requiem is by no means a typical work of religious music. At the time of its premiere, it seemed so unconventional a piece that critics slammed it for being 'an opera in ecclesiastical robes'. The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra is here joined by the massed CBSO Chorus and four operatic voices, for a rendition of the work which conductor Edward Gardner (pictured) promises will see the volume being turned up to 11.



European Union Chamber Orchestra

The Barber Institute, Birmingham, Sat 28 October



Boasting some of Europe's finest young professional players, the European Union Chamber Orchestra (EUCO) was formed in 1981, since which time it's toured extensively across Europe and further afield. Along the way, the orchestra has performed with a wealth of distinguished classical artists, including Nicola Benedetti, Julian Lloyd Webber and Emma Johnson. This latest Midlands concert sees the EUCO presenting a programme of baroque and classical works as part of the Birmingham International Piano Festival. They're joined by harpsichordist Steven Devine.

Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra

The Bramall, University of Birmingham, Sun 15 October

The Birmingham Phil here presents a programme comprising Weber's Clarinet Concerto No 2 and two works by Hector Berlioz - his Overture to the unfinished Les francs-juges and his opium-inspired Symphonie Fantastique.

Famous for its hallucinatory, dream-like qualities, the latter work was once described by Leonard Bernstein as 'the first musical expedition into psychedelia'. "Berlioz tells it like it is," said Bernstein. "You take a trip, you wind up screaming at your own funeral."



Ex Cathedra

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sat 14 October

Ex Cathedra have long enjoyed an international reputation as one of the UK's leading choral and Early Music ensembles. They return to Symphony Hall to present a performance of Johann Sebastian Bach's Magnificat - a composition widely recognised as a Baroque-era great. Ex Cathedra founder and conductor Jeffrey Skidmore is the man at the helm for a concert that also features the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. The programme is completed by two of Bach's famous cantatas and his resplendent Orchestral Suite No3.



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Birmingham Comedy Festival exclusive interview

Matt Lucas

From Little Britain to Little Me: My Life From A-Z

Little Me is your first autobiography. What made you decide to write it, and what inspired the A-Z format?

Well, I decided it was time to upload some things out of my head and free up some space! I didn't want to write a conventional autobiography because I knew I wanted to steer clear of some things and obsess over others. This format allowed me to do that.

You talk very honestly and openly about going bald at the tender age of six, and about the lack of bald men in the public eye when you were growing up. Who were your role models as a child and how important were they to you?

Duncan Goodhew, because he was hairless and a winner. And Kojak, because he could always get hold of a lollipop.

You talk about your time at Haberdashers' Aske's Boys School in the book. How important were your schooldays in encouraging your love of theatre, and what's your happiest memory from school?

The school plays were my escape - and also in school holidays my mum and grandma would take me to the West End to see shows. There was nothing more thrilling than when the lights went down and the overture began.

Who are your comedy heroes?

Laurel & Hardy and Reeves & Mortimer. Perfect chemistry. Like brothers. Destined to be together.

We love your 'clangs' every time a famous person you've met and worked with is mentioned. Is there anyone you've never had the chance to work with but would love to?

Mike Leigh and Shane Meadows spring to

mind. Chris Morris. And I think I would love to appear onstage with Nathan Lane and Patti Lupone.

You did your time on the comedy circuit before success with Shooting Stars and Little Britain. Do you have any advice for young comedians starting out?

Yes, record every gig on your phone and listen to it on the way home. It's never as bad (or as good) as you thought.

Little Britain was such a defining moment in British comedy. Are there any characters you regret, or ones you'd love to recreate and work on again?

There are some I like more than others, certainly some I wouldn't do now, but few I regret. It was a show of its time. I would love to play Marjorie again, but I think things are different now, and it would be considered fat-shaming. You have to move with the times.

You've created and played so many legendary characters. Do you have a favourite?

Probably Marjorie, Andy Pipkin, maybe Taaj from Come Fly With Me. I used to enjoy playing Gary Barlow. My favourite is Pompidou.

You've found success on stage, screen, and in the movies with roles in Les Mis, Bridesmaids, Alice In Wonderland and more. Do you have a favourite medium?

Actually my favourite thing to do is write, more than perform. And write music at that.

You're much loved by Doctor Who fans. What do you like about Nardole, and does he love the new female Doctor Who?

I liked playing Nardole because, let's face it,



how often do you get to play a hybrid of alien, robot and human? He's a one-off. And I've loved all the Doctors. I doubt Nardole has any interest in the concept of love. There are worlds to save.

What's next...?

Cuppa tea.

What's the best thing that ever happened to you in Birmingham?

Once got a room at the Crowne Plaza for £25 a night. Tiny it was, mind.

Little Me: My Life From A-Z by Matt Lucas is published on 3 October by Canongate and priced at £20 hardback.

Matt talks about the book at Birmingham Town Hall on Saturday 14 October, at 2pm. For tickets, visit thsh.co.uk

Birmingham Comedy Festival is a 10-day extravaganza, with more than 60 events taking place at various locations from 6 to 15 October.

For more info, visit bhamcomfest.co.uk



Impractical Jokers Arena Birmingham, Thurs 12 October

High school buddies Joseph Gatto, James Murray, Brian Quinn and Salvatore Vulcano stepped into the world of comedy at the end of the 20th century, forming live-improv troupe The Tenderloins. Over a decade later, the boys became the stars of TV's *Impractical Jokers*, a reality series in which they coerce one another into doing public pranks while being filmed by hidden cameras.

With six series of the show having aired since 2015 and a seventh on the way, the fellas have plenty of material around which to develop a successful live offering. But don't expect anything too sophisticated from the quartet. Pulling pranks on stage in the confines of a venue really isn't an option, so instead they play clips, tell jokes and revel in a friendship which has seen them grow a loyal and devoted cult following.

Jenny Eclair

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 8 October

As Jenny Eclair has matured, she's developed an appreciation of her womanhood which has cleverly informed her comedy routine.

"I think women get dirtier as they get older," she says. "The more your body lets you down, the more you have to find it funny. It produces more emissions, farts and little noises, and bibbly-bobbly bits that appear and disappear. And then there's giving birth. As soon as you do that, you have to lose all respect for your body. Maybe it's a cheap device, but it does make me laugh. I just think bumholes and fannies are hilarious. The first joke my father told me was a fart joke, and I still find it funny."

Jenny visits Stratford with her show, *How To Be A Middle-Aged Woman (Without Going Insane)*.



Jo D'Arcy

mac, Birmingham, Thurs 12 October

A one-time teacher who knew that she faced a whole career being called 'the D'Arcehole' by her students, Jo D'Arcy decided to opt for a different kind of potential embarrassment and became a standup comedian. In a show that got full marks at the Edinburgh Festival, Jo uses a 'basic' powerpoint presentation to recall her days in a Stoke-on-Trent classroom, delivering the kind of lesson that would definitely have seen her sacked in her old job... Expect inappropriate jokes, a good amount of swearing, some Rik Mayall-style craziness and maybe even the odd technical glitch.



Henning Wehn

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington, 8 October; Birmingham Town Hall, 13 & 14 October; Civic Hall, Wolverhampton, 27 October; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, 12 November

The self-appointed German comedy ambassador's style of humour has been described as Teutonic jolliness at its best. We reckon that's such a good way of putting it, we have nothing further to add - except, that is, for the following Henning gags: "With standup in Britain, what you have to do is bloody swearing. In Germany, we don't have to swear. Reason being, things work," and "World War Two was a painful time for my family. My grandfather died in a concentration camp. He got drunk one night and fell out of his guard tower..."



Ed Gamble

Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury,
Thurs 26 October

"I'm essentially a great guy delivering humour through your classic microphone/speaker combo," says a tongue-in-cheek Ed Gamble in describing himself. "As well as being a standup comedian, I'm an actor and a writer - although to be honest, I very rarely act, and 'writing' is a very lofty term for the absolute filth I've committed to paper in the past."

Best known for his work with Ray Peacock on The Peacock And Gamble Podcast, Ed here presents Mammoth - a gig which the London-born comedian describes as "a brand new, lumbering beast of a comedy show".



Andrew Lawrence

The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton,
22 October

He's not a particularly well known or much-lauded comedian, but it's fair to say Andrew Lawrence's profile has been raised a bit by his involvement in various social media controversies.

On Facebook a while back, he accused television panel shows of indulging in "liberal back-slapping", claiming they featured "ageing, balding, fat men, ethnic comedians and women posing as comedians" who spent their time making jokes at the expense of UKIP and Nigel Farage.

He's also hit the headlines for posting a tweet about feminists and suicide that protesters claimed incited others to take their own lives.

"Currently being dogpiled by feminazis," Lawrence tweeted in response. "I think I like it..."

Jokes include: "Most of us have a skeleton in the cupboard. David Beckham takes his out in public."



Sofie Hagen

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 14 October

"My gigs are anxiety-safe," says Danish feminist comedian and one-time self-harming Westlife fan Sofie Hagen. "If you have anxiety over attending the show, you can email me at tour@sofiehagen.com and let me know what I can do to help. Maybe you want to reserve a specific seat? Maybe you want to ask a question? Either way, let's talk."

As well as wanting to ensure that her gigs are safe spaces for anxiety sufferers, Sofie also insists that all venues in which she performs

have gender-neutral and disabled toilets.

Her current show is Dead Baby Frog. This month being presented in the Midlands as part of Sofie's post-Edinburgh tour, the show is a contemplation on the subject of anger - and the funeral of her psychopathic grandfather, who's not even dead yet...

Examples of Sofie's humour include the following: "I have the confidence to text a man first. And second. And third. And fourth. And fifth. And sixth. And seventh. Basically, until he answers," and, "The question you always have to ask yourself is: 'Is my depression back or am I just hungry?'"

Robin Ince

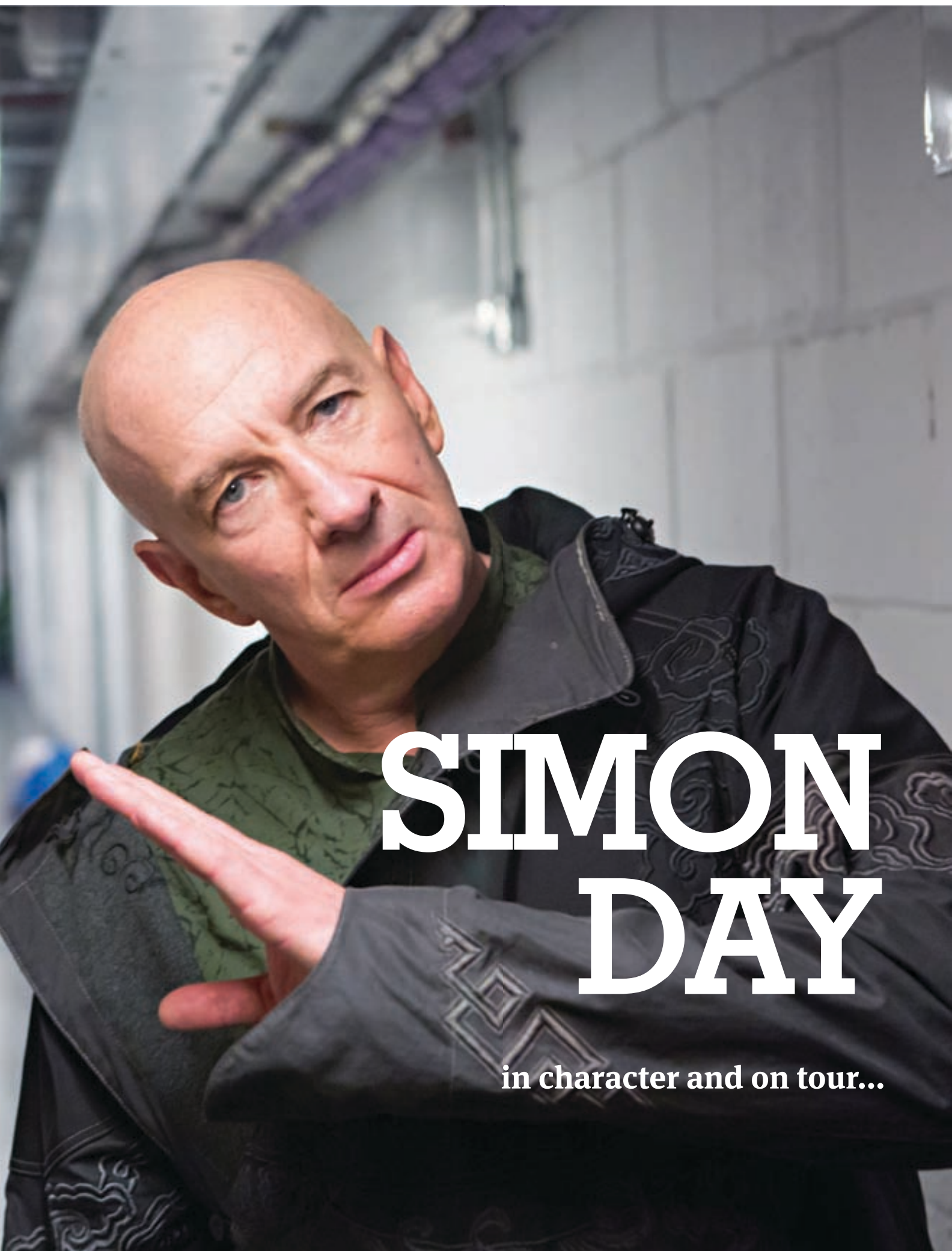
Comedy Junction, The Station Pub, Sutton Coldfield, Fri 13 October

Co-presenter of irreverent BBC Radio Four science show The Infinite Monkey Cage, Robin Ince is here making a return to the world of standup after taking a long break to spend more time with his family.

When quitting the circuit back in 2015, he was also honest enough to admit that professional paranoia had played a significant role in his decision. "I saw the work of [fellow comedians] Daniel Kitson or Bridget Christie or John Kearns and faced my limitations. I walked off satisfactory gigs with disappointment in my airways because I kept imagining I might have been capable of something that, in truth, I was not."

"I think I was starting to go mad. I didn't have some Hancockian black dog hovering above me, more a facetious little grey dog yapping."

Robin's new show, Pragmatic Insanity, is described as '90 minutes fizzing with ideas about creativity in science and art, as well as asking why we believe we see what we see and why we believe what we believe'.



SIMON DAY

in character and on tour...

Comedian, writer and actor Simon Day cut his teeth on the alternative comedy circuit of the early 90s. Under the guise of Music Hall raconteur Tommy Cockles, he teamed up with fellow travellers Vic and Bob before hitting the mainstream with seminal sketch series The Fast Show, and a raft of new characters, such as Competitive Dad and Dave Angel.

He's since appeared in a variety of TV shows, including Channel 4's recent comic drama Loaded, the BBC's one-off revival of 'Till Death Do Us Part, Paul Whitehouse's Nurse, Bellamy's People, and The Life Of Rock With Brian Pern.

Heading out on tour, Simon Day: In Character sees him revisiting four of his most popular creations – reformed criminal Tony Beckton, struggling Yorkshire poet Geoffrey Allerton, the Fast Show's well-meaning but utterly annoying pub bore Billy Bleach, and prog' rockin' Thotch frontman, Brian Pern. "The theme of the show is loosely how the characters are coping with life now," he says.

How was it starting out? How did audiences take to your Tommy Cockles character?

With Tommy I used to die quite a bit, then Vic and Bob took me on tour, and we did a tour in 1990. I'd come out and the audience would boo, or talk over everything. I never had a plan-B with him, if he was being attacked I'd just say 'that's not nice ... I shall go off if this continues ...'. But when he went down well, he went down really well. I remember playing The Glee Club on a Saturday night, and it was straight down the line, full of 40-fags-a-night people ... that was hard. But usually he went down fine. There was only me and John Shuttleworth then, doing that quite gentle, quiet character comedy.

Was there much of a circuit back then?

There were plenty of gigs – pubs, comedy clubs, there was enough of it to keep you busy, places like Malcolm Hardee's up The Creek, in Greenwich.

Did you consider what you were doing to be 'alternative comedy'?

I did, although I didn't come from that left-wing, smash-down-the-walls-of-Bernard-Manning-and-kick-him-to-the-ground thing that some acts came from. I read Stewart Lee's autobiography – How I Escaped My Certain Fate... - and I can see where he was coming from. But me, Jim (Vic Reeves) and Bob (Mortimer), we just wanted to have a laugh – we weren't overly political.

When your autobiography Comedy and Error: They Really Were Marvellous Times, came out back in 2011/2012, you discussed the possibility of turning it into a TV project ...

We did write it! But we were told no-one was interested in the 1980s ... and then lots of shows about the 1980s come on. Ha-ha! It's very hard to go from comedy to drama, but I'd like to have a go at doing it, even if it's just in a play. I want to do it.

You also said that you missed out a lot of stories - any plans for a Part 2?

People say there's no money in books, so I went off and did Brian Pern instead as I might as well write and perform than just write. And it was a bit grim, writing the book. But so many people have said that it's one of the best ... for what it is, it's one of the best. You can still get it on Amazon, and if you look at the reviews, it's got 40 five-star reviews – people get it! I think the publisher thought they'd got another Russell Brand book, but by comparison, it was a flop. No one reviewed it at the time, and it's very hard to move between the two (writing and TV/comedy) ... 'he's not a writer!' It needed someone like Will Self to review it. I've read a lot of those books and some of them are so abysmal, so untrue, and there are so many of them – there's a cricketer one week, a couple of boxers the next, several war journalists, another footballer ... the celebrity book market is so crowded. But I'm proud of it, I'm proud I did it.

You know, Graham Linehan (Father Ted, The IT Crowd, Count Arthur Strong) phoned me up the other day and said 'your book is brilliant!' Great! Let's make it into a series! 'No!' That's showbiz for you. (laughs)

The Fast Show is one of those few programmes that helped define a generation and changed comedy. You were rock star comedians, playing arenas! How do you feel about those days now?

The Fast Show was so so long ago now. It was a big show and I'm recognised as much now for that as anything I've ever done. We only did three series and it's locked in that time now, when there were only four channels. It's there. You can't touch it. It didn't go stale. People grew up with it, were watching it at university, and oversees I get a lot about it – lots of expats, especially miserable ex-pats in South Africa, Australia, they remember it. Well they would wouldn't they? Being miserable (laughs). In many ways it was the perfect show. When I look back I see that it was good. Should I have done a Dave Angel sitcom? Maybe I should have, but at the time I was just enjoying it / not enjoying it.

The Brian Pern series' for BBC Four and BBC Two featured some great cameos - Sir Tim Rice, Monty Don, Christopher Eccleston, even Peter Gabriel. How did you get them? Did you approach them? Or did they approach you?

It was a mix. (Co-writer/ director) Rhys (Thomas) was very charming. He does like prog rock and Genesis and a lot of those people just don't get asked to do much. Some were reluctant, but then they saw the show on BBC Two and they got back to us – their agent's probably had a word with them. The Zombies asked to be in it, and they were turned down because they were not recognisable enough – (I said) 'you're turning down The Zombies? You can't do that!' Rod Stewart? He said 'no, I'll leave it to the actors,' and he was quite right, but we got Roy Wood and he was really good. The thing was that we didn't take the mickey, we were affectionate, we didn't push them out of their comfort zones.

Can we expect to see any more of Brian and Thotch on TV in the future?

There are no plans for more Brian Pern at the moment. The BBC said 'we're fine now for the moment, thanks.' (laughs)

How was it doing Alf Garnett / Till Death Do Us Part for the BBC's Lost Sitcoms series?

I didn't want to do it to be really honest, but I couldn't afford not to. They found one episode that wasn't racist and wasn't sexist. I thought that if I was going to do it, I wanted to do it as it was – and this isn't what the show was about. He was just a bit rude in it. But it was so good to be in.

Did you watch it back in the day?

I saw bits of it (growing up), but it was an odd one. I was more into watching Porridge, Monty Python, Dad's Army.

