

Coventry & Warwickshire

ISSUE 382 OCTOBER 2017

# What's On

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SOMETHING GIANT IS COMING...

# JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

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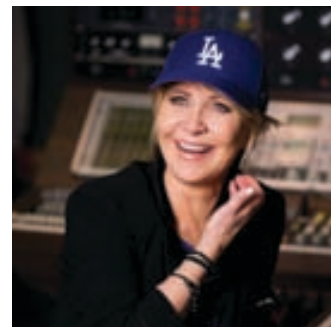
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## RSC announces its summer season for 2018

Productions of three of Shakespeare's most popular plays are among the highlights of the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2018 summer season. New versions of *Macbeth* - starring ex-Dr Who Christopher Eccleston - *Romeo And Juliet* and *The Merry Wives Of Windsor* all feature in the programme. They are accompanied by Webster's *The Duchess Of Malfi*, a revival of a 17th century play by little-known Mary Pix, *The Fantastic Follies Of Mrs Rich*, and *Miss Littlewood*, a brand new musical based on the life of theatre revolutionary Joan Littlewood.

The Company's 2016 production of *King Lear* will join the repertoire for a limited season after an international tour.

## Wellbeing in the Midlands

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 this 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](http://mindbodyspirit.co.uk)



## The Specials' Ghost Town is top of Coventry's pops

*Ghost Town* by The Specials has been named Coventry's favourite song.

The classic 1981 track was selected by the public as their number one sound in response to a Belgrade Theatre survey. The Specials also took runner-up spot in the survey with *A Message To You Rudy*.

Hazel O' Connor came in third with *Will You*. The Belgrade launched the survey to tie in with its new musical, *Godiva Rocks*, which shows at the venue from 7 to 21 October.

## Light, sound, poetry and nature at Compton Verney



Compton Verney Art Gallery & Park is once again presenting its hugely popular light-and-sound display this autumn. Light artists Luxmuralis have taken poetry and nature as their inspiration for a series of stunning light projections. The display will see the written word 'brought to life in a rich and colourful palette' projected onto Compton Verney's Georgian facade, while flora and fauna will be depicted both on a miniature and an epic scale. The light display takes place on the weekends of 28 & 29 October and 4 & 5 November.

## Mids theatre to host new musical of cult '80s movie

A Midlands theatre is set to host the world premiere of a musical based on cult 1980s movie *An Officer And A Gentleman*. The new show, which opens at the Leicester Curve from Friday 6 April before playing at

the Birmingham Hippodrome Tuesday 15 - Saturday 19 May, is being helmed by the Curve's Artistic Director Nikolai Foster. "An Officer And A Gentleman delicately charts the lives of working class, military folk in America in the early 1980s," explains Nikolai. "We're proud to be working alongside the film's creator to present this beautiful and inspiring story." For more information, visit [curveonline.co.uk](http://curveonline.co.uk)

## Bedlam in Birmingham!

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.





## Warwick Words History Festival makes a return

Historical crime fiction and stories of real-life courage feature among the attractions at this year's Warwick Words History Festival.

Highlights of the 2017 event include Birmingham-born bestselling novelist Lindsey Davis talking about her new book, *The Third Nero* - the fifth in her Flavia Albia series. Veteran TV journalist and presenter Peter Snow and wife Ann MacMillan also contribute, presenting 'gripping tales of courage, cunning and compassion' in *War Stories*. Warwick Words History Festival runs from Monday 2 to Sunday 8 October. For more information, visit [warwickwords.co.uk](http://warwickwords.co.uk)

## Shakespeare's Birthplace hosts new exhibition

Shakespeare's Birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon is hosting a new exhibition telling the complete story of how an 1847 auction saved the venue. The exhibition explains the steps that were taken to secure the Birthplace's future after the Government of the day refused to purchase the house. Over 31 million people have visited Shakespeare's Birthplace since records began in 1852. The exhibition shows until Friday 29 December.

## 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'. The show takes place at the Genting on Friday 29 December.



## Bite Size theatre productions at Warwick Arts Centre

A new take on Ovid's Minotaur myth and an innovative jukebox musical featuring the songs of John Bon Jovi are among the varied theatre shows on offer in this year's Bite Size Festival, returning to Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, on Saturday 7 October.

Offering an eclectic day-long showcase of new work by theatre makers across the Midlands, Bite Size features performances from well-established companies and emerging artists.