.....
Simon Day: In Character is at The Glee Club, Birmingham, on Sunday 15 October 2017, as part of Birmingham Comedy Festival.



Shall we dance?

Strictly winners Caroline Flack & Tom Chambers star in Crazy For You



What's a would-be Broadway hooper to do when his dreams of dancing with the Follies are dashed by a bungled audition?

In multi-award-winning Gershwin Brothers musical *Crazy For You*, starry-eyed Bobby Child is burdened with thwarted ambitions, as well as a boring day job in his family's banking business and the attentions of a girlfriend he doesn't love.

Sent by his mother on a mission to close the failing Gaiety Theatre out in Nevada, Bobby seizes the opportunity to get away from home, but soon ends up taking on more than he bargained for when he falls for the proprietor's daughter, Polly. Before long, he's decided to save their theatre by putting on a show of his own...

Joining the cast as Bobby and his frustrated fiancée, Irene, Tom Chambers and Caroline Flack both know a thing or two themselves about big dreams and how life often gets in the way of them. A few years back, almost at his wits' end with unsuccessful agents and auditions, Chambers was just about ready to give up on acting when he finally got the call from *Holby City*, off the back of a Fred Astaire routine that he'd recreated and sent out on spec.

"It was only when my agent fired me for not doing *Bob The Builder: The Arena Tour* that I decided to try this one last thing before I jacked it all in," says Chambers. "So I left London and went back to live with my parents, where I spent seven months watching this old VHS and trying to recreate it frame by frame. I sent out 1,000 copies, from which I got two replies. I'd actually gone into a fire station and got my papers to sign up to be a fireman when the phone rang to say I'd got an audition for *Holby City*. The

funny thing was that they were actually looking for an American actor, and they'd obviously decided that because Fred Astaire was American, I must be too!"

Meanwhile, theatre-trained Caroline Flack makes her professional stage debut in *Crazy For You*, following a 15-year career as a TV presenter.

"When I was a kid I sometimes performed at the local village hall, and we also used to go and see shows in Norwich and in the West End," says Flack. "When I was about 10, I can remember asking my mum if people really did that as a job, and deciding that was what I wanted to do. So it's been in me since a really young age. I was really driven - I enrolled in loads of different classes and got myself a scholarship, but then when I left college I got snapped up by a TV agent."

Now an experienced stage performer, Chambers has built up something of a reputation as a go-to lead for Golden Age shows, thanks to sensational stints in the likes of *Top Hat* and *Private Lives*. Yet although the class and glamour of the era clearly comes naturally to him, he's happy to own that, without his winning run on *Strictly Come Dancing*, it's unlikely he'd have got to where he is now. For fellow *Strictly* winner Flack, the show also marked a major turning point.

"It wasn't until I did *Strictly* that my training all came back to me, and Pasha, my partner, said to me, 'This is what you should be doing - this is what you love. It opened a new door to me because suddenly all these theatres and shows were like, 'Come and work for us!'"

Joining an experienced team as a newcomer can be daunting, but Flack has been warmly received both by audiences across the UK and by her fellow cast members.

"Caroline is an absolute gem. She's like a little dynamo!" gushes Tom. "She's got a great energy about her - a bit sassy and cheeky, which is perfect for the part. Of course, we know that her dancing is flawless, but I can also say that her acting and character work are sublime."

Part of this success is no doubt due to the care she took in choosing her debut part.



"Initially they did ask me to read for Polly, but when I looked at the script, I just thought, 'That's not me. I haven't got that classic musical voice - my singing style's a bit more jazzy and soulful, which is perfect for Irene. Getting the right first part was really crucial for me, because it's all such a learning curve.'"

For Chambers, meanwhile, playing Bobby is pretty much a dream come true.

"*Crazy For You* is probably my favourite musical of all time. It's one of the first ones I ever saw, when I was about 15 or 16. Although it's still Golden Era, the part is more classic Gene Kelly than Fred Astaire. Where *Top Hat* was very dapper and sophisticated and clipped, this is a bit more relaxed. And the script is just so funny! It's got all the key ingredients for me."

"The other thing about this production is that it's being done in a way in which the show has never been done before. Instead of having the orchestra in the pit, we've got music being played by the cast live on stage. So instead of a triple threat, it's like a quadruple threat - singing, acting dancing and playing instruments."

"When I first stepped into rehearsals, some of the cast had already been there a week, practising the music. I was just blown away when I heard them. I can't stress to you how talented they are. I've never met a group of people like it!"

.....

Crazy For You shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 24 to Saturday 28 October.



Hairspray The Musical

Birmingham Hippodrome, Mon 9 - Sat 14 October &
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 26 February - Sat 3 March 2018

'Bigger, brighter and *beautifuller!*' is how Hairspray star Brenda Edwards describes this latest incarnation of the hit musical. "Audiences can expect energy, a lot of laughs and some fantastic songs played by a phenomenal band."

Set in 1962, the Tony Award-winning show boasts a jukebox-worth of

'60s-style dance music and 'downtown' rhythm & blues. At its heart is the story of chubby teenager Tracy Turnblad, who enjoys an overnight rise to stardom when she earns the chance to appear on a local TV dance show.

One-time X Factor contestant Brenda takes the role of Motormouth Maybelle... "I think Motormouth's record shop is the central hub, where all the kids in the neighbourhood can come and hang out," says Brenda. "And the songs she sings are just fabulous! She has a big personality, just like me, so I think it's a perfect role."

Notorious

The REP, Birmingham, Fri 20 - Sat 21 October

An evening in the company of The Famous Lauren Barri Holstein has the potential to be a bit of a challenge for the faint-hearted. Her previous performance work has seen her engage in activities such as inserting a knife handle into her vagina and urinating on stage (although not at the same time, we hasten to add - that would be just plain wrong!). The Famous, as she's known, describes this latest show as a search for her real self - "for the pure me, behind this soiled shroud of promiscuity".



Pink Sari Revolution

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Wed 11 - Sat 21 October

This stage adaptation of a true story is based on the book by internationally renowned journalist Amana Fontanella-Khan. It's being presented as part of UK/India 2017, a year-long celebration marking India's 70 years of independence and showcasing British and Indian creativity.

Fusing together drama, music and movement, the production focuses on the pink-sari-wearing Gulabi Gang, a movement of over 400,000 women fighting for their rights in the 'Badlands' of Uttar Pradesh, where violence against females can be traced back into Indian mythology.

The show has been produced by the Belgrade in collaboration with Curve Theatre Leicester and West Yorkshire Playhouse.

Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Tues 24 - Sat 28 October

Joseph was Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's first foray into the world of musical theatre, paving the way for later offerings Jesus Christ Superstar and Evita. Fabulously fun and frothy, the show offers great entertainment for anybody who fancies the kind of night out that lets you leave your brain at home... X Factor winner Joe McElderry stars as Joseph.





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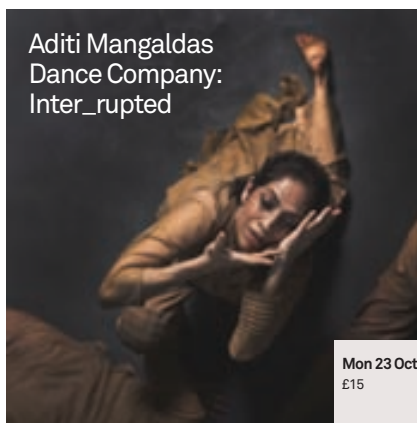


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Inter_rupted

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Boom Boom Pups**

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28 Oct
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Die Fledermaus Johann Strauss II
**From the House of
the Dead** Janáček
Eugene Onegin Tchaikovsky

Tue 31 Oct –
Sat 4 Nov
From £18



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AND WEST END
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MUSICAL

Beautiful
The Carole King Musical

Tue 7 –
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and Major Scales:**
The Vaudevillians

Sun 19 Nov
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Cilla The Musical

New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Tues 10 - Sat 14 October; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 14 - Sat 18 November

From Swinging '60s pop star to 21st century national treasure, Cilla Black enjoyed more than 50 glorious years in the showbiz limelight.

This brand new celebratory musical takes a look back at the life and times of the Liverpool lass who was Christened Pricilla White, and whose career was kickstarted by John Lennon's decision to introduce her to music mogul Brian Epstein.

Featuring all of Cilla's best-known hits, including Any-one Who Had A Heart, Alfie, Something Tells Me and Step Inside Love, the show stars newcomer Kara Lily Hayworth in the title role. "When I was 11, I was shopping with my mum, bumped into Cilla and asked for her autograph," recalls Kara. "I told her I wanted to be an actress - she laughed and said, 'It's a tough industry, but if you really work hard and go for it, you'll be just fine.'" "She was a huge inspiration to me as a child; I grew up watching her on Blind Date every Saturday night with my nan. To be chosen to play her is such an honour, and I'm so excited to be taking on the role."



Duet For One

The REP, Birmingham, until Sat 7 October

Belinda Lang - a late replacement for Jemma Redgrave - and Oliver Cotton star in this new version of Tom Kempinski's critically acclaimed two-hander.

Premiered in 1980 and adapted for the cinema six years later, the play is based on the story of Jacqueline du Pré, the legendary cellist whose life and career were tragically cut short by multiple sclerosis.



About A Bird

mac, Birmingham, Sat 28 October

"Our works are accompanied by a commitment to consistent improvisation," explain Reset Theatre, the West Midlands company behind this one-act farce. "After all, improv is perpetually relevant and immediate, as well as a little bit of fun."

Reset's autumn offering is based on the lives

of Romantic poets Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth, and on the story of how their groundbreaking composition, Lyrical Ballads, came into being. "About A Bird breathes a manic new life into history," say Reset. "It tells a story about a temperamental partnership and the nature of creativity. Our works are sometimes inspired by history and classics but are always tailored to the world around us."

Rita, Sue And Bob Too

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 17 - Sat 21 October

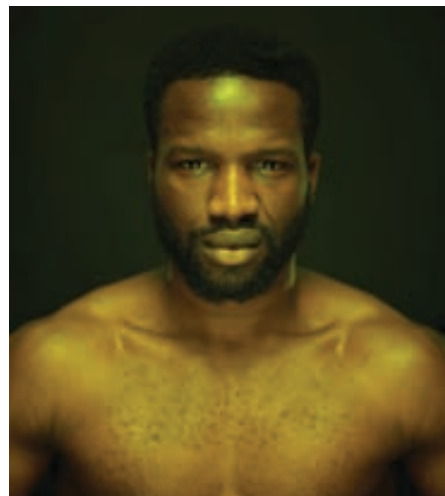
By the time Andrea Dunbar was 20, she had written two critically acclaimed plays - The Arbor, at the age of 15, and the wickedly funny Rita, Sue And Bob Too, four years later. Hailed a genius straight from the slums, Dunbar spent time in a Women's Aid refuge, had three children by three different fathers, developed a serious addiction to alcohol and died of a brain haemorrhage at the age of 29. Both of her plays, but particularly Rita, are shining examples of an extraordinary talent that burned brightly for all too short a time... When best friends Rita and Sue are given a lift home by married Bob after they've spent the evening babysitting his kids, they find themselves embarking on a sexual adventure that swiftly spirals out of control... The play's original director, Max Stafford-Clark, co-helms this major new production.

Coriolanus

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 14 October

By comparison with many of his works, Shakespeare's searing tragedy of political manipulation and revenge is rarely performed - although Ralph Fiennes' 2011 film version did help the play raise its head above the parapet a little.

Telling the story of the eponymous hero-soldier and his fractious and bloody relationship with the people of Rome, Coriolanus is here presented in a future world, and is the final entry in the RSC's Rome season. Sope Dirisu (pictured) takes the title role.



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Austentatious

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 28 October;
Bridge House Theatre, Warwick, Fri 17 November

Austentatious returns to the Midlands having garnered plenty of praise on its previous visits to the region.

Lighthearted and delightfully throwaway, it sees the performers using audience suggestions to develop a play that not only pays homage to Jane Austen but also generates plenty of laughter along the way.

The company's previous 'lost' Austen masterpieces have included *Sixth Sense & Sensibility*, *Double O Darcy* and *Mansfield Shark*, with no two performances ever the same.

"We're thrilled to be travelling the length and breadth of the country, rediscovering the lost classics Austen wrote and promptly forgot about," say Austentatious's cast of quick-witted comic performers. "We love and admire Jane's works, and the public deserve an intimate acquaintance with them, particularly the very prescient ones about Donald Trump!"



Wait Until Dark

Lichfield Garrick, Tues 10 - Sat 14 October;
Malvern Theatre, Tues 24 - Sat 28 October

With the arrival in her life of a conman searching for a heroin-packed doll, blind housewife Susy Hendrix finds herself fighting to survive... Written by Dial M For Murder playwright Frederick Knott and set in socially turbulent 1960s London, *Wait Until Dark* is best known from its 1967 movie incarnation starring Audrey Hepburn. This latest stage revival stars *Prime Suspect*'s Jack Ellis and *Coronation Street* favourite Oliver Mellor.



Cabaret

Malvern Theatre, Tues 10 - Sat 14 October

When a show visits the region which, between its stage and screen versions, boasts multiple Oscars, BAFTAs and Tony Awards, it makes sense to get along and check it out... Will Young here reprises the role of Emcee, with Louise Redknapp (pictured) stepping into the lead part of the legendary Sally Bowles, a nightly performer at the infamous Kit Kat Klub in early-1930s Berlin. Featuring 'show-stopping choreography, daz-

zling costumes and some of the most iconic songs in musical theatre' - including *Money* (makes the world go around) and, of course, the famous title number - the show is helmed by National Theatre Artistic Director Rufus Norris. Olivier Award-winning Javier de Frutos is the choreographer.



Obama And Me

Old joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham,
Wed 18 October

Black Brit Sylvia Arthur's one-woman show contemplates the political landscape of 2017, exploring the meaning of identity, politics, power and belonging 'in the post-post-racial 21st century'.

Now living and working in Brussels, Sylvia champions the benefits of a borderless EU. But just as America's first Black president, Barack Obama, faced resistance to his agenda, so too has Sylvia found her own dream crumbling beneath a European tidal wave of nativism, authoritarianism, misogyny and racism.

"I belong wherever I decide to belong," explains Sylvia in an interview with *The Fem*, "but whether or not I'm accepted there, or feel welcome, has a definite impact on one's sense of belonging."

"It's this space between belonging and acceptance, between the internal and the external, that I try to explore and excavate in my writing."

The Masks Of Aphra Behn

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 20 October

In the late 1660s, in the midst of the Second Anglo-Dutch War, a young woman returned home to England from a stint as a spy in Antwerp, only to be denied payment for her work by King Charles II...

The details of Aphra Behn's colourful life are sketchy, but it was around this time, crippled by debt and seeking a new source of income, that she began to write plays.

Behn would go on to become the country's first professional female playwright, achieving commercial success in the 1670s with her carnival comedy, *The Rover*. The play was last year revived to great critical acclaim by the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Claire Louise Amias stars as Aphra in this well-reviewed one-woman show.




**BEVERLEY
KNIGHT**
as THE FAIRY GODMOTHER

**DANNY
MAC**
as PRINCE CHARMING

**MATT
SLACK**
as BUTTONS

**SUZANNE
SHAW**
as CINDERELLA



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Awful Auntie

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 4 - Sat 7 October; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 18 - Sat 21 October; New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 22 - Sun 26 November

Frights, fights and friendships are the order of the day in this world premiere of David Walliams' much-loved story. At the centre of the tale is a young girl named Stella. The sole heir to Saxby Hall, she finds herself in danger of losing both her inheritance and her life when she comes up against her thoroughly unpleasant Aunt Alberta... Produced by the team behind the hugely successful stage adaptation of Walliams' Gangsta Granny, the show comes complete with a very old car, a very large owl, a very small ghost and plenty of opportunity to enjoy a jolly good chuckle.



The New Adventures Of Puss In Boots

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 23 October

If your kids are 'feline' in the mood for a sing-along show boasting plenty of audience participation and no shortage of music, magic and mayhem, then this brand new offering should leave them purring like the cat that got the cream.

Telling the terrific tale of a marvellous moggy who helps make his master the top, er, dog, the show stars Grand Theatre pantomime dame Ian Adams and Cats star Julie Paton.



64 Zoo Lane

Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 25 - Sun 29 October

Branding itself as 'a perfect introduction to theatre' for children aged three and older, this brand new family-friendly musical is based on the award-winning British-French children's television series of the same name. Coming complete with catchy songs, puppets and 'loads of fun', the show features all the telly programme's favourite characters, in-

cluding Georgina the Giraffe, Nelson the Elephant, Molly the Hippopotamus, Giggles & Tickles and, of course, the star of the show, seven-year-old Lucy.

The Girl And The Giraffe

mac, Birmingham, Tues 24 - Thurs 26 October

This thought-provoking Half Moon Theatre/Floods Of Ink production finds a girl making friends with a giraffe who really isn't very well. And not even bandages, a cup of tea and a magnificent cake make him feel any better. The giraffe's problems go deeper, and it's an altogether different kind of help that he needs...

Told from a child's perspective, The Girl And The Giraffe combines 'charming' puppetry, an 'enchanted' soundscape and 'beautiful' storytelling to carefully and sensitively explore themes around the subject of depression. The production is suitable for children aged between three and six.



Monstersaurus

The Roses, Tewkesbury, Wed 25 October; The Core, Solihull, Fri 27 October

Having created a whole world of whacky inventions and incredible monsters, young inventor Monty doesn't know what to do with them all...

The creators of Aliens Love Underpants make a return with this 'monster-ously good show', which comes complete with original music and plenty of audience participation.



Doris The Dragon

Stourbridge Town Hall, Tues 24 October

Doris's new home for down-and-out dragons - a dingy old castle whose owners have moved away - is proving to be a big hit with the dragon population. But when the members of her brand new fire-breathing family take turns looking after an unhatched baby dragon egg, it isn't long before all manner of mischief ensues... Boasting 'giddy games, panto-style slapstick and lots of audience interaction', this 100-minute show - suitable for children aged 10 and younger - has been written by Jonathan Blazer, a former producer of Sooty and Rainbow theatre tours.

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Crazier than You

Carrie Hope Fletcher stars as Wednesday in The Addams Family UK tour

With her upbeat, playful and down-to-earth persona, and the warmth, wit and wisdom she imparts to her scores of young fans, multi-talented singer, actor, writer and internet sensation Carrie Hope Fletcher has been described as everyone's favourite big sister. Lately, however, she's been appearing as a big sister of a rather different ilk, starring as the borderline-psychotic Wednesday Addams in the UK tour of Andrew Lippa's Addams Family musical.

Straight black pigtails and scathing, deadpan looks make quite a change from the bright, curly-haired Carrie that we're used to seeing. But is this really the first time she's been in touch with her dark side? With the show soon to arrive in Wolverhampton, we asked her whether she'd ever 'gone goth' before.

"I did!" she laughs. "I had a real emo phase when I was about 14. I wore lots of Hellbunny clothing, black lace, skulls and crossbones and stripy purple and black hoodies with cat ears on the hood. I was really into My Chemical Romance. In fact, just today, when I was peeking out of the Addams Family letterbox before the beginning of Act Two, I spotted a girl on the front row wearing a My Chemical Romance hoodie. It made me really happy!"

With her angsty teenage years now behind her, Wednesday Addams is pretty far removed from parts that Carrie's accustomed to today. Happily, the Carrie fanbase seems to have accepted Wednesday in all her wonderful weirdness.

"They've taken to her much more than I expected - everyone seems to really love her! I think it's partly because she's 18, and the majority of my online audience is between the ages of 18 and 24, so they can identify with her. She's great because she's such an advocate for being confident and being who you are no matter what anyone says. There's a great line she sings in *Crazier Than You*

which just sums her up so well: 'I'm crazier than you, so get on board or simply move along.'"

The version of Wednesday Carrie plays in the production is a bit older than previous incarnations - a fully fledged 18-year-old starting to assert her independence. Of course, she's never been one to stand for any mollycoddling or pay much heed to rules, but there are some lines that you simply don't cross - and one of them is falling for a boy like Lucas Beineke. Thankfully, his relative 'ordinariness' doesn't seem to have rubbed off on Wednesday too much, even if she does get overly worked up about how her 'meet the parents' dinner will play out.

"The thing about her is that instead of getting gooeey and lovey-dovey, she gets crazy. You know when you see a kitten that's so cute that you want to hurt it? That's Wednesday to a tee. She loves Lucas so much, she wants to kill him, almost!

"But I also think that she's attracted to the fact that she can look after him. Lucas loves the darker side of life, but he's still quite a vulnerable, normal boy who is very out of his depth with her. I think she likes that she gets to stand in front of him wielding her crossbow, daring anyone to call him a dork. We always joke that she would never become Wednesday Beineke, it would always be Lucas becoming an Addams. Over time, I think he'll definitely become more like them - I don't think he has any choice!"

Indeed, the process seems already to be underway in the song *Crazier Than You*, a turning point both for Wednesday and Lucas and for Lucas' overwhelmed parents, Mal and Alice. But while the characters battle it out to claim the title on stage, behind the scenes, says Carrie, it's Cameron Blakely, who plays her father, Gomez, who's the craziest. "He's basically the same person on and off stage,

just minus the Spanish accent!"

Carrie got her first taste of the show's music much earlier than her co-stars, having originally been invited to sing one of the songs, *Pulled*, in an Andrew Lippa concert. So enamoured was she by the idea of the show that she begged to be first in line for auditions if it ever came to the UK.

"I knew it wouldn't be exactly the same as the Broadway version because I'd heard that there'd been a few changes, so when I read it I was just so excited to find out what our story would be. I actually got the script about three or four weeks before we started rehearsals, and I was just itching to get to work straight away - it was everything I expected and more!"

Alongside her demanding role in the show, Carrie's also found time to promote her latest novel, *All That She Can See*, which was published in July. Conveniently, she's been able to sync up her stage tour with visits to bookshops near to the venues.

"It's been going really well. I had just over 200 people turn up to my signing in Manchester - and what's really nice is that a lot of the people who came had either been to see *The Addams Family* or were coming to see it, so it's lovely to be able to talk to them about that."

As if that wasn't enough, she's already writing something new, though won't reveal details yet...

"You'll just have to wait and see!" she exclaims.

.....

Carrie Hope Fletcher stars in *The Addams Family* at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday 17 to Saturday 21 October.

Sir Peter Wright's The Nutcracker



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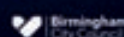
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**24 November –
13 December**





Birmingham Royal Ballet: Aladdin

Birmingham Hippodrome,
Tues 3 - Sat 7 October

As great introductions to ballet go, David Bintley's *Aladdin* is right up there with the best of them.

Recipient of widespread critical acclaim when first mounted a handful of years ago, the show is a fantastic way to get your kids in the mood for the soon-to-be-upon-them magic of Christmas.

Bintley's choreography, the dancers' exceptional performances, the stunning set designs of Dick Bird and a magnificent score by the Bafta Award-winning Carl Davis are beautifully combined to create a truly breathtaking production. Indeed, it's hard to imagine how the show could be any more magical even if the genie of the lamp himself had conjured it up.

Motionhouse: Charge

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 4 - Sat 7 October; The Roses, Tewkesbury, Tues 31 October; Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 13 March, 2018

Leamington-based Motionhouse's new multimedia show about energy is the third element of Kevin Finnan's 'Earth Trilogy'. It develops on the theme of 'man's relationship with water and the earth', as previously explored in *Scattered* (2009) and *Broken* (2013).

Making use of digital projections to create an on-stage world in which dancers and images interact seamlessly, the show features six performers using dance and acrobatics to explore the human body, 'tracing the incredible story of energy in our lives'. "Charge is an incredible collaboration be-

tween artists and scientists," explains Motionhouse co-founder Finnan. "I find the science behind the show fascinating, and I want to use my inspiration from this to create a presentation for audiences to enjoy - but which also makes them think about the role that energy plays in our lives."



Acosta Danza

Birmingham Hippodrome,
Wed 18 - Sat 21 October

Ballet star Carlos Acosta's Havana-based company stops off in Birmingham as part of its first ever UK tour.

Comprising performers trained in ballet and contemporary dance styles, the ensemble is building its reputation by presenting programmes of work which feature both new and existing pieces by Cuban choreographers. The UK show, which sees Acosta himself making a guest appearance, includes works by Cuban choreographer Marianela Boán and Sadler's Wells' Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui.



Autin Dance Theatre: A Positive Life

mac, Birmingham, Tue 17 October

Project-based professional company Autin Dance Theatre make a welcome return to mac with a show that 'delivers an uplifting and engaging message on self-love, sexual health and sex education'. An immersive theatre experience, inspired by the individual journeys of five characters around the issues of sex, love and relationships, the show brings together dance, physical theatre and spo-

ken word...

Birmingham-based Autin Dance have been performing across the Midlands and beyond since 2013.

"We draw on contemporary social issues and events to make work which is beautifully crafted, accessible and relevant," says founder Johnny Autin.

"The company is gaining a reputation for creating powerful performances, catapulting audiences into intense dance-worlds which we hope will resonate with them long after they leave the auditorium."



Aladdin

David Bintley's critically acclaimed production ventures into a fantastical world of genies, flying carpets and magic lamps...

Lachlan Monaghan and Yaoqian Shang are dancers with Birmingham Royal Ballet. Together they will be performing the lead roles of Aladdin and the Princess Badr al-Budur in Aladdin, which tours to Salford, Birmingham, Plymouth and London. After dancing with the ballet company for six and five years respectively, they are starting to break into principal roles and discover what it means to be at the top of their profession. Here, they talk about Aladdin, coping with long hours of rehearsal and what makes the perfect partnership.

To start, tell us a little about yourselves:

YS: My name is Yaoqian Shang, I am Chinese and I'm a Soloist with Birmingham Royal Ballet. I started dancing properly at Beijing Dance Academy when I was 9 years old and went to the Royal Ballet School when I was 16.

LM: I'm Lachlan Monaghan, I'm Australian and I'm a First Artist with Birmingham Royal Ballet. I started tap and jazz when I was about 11 because of my sister, and ballet when I was about 13. I went to the McDonald College in Sydney and then to the Royal Ballet School when I was 17.

Will audiences be familiar with the story of Aladdin, or is it quite different from the famous Disney film?

L: It is quite different. In the ballet our Director David Bintley goes back to the original story from the Arabian Nights rather than the Disney version. We don't have a monkey or a talking parrot but we do have flying carpets and genies!

You're less than two weeks away from your first performances at The Lowry in Salford. How are rehearsals going?

L: It's quite nerve-racking to think that we will perform our first show in less than two weeks. The first things you attempt to conquer in rehearsal are the pas de deux. As an audience member you might think the pas de deux or the solos are the hardest part, and they do have the most difficult steps, but actually it's all the transitions, interactions with the other characters and the props that are the difficult things to get a handle on. They take time to learn, and it's not really until we get to full cast rehearsals that we see it come together.

Alongside Aladdin and the Princess, do you have other roles you need to learn?

Y: I'm also performing as one of the Princess' attendants (one of her girlfriends), sapphires and rubies (the jewels that Aladdin finds in the cave). It's not too bad because all my other roles are quite short so it's not like I'm on the go all of the time.

L: I'm finding it difficult with the Djinn, Aladdin and also one of his two friends. There are a lot of scenes where all of those characters are on stage at the same time. For example, there are times where Aladdin and the Djinn are in the same scene, both fighting the Mahgrib, and the moves are one count after each other. It's certainly testing my brain, but it's really fun.

There must be fine balance between relaxing after a long day of rehearsals, and thinking over the work you've done that day. How do you manage that?

Y: I prefer to just switch off. I like to think about the work before I do it rather than later. There can be a lot of corrections, and if you keep thinking about them you just pile extra pressure on yourself, and I really don't like that. The next day, before I have rehearsals, I'll go through corrections then and see what I have to work on.

L: Immediately after rehearsal, I like to reflect a little bit on the positive things. There's always going to be something that's gone wrong – I don't think you ever walk away going 'well, that was perfect' – but that's the beauty of performing a character role because every day can be different. The way we play Aladdin and the Princess in our first show will be different from the way we play it in our second show. That's what's exciting – the growth, and the change, and responding to each other. I like to switch off as well; watch TV, listen to music, do all those normal things. It's good to chill out and remind yourself that, as brilliant as ballet is, there's a big world out there.

What do you think makes a good partnership, both in rehearsal and on stage?

Y: It's definitely important to have fun. We've had a lot of laughs.

L: There are some quite challenging lifts in Aladdin where, holding her weight, I'll have to go down on my knee and drop to the floor.

There have been some quite heavy crash landings to laugh about. I think it's really important to have a good sense of humour and to have fun.

Y: It's true. Also, Lachlan is so clever. I always say that; he just knows exactly where you are. We've never really danced together before Aladdin but we've worked really well from the start. With partnering you need to find your co-ordination together, and things feel different from one partner to another, but for us there's been nothing difficult that we've had to fix.

L: Yaoqian is brilliant; she's just such a natural dancer. There've been so many rehearsals where we hadn't even tried bits before, and decided to just do a section with the music. We'd do it and it would work, so we'd just keep going. We enjoy dancing together so much that each section just falls into place. That's what audiences seem to remember – the rapport of a partnership, and the way you look at each other.

Finally, if you weren't a ballet dancer, what would you be doing?

Y: I'd quite like to learn some interior design because I've always liked drawing but I've never had time to work on it properly. It's my dream to build my own house.

L: I'm very interested in photography. I think being a dancer teaches us so many skills, and being a dancer turned photographer is rare. I also play piano and my dream is to one day choreograph my own ballet, and also write the score. That's my ultimate goal.

.....

Birmingham Royal Ballet present David Bintley's Aladdin at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 3 to Saturday 7 October



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Helping you to plan ahead for the festive season...

Is that the not-too-distant jingling of Christmas bells we can hear?...

Yep, that's right, 'the season to be jolly' is once again on its merry old way, and will no doubt be upon us in the blink of a red-nosed reindeer's eye! At the time of going to print, for instance, we're just 51 short days away from the opening of the Christmas Markets in Birmingham City Centre, and 58 days away from the launch of the region's first panto - Cinderella at Coventry's Belgrade Theatre.

In short, it's time to start thinking about how best to celebrate and enjoy the fabulous festive season. If you're struggling for ideas, fear not - there are plenty of fun-filled events taking place across the region...

Looking for some Christmas gifts inspiration? Then check out next month's Festive Gift Fair at the NEC (16 - 19 November). With more than 350 stalls bursting with unique and unusual gifts, it's a one-stop shop to help you get your Christmas shopping wrapped up in plenty of time.

Wanting to sample a traditional Christmas? Then head to Blists Hill in Shropshire or the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, where

they'll be celebrating the season of good will in classic Victorian style.

Let it snow! One place where the fluffy white stuff is guaranteed is SnowDome in Staffordshire. The venue's Santa's Winter Wonderland attraction (17 November - 31 December) is always a seasonal hit, coming complete with real snow trail, an all-new Santa Show and real reindeer.

And with pantos aplenty reporting record early ticket sales this year, now's the time to book yourself a theatre seat. So if you're on the lookout for some on-stage yuletide magic, check out the below list of festive shows taking place at venues across the region this Christmas...



Festive shows across the Midlands...

TREASURE ISLAND Classic tale of buccaneers and buried gold, featuring live music, humour & puppetry, Sat 18 Nov - Sat 27 Jan, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ALICE IN WONDERLAND Embark on a magical adventure through the rabbit hole in Lewis Carroll's classic tale, Tues 20 - Sat 30 Dec, The Old Rep, Birmingham

CINDERELLA Featuring Iain Lauchlan as director and Dame, Wed 22 Nov - Sat 13 Jan, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Phil Davies, Kara Tointon and Adrian Edmondson star in Rachel Kavanaugh's version of Dickens' famous festive tale of redemption and compassion, Mon 27 Nov - Sun 4 Feb, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS Featuring Brad Pitt and Eric Smith, Wed 29 Nov - Sun 7 Jan, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ALADDIN Featuring CBeebies presenter Cat Sandion as Aladdin, Sam Rabone as Dame Widow Twankey and Ben Thornton as Wishy Washy, Thurs 30 Nov - Sat 6 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

THE ONE HUNDRED AND ONE DALMATIANS Debbie Issit's staging of Dodie Smith's delightful tale, Thurs 30 Nov - Sat 13 Jan, The REP, Birmingham

RAYMOND BRIGGS' FATHER CHRISTMAS Featuring live music, songs and playful puppetry, Thurs 30 Nov - Sat 30

Dec, mac, Birmingham

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY SISTERS A rootin' tootin' spaghetti western where the glass slippers have spurs, and the bells chime for high noon, Sat 2 - Sat 30 Dec, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

SLEEPING BEAUTY Sat 2 - Sun 31 Dec, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE LION, THE WITCH & THE WARDROBE Glyn Robbins' dramatisation of CS Lewis' much-loved fantasy, Sun 3 - Sun 16 Dec, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

SLEEPING BEAUTY Mon 4 Dec - Sun 7 Jan, Swan Theatre, Worcester

PETER PAN Swashbuckling pantomime adventure starring Bernie Clifton, Adam Kelly and Charlotte Griffiths, Wed 6 - Sun 31 Dec, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford

SNOW WHITE Starring Nicole Faraday and Britain's Got Talent winner Jai McDowall, Wed 6 - Sun 31 Dec, Palace Theatre, Redditch

SANTA'S MIXED-UP MARTIAN Featuring Santa, Ellie, Rudolph and a very friendly visitor from outer space, Thurs 7 - Sun 24 Dec, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

WIND IN THE WILLOWS Staging of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved riverside tale, Thurs 7 Dec - Sat 6 Jan, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

ROBIN HOOD Rock'n'roll version of a traditional adventure story, Fri 8 Dec - Sun 7 Jan, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Starring Malcolm Stent, Fri 8 - Sun 31 Dec, The Core Theatre, Solihull

CRIMES ON THE CHRISTMAS EXPRESS Alternative Christmas comedy for adults, Fri 8 Dec - Sat 6 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Starring Gareth Gates, Lisa Riley, Doreen Tip-ton, Ian Adams, Graham Cole and Adam C Booth, Sat 9 Dec - Sun 14 Jan, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS Fun-filled adventure for younger audiences, featuring clumsy sheep, lost birds, stranded farmers and mayors in a pickle, Tues 12 - Sun 31 Dec, Lichfield Garrick

THE SNOW DRAGON Tall Stories present a seasonal show featuring toe-tapping songs and lots of laughter for everyone aged three-plus, Thurs 14 - Fri 15 Dec, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

CINDERELLA Featuring Alison Hammond & Cbeebies' Paul Hawkyard, Thurs 14 Dec - Sun 7 Jan, Malvern Theatre

ALADDIN Starring Jonathan Wilkes and Christian Patterson, Fri 15 Dec - Sun 7 Jan, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

CINDERELLA Presented by All & Sundry, Sat 16 - Sat 23 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Dickens' supernatural tale of redemption and the Christmas spirit, Sat 16 - Sat 30 Dec, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

JERSEY BOYS Internationally acclaimed jukebox musical featuring all

the hits from Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons, Sat 16 Dec - Sat 6 Jan, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

DEAR SANTA Festive tale for younger audiences from the author of well-loved children's book Dear Zoo, Sun 17 - Sun 24 Dec, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CINDERELLA Starring soul diva Beverley Knight, Strictly star Danny Mac, Suzanne Shaw, comedy duo The Grumbleweeds, Hippodrome favourite Matt Slack, and Ceri Dupree and Phil Randall as the Ugly Sisters, Tues 19 Dec - Sun 28 Jan, Birmingham Hippodrome

PETER PAN: CHRISTMAS IN NEVERLAND Starring Bradley Walsh as Mr Smee, Martin Kemp as Captain Hook & Matt Knight as Peter Pan, Thurs 20 - Sun 24 Dec, Arena Birmingham

SKELLIG David Almond's haunting story of mystery, imagination and childhood... Thurs 20 - Sun 30 Dec, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE SNOW DRAGON Tall Stories present a seasonal show featuring toe-tapping songs & lots of laughter for everyone aged three-plus, Thurs 21 Dec - Sun 7 Jan, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

SNOW WHITE Fri 22 - Sat 30 Dec, Prince of Wales Centre, Cannock

SANTA'S CHRISTMAS WISH Festive musical adventure for two-to-seven-year-olds, Sun 24 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN Playful and inventive take on the well-known legend. Perfect for ages three-plus, Wed 27 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

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Blade Runner 2049 CERT tbc

Starring **Ryan Gosling, Harrison Ford, Ana de Armas, Mackenzie Davis, Jared Leto, Robin Wright, Dave Bautista, Lennie James, Edward James Olmos, Barkhad Abdi, Hiam Abbass**
Directed by **Denis Villeneuve (USA)**

It's been a long time coming. Regarded as one of the seminal sci-fi films of all time, Ridley Scott's original *Blade Runner* presented a grim but credible view of the year 2019 (from the perspective of 1982). The sequel jumps 30 years on and features Ryan Gosling as a younger blade runner (or android tracker) who discovers a frightening secret that could signal the end of mankind. So he searches for his legendary predecessor Rick Deckard (Harrison Ford), who has been missing for three decades...

The new director is none other than Denis Villeneuve, who, on the evidence of *Incendies*, *Prisoners*, *Sicario* and especially *Arrival*, is a worthy successor to Ridley. We don't know yet what role Mackenzie Davis plays, but she displays more than a passing resemblance to Daryl Hannah, who was Pris in the original. In 3D.

Released Thurs 5 October



CRITIC'S CHOICE

Film highlights released in October...



The Glass Castle

CERT 12a (127mins)

Starring **Brie Larson, Woody Harrelson, Max Greenfield, Sarah Snook, Naomi Watts**
Directed by **Destin Daniel Cretton (USA)**

Based on Jeannette Walls' 2005 memoir, *The Glass Castle* tells of the author's unconventional childhood. Leading a largely nomadic life, Jeannette grew up in abject poverty with her eccentric mother (Watts), alcoholic father (Harrelson) and three siblings.

Released Fri 6 October

The Mountain Between Us CERT tbc

Starring **Idris Elba, Kate Winslet, Dermot Mulroney, Beau Bridges**
Directed by **Hany Abu-Assad (USA)**

Based on the 2011 novel by Charles Martin, this survival romance sees Idris and Kate forced to rely on each other after their plane crashes in the snowy High Uintas Wilderness of Utah.

From the director of the Oscar-nominated Palestinian films *Paradise Now* (2005) and *Omar* (2013).

Released Fri 6 October



Loving Vincent CERT 12a (93 mins)

With the voices of **Douglas Booth, Jerome Flynn, Helen McCrory, Chris O'Dowd, Saoirse Ronan, Eleanor Tomlinson** Directed by **Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman (UK/Poland)**

Van Gogh would certainly approve. This is not just a biography of the troubled, legendary painter but the first fully painted animated film.

Each of the film's 65,000 frames is an actual oil painting on canvas, applying the same technique that Van Gogh himself used.

Released Fri 13 October

Film highlights released in October...

Thor: Ragnarok CERT 1tbc

Starring **Chris Hemsworth, Tom Hiddleston, Cate Blanchett, Idris Elba, Jeff Goldblum, Tessa Thompson, Karl Urban, Mark Ruffalo, Anthony Hopkins, Benedict Cumberbatch**
Directed by **Taika Waititi (USA)**

The world must be in trouble again. Actually, it's the Norse domain of Asgard that's looking doomed, but before the mighty Thor can put things to rights - and battle the loathsome Hela (Cate Blanchett) - he

must do battle with the Hulk, his former ally. It's complicated, okay? But what a cast: Ms Blanchett as the Norse goddess of death (a nice role if you can get it), fellow Oscar-winner Anthony Hopkins as Odin and Benedict Cumberbatch as Doctor Strange. The director Taika Waititi previously brought us the highly acclaimed New Zealand film *Hunt For The Wilderpeople* (2016). In 3D.