Commenting on the festival, Paul Warwick, Co-Director of one of its organisers, China Plate, said: "Bite Size promises to be a terrific opportunity to see an exciting snapshot of what the Midlands has to offer. The terrific-value day-pass means you can see the work of 16 artists for less than £30." For more information, visit [chinaplatetheatre.com](http://chinaplatetheatre.com)

## New men's barbers cuts it in Solihull

A fast-growing chain of barbers has opened a new premises in Solihull-based shopping centre Mell Square.

Everyman Barbers is 'the home of the modern man', where customers are offered a beer, the use of a PlayStation and the opportunity to watch Sky Sports while they wait. With access to a webcam through its website or bespoke app, customers can also see how busy the salon is before they visit. For more information, visit [mellsquare-shopping.com](http://mellsquare-shopping.com) or search Mell Square on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

## It's time to get Fierce in the Midlands

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, check out [wearefierce.org](http://wearefierce.org)





## Wheeler Dealers TV premiere to screen at classic motor show

A UK premiere screening of the first episode in the 14th season of hit TV show Wheeler Dealers will take place at next month's Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show at Birmingham's NEC. The episode, which features show stalwart Mike Brewer with new lead mechanic and co-host Ant Anstead, will be shown to around 200 guests in an after-hours screening. Classic motoring enthusiasts are being given the chance to win two tickets to view the screening. If they book their show tickets before Thursday 26 October, they will automatically be entered into a prize draw. The lucky winners will join Mike, Ant and special guests to watch the first episode of the brand new series. The Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show returns to Birmingham's NEC from Friday 10 to Sunday 12 November. For more information, visit [necclassicmotorshow.com](http://necclassicmotorshow.com)

## Folk stars to play Coventry Cathedral

British folk ambassadors Show Of Hands are next month performing at Coventry Cathedral. The award-winning duo, who blend sharp songwriting with unrivalled musicianship, will perform at the venue on Friday 10 November. They're joined for the gig by Miranda Sykes.



6 [whatsonlive.co.uk](http://whatsonlive.co.uk)

## Halloween horror at Coventry cinema

Coventry's Albany Picture House is getting into the spooky spirit of Halloween this month, courtesy of a special horror film festival. The venue is presenting five films in total, culminating in a special screening of FW Murnau's classic Nosferatu (1922), complete with live musical accompaniment from the local Orchestra Da Camera. Other featured films are The Haunting (1963), The Omen (1976), Dracula: Pages From A Virgin's Diary (2002) and A Girl Walks Home Alone At Night (2014). The festival runs from 3 to 31 October. For more information about the movies, visit [albanytheatre.co.uk](http://albanytheatre.co.uk)

## Student shopping night makes a return

To coincide with the start of a new academic year, Coventry's always-popular Student Shopping Night is making a welcome return on Wednesday 4 October. From 6pm to 10pm, new and returning students will be able to take advantage of late-night openings and a host of exclusive discounts, freebies and promotions. Commenting on the event, Coventry BID manager Trish Willetts said: "Now is the time for students to get registering for the event and make sure that they've secured their wristband, giving access to exclusive offers and events on the night. It's simple to do - just visit [coventrycitycentre.co.uk](http://coventrycitycentre.co.uk), where you will be able to sign up for free."



## Coventry theatre celebrates 10 years of B2

Coventry Belgrade Theatre recently celebrated 10 years of its B2 auditorium. B2 opened in September 2007, offering a flexible and intimate second space in which to stage risk-taking and innovative work. The auditorium was the vision of Artistic Director Hamish Glen, who insisted on its construction when he arrived in Coventry in 2003.



## Hollywood fame beckons for Midlands author

A Midlands 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 Birmingham 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."



# 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**





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# 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."

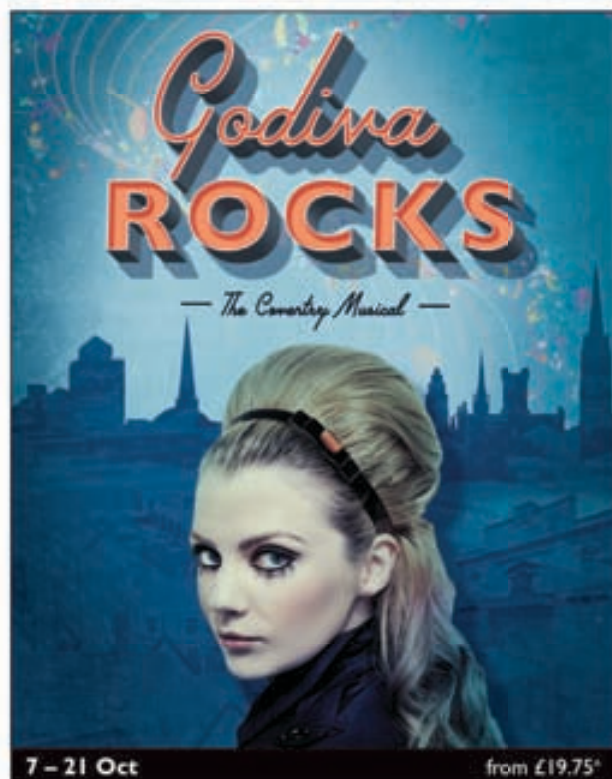
And Pollock has certainly been doing his bit to celebrate Coventry for some years: neither this nor his controversial Coventry Blitz play One Night In November are his first time putting the city centre-stage.