Released Tues 26 October

CRITIC'S CHOICE



The Lego Ninjago Movie

CERT tbc

With the voices of **Dave Franco, Justin Theroux, Michael Peña, Kumail Nanjiani, Abbi Jacobson, Jackie Chan**
Directed by **Charlie Bean, Paul Fisher and Bob Logan (USA/Denmark)**



The chunky Danish figures that were used to lampoon various superheroes in *The Lego Movie* (2014) and *The Lego Batman Movie* (2017) now take a swipe at the martial arts genre. Borrowing from the Lego Ninjago brand, this animated feature tells the story of six high school kids who struggle with their alma mater during the day but as ninja warriors kick major butt at night. In 3D.

Released Fri 13 October

The Party CERT tbc

Starring **Patricia Clarkson, Bruno Ganz, Emily Mortimer, Cillian Murphy, Kristin Scott Thomas, Timothy Spall**
Directed by **Sally Potter (UK)**

A black comedy from the director of *Orlando* (1992) and *The Tango Lesson* (1997), *The Party* starts with a merry, congratulatory get-together to toast the appointment of the new health minister (Scott Thomas). But you know what parties are like... The critics loved it.

Released Fri 13 October



The Ritual CERT 15 (94 mins)

Starring **Rafe Spall, Arsher Ali, Robert James Collier, Sam Troughton**
Directed by **David Bruckner (UK)**



If you go down to the woods... Here, we have another reunion (cf. *Girls Trip*, *Rough Night*), but this time the outcome for a quartet of old college friends is a little more supernatural and sinister...

Released Fri 13 October

The Snowman CERT tbc

Starring **Michael Fassbender, Rebecca Ferguson, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Val Kilmer, JK Simmons, Toby Jones**
Directed by **Tomas Alfredson (UK/USA)**

Not to be confused with the Raymond Briggs cartoon, this is actually based on the chilling 2007 Norwegian novel by Jo Nesbø. Michael Fassbender plays Detective Harry Hole, who follows up the disappearance of a woman whose pink scarf is found wrapped round the neck of a snowman. Tomas Alfredson previously directed the highly acclaimed 2011 film version of *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*.

Released Fri 13 October



The Death Of Stalin

CERT 15 (107 mins)

Starring **Steve Buscemi, Paddy Considine, Rupert Friend, Michael Palin, Andrea Riseborough, Jeffrey Tambor**
Directed by **Armando Iannucci (UK/France)**

When Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin shuffled off his mortal coil, a power vacuum - and a shambles - resulted in the Kremlin's corridors of power. Having dissected British politics in his TV satire *The Thick Of It*, the writer-director Armando Iannucci now turns his attention to Russia. And while he lays on the gags, he's not afraid to confront the horror, either.

Released Fri 20 October



Jungle

CERT 15 (113 mins)

Starring **Daniel Radcliffe, Alex Russell, Thomas Kretschmann, Yasmin Kassim, Joel Jackson, Jacek Koman** Directed by **Greg McLean (Australia/Colombia)**

Based on the real-life story of the Israeli backpacker Yossi Ghinsberg (Radcliffe), *Jungle* is a tale of survival and human endurance from the director of *Wolf Creek*. Hoping for new experiences, Yossi tags along with an American photographer (Russell) and a Swiss teacher (Kretschmann) and heads deep into the unforgiving heart of the Amazon. Not for weak stomachs.

Released Fri 20 October



Geostorm

CERT 12a (109 mins)

Starring **Gerard Butler, Jim Sturgess, Abbie Cornish, Ed Harris, Andy García, Alexandra Maria Lara** Directed by **Dean Devlin (USA)**

Now, when did we last talk about the weather? This sci-fi disaster movie looks into the future when a satellite initiative is de-

signed to mitigate the catastrophic effects of climate change. But when Hollywood messes with science... We can't wait. In 3D.

Released Fri 20 October

Happy Death Day

CERT tbc

Starring **Jessica Rothe, Israel Broussard, Ruby Modine, Rachel Matthews**
Directed by **Christopher B Landon (USA)**

Think *Groundhog Day* with a horrific twist: poor Tree (Rothe) is forced to re-live the day she died at the hands of a sicko in a mask and then wakes up to live her whole last day again.

What's really sad is that it's her birthday - and each day she is killed in a different way.

Released Fri 20 October

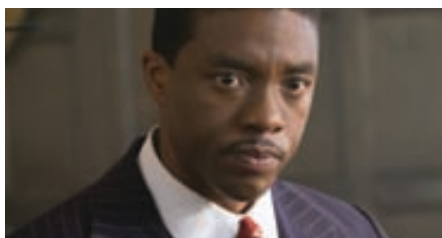
Marshall

CERT 15 (118 mins)

Starring **Chadwick Boseman, Josh Gad, Kate Hudson, Dan Stevens, Sterling K Brown, James Cromwell**
Directed by **Reginald Hudlin (USA)**

Thurgood Marshall (Boseman) was the first African-American justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. This is his story. Incidentally, Chadwick Boseman has previously played on film the American footballer Floyd Little, the baseball star Jackie Robinson and the singer James Brown.

Released Fri 20 October



Earth: One Amazing Day

CERT U (95 mins)

Narrated by **Robert Redford**
Directed by **Richard Dale, Lixin Fan and Peter Webber (UK)**

Utilising previously unavailable technology, this sequel to the BBC's *Earth* (2007) chronicles Nature in all its diversity over the course of one day. If it's anywhere near as good as the first film, this is one documentary you should not miss.

Released Fri 20 October

Breathe

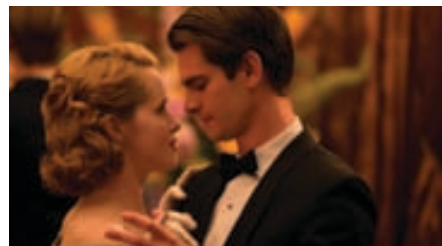
CERT 12a (117 mins)

Starring **Andrew Garfield, Claire Foy, Tom Hollander, Hugh Bonneville, Dean-Charles Chapman, Ed Speleers** Directed by **Andy Serkis (UK)**

Andrew Garfield plays Robin Cavendish, an

army man and entrepreneur who contracts polio and fights the disease like a warrior. Based on the inspiring true story of Cavendish - the film is produced by his son, Jonathon - the movie is scripted by William Nicholson OBE (*Shadowlands*, *Gladiator*, *Les Misérables*) and marks the directorial debut of Andy Serkis.

Released Fri 27 October



Call Me By Your Name

CERT 15 (132 mins)

Starring **Armie Hammer, Timothée Chalamet, Michael Stuhlbarg, Amira Casar, Esther Garrel**
Directed by **Luca Guadagnino (Italy/USA/Brazil/France)**

Based on the novel by André Aciman, this coming-of-age drama is set in north Italy during the summer of 1983. There, the 17-year-old Elio Perlman (Chalamet) lives an enchanted life reading and playing classical music. Then his world is turned upside down when he meets the handsome and charming American academic Oliver (Hammer), who's staying at his parents' villa.

Released Fri 27 October

Jigsaw

CERT 18 (109 mins)

Starring **Tobin Bell, Mandela Van Peebles, Laura Vandervoort, Brittany Allen, Callum Keith Rennie**
Directed by **The Spierig Brothers (USA)**

It was all meant to end with *Saw 3D: The Final Chapter* (2010). But you know what studios are like. *Jigsaw* is the eighth instalment in the *Saw* franchise and focuses on a series of murders that match the modus operandi of the twisted John Kramer (aka *Jigsaw*). But hasn't Kramer been dead for over a decade?

Released Fri 27 October





Kaleidoscope

Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre,
Coventry, Thurs 5 October -
Sat 9 December

The relationship between colour and form, rationality and irrationality, order and waywardness is the central focus of this celebration of 1960s' British art. Featuring work by more than 20 artists, Kaleidoscope turns the spotlight on the sense of repetition, sequence and symmetry that underpinned the style of the time - a style noted for its bold, artificial colours and unpredictable shapes and forms.


The show features examples of the mind-bending surfaces so closely associated with Op Art, the flattened repetition of Pop, the mathematical order of Constructivism and the sequential placement of brightly coloured abstract units found in New Generation sculpture.

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Pride And Persecution

The Barber Institute, Birmingham, Fri 27 October - Sun 21 January

The fascinating history of the Barber's Jan Steen masterpiece, *The Wrath Of Ahasuerus*, is explored in this exhibition. The show also focuses on the 17th century Dutch Golden Age during which the painting was produced, the emerging Dutch nation's links and associations with the Biblical Israelites and the connections of these paintings with contemporary Dutch theatre.

The Wrath Of Ahasuerus is one of 70-plus paintings by Steen which narrate scenes from the Bible and classical mythology and history. Despite his impressive output of artwork inspired by these subjects, Steen was better known for his exuberant, humorous and gently moralising scenes of everyday life.

Pride And Persecution is complemented by *Tales From History* (showing from 27 October to 18 February), an exhibition focusing on rarely shown prints and drawings by Steen's contemporary, Rembrandt, and some of the latter's pupils.

Quentin Blake: Inside Stories

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Sat 21 October - Sunday 17 December

An exhibition featuring the work of one of the world's best-loved illustrators, *Inside Stories* offers a unique insight into some of Quentin Blake's most popular creations.

The show features a huge range of the artist's drawings, not only from the Roald Dahl books with which he's most closely associated, but also from David Walliams' *The Boy In The Dress* and Michael Rosen's *Sad Book*.



Clive Barker: Pop Art. 1961 - 1981.

Wolverhampton Art Gallery,
Sat 21 October - Mon 1 January

It was while working with chrome-plated and leather car parts on the Vauxhall Motors assembly line that Clive Barker found the greatest inspiration for his art.

In the high-profile career which has followed, Barker has not only applied chrome finishes to his pieces but also chosen to work primarily in polished cast metals.

Widely considered to be the most important sculptor of the British Pop Art movement, Barker has produced work covering themes as diverse as portraiture, conceptual art, classical art and war & conflict.

This new exhibition, although celebrating a 20-year period in the artist's career, mainly focuses on work produced by Barker throughout the 1960s and into the early '70s.



Sofia Hultén: Here's The Answer, What's The Question?

Ikon, Birmingham, until Sun 26 November

This selection of sculptures, installations and films - contemplating the nature of the material world and the way people navigate it - constitutes the most comprehensive exhibition to date of Sofia Hultén's work.

Focusing on the Berlin-based artist's interest in shuffling the chronological order of things, the show includes highly rated video work *Nonsequences*, in which a sequence of events is re-enacted to defy expectations of cause and effect.

One example of this features an apple, which, having been polished on jeans, is then dropped into dirt before being disposed of in a plastic bag. This is followed by a sequence in which the apple is placed in the bag *before* being dropped in dirt.

In Hultén's art, common sense no longer holds sway, as the artist provides the viewer with answers to which they must then make up the corresponding questions.



The Horse Of The Year Show

NEC, Birmingham, Wed 4 - Sun 8 October

Now heading towards its 70th anniversary, the Horse Of The Year Show was launched in 1949 as a way to mark the end of the equestrian season.

The event has undergone considerable change since that inaugural show with its 400 entries. Nowadays there are 1,600 horses and ponies taking part, with competitors numbering 1,500 and a staggering 65,000 spectators sampling the show's numerous delights.

Highlights this year include two never-before-seen displays from Atkinson Action Horses and The Caspian Horse Society. There's also a full programme of International Showjumping classes, one of which includes the world-famous Puissance.

Other featured attractions are a dressage masterclass from former Olympic gold medallist Charlotte Dujardin and the ever-popular Virbac 3D worming Pony Club Mounted Games.

The 24th Carole Nash Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show

Staffordshire County Showground, Sat 14 - Sun 15 October

Club stands, live action, autumn sales, classic off-road machines and special guest stars from iconic eras of motorcycling are all featured in a show which regularly welcomes more than 30,000 enthusiasts through its doors.

Celebrating the growing popularity of emerging and modern classics from the 1960s, '70s and '80s, the show features hundreds of traders and dealers, as well as numerous autojumble stands offering a wealth of parts and spares for every project.



Wedding Fair

Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, Sat 21 - Sun 22 October

This month's show features wedding experts aplenty, offering advice on everything from flowers and favours to cakes and cars.

Bridal boutiques, florists and catwalk shows are all present and correct too, as is the Vintage Village, celebrating the ever-evolving trend for yesteryear-style weddings.

The Motorhome And Caravan Show

NEC, Birmingham, Tues 17 - Sun 22 October

Attracting huge crowds and filling numerous halls of the NEC, the Motorhome And Caravan Show 2017 is promising to be 'bigger and better than ever'.

The always-popular event features hundreds of UK exhibitors, offering visitors the chance to check out all the new 2018 caravan, motorhome, holiday home, trailer tent and folding caravan models.

The show also provides free help and advice on all aspects of touring - from finance, insurance and security to the best tow cars on the market. A wide range of accessories are available at show-only prices.





Disney On Ice Presents Passport To Adventure

Arena Birmingham, Wed 18 - Sun 29 October

Yep, it's that get-your-skates-on time of year again, with Disney's ever-popular line-up of children's favourites once more taking to the ice to astound and delight.

This time out, Midlands families are invited to explore the African Pride Lands with Simba and friends, voyage to Ariel's underwater kingdom and fly from London to Neverland with Peter Pan. They also travel to Arendelle, for an 'extraordinary' adventure with sisters Anna and

Elsa, mountain-man Kristoff and huggable snowman Olaf.

And for those who like their Disney characters more 'long in the tooth', there are appearances by Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald, Goofy and Daisy.

Oh, and there's also a pre-show party featuring Zootropolis to enjoy, to help get your youngsters in the mood for all the fun to come.

The Birmingham Literature Festival 2017

Various venues, Sat 7 - Sun 15 October

A host of top literary talent has been lined up for the 20th Birmingham Literature Festival. From humble beginnings back in 1998, the event has developed into one of the city's most high-profile celebrations of the arts.

Highlights this year include contributions from India's best-selling female writer, Preeti Shenoy, debut novelist Chinelo Okparanta and children's writer Christopher Edge.

There's also a showcase of work produced by marginalised writers across the UK, a collection of pieces by up-and-coming regional authors, performances of poetry and numerous debates.

An evening with Birmingham comedian Joe Lycett and Yardley MP Jess Phillips also features.



Mad Science Children's Activities

Ragley Hall, Warwickshire, Thurs 26 October



'Education wrapped in entertainment' is the name of the game at Mad Science's hugely popular interactive learning events.

The science-themed shows offer children the chance to thoroughly engage in all manner of imaginative pastimes. These include creating foggy dry ice storms, finding out how a foam factory functions, building super-bouncy balls, making magic mud and altering soundwaves. And if that little lot doesn't wear out the kids and buy you some much-needed half-term peace and quiet, then nothing will!

Grand Designs Live

NEC, Birmingham,
Wed 11 - Sun 15 October

The UK's leading contemporary home show makes its annual visit to Birmingham this month, with design guru Kevin McCloud once again presiding over proceedings. Kevin hosts various events in the show's Grand Theatre, where guest speakers offer tips and advice on a variety of homebuilding issues. This year's show also features tons of inspiring ideas, state-of-the-art bathroom products, suggestions for making the most of available kitchen space, and 'must have' products for gardens and outdoor spaces.



Dive 2017

NEC, Birmingham,
Sat 21 - Sun 22 October

Boasting hundreds of exhibitors - including manufacturers and retailers of diving equipment, and travel agents offering dive holiday destinations - Dive 2017 also features an unrivalled programme of guest speakers.

Special features include two large in-hall presentation stages, pools, mini-theatres, TekDeck and prominent dive-travel, training and underwater photography areas.

Half-term fun at the Motor Museum

British Motor Museum, Gaydon,
Warwickshire, Sat 21 - Sun 29
October

Get your motor running in the direction of this hugely popular visitor attraction this half term. Activities include numerous art-based workshops, a brand new trail for kids to enjoy in the company of costumed guides and, returning by popular demand, the Black Cat Halloween trail.

Join Us for
Spooktober!



Take part in spooky story walks, creepy arts and crafts, freaky face painting and more at Birmingham Botanical Gardens this October half term.

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Tamworth Castle

Autumn fun & activities

Haunted Castle
Mon 23rd to Fri 27th October
11.30am-4.00pm
Bring the family to enjoy the ghostly goings-on at the Castle. You'll encounter a series of spooky characters and activities as you tour the Castle. Complete the challenges set by the horrible hags, and try not to lose your body parts as you meet Master Slaughter! Have you got the courage to complete the tour?

Children's Halloween Evening
Sat 28th October 5.00pm-8.30pm
A fun evening hosted by the Friends of Tamworth Castle charity. Bring all the family, get dressed up in your spookiest costume and enjoy the ghostly goings on around the Castle. This is a very popular event, so please book your time slot in advance.
For information regarding the Friends of Tamworth Castle charity please visit www.tamworthcastlefriends.org

Half-term hunting, spooky family fun, fireworks, ghost search and lanternry!

Ghost Search
Tues 31st October 7.30pm-Midnight
Join us for a night with a difference on our ghost walk around the Medieval Castle, with vigils conducted in reputedly haunted rooms. Cameras or camcorders can be used, and we advise warm clothing and rugs or cushions for use during the vigils as rooms can be chilly!

Bonfire Night
Sat 4th November 5.00pm-8.00pm
This is a chance to visit Tamworth Castle after dark before enjoying the ever-popular breath-taking firework display in the Castle grounds. Castle Grounds activities start at 6.00 pm, with Fireworks at 8.00 pm. There is no access to Castle tower or parapets to view the firework display. Visitors cannot enter the Castle after closing time at 8.00 pm, or during the firework display.

Lanternry - 'The lantern-lit story!'
Sat 18th November
Join us in a brand-new storytelling concept that follows the exploits of Raika a young thief as he attempts to acquire treasures from the Castle. The story is revealed in parts as visitor's tour through the Castle lit by lantern light.
Family slots every half hour from 5.00 pm-7.30pm
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Great
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Halloween Nights

The Black Country Living Museum, Dudley,
Wed 25 - Sat 28 October

Expect ghouls and ghosts and goblins to be dancing around the Black Country Living Museum this month, as the popular visitor attraction gets into the Halloween 'spirit'. Treats, tricks and 'terrifying tales of old' abound, the venue's gaslit streets coming alive with all manner of street entertainment. The museum's mine has been suitably spookified for the occasion, and there's also the chance to win a prize for best-dressed ghoul in a costume parade.

Alton Towers' Scarefest

Alton Towers Resort, Staffordshire,
Sat 7 - Sun 8, Sat 14 - Sun 15 and
Fri 20 - Tues 31 October

Alton Towers' hugely popular Scarefest attraction makes a welcome return this month.

The venue has a great reputation when it comes to putting the heebie jeebies up its October-time visitors - but only in a family-friendly way, of course!

Alongside the theme park's impressive selection of usual rides, the Staffordshire visitor attraction is hosting four live shows for very young children. There's also a House Of Monsters maze and Freak Show scare-zone to sample, as well as four terrifying scare mazes for those who consider themselves the bravest of the brave.



Ghostly Gaslight

Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge,
Sat 28 October

This spine-tingling but family-friendly annual event sees the amiable characters of Blists Hill Victorian Town replaced by ghosts, ghouls and creepy-crawlies.

When night falls and street lamps cast their shadows across the cobbled streets, visitors are advised to keep their eyes and ears open, as weird apparitions and spooky sounds take over the town's shops, cottages and work places. Anybody who fancies doing some 'spooking' of their own is more than welcome to hit the fancy-dress shop beforehand...



Halloween Spooktacular

British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry, Shropshire, Friday 27 October

We're reliably informed that 'staff are readying the fake blood and scream-inducing decorations' at the British Ironwork Centre, where youngsters who enjoy feeling the hairs on the back of their necks stand on end are set to enjoy some ghoulish fun at the end of the month.

Highlights include a whole host of spooks and spectres, the venue's classic pumpkin hunt, a 'devilishly delicious' doughnut challenge and both pumpkin and face-painting opportunities. Visitors who think they're brave enough can also take on the challenge of the 'fear boxes', or head for the 'scream-extracting' terror tunnel (over-12s only). Fancy dress is of course encouraged, with prizes to be won for the ghouliest of outfits.



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GHOSTLY GASLIGHT

SAT 28 OCT
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Includes
family
fireworks
display



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6pm - 9pm

Includes spectacle
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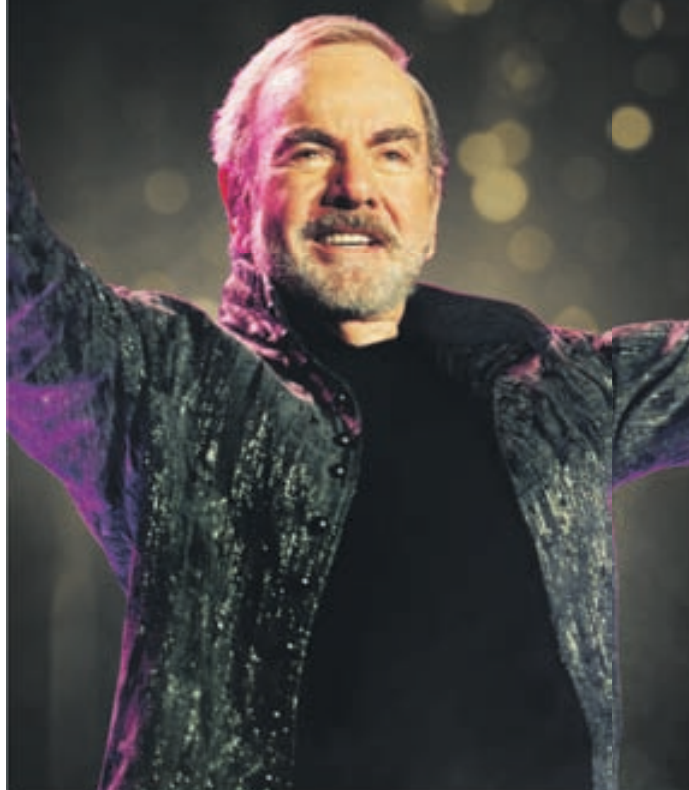
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Spooky previews from around the region

Spooky Science Week

Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum,
Mon 23 - Fri 27 October

There's no shortage of spellbinding fun to be had at Thinktank during this month's half-term school holidays.

An after-hours Spooky Science Night (Sat 28, 6 - 9 pm) includes eerie experiments and a science-of-fright show, not to mention encounters with creepy crawlers in the company of Thinktank's expert handlers. Arrive attired in fancy dress and you'll be entered into a 'fantastic' prize draw on the night.

More spooktacular fun can be enjoyed over at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery on 25 October, when a Monster Party in the Waterhall Gallery includes music, dancing and plenty of ghoulish games. And the Halloween fun continues at the venue throughout the week, courtesy of some gruesome object handling sessions and a spooky portrait studio.



Spooktober

Birmingham Botanical Gardens,
Mon 23 - Fri 27 October

Birmingham's Botanical Gardens is promising visitors the chance to get up close and personal with cackling witches, petrifying pumpkins and

ghastly ghouls this Halloween season. Spooky storytelling, freaky face-painting and an opportunity to make some scary arts & crafts are among the October attractions at the popular venue.

There's even a spot of pond-dipping thrown in for good measure!

More Treat Than Trick

Drayton Manor Theme Park,
Sat 14 - Sat 26 October

Drayton Manor Park is inviting families to dust off their broomsticks and batwings and treat themselves to some ghoulish Halloween fun this month.

Creepy capers to enjoy include the chance to see the ever-popular Thomas Land attraction transformed into the 'spooktacular' Island of Sodor. More-courageous youngsters can face their fear of the unknown by taking part in the 'five mys-

tery boxes' challenge. The theme park's fabulous white-knuckle rides provide the perfect opportunity to add a churning stomach to that Halloween-induced tingling spine!



Halloween Family Boat Trips

Dudley Canal Trust, Fri 27 - Tues 31 October

What better way can there be to get into the Halloween spirit than by exploring Dudley Canal Trust's naturally spooky tunnels and caverns? The Trust is running special children's boat trips this half-term holiday, during which youngsters will encounter some truly impressive glow-in-

the-dark Halloween puppets.

The boat trips are 'spooky' but not scary, and should be suitable for children over three years of age.

And the fiendish fun doesn't end there. On various days of half-term week, families can get creative with a selection of Halloween-themed craft activities. Children can make a witch or wizard hat, have a go at creating an animal superpower potion and add a spooktacular creation to the Trust's gruesomely ghastly ghostly gallery.

Haunted Castle

Tamworth Castle, Staffordshire,
Mon 23 - Fri 27 October

Take advantage of this long week-end of ghostly goings-on at Staffordshire's spooktacularly haunted castle.

There are Halloween activities aplenty to sample, including the chance to play ping-pong eyeballs with some not-entirely-pleasant hags. Visitors are also advised to keep their wits about them throughout their stay, to ensure they remain beyond the clutches of the eerie executioner and the ever-so-spooky St Editha...

Ghost Tour

New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, Fri 27 October

It's believed that at least five ghosts haunt the nooks and crannies of the New Alexandra Theatre, and this sure-to-be-fun ghost tour offers a great opportunity to meet them! For super-brave ghostbusters, there's even an add-on 'lock in' event, offering the chance to experience the auditorium in the dark and disconcerting depths of the night. Don't forget your torch. And your big bag of courage.

Torch-Lit Pumpkin Walk

Bodenham Arboretum, Kidderminster, Worcestershire,
Fri 27 - Sun 29 October

Apple bobbing, marshmallow toasting, spooky storytelling and creepy craftmaking keep the kids active and amused at this special Halloween event.

The main attraction, though (as ably evidenced from the event's title) is the torch-lit pumpkin walk, a fun undertaking that sees families making their way round the big pool in search of pumpkins with letters carved into them. Unscramble the letters to make a Halloween word - and when you're done, grab yourself a bowl of pumpkin soup to keep the nighttime chills away! Visitors are invited to bring along their very own carved pumpkin - there's a prize for the best one...

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Images, left to right: Julian Eade, Andrew Muir, Thomas Glover and Scandinavian by Design

Nick Mulvey

Following a triumphant Glastonbury performance, British singer-songwriter Nick Mulvey embarks on a new tour in support of his new album *Wake Up Now*. Lauren Foster recently caught up with Nick to find out more..

Your new album, *Wake Up Now*, is out now. Can you tell us a little bit about it?

Sure! It's an album I wrote in parallel with my wife's pregnancy and the birth of our first kid. We recorded it last October in Real World studios, which is Peter Gabriel's studio out in Wiltshire. The songs look at the role of self-enquiry in our understanding of our predicament. I was ready as a writer to start having a bit more of an outward perspective. My first record was insular, and I think I was ready as a writer to look outwards. That feeling was amplified by becoming a dad and having that natural thing where you have a sense of responsibility for your small part of the world. Also, it was a product of the fact of writing an album in 2016 - it felt impossible not to talk about some of the big issues going on that are so prevalent right now. If you've grown up in the horn of Africa, or you were made homeless because there's not enough support for people at a certain level in housing, then issues have been screamingly loud for a long time, but the difference is that now, they allow for all of us. It's an increasingly exhausting act to be in denial about what's going on in the world. I couldn't do it. This album is a response to that.

Does it differ much from your debut album, *First Mind*?

The songs being more outward-looking is reflected a bit in the recording process as well, which is a difference between the two. I realised I needed to record in a very live way, with a group of musicians all in the same room. That way, you have sonic spillage over the microphone, so that there are symbols on

the guitar mics and guitar mics on the vocal mics. It means you can't be such a control freak because you can't edit afterwards as much. You can't take out that instrument or rejig that structure. You have to commit to the structure and you have to go for the take. All of that was enormously helpful for me as an artist. It gave me a lot of confidence just to be like 'fuck it, let's do it like this'. It was a lot of fun; it freed me up just to play music and made it a really exciting journey.

What's the meaning behind the title?

The album is fundamentally about waking up to the mystery of life and celebrating being alive, and I don't mean just being alive in the sense that we normally mean. I think we've constantly overlooked the mystery of our own being, and that has a key role in our over-consumption, which is driving the planet to the edge. Therefore a greater sense of the mystery of absolutely every moment of every day has a role to play in our sense of knowing that we are already enough - and that's a joyful thing. That sense of joy and wonder is hard to feel if you live in debt or live with chronic pain, for example. It's hard to walk around going 'oh every day is wonderful'.

The track *Myela* was born out of the refugee crisis. Can you elaborate on this?

It was something I felt very strongly about, as was the cynicism of much of the British media. I was confused by that and wanted to write about it. I had this chord sequence that was brewing for many months. Loosely

speaking, it was kind of flamenco, although my Italian friend that I worked with on this song, Federico Bruno, said that the sequence reminded him of Southern Italy - so it's kind of Mediterranean, and that was important. We recognised that we couldn't write our own words about it because what experience do we have, so we decided to do some research and do it properly. We were inspired by Peter Gabriel's song, *Biko*, which is about Steve Biko and apartheid in South Africa in 1980, and which takes a more journalistic approach. We looked at online archives of refugees' accounts of their own journeys, and the song started to flow from that. We were fictionalising these characters. For example, there's a 10-year-old boy called Deogratius from Nigera, and when they asked him why he'd gone to Italy, he said he'd rather die once in the sea than die every day staying at home. From a 10-year-old kid that was just devastating to read, and that became the song. It was something I felt like I wanted to write. It's not perfect - people have told me that the 'I am your neighbour' bit at the end is a bit wordy, but the thing is, it's not saying a song is going to change the world. I don't think a song could change the world. People could change the world, but that's why songs matter, because our attitudes and actions are all shaped by the things we absorb, so I wanted to write something that mattered.

Last year saw the birth of your son, Inka. How's fatherhood treating you?

It's amazing! It's a wonder. We live in a barn where there are no stairs, but at the moment,



whilst I'm releasing the album, we've all moved to London, and there are stairs in this house and he just can't believe it! We just go up and down, up and down, up and down, and I'm happy because he's going to tire himself out and have a good sleep. That was me from 6.45am until about 8.30am, just up and down the stairs - it was joyful. It's hardcore as well. I've been very busy this summer and it's really stretched me to the edge. Being a parent brings up all your shit, you know - you realise where you're at, not where you think you're at. It's an amazing test, and I'm failing and having a wonderful time, if you know what I mean.

What's your dream collaboration?

I would love to collaborate with PJ Harvey. I think she's amazing. I love and admire the way that she dedicates her art to speaking about things that matter, I'm really inspired by that right now.

What's your first musical memory?

There was a lot of music in the house. My dad would always crank the music up and really enjoy it. Stuff like ZZ Top in the car. When you're five years old, that's massive. It completely blows your mind and is a really powerful experience. A little bit later, my sister used to feed me a lot of music, the cooler stuff like Massive Attack and

Portishead and hip-hop, De Le Soul and stuff like that. She fed me a lot of hip-hop and drum and bass and jungle - a lot of stuff I went on to love.

You're well known on the festival circuit. Do you have a favourite festival?

I always love Green Man Festival. The curation, they always nail it there, and it's a beautiful site. I love Womad - always a winner. I love Glastonbury as well.

You opened Glastonbury's Pyramid Stage in 2014. What an achievement...

Yeah, it was awesome. It was the beginning of something, I feel. I still feel that on the second record. I feel like I have something to prove on this record and I'm excited to see where it goes.

You run a series of Meet Me There events throughout the country. Can you tell us a little bit about those?

It came from when we were releasing singles from my last album. We'd just got home, I was chatting to fans on the internet and my wife said, 'What do you think would happen if we put a postcode and a time?' I have a song called Meet Me There, which was the single that was on the radio at that time, so we just thought, let's try it. We put the name of a park around the corner from our house,

7pm, Meet Me There, and about eight people turned up. It was brilliant, and our mate came down and we filmed it. We never explained it, we just put the film up the next day. A week later, we did a different location somewhere else in Central London and 30 people came. A month later, it was 100.

You're playing Birmingham's O2 Institute in October. What can audiences expect from your show?

It's new level for me. This band is freer and we have a deeper connection than I've ever had before with musicians. I'm really, really excited about this UK tour. We're going to make a lot of people happy and we're happy doing it. I can't wait for them to meet the band. To my left on stage, so to their right, is Frederico Bruno, and he is amazing. He's a really special character and he's having a ball. He's very free and he's playing a lot of different instruments. Then, on my right, stage left, is Fifi. These are really old, dear friends of mine, and I can't believe we're all in a band together. She's a secret weapon - she's amazing. People are going to enjoy it.



Nick Mulvey performs at O2 Institute, Birmingham on Monday 9th October

Your week-
by-week
listings guide
October 2017

the list

Emeli Sandé at Genting Arena, Birmingham - Wed 25 October

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

What's On

Sun 1 to Sun 8 October



Texas play Symphony Hall

Sun 1 October

Mon 9 to Sun 15 October



Simon Amstell at
Birmingham Town Hall

Sun 15 October

Mon 16 to Sun 22 October



Birmingham Chocolate Festival
in Brindleyplace

Sat 21 October

Mon 23 to Tues 31 October



BRICK Live at the NEC

Thurs 26 - Sun 29 October

THROUGHOUT OCTOBER

Visual Arts

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

I WANT! I WANT!: ART & TECHNOLOGY A curated selection from the Arts Council Collection - with key loans from other major collections - that presents the work of contemporary artists using new technologies, until Sun 1 Oct

MY STORY, OUR JOURNEY: SIKH MIGRATION INTO BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY Exhibition tracing the journey of the Sikhs from rural Punjab to modern-day Britain, exploring how and why they've travelled to, and settled in, Birmingham and the Black Country, until Sun 22 Oct

KNIGHTS OF THE RAJ Exhibition featuring rare photographs, unique artefacts, videos, interactive displays and oral histories that tell the fascinating story of the much-loved British curry, until Sun 7 Jan

NEW BEYOND THE BATTLEFIELD: FACES OF PEACE & WAR Amateur photographer Käthe Buchler photographed the German home front during the First World War. Her black & white images feature members of her family, working children and a series called 'women doing men's jobs', Fri 20 Oct - Sun 14 Jan

FAITH IN BIRMINGHAM, Exploring how different faiths have influenced and shaped the city, until Sun 3 Feb 2019

BOM (B'ham Open Media)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HUMANS Exhibition considering the relationship between humans and machines, and the systems that control them. The show brings together three artists - Pete Ashton (Birmingham, UK), Kyle McDonald (Los Angeles, USA), Nye Thompson (London, UK), until Sat 16 Dec

Ikon Gallery

ANNA MOLSKA: THE WEAVERS/DIE WEBER Molska's 12-minute 2009 film, *The Weavers/Die Weber*, is based on Gerhart Hauptmann's 1894 play, which in turn was inspired by the 1844 rebellion of Silesian weavers against harsh working conditions and the poverty of their lives, until Sun 26 Nov

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST: KÄTHE KOLLWITZ Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945) was one of the leading artists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The exhibition features around 40 of her works from the British Museum's remarkable print collection, presented alongside material drawn from other

UK public collections, until Sun 26 Nov

SOFIA HULTÉN: HERE'S THE ANSWER, WHAT'S THE QUESTION? Through a combination of sculptures, photographs and films, Hultén conveys an ongoing preoccupation with the material world and the way in which we navigate it through time, until Sun 26 Nov

mac, Birmingham

THE HOP PROJECT Exploration of the historical migratory movements of hop-pickers and the social and political implications of hop production in the West Midlands, until Sun 12 Nov

MADE AT MAC: PAINTING AND DRAWING TO MUSIC Exhibition of work by the students, exploring how music can inspire abstract visual forms in painting and drawing, until Sun 19 Nov

THE FENCE AND THE SHADOW This series of paintings by artist Dr Sally Payen is based on her exploration of the contested landscape of Greenham Common and the women's peace camps and anti-nuclear protests that took place there in the 1980s, until Sun 26 Nov

RBSA Gallery

NIGEL PRIDDEY RBSA A selection of new watercolour landscapes in Nigel's bold and distinctive style, until Sat 7 Oct

ROBERT NEIL PRBSA A selection of strikingly life-like portraits in oil, until Sat 14 Oct

SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF DESIGNER-MAKERS Birmingham City University's School of Jewellery's annual degree show, until Sat 28 Oct

STARLIGHT Exhibition of art that explores the spectacle and wonders of outer space, from jewellery inspired by meteorites and shooting stars to space-age ceramics and ethereal glass, until Sat 27 Jan

NEW AROUND THE JEWELLERY QUARTER RBSA artists Wayne Attwood, Ed Isaacs and John Shakespeare depict past and present places, people and architecture to capture this famous area of the city, Mon 2 - Sat 14 Oct

NEW ROBERT PERRY RBSA: SUNLIGHT 3 New paintings and drawings inspired by the enchanting effects of light upon landscapes, Mon 2 - Sat 14 Oct

NEW ELAINE HIND RBSA - BOTANICA Detailed and delicate porcelain vessels and sculptural pieces inspired by the forms, patterns and colours of plant life, Mon 2 Oct - Sat 18 Nov

NEW DENNIS MINCHIN RBSA A colourful display of bright and beautiful floral studies in acrylics and oil, Mon 9 Oct - Sat 18 Nov

Gigs

LORDE Sun 1 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SAINT PHNX Sun 1 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

HABADEKUK Sun 1 Oct, Lichfield Guildhall

TEXAS Sun 1 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

GERRY COLVIN Sun 1 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

DENAI MOORE Mon 2 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

RIVRS Mon 2 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

HANNAH JAMES AND GRACE PETRIE Mon 2 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

KIP MOORE Mon 2 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

KING NO-ONE WITH SPECIAL GUESTS Tues 3 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

STEVIE PARKER Tues 3 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

STATE OF THE UNION Tues 3 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

LOYLE CARNER Tues 3 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TOM HILL'S 70'S JAZZ FUNK MACHINE Tues 3 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham

MEGSON Wed 4 Oct, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

THE STRYPPES Wed 4 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SHELLY QUARMBY BAND Wed 4 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham

DEAD PRETTIES Wed 4 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

STRANGE BONES Wed 4 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

IN HEARTS WAKE Wed 4 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

ARI EISNGER Wed 4 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

EMPIRICAL Wed 4 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WILLE AND THE BANDITS



Megson - The Red Lion Folk Club

Wed 4 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PRETTY VICIOUS Wed 4 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JARROD DICKENSON Wed 4 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ROCK 'N' ROLL BACK THE YEARS Thurs 5 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

CHANTEL MCGREGOR Thurs 5 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE BIG WOLF BAND Thurs 5 Oct, The Roadhouse, B'ham

THE PICTUREBOOKS Thurs 5 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

PAPA ROACH Thurs 5 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JUSTIN HAYWARD Thurs 5 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

NANNA RADLEYS Thurs 5 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham

TOM GRENNAN Fri 6 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JESS MORGAN & DAN WHITEHOUSE Fri 6 Oct, mac, Birmingham

THE LOST WILL & TESTAMENT OF JAKE THACKRAY Fri 6 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MOTHERSHIP - LED ZEPPELIN TRIBUTE Fri 6 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SHELLAC Fri 6 Oct, The Asylum, B'ham

SQUEEZE WITH SPECIAL GUESTS 9 BELOW ZERO. Fri 6 - Sat 7 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

ALLMAN BROWN & DAN BETTRIDGE Fri 6 Oct, Ort Cafe, Birmingham

MARTY STUART Fri 6 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

ZOE GILBY QUARTET Fri 6 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

FRED ZEPP Fri 6 Oct, Route 44, B'ham

THEATRE OF HATE Fri 6 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

ESTRONS Fri 6 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

RHINO AND THE RANTERS Sat 7 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THY ART IS MURDER Sat 7 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SALUTE TO SINATRA AND THE SWING LEGENDS Sat 7 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