"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.**



**BOOK NOW 024 7655 3055 www.belgrade.co.uk**

\*Ticket prices include a £1 booking fee. No booking fee applies if booked online.





## REVIEW: Bistrot Pierre, Kidderminster

### Sophisticated new restaurant adding a real touch of glamour to the waterfront

Located just a short walk from the town centre and overlooking the river Stour, this delightful addition to Kidderminster's thriving Riverside development - a £3 million leisure & retail complex - prides itself on its 'great-value cooking and seasonal menus' combined with 'beautiful French-style interiors' and a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

A brief glance at the restaurant's extensive menu reveals both an inviting and varied choice of bistro-inspired dishes, including the much-loved duck leg confit with Provençal vegetables, beef bourguignon maison and the classic steak frites - in this case, 21-day matured, served with a choice of roasted garlic butter, green peppercorn or brandy sauce.

Alongside this is a similarly diverse offering of seasonal specialities, from the Alsace classic tarte flambé, served with a choice of fresh, seasonal toppings, right through to the Moroccan-inspired epaule d'agneau - slow-cooked shoulder of lamb served with pearl cous cous, harissa, toasted pine nuts, dried apricots and mint yogurt dress-

ing.

Optional packages include - to name but three - a la carte, prix fixe lunch (priced at £11.95 for two courses and £13.95 for three) and diner et vin (two courses for £22.95 and three for £27.95 with specially chosen wine).

This is a restaurant chain that knows its audience down to a T, combining great value with a carefully thought-out range of ready-to-go dining options for any occasion, whether that be an after-work dinner, pre-theatre meal or all-out celebration. For the ultimate Bistrot Pierre experience, look out for their Soirée Gastronomique evenings, taking place on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month and consisting of a six-course set dinner priced at an incredible £22.95 per person - c'est magnifique!

In keeping with the restaurant's bistro-inspired ethos, the interior design and decor boasts hardwood floors, circular booths accented with shades of yellow and duck-egg blue, Parisian-inspired café tables and early 20th century poster prints of varying colours and styles. These com-

bine with a delightful waterfront terrace to create an atmosphere of relaxed sophistication, channelling the authentic spirit of provincial French dining but with a distinctly contemporary twist.

Opting for an appetiser of pan sans gluten (lightly toasted gluten-free bread served with Lescure butter) and saucisson - sourced from the Beaujolais region and served with a side accompaniment of cornichons (a cucumber-like French gherkin) - it was clear from the first course that every possible effort had been made to ensure an authentic taste of France was present in every bite. From the intensely flavoured Label Rouge saucisson to the characteristically rich Lescure butter, the little touches made a big difference, and the attention to regional produce really showed!

I chose from the Fin de Weekend menu - a perfect pairing of two courses and a carafe of white, red or rosé Cuvée 94 for £21.50 per person. My gluten-free starter of salade de truite fumée (smoked trout, beetroot and fennel salad with horseradish crème fraîche) was the perfect marriage of seasonal produce and fresh flavour combinations. Perfectly cooked with a light flake, the smokiness of the trout partnered exquisitely with the sweetness of the beetroot, whilst the peppery bite of the fennel salad was complemented beautifully by the creaminess of the crème fraîche. Perfection on a plate!

For our main course, my choice of porc sauce béarnaise served with crispy bacon and seasonal vegetables didn't disappoint. Generously portioned, tender to the taste and enhanced by the rich saltiness of the bacon topping, this was hearty French cuisine as I remember it. Add to this a side order of French beans with toasted almond flakes at £3.25, and you have all the makings of a French-bistro classic.

For those seeking a lighter op-

tion, my partner's choice of morue gratinée - baked fillet of cod with a lemon, herb and garlic crust, sautéed green beans, sun-blushed tomatoes and basil - was a perfect alternative. Full-flavoured, baked to just the right texture and injected with just the right amount of sharpness from the lemon and herb crust, the quality of ingredients - again - spoke for itself.