ROSIE CARNEY & HENRY JAMISON Sat 7 Oct, Ort Cafe, Birmingham

LIVE & LET ROCK Sat 7 Oct, Route 44, Birmingham

TUBULAR BELLS FOR TWO FEATURING SUPPORT FROM GYPSYFINGERS Sat 7 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

BOOTLEG BLONDIE Sat 7 Oct, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

DEFINITELY MIGHTBE Sat 7 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BEVERLEY KNIGHT Sun 8 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SKINNY GIRL DIET Sun 8 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

YASSASSIN Sun 8 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DRU HILL Sun 8 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

JOSH HARTY PLUS AMIT DATTANI Sun 8 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

THERAPY? Sun 8 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

Classical Music

MOZART'S CLARINET CONCERTO Featuring the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (conductor) & Jörg Widmann (clarinet). Programme to include works by Weber, Mozart, Jörg Widmann & Brahms, Wed 4 - Thurs 5 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



CEMPR Early Music Lecture - recitals: Early Strings with Miki Takahashi and Andrew Kirkham, Thurs 5 Oct, The Bramall, Birmingham

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: WIDMAN & WEBER Featuring the CBSO musicians & Jörg Widmann (clarinet/artist in residence), Fri 6 Oct, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

Comedy

THE LAUGHING SOLE COMEDY FOR KIDS Sun 1 Oct, mac, Birmingham

COMEDY OF BLACK ORIGIN (COBO) BRINGS A BLACK HISTORY MONTH SPECIAL Sun 1 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JEWELLERY QUARTER COMEDY CLUB Tues 3 Oct, The Rose Villa Tavern, Birmingham

ABANDOMAN Wed 4 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham



MIKE GUNN, LOST VOICE GUY & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 5 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MAFF BROWN, DALISO CHAPONDA, GARY MEIKLE & JIM SMALLMAN Thurs 5 Oct, The George Hotel, Lichfield

THE LOST WILL & TESTAMENT OF JAKE THACKRAY Fri 6 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

JIMMY MCGHIE, MARK SIMMONS & TREVOR COOK Fri 6 Oct, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

BREAKING TALENT AWARD 2017 Fri 6

Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BEST OF BRUM COMEDY SHOWCASE #1 FEATURING PHIL PAGETT, MICHAEL DRYBURGH, LINDSEY SANTORO, ANDREW MCBURNEY, LUCY THOMPSON & JACK KIRWAN Fri 6 Oct, Cherry Reds Cafe-Bar, Birmingham

KEITH FARNAN, ANDRE VINCENT & TWO COMICS TBC Fri 6 - Sat 7 Oct, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

MIKE GUNN, LOST VOICE GUY, JOE BOR & MARTIN MOR Fri 6 - Sat 7 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM COMEDY FESTIVAL Fri 6 - Sun 15 Oct, Various locations, throughout Birmingham

JIMMY MCGHIE, MARK SIMMONS & TREVOR COOK Sat 7 Oct, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

JAY HANDLEY Sat 7 Oct, mac, B'ham

BARNSTORMERS COMEDY NIGHT Sat 7 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE SCUMMY MUMMIES SHOW Sat 7 Oct, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

BARBARA NICE Sun 8 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

Theatre

DUET FOR ONE Revival of Tom Kempinski's award-winning play, taking a look at what happens when unexpected events lead you to reevaluate your life, until Sat 7 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

CORIOLANUS Angus Jackson directs Shakespeare's full-throttle war play, until Sat 14 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

DIDO, QUEEN OF CARTHAGE Christopher Marlowe's darkly humorous play about the politics of identity and happiness, until Sat 28 Oct, The Swan Theatre Stratford, Stratford-upon-Avon

DODGER Amateur staging of Terry Pratchett's Victorian tale, inspired by Charles Dickens' character, the Artful Dodger, Fri 29 Sept - Sat 7 Oct, Hall Green Little Theatre, Birmingham

I KNEW YOU Highly anticipated second play from Birmingham-born writer and performer Steven Camden, aka Polarbear, taking a look at family dynamics. Featuring Lorna Laidlaw (Doctors), Fri 29 Sept - Sat 7 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

SKYLIGHT The Crescent Theatre Company present David Hare's witty political play, Sat 30 Sept - Sat 7 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE GOLDEN DRAGON Music Theatre Wales present a compelling fable of modern life, which begins with the discovery of a decayed tooth found in a bowl of soup, Tues 3 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

YOU FORGOT THE MINCE Imagine If



Spamalot - New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

Theatre present a story of falling in love and falling apart, Tues 3 Oct, mac, Birmingham

SPAMALOT Eric Idle's award-winning Monty Python musical comedy, Tues 3 - Sat 7 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

LETTERS TO EMMA New play based on the life of Anna Seward, Tues 3 - Sat 7 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE WEDDING SINGER Ray Quinn, Cassie Compton, Roxanne Pallett and Ruth Madoc star in a new production of the popular musical, based on the hit film of the same name, Tues 3 - Sat 7 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

SLEEPING TREES: SCI-FI? A journey into the deep and infinite unknown... Wed 4 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

PROMISE AND PROMISCUITY: A NEW MUSICAL Penny Ashton brings a full cast of Austenesque characters to life with song, dance - and appalling cross-stitching... Thurs 5 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT Music, mirth and merriment with Dandy, Ian 'Sludge' Lees, The Empty Can, Bev Pegg & Jess Silk, Thurs 5 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

LOADED Violent, lyrical and thought-provoking theatre fusing an evocative original sound score with texts ranging from ancient literature to modern science, Thurs 5 - Fri 6 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

ENTERTAINING MR SLOANE Joe Orton's acclaimed black comedy, featuring themes of murder, homosexuality, nymphomania and sadism, Thurs 5 - Sat 14 Oct, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

THE BASTARD KING Sketch comedy duo The Awkward Silence present their latest show, Fri 6 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

AKSHAYAMBARA Experimental play

creating a contemporary narrative that raises questions about female representation and male ownership, Sun 8 Oct, mac, Birmingham

THEATRETRAIN: WEBBER STREET A celebration of master of musicals Andrew Lloyd Webber, Sun 8 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Dance

THE MATTER OF THE HATTER Dance show set in the world of Wonderland, where you can achieve six impossible things before breakfast, Sun 1 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

ALADDIN Birmingham Royal Ballet perform David Bintley's critically acclaimed adaptation of the famous story, Tues 3 - Sat 7 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

8 MINUTES Choreographer Alexander Whitley in collaboration with space scientists from STFC RAL Space, Tues 3 Oct, DanceXchange, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

Talks

BRIAN REED ON CREATING S-TOWN: A NEW WAY TO TELL A STORY Spoken-word event featuring Brian Reed, the host and co-creator of groundbreaking podcast S-Town, Mon 2 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

AN EVENING WITH AN IMMIGRANT Inua Ellams shares his personal story of immigration, from escaping fundamentalist Islam to drinking wine with the HM The Queen, Tues 3 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

CAFÉ SCIENTIFIQUE: SLEEP BETTER - THE SCIENCE AND THE MYTHS Join Graham Law as he explores the myths that surround sleep, Tues 3 Oct, Think-



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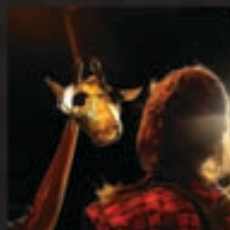
Highlights



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Half Moon Theatre: The Girl And The Giraffe

Tue 24 - Thu 26 October

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R Relaxed performance: Wed 25 October



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JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER Tunji Sowande, the first Black Head of Chambers before becoming the first (part-time) judge in Britain, muses on Imperialism, Colonialism and Black people's struggles for freedom, justice and human rights, Thurs 5 Oct, Arena Theatre, Birmingham

WAR STORIES WITH PETER SNOW & ANN MACMILLAN The husband-and-wife team present a fascinating, illustrated account of ordinary people swept up by the horror of war, Thurs 5 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

STORIES CROSSING BORDERS: AN AFTERNOON WITH PREETI SHENOY Join one of India's most celebrated authors as she discusses her latest book, Sat 7 Oct, The Studio @ The REP, Birmingham

Film

BLACK SABBATH: THE END OF THE END (15) Music/Documentary. Starring Ozzy Osbourne, Tony Iommi. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, until Thurs 5 Oct

GOODBYE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (PG) Biography/Family. Starring Margot Robbie, Domhnall Gleeson. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, from Fri 29 Sep

VICTORIA & ABDUL (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Judi Dench, Adeel Akhtar. mac, Birmingham, Fri 29 Sept - Thurs 5 Oct

WIND RIVER (15) Crime/Drama. Starring Kelsey Asbille, Jeremy Renner. mac, Birmingham, Fri 29 Sept - Thurs 5 Oct

BEFORE SUNRISE (15) Drama/Romance. Starring Ethan Hawke, Julie Delpy. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 1 Oct

ALI G IN DAHOUSE (15) Comedy/Romance. Starring Sacha Baron Cohen, Emilio Rivera. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 1 Oct

BORAT: CULTURAL LEARNINGS OF AMERICA (15) Comedy. Starring Sacha Baron Cohen, Ken Davitian. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 1 Oct

BRÜNO (18) Comedy. Starring Sacha Baron Cohen, Gustaf Hammarsten. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 1 Oct

GRIMSBY (15) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Sacha Baron Cohen, Mark

Strong. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 1 Oct

PECKING ORDER (PG) Documentary. Starring Doug Bain, Sarah Bunton. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Mon 2 Oct

THE MARKER (15) Crime/Thriller. Starring John Hannah, Ana Ularu. Followed by director's Q&A. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 3 Oct

BLADE RUNNER 2049 (15) Sci-Fi/Thriller. Starring Ryan Gosling, Harrison Ford. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 5 - Thurs 19 Oct; Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 6 - Thurs 19 Oct

A GHOST STORY (12a) Drama/Fantasy. Starring Casey Affleck, Rooney Mara. mac, Birmingham, Fri 6 Oct

THE MUSIC ROOM (U) Drama/Music. Starring Chhabi Biswas, Sardar Akhtar. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Fri 6 Oct

SUFFRAGETTE (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Carey Mulligan, Meryl Streep. mac, Birmingham, Sun 8 Oct

STEP (12a) Documentary. Starring Paula Dofat, Blessin Giraldo. mac, Birmingham, Sun 8 & Tues 10 Oct

Events

CONTEMPORARY CRAFT MARKET Range of stalls with a broad selection of quality handmade products, including ceramics, jewellery, paintings, and craft items, Sun 1 Oct, mac, Birmingham

THE LAUGHING SOLE COMEDY FOR KIDS Comedy club specifically for children and their families, bringing together some of the best acts on the circuit, Sun 1 Oct, mac, Birmingham

CALLIGRAPHY SESSION Designed for both beginners and more experienced calligraphers, Sun 1 Oct, The Pen Museum, Birmingham

COVENTRY COMIC CON Featuring special guests, dealer tables, comic-book artists, Cosplay and more, Sun 1 Oct, Sports Connexion, Coventry

HORSE OF THE YEAR SHOW Featuring the most prestigious National Showjumping and Showjumping Championships, International Showjumping classes and the Dressage Future Elite Championship, Wed 4 - Sun 8 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

SOOTY'S BIRTHDAY BAKE-OFF Sat 7 - Sun 8 Oct, Cadbury World, B'ham



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Saturday 21 October 7.30pm

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with world premiere performances of excerpts from
SYMPHONIC ADIEMUS



Sir Karl Jenkins conductor

Joo Yeon Sir violin Kathryn Rudge mezzo-soprano

Manchester Chorale Manchester Concert Orchestra

Sunday 5 November at 3.00pm

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OVERTURE

PIANO CONCERTO NO. 21

REQUIEM

Tereza Gevorgyan soprano

Anna Huntley mezzo-soprano

Oliver Johnston tenor Morgan Pearce baritone

Tom Poster piano Adrian Lucas conductor

City of Birmingham Choir Mozart Festival Orchestra

Saturday 11 November at 2.30pm & 7.30pm

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VERDI Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves MASCAGNI Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana
VIVALDI Finale of Summer from The Four Seasons TCHAIKOVSKY Sleeping Beauty Waltz
ELGAR Nimrod PUCCINI O Soave fanciulla VERDI Brindisi from La Traviata

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BACH Toccata & Fugue in D minor

FAURE In Paradisum

WALTON Crown Imperial

ELGAR Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1

HANDEL Zadok the Priest

STRAUSS Sunrise from Also Sprach Zarathustra

MOZART Lacrimosa from Requiem

MASCAGNI Intermezzo from Cavalleria rusticana

MOZART Requiem

WIDOR Toccata

PARRY I was glad

Stephen Bell conductor

Darius Battiwalla organ

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The Pretenders - Symphony Hall

Gigs

LADY ANTEBELLUM Mon 9 Oct, Arena Birmingham

GOOD LOVELIES Mon 9 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

THE XCERTS Mon 9 Oct, The Flapper, B'ham

NICK MULVEY Mon 9 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SUPERSUCKERS Mon 9 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

HEG & THE WOLF CHORUS Mon 9 Oct, Crescent Theatre, B'ham

UNEVEN STRUCTURE Tues 10 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

ZERVAS AND PEPPER Tues 10 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

FLYTE Tues 10 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SUPERFOOD Wed 11 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

THE SHEE - CONTINUUM Wed 11 Oct, mac, Birmingham

PRINCE REVELATION Wed 11 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SLEEPMAKESWAVES Wed 11 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

GARY NUMAN Wed 11 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GOSPEL CENTRAL Wed

11 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE CHURCHFITTERS Wed 11 Oct, The Red Lion Folk Club, B'ham

DRAGONFORCE Wed 11 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JOE FOX Thurs 12 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MIKE SANCHEZ BAND Thurs 12 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham

BROTHER STRUT Thurs 12 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

STILL REMAINS Thurs 12 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

DWEEZIL ZAPPA: 50 YEARS OF FRANK Thurs 12 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

LADY GAGA Thurs 12 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

THE COAL PORTERS Thurs 12 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

JEFFREY LEWIS & LOS BOLTS Thurs 12 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JEHST Thurs 12 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

NEIL DIAMOND Fri 13 Oct, Arena Birmingham

BIG GINGER KID Fri 13 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

HOUSE OF JEALOUS LOVERS Fri 13 Oct,

Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE MUSICAL BOX: THE BLACK SHOW Fri 13 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BEASTDOME: FOOTSTEPS Fri 13 Oct, The Bramall, Birmingham

BON GIOVI Fri 13 Oct, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

THE ALARM Fri 13 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE ROVING CROWS Fri 13 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

LITTLE MIX Fri 13 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

LETHAL BIZZLE Fri 13 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE BEAT BROTHERS Fri 13 - Sat 14 Oct, The Jam House, B'ham

J. COLE Sat 14 Oct, Arena Birmingham

HMLTD Sat 14 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LEGENDS LIVE Sat 14 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

DUA LIPA Sat 14 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

BABY IN VAIN Sat 14 Oct, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

GLAM45 & SWEET45 Sat 14 Oct, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

LED HENDRIX Sat 14 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

IVOR & LYN'S CLASSIC ROCK NIGHT Sat 14 Oct, Route 44, B'ham

NEIL DIAMOND Sun 15 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

NELL BRYDEN Sun 15 Oct, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth

FLING, THE AROSA & THE NOVUS Sun 15 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

ANDRÉ KRENGEL & ROLAND KRAUSE Sun 15 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

BACK TO BACHARACH Sun 15 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE PRETENDERS Sun 15 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Classical Music

CANADIAN BRASS Featuring Caleb Hudson & Chris Coletti (trumpets), Bernhard Scully (horn), Achilles Liarmakopoulos (trombone) & Chuck Daellenbach (tuba), Mon 9 Oct, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

THOMAS TROTTER LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT: BIRDS OF A FEATHER Mon 9 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

CEMPR Early Music Lecture - recitals: Natural horn with Anneke Scott Mon 9 Oct, The Bramall, Birmingham

BASEL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Ivor Bolton (conductor) & Sol Gabetta (cello). Programme comprises Busoni's Lustspiel Overture Op 38, 8'; Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto, 19' & Beethoven's Symphony No 7, 36", Tues 10 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

BEOWULF Featuring Armonico Consort & AC Academy Singers, Elin Manahan Thomas (soprano), Catrin Finch (harp), Toby Young (keyboards) and Christopher Monks (conductor), Wed 11 Oct, Bushell Hall, Solihull



SHOSTAKOVICH'S TWELFTH Featuring Vassily Sinaisky (conductor) & Simon Trp eski (piano). Programme comprises Beethoven's Fidelio: Overture, 6' & Piano Concerto No.5 (Emperor), 38' plus Shostakovich's Symphony No.12 (The Year 1917), 39', Wed 11 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MARIINSKY ORCHESTRA - SYMPHONIC DANCES Featuring Valery Gergiev (conductor) & Denis Matsuev (piano). Programme includes works by Rimsky-Korsakov's Suite from The Golden Cockerel, 25", Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No.2, 31' & Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances Op 45, 35" Thurs 12 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BAGATELLES AFTER BEETHOVEN: PRESTEIGNE FESTIVAL TOUR Featuring Tim Horton (piano). Programme features works by Beethoven & a set of newly commissioned Bagatelles, written to celebrate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Presteigne Festival, Fri 13 Oct, The Barber Institute,

Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: BACH'S MAGNIFICAT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Elizabeth Adams, Katie Trethewey & Amy Wood (sopranos), Martha McLorinan (alto), Bradley Smith (tenor) & Greg Skidmore (bass), Sat 14 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE PEOPLE'S ORCHESTRA Performing live music from Harry Potter & The Prisoner of Azkaban, Games of Thrones, Lord of the Rings, Star Trek and many more... Sat 14 Oct, West Bromwich Town Hall

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA - FANTASTIC SYMPHONY Featuring Michael Lloyd (conductor), Sun 15 Oct, Elgar Concert Hall, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA Featuring Michael Lloyd (conductor) & Michael Webb (clarinet). Programme includes works by Berlioz & Weber, Sun 15 Oct, The Bramall, Birmingham

Comedy

GREG DAVIES Mon 9 - Tues 10 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WOODY ALLEN(ISH) Wed 11 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LARA A. KING, KAREN BAYLEY, LINDSEY SANTORO & MAUREEN YOUNGER Wed 11 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

IMPRACTICAL JOKERS Thurs 12 Oct, Arena Birmingham

ZOE LYONS, JONNY AWSUM Thurs 12 Oct, The Bramall, Birmingham

JO D'ARCY Thurs 12 Oct, mac, B'ham

MATT PRICE, THE NOISE NEXT DOOR & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 12 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROBIN INCE Fri 13 Oct, Station Pub, Sutton Coldfield

GLENN WOOL, HARRIET DYER, JOSH PUGH & CHRIS PURCHASE Fri 13 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

MATT PRICE, GAVIN WEBSTER, ABIGAIL SCHAMAUN & COMIC TBC Fri 13 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JAYDE ADAMS Fri 13 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BEST OF BRUM COMEDY SHOWCASE # 2 FEATURING STU WOODINGS, GARETH BERLINER, DANNY CLIVES, MASAI GRAM, EMILY BROOKS & JOSHUA JACKSON Fri 13 Oct, Cherry Reds Cafe-Bar, Birmingham

CARL DONNELLY, PAUL MCCAFFERY, MANDY KNIGHT & COMIC TBC Fri 13 - Sat 14 Oct, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

ROBIN INCE Sat 14 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ELLIE TAYLOR Sat 14 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MATT PRICE, GAVIN WEBSTER, ABIGAIL SCHAMAUN & GORDON SOUTHERN Sat 14 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

JARLATH REGAN, ALLYSON SMITH & JOHN PEARSON Sat 14 Oct, Jongleurs Comedy Club, Birmingham

JOHN HEGLEY Sat 14 Oct, mac, Birmingham

MATT LUCAS Sat 14 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

SIMON AMSTELL Sun 15 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

SIMON DAY Sun 15 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham



Theatre

FREEMAN Play inspired by the true story of a black man put on trial in 19th century New York whose case was the first in America to use 'insanity' as a defence, Mon 9 - Tues 10 Oct, The REP, Birmingham



HAIRSPRAY Starring Brenda Edwards and Norman Pace, Mon 9 - Sat 14 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

MAD ABOUT THE MUSICALS Whistle-stop tour of the shows, from the heart of London's theatreland to the glitz of Broadway, Tues 10 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

HYPED Outspoken present a digital, grime performance, on the theme of mental health, for young people aged 13 to 18, Tues 10 - Thurs 12 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

WAIT UNTIL DARK Jack Ellis (Bad

Girls/Prime Suspect) & Oliver Mellor (Coronation Street) star in a new staging of Frederick Knott's thriller, Tues 10 - Sat 14 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

CILLA THE MUSICAL Musical telling the story of the young girl from Liverpool whose teenage dreams of stardom led to her becoming one of Britain's best-loved entertainers, Tues 10 - Sat 14 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

SPAMALOT Amateur production presented by South Staffs Musical Theatre Company, Tues 10 - Sat 14 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

CABARET Will Young reprises his critically acclaimed performance as Emcee in Rufus Norris' production. Strictly Come Dancing runner-up Louise Redknapp stars as Sally Bowles, Tues 10 - Sat 14 Oct, Malvern Theatres

PRIVATE PEACEFUL New version of Michael Morpurgo's classic tale, Tues 10 - Sat 14 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

HOLY DAY Birmingham School of Acting present a chilling tale set in the Australian outback, Wed 11 - Sat 14 Oct, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

5 LESBIANS EATING A QUICHE Will the Sisters of Gertrude Stein be able to keep their cool when the Communists threaten their idyllic town? Wed 11 - Sun 15 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

RICHARD JONES - THE POWER OF IMAGINATION A serving member of The Household Cavalry, where he is part of the only band of the British Army to perform on horseback, Jones's super-patriotic routine won him Britain's Got Talent 2016. His magic and mind-reading act is super-stylish whilst capable of bringing a lump to the throat. Having performed a trick on Prince Charles during The Royal Variety Show 2016, Richard embarks on his debut touring show "The Power of Imagination", Thurs 12 Oct, mac, Birmingham

BLOODY BLOODY ANDREW JACKSON Birmingham School of Acting present the British premiere of the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical - a satirical and irreverent comedy with a 'killer rock' score, Thurs 12 - Sat 14 Oct, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BORDER CROSSING Political thriller written and performed by Daniel Bye, Fri 13 Oct, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

IDLE WOMEN OF THE WARTIME WATERWAYS Alarum Theatre present a double bill of theatre, poetry and music, whisking audiences back to the days of World War II, when a shortage of crews to keep the working boats going brought a new breed of boater to the canal, Fri 13 - Sat 14 Oct, Oldbury Rep



5 Soldiers: The Body Is The Frontline

The REP, Birmingham, 13 & 14 October

Creating a production around a subject about which most people know relatively little is always a difficult task, yet Rosie Kay manages to present the world of the British military in a very insightful way.

5 Soliders: The Body Is The Frontline explores the life of British soldiers - the existence inside the barracks, the training programme and, of course, the experience of war.

Having spent several months conducting field research in various military bases, Kay's knowledge is clearly both current and accurate. Her dancers also spent time with soliders, learning various drills and weapon handling - although Kay decided against using actual weapons in the production.

The piece as a whole is strong and the dancers are a credit to the choreographer. They manage to portray a discipline usually achieved after years of military training, while at the same time bringing a beautiful, contemporary quality and a real sense of movement to the material.

There are moments of comedy, seduction and pure emotion to enjoy. Kay has successfully captured a sense of a somewhat secret world - one in which outsiders aren't welcome.

A truly engaging and profoundly touching piece.

BILMANKHWE: THE TEMPEST Urban production of Shakespeare's last play, featuring contemporary African dance choreography, Sat 14 Oct, mac, Birmingham

TALES OF BIRBAL Using humour, puppetry, music and the occasional fake beard, Mashi and Bhanji bring to life timeless and treasured fables from the Indian sub-continent, Sun 15 Oct, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome



Talks

BARBARA TAYLOR: THE LAST ASYLUM Hear about Taylor's own experience of mental breakdown and healing, Sun 8 Oct, The Door at The REP, Birmingham

STORIES CROSSING BORDERS: CHINELO OKPARANTA IN CONVERSATION Join Chinelo as she discusses identity, the testing of faith and the uncovering of histories through the personal journeys of her characters, Mon 9 Oct, The Studio @ The REP, Birmingham

MARK RADCLIFFE - SHOULD YOU BE INTERESTED Songs and stories of middle-aged angst, Tues 10 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

ADVENTURES IN POETRY: BRUM STANZA FESTIVAL SPECIAL Roz Goddard talks

Monday 9 - Sunday 15 October

to poet Wayne Holloway-Smith, Tues 10 Oct, Waterstones, Birmingham

TOLKIEN'S OLD WORCESTERSHIRE AND OXFORD Illustrated talk covering JRR Tolkien's life, Thurs 12 Oct, Selly Manor, Bournville, Birmingham

KAMILA SHAMSIE: HOME FIRE Join the Pakistani author as she talks about her new novel, which tells the heart-breaking tale of two British Muslim families with differing ideas about loyalty to the state, Thurs 12 Oct, The Studio @ The REP, Birmingham

JACKIE MORRIS: THE LOST WORDS Discussion about the lost words of our childhood and the intoxicating magic of language, Sat 14 Oct, The Studio @ The REP, Birmingham

HOLLIE MCNISH Join Holly as she reads from and chats about her new collection, Plum, Sun 15 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

LOVING VINCENT (15) Animation/Biography. With the voices of Douglas

Booth, Chris O'Dowd. Followed by satellite Q&A with directors, cast members & special guests. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Mon 9 Oct

BOMBAY (12) Drama/Musical. Starring Arvind Swamy, Manisha Koralia. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Tues 10 Oct

THE CLOUD CAPPED STAR (12) Drama/Musical. Starring Supriya Choudhury, Anil Chatterjee Bijon Bhattacharya. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Thurs 12 Oct

BLACK BRITAIN ON FILM (12a) Documentary. mac, Birmingham, Thurs 12 Oct

THE SNOWMAN (15) Drama/Horror. Starring Michael Fassbender, Rebecca Ferguson. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, from Fri 13 Oct

HELLRAISER (18) Horror/Thriller. Starring Andrew Robinson, Clare Higgins. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 13 - Sun 15 Oct

ON BODY AND SOUL (18) Drama. Starring Géza Morcsányi, Alexandra Borbély. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Fri 13 - Wed 18 Oct

DAPHNE (PG) Comedy/Drama. Starring Emily Beecham, Geraldine James. mac, Birmingham, Fri 13 - Thurs 19 Oct

3 DEAD TRICK OR TREATERS (18) Horror. Starring Holden Levack, Jeremy Charles Singer. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 14 Oct

IN PURSUIT OF HEALTH AND HAPPINESS (U) Comedy. Three classic films from the greatest double-act of all time find Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy. mac, Birmingham, Sat 14 Oct

PYAASA (U) Drama/Musical. Starring Guru Dutt, Mala Sinha. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Sun 15 Oct

Events

VINTAGE TEA AND TOUR Factory tour and refreshments, Wed 11 Oct, Newman Brothers Coffin Works, B'ham

GRAND DESIGNS LIVE Wed 11 - Sun 15 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

GIN TASTING Sat 14 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

DUNGEONS AFTER DARK Prepare to experience the darkest, bloodiest and most frightening times in the castle's history, Sat 14 Oct, Warwick Castle

BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS Sat 14 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

SCAREFEST Complete with spooks, frights, thrills, and remaining open until 9pm, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Oct, Alton Towers, Staffordshire

HISTORIC LIGHTING WEEKEND Learn about how we moved from candle-light to electric lamps, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

CHARACTER WEEKEND Sat 14 - Sun 15 Oct, Cadbury World, Birmingham

MORE TREAT THAN TRICK Prepare for some spine-tingling fun, Sat 14 - Thurs 26 Oct, Drayton Manor Theme Park, Tamworth

SPOOKY SEAS Meet the peaceful clownfish and not-so-scary sharks, Sat 14 - Tues 31 Oct, National Sea Life Centre, Birmingham

WEDDING FAIR Sun 15 Oct, Lightwoods Park, Birmingham

LIVE AT THE ALBANY
Comedy Club, Fri 27 Oct - 7.30pm, £18/£16 concs
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JUNIOR SIMPSON PIERRE NOVELLIE
THE ALBANY THEATRE
www.albanytheatre.co.uk & 02476998964

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City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

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Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Start Christmas in style by enjoying a sparkling performance of Handel's famous choral masterpiece, Messiah.

Rowan Pierce	Soprano
Anna Huntley	Alto
Bradley Smith	Tenor
James Cleverton	Bass
Adrian Lucas	Conductor
Thomas Trotter	Harpischord
Christopher Allsop	Organ

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**Book your tickets to the Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show, with Discovery, before Thursday 26th October and you will automatically be entered into the prize draw. Full T&Cs online.



Coasts - Mama Roux's

Gigs

SHANE FILAN Mon 16 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

PALE WAVES Mon 16 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE CORONAS Mon 16 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

MICHAEL KIWANUKA Mon 16 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

MELLOW GANG, NON-SUCH & CROP CIRCLES Tues 17 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

THE ESKIES Tues 17 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BEN SAVAGE & HANNAH SAUNDERS Tues 17 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

MARC ALMOND : SHADOWS & REFLECTIONS TOUR Tues 17 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MILES HUNT & ERICA NOCKALLS Tues 17 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

THREE STEP MANOEUVRE Tues 17 Oct, The Jam House, B'ham

STARSAILOR Tues 17 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FAST LOVE Wed 18 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

HONEYBOY HICKLING BAND Wed 18 Oct, The Jam House, B'ham

XZLUCA STRICAGNOLI

Wed 18 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JUSTIN CURRIE & THE PALLBEARERS Wed 18 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SEETHER Wed 18 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

COASTS Wed 18 Oct, Mama Roux's, B'ham

GREG RUSSELL & CIARAN ALGAR Wed 18 Oct, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

STONE FOUNDATION Wed 18 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

STEVE STEINMAN'S MEATLOAF STORY Thurs 19 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

THE ELECTRIC STRAWBS Thurs 19 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

DEBORAH ROSE AND MARI RANDLE Thurs 19 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE WATERBOYS Thurs 19 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE NIGHTINGALES, FUZZBOX & TED CHIP-PINGTON Thurs 19 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

O'HOOLEY AND TIDOW Thurs 19 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

SÄLEN Thurs 19 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

COLLIE BUDDZ Thurs 19 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ROACHFORD Fri 20 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

BECKY HILL Fri 20 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

DIZZEE RASCAL Fri 20 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TIM AMMAN X-TET Fri 20 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

FRED ZEPPELIN Fri 20 Oct, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

GABRIELLE APLIN Fri 20 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE WORLD FAMOUS ELVIS SHOW Fri 20 - Sat 21 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MR BEN Fri 20 - Sat 21 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham

JAMES HICKMAN AND DAN CASSIDY Sat 21 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE YOUNG'UNS Sat 21 Oct, mac, Birmingham

JOHN MAYALL Sat 21 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

TOO MANY T'S & SOCIAL STATE Sat 21 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

TRAIN Sat 21 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JOHN ILLSLEY Sat 21 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

DURAN: THE TRIBUTE Sat 21 Oct, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

TOO MANY T'S Sat 21 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE SOUTHMARTINS Sat 21 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TIGERCUB Sat 21 Oct, The Flapper, B'ham

METRONOMY Sat 21 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MARLEY REPRISED Sun 22 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

KELE OKEREKE Sun 22 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE SOUTH: EX THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH Sun 22 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

BANKS Sun 22 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MEAT LOUD Sun 22 Oct, Lichfield Guildhall

Classical Music

BRILLIANT BRAHMS - CBSO BENEVOLENT FUND CONCERT Featuring Alpesh Chauhan (Conductor), Nicola Benedetti (Violin), Leonard Elschenbroich (Cello). Programme comprises Brahms' Three Hungarian Dances, 12'; Double Concerto, 31" & Symphony No. 3, 37", Wed 18 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ALEX MENDHAM & HIS ORCHESTRA Thurs 19 Oct, The Bramall, B'ham

BEETHOVEN TRIO Featuring John Thwaites (Piano), Jonathan Martin-dale (violin), Michael Jenkinson (viola), Helen Edgar (cello), Oliver James (clarinet) & Elspeth Dutch (horn). Programme includes works by Beethoven & Dohnányi, Thurs 19 Oct, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

CBSO: CLASSIC FM SMOOTH CLASSICS Featuring the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Michael Seal (conductor) & John Brunning (presenter). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Barber, Debussy, Mendelssohn, Grieg, Bizet, Rachmaninov, Massenet, Elgar, J S Bach & Borodin, Fri 20 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

FLORIAN KITT & CARLOS RIVERA-AGUILAR Programme comprises Beethoven's Cello Sonata Op 102 No1; Takemitsu's Orion (1984); Britten's Cello Sonata Op 65; Cerha's 5 Satze (2013) & Prokofiev's Cello Sonata Op 119, Fri 20 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

RICHARD JENKINSON & ALEXANDER BOYD LUNCHTIME CONCERT Programme comprises Kodály's Sonata Op.4 & Rachmaninov's Sonata in G minor, Fri 20 Oct, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

KARL JENKINS - THE ARMED MAN Featuring the Manchester Concert Orchestra, Sir Karl Jenkins (conductor), Manchester Chorale, Joo Yeon Sir (violin) & Kathryn Rudge (mezzo-soprano), Sat 21 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



YOUNG CONDUCTOR DAY Sat 21 Oct, The Bramall, Birmingham

CBSO: MYTHS AND LEGENDS Featuring the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; Jonathan Bloxham (conductor) & Tom Redmond (presenter). Programme includes works by John Williams, Wagner, Sibelius, Copland, John Williams & Stravinsky, Sun 22 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

TOADALLY FREE COMEDY! Mon 16 Oct, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

SIMON DAY Tues 17 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

MALCOLM STENT Tues 17 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

BRIAN GITTINS Wed 18 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ELLIE TAYLOR Thurs 19 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

DAVID TRENT, JOSH PUGH & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 19 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

LUISA OMIELAN Thurs 19 Oct, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

MATT REED, DAMIAN CLARK, LEO KEARSE & COMIC TBC Fri 20 - Sat 21 Oct, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

DAVID TRENT, JOSH PUGH, IAN MOORE & BRUCE DEVLIN Fri 20 - Sat 21 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SULLY O'SULLIVAN & NIGE Sat 21 Oct, Jongleurs Comedy Club, B'ham

ANDREW LAWRENCE Sun 22 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

Theatre

FRANKENSHOW A 'lo-fi monstrosity of epic proportions', Tues 17 Oct, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

OUR HOUSE A Sutton Coldfield Musical Theatre Company production, Tues 17 - Sat 21 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

KICK IN THE BAUBLES Get set for a car-crash Christmas, Tues 17 - Sat 21 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE ADDAMS FAMILY Samantha Womack, Les Dennis and Carrie Hope Fletcher star in this stage version of the cult TV series, Tues 17 - Sat 21 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT Music, mirth and merriment with Dandy, Ian 'Sludge' Lees, The Empty Can, Bev Pegg & Jess Silk, Wed 18 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Family shows at The Old Rep



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OBAMA AND ME One-woman show that explores the meaning of identity, politics, power and belonging in the post-post-racial 21st century, Wed 18 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

MACHINAL Birmingham School of Acting presents its version of Sophie Treadwell's modern classic, based on the true story of American murderer Ruth Snyder, Wed 18 - Sat 21 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

NORMA Midland Opera Company presents its production of Bellini's masterpiece, Wed 18 - Sat 21 Oct, The Old Rep, Birmingham

BEDLAM - I HAD A BLACK DOG Comic story of survival, based on the book of the same name, Thurs 19 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

NOT THAT KIND OF GIRL Jars of Clay Theatre present a heart warming tale, Thurs 19 - Sat 21 Oct, Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

LITE Multimedia stage production exploring the theme of identity through a young black woman's eyes, Fri 20 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

BEDLAM - MY BEAUTIFUL BLACK DOG Poetically wild musical exploring the beautiful complexity of our fragile minds, Fri 20 Oct, The REP, B'ham

NATIVITY! THE MUSICAL Major new stage adaptation based on the film of the same name, Fri 20 Oct - Sun 12 Nov, The REP, Birmingham

NOTORIOUS The Famous Lauren Barri Holstein contemplates representations of women, Fri 20 - Sat 21 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

BEDLAM: HEARING THINGS Provocative drama exploring the dilemmas of psychiatry from the points of view of patients, relatives and staff, Sat 21 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

POPE HEAD: THE SECRET LIFE OF FRANCIS BACON A dark, comedic drama exploring the life, art, sexuality, psyche and philosophies of artist Francis Bacon, Sat 21 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

LORE OF AVERAGES Treefrog Theatre Company take a light-hearted look at what happens when stories from the distant past are brought into the present day, Sat 21 Oct, mac, Birmingham

MULTIVERSE UK premiere in which Louis Vanhaverbeke is a multifunctional disc-jockey with a set of odd props. Forms part of the Fierce Festival 2017, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Oct, mac, Birmingham

DOREEN: RISE OF THE YAM YAM Join the What's On Personality Of The Year as she sets out to challenge Darwin's Theory of Evolution... Sun 22 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

DELAYED UK premiere of new musical which starts with two men meeting on

a platform... Sun 22 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

DISCOVERY DAY: BEDLAM SHOWCASE Innovative local companies showcase groundbreaking work, Sun 22 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

Kids shows

DISNEY ON ICE: PASSPORT TO ADVENTURE Journey to the timeless worlds of The Lion King, The Little Mermaid, Peter Pan and Frozen, Wed 18 - Sun 29 Oct, Arena Birmingham

Dance

A POSITIVE LIFE An immersive theatre experience featuring dance, physical theatre and spoken word, Tues 17 Oct, mac, Birmingham

ACOSTA DANZA Featuring new and existing pieces by Cuban choreographers and newly commissioned work by international choreographers taking inspiration from their native countries, Wed 18 - Sat 21 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

I RIDE IN COLOUR AND SOFT FOCUS, NO LONGER ANYWHERE Choreography that prioritises density over going anywhere, noise over silence, now over yesterday and pleasure over doing it right. Presented as part of Fierce Festival, Thurs 19 Oct, mac, Birmingham

PILGRIM A physical journey through the mystical sound scores created by electronic musician James Holden. Presented as part of Fierce Festival, Fri 20 Oct, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome



HIGHER Michele Rizzo explores the cathartic power of dance, as a form of prayer and celebration of existence. UK premiere presented as part of Fierce Festival, Sat 21 Oct, The Patrick Centre, B'ham Hippodrome

Talks

HEADZ 20 Stories High offer an insight into the lives of Liverpool's young people through a series of contempo-



I Ride In Colour And Soft Focus, No Longer Anywhere - mac, Birmingham

rary urban monologues, Thurs 19 Oct, mac, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH AGGERS & BUMBLE Cricket commentators Jonathan Agnew and David 'Bumble' Lloyd team up, Sun 22 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

THE MIDWIFE (12a) Drama. Starring Catherine Deneuve, Catherine Frot. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Tues 17 & Thurs 19 Oct

CARRY GREENHAM HOME Documentary. Followed by Q&A with Sally Payen, Lynette Edwards mac, Birmingham, Tues 17 & Thurs 19 Oct

EMPIRE RECORDS (12a) Comedy/Drama. Starring Liv Tyler, Ethan Embry. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 19 Oct

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (PG) Drama/Sci-Fi. Starring Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 20 Oct

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 20 Oct, showing at selected cinemas

EARTH: ONE AMAZING DAY (U)

GEOSTORM (12a)

HAPPY DEATH DAY (tbc)

JUNGLE (15)

MARSHALL (15)

MY LITTLE PONY, THE MOVIE (tbc)

THE DEATH OF STALIN (15)

Events

THE MOTORHOME AND CARAVAN SHOW Snap up the most up-to-date accessories and gadgets, Tues 17 - Sun 22 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL Featuring music, entertainment, and food stalls selling a range of indulgent and unusual treats, Fri 20 - Sat 21 Oct, Brindley-place, Birmingham

SCAREFEST Complete with spooks, frights, thrills, and remaining open until 9pm, Fri 20 - Tues 31 Oct, Alton Towers, Staffs

EDWARDIAN TEAROOM LATE: FIERCE FESTIVAL TAKEOVER! Fierce and Free Radical collide activism and art in grand surroundings, Sat 21 Oct, Birmingham Museum And Art Gallery

DIVE 2017 The UK's biggest event for scuba divers, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

VICTORIAN HALLOWEEN The residents of Blists Hill Victorian Town celebrate Halloween in traditional style, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, Blists Hill, Ironbridge

FOUL FOODS - HALF-TERM ACTIVITIES Become a Victorian food detective and help separate foul foods from tasty treats, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR Help Witchy Woo Woo and Wolfman beat cheating villain Franky Frankenstein, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, Cadbury World, Birmingham

TERRIBLE TUDORS Get hands-on with creepy crafts and spectacularly spooky activities, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, Kenilworth Castle

FAMILY FUN DAY - HALLOWEEN Spooky outdoor trail, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, Packwood House, Solihull

WELLBEING DISCOVERY DAY Featuring free wellbeing workshops, Sun 22 Oct, The REP, Birmingham



Jason Isbell - Symphony Hall

Gigs

IRIT Mon 23 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LONDON GRAMMAR Mon 23 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MARMOZETS Mon 23 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SKINNY MOLLY Mon 23 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

CHARLOTTE CARPENTER WITH AUTUMN EVANS Mon 23 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

EMILY MAE WINTERS Tues 24 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

RALPH MCTELL Tues 24 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

MANCHESTER ORCHESTRA Tues 24 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE HORRORS Tues 24 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JAMES HICKMAN AND DAN CASSIDY Wed 25 Oct, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

SLAMBOREE Wed 25 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

EMELI SANDÉ Wed 25 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

WILD PONIES PLUS THE LOST NOTES Wed 25 Oct, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

JOEY BADASS Wed 25 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ALEXANDRA JAYNE, Wed 25 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham

SKINNY LIVING Wed 25 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WHITNEY - QUEEN OF THE NIGHT Thurs 26 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

KIOKO Thurs 26 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SLEAFORD MODS Thurs 26 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ULRICH SCHNAUSS Thurs 26 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

BRANDY CLARK Fri 27 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

WEEZER Fri 27 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE REBEL MASSIVE Fri 27 Oct, Route 44, Birmingham

TIMMY TRUMPET Fri 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SAM INGVORSEN QUARTET Fri 27 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

THE SYD LAWRENCE ORCHESTRA Fri 27 Oct, The Bramall, Birmingham

UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE Fri 27 - Sat 28 Oct, The Jam House, B'ham

FOZZY Fri 27 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE PIGEON DETECTIVES Fri 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THINK FLOYD Fri 27 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

WESLEY GONZALEZ Sat 28 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

ERIC BENÉT Sat 28 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JEAN GENIE - TRIBUTE TO DAVID BOWIE Sat 28 Oct, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

CUD Sat 28 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

BUGZY MALONE Sat 28 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

DECLAN MCKENNA Sat 28 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

LULU Sun 29 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ONE NIGHT OF QUEEN WITH GARY MULLEN Sun 29 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

JUDIE TZUKE Sun 29 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

IBIBIO SOUND MACHINE Sun 29 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SKINNY MOLLY Sun 29 Oct, Lichfield Guildhall

MØ Sun 29 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JOSE JAMES Mon 30 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

METALLICA Mon 30 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

BLAIR DUNLOP & SPECIAL GUEST BROOKE SHARKEY Mon 30 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BROKEN WITT REBELS Mon 30 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

AKON WITH KONVICT KARTEL Mon 30 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

STEVEN PAGE Mon 30 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CELTIC WOMAN: VOICES OF ANGELS Mon 30 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

HEIDI TALBOT Tues 31 Oct, mac, Birmingham

PULVIS ET UMBRA Tues 31 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

JASON ISBELL AND THE 400 UNIT Tues 31 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GHOSTPOET Tues 31 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

HARRY MANX Tues 31 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

DJ FORMAT & ABDOMINAL Tues 31 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by J S Bach, Dowland, Francaix & Reubke, Mon 23 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

QUATUOR VAN KUIJK The French String Quartet present works by Haydn, Janáček, Édith Canat de Chizy & Ravel, Mon 23 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall



CBSO: VERDI'S REQUIEM Featuring the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Edward Gardner (Conductor), Tamara Wilson (Soprano), Karen Cargill (Mezzo Soprano), Gwyn Hughes Jones (Tenor), Brindley Sherratt (Bass) & the CBSO Chorus, Wed 25 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN Featuring David Curtis (conductor) & Julian Bliss (clarinet). Programme includes Rossini's The Barber Of Seville (Overture), Weber's Clarinet Concerto No 2 in E-flat major & Beethoven's Symphony No.8 in F Major, Wed 25 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

KENNETH HAMILTON LECTURE RECITAL-FROM STEIN TO STEINWAY: 300 YEARS OF THE PIANO Fri 27 Oct, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

EUROPEAN UNION CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Featuring soloists from the orchestra and guest harpsichordist, Steven Devine. Programme includes Handel's Concerto Grosso Op. 6 No.7; Haydn's Concerto for violin with Harpsichord; Mozart's Divertimento in F; JS Bach's Harpsichord concerto in D minor & Telemann's Polish Concerto, Sat 28 Oct, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

CBSO YOUTH ORCHESTRA: SPANISH FIESTA Featuring Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (Conductor) & the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Programme includes works by Debussy, Bizet & Falla, Sun 29 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



DAME MITSUKO UCHIDA: SCHUBERT SONATAS Dame Mitsuko Uchida plays the piano sonatas of Schubert including Sontata in B major D 575, 25'; Sonata in A minor D845, 30" & Sonata in D major D 850, 39", Mon 30 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

HALLOWEEN SILENT MOVIE SPECIAL Nigel Ogden performs a double-bill of classics on the organ comprising the score from Frankenstein & Nosferatu, Tues 31 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

JOE LYCETT, DALISO CHAPONDA, JEN BRISTER & ANDY ROBINSON Wed 25 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOM STADE Thurs 26 Oct, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

MARC JENNINGS, THOMAS RACKHAM & ABIGILIAH SCHAMAUN Thurs 26 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

LARRY DEAN, NIGEL NG & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 26 Oct The Glee Club, Birmingham

RUBY WAX Fri 27 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

DAMIAN CLARK, DAVID WARD Fri 27 Oct, Jongleurs Comedy Club, B'ham

ADAM BLOOM, IAN BOLDSWORTH, ANDREW RYAN & COMIC TBC Fri 27 - Sat 28 Oct, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

ANDY ROBINSON, LARRY DEAN, MICHAEL LEGGE & GORDON SOUTHERN Fri 27 - Sat 28 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

ALI COOK Sat 28 Oct, mac, B'ham



DAMIAN CLARK, DAVID WARD Sat 28 Oct, Jongleurs Comedy Club, B'ham

PATRICK MONAHAN, PRINCE ABDI, KAE KURD & THAT INDIAN GUY Sun 29 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

MAD ABOUT THE MUSICALS Whistle-stop tour of the shows, from the heart of London's theatreland to the glitz of Broadway, Mon 23 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

ALL IN Atresbandes Theatre Company's darkly playful exploration of the millennial condition, Mon 23 Oct, mac, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM IMPROV FESTIVAL Featuring completely improvised plays, musicals, sketches, songs, drama, cabaret and workshops, Mon 23 - Sun 29 Oct, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

DIRTY DUSTING Heartwarming comedy starring Crissy Rock, Dolores Porretta, Leah Bell & Lee Brannigan, Tues 24 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE CARPENTERS STORY Homage to one of the most successful pop duos in history, Tues 24 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

CRAZY FOR YOU Caroline Flack, Charlotte Wakefield and Tom Chambers star in George Gershwin's popular musical, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

LET'S TWIST AGAIN Nostalgia show reliving the fun, laughter and music of the rock'n'roll era, Wed 25 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE WAR OF THE WORLDS Re-imagining of HG Wells' masterpiece, Wed 25 - Tues 31st Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT Music, mirth and merriment with Dandy, Ian 'Sludge' Lees, The Empty Can, Bev Pegg & Jess Silk, Thurs 26 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE LITTLE CREEPERS One-woman play about the trials and tribulations of a teenage schizophrenic, Thurs 26 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

WHERE DO ALL THE DEAD PIGEONS GO? A story of friendship, love and loneliness, set on the dark side of the moon, Thurs 26 Oct, mac, B'ham

FINDING JOY Masked theatrical company Vamos explore the subject of dementia 'through humour and humanity', Thurs 26 - Fri 27 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

DELIGHTFUL Exploration of love, grief and how the state of our minds can affect how we remember our past, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

SINGALONGA ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW The camp cult classic gets the sing-along-a treatment it's been screaming for! Sat 28 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THAT'S LIFE - THE FRANK SINATRA STORY Celebrating the life and music of Ol' Blue Eyes, Sat 28 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

HELLOWORLD Immersive four-hour event, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

MACBETH The Crescent Theatre Company presents its version of Shakespeare's famous tragedy, Sat 28 Oct - Sat 4 Nov, Crescent Theatre, B'ham

KHOVANSCHINA Mussorgsky's epic opera, addressing themes of politics, madness and death, Tues 31 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

NEXUS:WHISPERS Vexed Theatre present an 'edge-of-your-seat experience', Tues 31 Oct, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

CHARLES DICKENS' GHOST STORIES Featuring two of Dickens' most chilling supernatural tales - The Signalman and The Haunted Man, Tues 31 Oct - Sat 11 Nov, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

Kids shows

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF PUSS IN BOOTS Starring Julie Patton from Cats and Grand Theatre panto dame Ian Adams, Mon 23 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

DORIS THE DRAGON 'Fun-packed' show for children, Tues 24 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

THE GIRL AND THE GIRAFFE Half Moon Theatre story about wellbeing and friendship, told from a child's perspective, Tues 24 - Thurs 26 Oct, mac, Birmingham

64 ZOO LANE Family-friendly musical based on the award-winning children's series of the same name, Wed 25 - Sun 29 Oct, Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

HAIRY MACLARY & FRIENDS Family show featuring music, song and characters from the much-loved books, Thurs 26 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

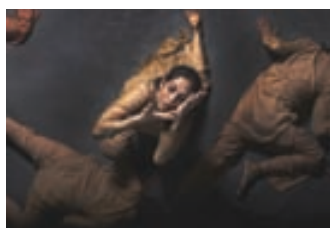
BOUNCING CATS & BOOM BOOM PUPS Immersive performance for children, Fri 27 - Sat 28 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

HAIRY MACLARY & FRIENDS Family show featuring music, song and characters from the much-loved books, Sat 28 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE CHRIS AND PUI SHOW New stage show with toys and characters from the hit TV programme, Sat 28 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Dance

INTER_RUPTED Brand new creation by Aditi Mangaldas Dance Company - a high-octane work based on disintegration, fragility, vulnerability, age and transience, Mon 23 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome



Lemn Sissay: Something Dark

mac, Birmingham, Tues 24 October

Celebrated performance poet Lemn Sissay gives a dramatic reading of his one-man play, a highly acclaimed work telling the story of his upbringing in children's homes and his search for his family and true identity. Associate artist at the Southbank Centre and author of five poetry collections, Sissay has performed Something Dark to great critical acclaim at venues around the world. This Birmingham reading is presented as part of a UK tour to celebrate the publication of the play by Oberon Books and its inclusion on the A-Level syllabus

THE NUTCRACKER Ballet Theatre UK presents this seasonal favourite, Tues 24 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

INFUSION EMPORIUM Boundary-pushing displays of bellydancing, Fri 27 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

Talks

LEMN SISSAY: SOMETHING DARK Dramatic reading of Lemn Sissay's acclaimed one-man play, Tues 24 Oct, mac, Birmingham

TAMED: WITH PROFESSOR ALICE ROBERTS

Find out how the taming of various species has left its mark on both them and us, Wed 25 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

BLUE - ALL RISE: OUR STORY An intimate evening celebrating the publication of the band's first book, Sun 29 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall



Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

THE BOSS BABY (U) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Alec Baldwin, Steve Buscemi. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Tues 24 Oct

WE LOVE MOSES; PROCLAMATION PUNCTUATION; NKOSI COIFFURE; 1745; ONE DROP OF LOVE An evening of short films opening the Black International Film Festival (BIFF). Films followed by Directors Q&A and a live acoustic set. mac, Birmingham, Tues 24 Oct

HAMPSTEAD (12a) Comedy/Drama. Starring Brendan Gleeson, Diane Keaton. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 24 Oct

E.T. THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL (PG) Family/Sci-Fi. Starring Henry Thomas, Drew Barrymore. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Wed 25 Oct

NO VISA REQUIRED A collection of stateside shorts by up and coming US filmmakers including sci-fi smash See You Yesterday, college drama Blake's World, moral dilemma To Those With Good Intent and segregation in Rolling In The Deep. Part of

Black International Film Festival (BIFF). mac, Birmingham, Wed 25 Oct

WHAT IS A MAN This selection of short films showcases Birmingham's finest filmmakers. Featuring tales of time-travel in Graycon, affairs of the heart in The Art Of Love in Broken, life or death struggle in Hands Up Don't Shoot, black fathers in A Man Called Dad, and the whimsical yet gritty Reverie. Followed by a Q&A with the director. Part of Black International Film Festival (BIFF). mac, Birmingham, Wed 25 Oct

THE HILLS HAVE EYES (PG)

Horror/Thriller. Starring Suze Lanier-Bramlett, Robert Houston. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 26 Oct

C'EST MOI; AFRO PUNK GIRL Two short films followed by a Q&A with the director. Part of Black International Film Festival (BIFF). Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 26 Oct

GHOSTBUSTERS (PG) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 27 Oct

IT (15) Horror. Starring Bill Skarsgård, Jaeden Lieberher. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 27 - Tues 31 Oct

A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (18) Horror. Starring Heather Langenkamp, Johnny Depp. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 28 Oct

HOCUS POCUS (PG) Comedy/Family. Starring Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker. New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Sat 28 Oct

HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA (PG) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Adam Sandler, Kevin James. The Bramall, Birmingham, Sat 28 Oct

JACKIE BROWN (15) Drama/Thriller. Starring Pam Grier, Samuel L. Jackson. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 29 Oct

CARRIE (18) Horror. Starring Sissy Spacek, Piper Laurie. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 29 Oct

CHRISTINE (18) Horror. Starring Keith Gordon, John Stockwell. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Mon 30 Oct

THE SHINING (15) Horror. Starring Jack Nicholson, Shelley Duvall. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 31 Oct

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Tues 24 Oct, showing at selected cinemas

THOR: RAGNAROK (tbc)

BREATHE (12a)

CALL ME BY YOUR NAME (15)

JIGSAW (18)

66 whatsonlive.co.uk

Events

OCTOBER HALF-TERM FUN Featuring crafts, games, nature trails and more, Mon 23 Oct, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

MONASTIC UNDERCROFT TOURS Visit the undercroft, the only remaining part of the original monastic house, and view the medieval architecture, Mon 23 Oct, Stoneleigh Abbey

HOCUS POCUS! Chance to make slithering snakes, frightful frogs and spooky spiders, Mon 23 - Fri 27 Oct, Selly Manor, Bournville, Birmingham

LEGENDS & LIGHTS Featuring Halloween-themed craft activities and spooky storytelling, Mon 23 - Sat 28 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

HALLOWEEN HUNT The ghouls and ghosts of Himley Hall have escaped onto the park. Find them all and claim your spooky certificate, Tues 24 Oct, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE GRAND Wed 25 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MURDER BY GASLIGHT A ghoulish audience with two of the most infamous poisoners in British history - William Palmer and Harvey Crippen, Wed 25 Oct, Lightwoods Park, Birmingham

HALLOWEEN NIGHTS Trick-or-treat along the gaslit cobbled streets and enjoy street entertainment from circus performers, fire-jugglers and magicians, Wed 25 - Sat 28 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

HALLOWEEN HOCUS POCUS Visit the candlelit pumpkin patch, enjoy creepy crafts & colouring, take a spooky selfie with Lou the Bat and enjoy Dippy's Halloween show & disco, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Oct, Dudley Zoological Gardens

FRIGHT NIGHTS Meet spine-tingling storytellers and discover tales of ghostly apparitions, dastardly deeds, and ghoulish goings-on, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Oct, Kenilworth Castle

DIRT BIKE SHOW 2017 Premier indoor off-road event, Thurs 26 - Sun 29 Oct, Stoneleigh Park

BRICK LIVE Celebrating all things Lego, Thurs 26 - Sun 29 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

BLACKOUT - LOCK IN Event offering after-dark access to all areas - with only a torch to guide you, Fri 27 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

PARANORMAL EVENING Featuring a history/ghost tour, vigils, use of paranormal equipment and more, Fri 27 - Sat 28 Oct, Dudley Zoological Gardens

SHERLOCKED: THE OFFICIAL SHERLOCK CONVENTION Featuring cast and creators from the show, with a wide variety of Sherlock-themed activities and events, Fri 27 - Sun 29 Oct, Hilton



Halloween Tours - Kenilworth Castle

Birmingham Metropole Hotel

CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN Enjoy special children's boat trips through Dudley's fantastic underground caverns, Fri 27 - Sun 29 Oct, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

SKY-FI FIREWORKS SPECTACULAR A 'galactic gathering' which sees fireworks set to music from popular classics, including Doctor Who, Star Trek, Star Wars and Guardians Of The Galaxy and many more, Fri 27 - Sun 29 Oct, Drayton Manor Theme Park, Tamworth

THE VAPER EXPO 'The ultimate day out for any vaping enthusiast', Fri 27 - Sun 29 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

ALI COOK Ali presents a show blending 'awe-inspiring' magic and off-beat comedy, Sat 28 Oct, mac, B'ham

GIN TASTING Featuring a talk about the history of gin and a tutored tasting of six gins from small independent producers, Sat 28 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

GCCF SUPREME CAT SHOW Sat 28 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

HALLOWEEN FIREWORKS FESTIVAL Sat 28 Oct, Ragley Hall, Alcester

FLAME AND THUNDER Action-packed day featuring motorsport stunts, drag racing, a fireworks display and bonfire, Sat 28 Oct, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough, Northants

CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN EVENING Get dressed up in your spookiest costume and enjoy the ghostly goings on around the castle, Sat 28 Oct, Tamworth Castle

HORRIBLE WILLENHALL HISTORIES Featuring a spooky trail and family-friendly ghost stories, Sat 28 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SPELLBOUND Stomp away at the Halloween disco and enjoy 'bone-tin-gling refreshments', Sat 28 Oct, Selly Manor, Bournville, Birmingham

WEST MIDLANDS VEGAN FESTIVAL Sat 28 - Sun 29 Oct, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

HALLOWEEN TOURS Eerie evening tour, Tues 31 Oct, Kenilworth Castle

GHOST SEARCH Ghost walk around the castle, with vigils conducted in reputedly haunted rooms, Tues 31 Oct, Tamworth Castle



Flame And Thunder - SantaPod, Northants

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JOE LYCETT • SPAMALOT!

HENNING WEHN • SIMON DAY

SIMON AMSTELL • BARBARA NICE

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What's On



For more information & full listings see:

bhamcomfest.co.uk



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