A brief glance over the dessert menu revealed plenty to tempt me back for a second sitting, from classic dishes like crème brûlée, chocolate torte, frangipane and sorbet to the less familiar bavares de fruits rouges - a tantalising marriage of buttermilk pudding and berry compote not unlike the Italian pannacotta.

Adding a splash of Parisian chic to Kidderminster's newly revitalised restaurant quarter, Bistrot Pierre is exactly the kind of high-street chain that the town needs to be encouraging. It really does bring a healthy injection of glamour to the waterfront.

Whether stopping off for post-work drinks, celebrating a special occasion or enjoying a light lunch with friends or business colleagues, the bistro's affordable yet sophisticated ethos, commitment to seasonality and respect for artisan produce speak volumes. Add to this a carefully chosen and well-thought-out menu of stand-alone vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options, plus a generously researched and well-stocked wine menu, and you have a surefire recipe for success! Katherine Ewing

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## Lavish new restaurant & cocktail bar set to open in Selfridges

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.

## Top chef unveils new wine collection

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

Created alongside celebrated wine maker Jean-Luc Colombo, the wines, which include the Jean-Luc Colombo Marco Pierre White Rosé and the Jean-Luc Colombo Marco Pierre White Rouge are exclusively available at Marco's UK restaurants.

## Renowned bar opens its doors in Coventry

Renowned bar the Slug & Lettuce has opened in Coventry's Old County Hall, opposite the cathedral ruins, following a £500,000 investment. The venue's interior has been modernised and decorated in the signature Slug & Lettuce style, with minimal yet elegant decor.

Commenting on the new arrival in the city, the bar's General Manager, Claire Turner, said: "We're really excited to bring Slug & Lettuce to Coventry, especially within a building that has such great history.

"The new bar looks fantastic, we have such a brilliant team, and with our enviable food & drink menu, we certainly won't disappoint."

## RSC's Rooftop Restaurant launches a new vegan menu

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) has introduced a new three-course vegan pre-theatre and dinner menu at the Rooftop Restaurant in its main Stratford-upon-Avon theatre.

Starters include warm marinated vine tomatoes, roasted baby beets, basil puree and rocket, or giant couscous with red quinoa, fig, toasted almond and red onion salad and pomegranate molasses.

Mains feature Turkish aubergine and chick pea stew with freekeh pilaf, herb salsa and pine nuts, or fusilli with butternut squash, red onion, chestnut mushrooms, fried sage and creamy walnut sauce.

The meal can be rounded off with either sloe gin-poached pear served with blackcurrant sorbet, or autumn fruit compote with calvados custard.

Rooftop Restaurant diners can now also enjoy a vegan-style traditional afternoon tea, including scones, sandwiches and a range of desserts.

Commenting on the new vegan menu, RSC Exec-



utive Chef Simon Malin said: "As with our shows, we're always looking to make our food offer as accessible to as many people as possible, which is why I'm excited to introduce our brand new vegan offer, to open up more of the RSC to people looking to have a great shared culinary experience."



## Top cocktail bar expands with £1.4million refurbishment

One of the Midlands' most-loved cocktail bars has recently opened a second room, following a £1.4million refurbishment.

Located in Birmingham's 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."



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## The Skints

The Assembly, Leamington Spa,  
Tues 3 October

"Reggae music is the sound that makes all four of us geek out," says Skints vocalist and guitarist Josh Waters Rudge, "so it's always going to be where our greatest strength lies. The music has so much history, so it's important to be respectful at the same time as trying to create something new."

A ska and reggae band hailing from East London, The Skints quickly established a formidable reputation as live performers. They also scored a significant hit with their first two albums - *Live. Breathe. Build. Believe.* and *Part & Parcel*. The latter was hailed a modern-day dub, reggae and hip-hop-inspired classic. Third album *FM* proved to be even more successful. Expect to hear songs from all three when they visit Leamington this month.



## Sundara Karma

The Empire, Coventry, Wed 4 October

Led by the charismatic Oscar Pollock, Sundara Karma released their acclaimed debut album in January and are already being

hailed as the bright future of alt-rock. Following a busy summer of festival performances - Glastonbury, Reading & Leeds, Blissfields and Y Not all included - the four-piece have now embarked on their biggest UK tour to date.

## Roving Crows

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 13 October

Roving Crows are a Celtic folk fusion band based in Worcestershire and Herefordshire. Since forming in 2009, they've released four full-length albums, including *Deliberate Distractions* (2013) and latest offering *Bury Me Naked* (2017). They've also won numerous awards along the way, including Best Folk Act at Exposure Awards 2011 and Band Of The Year in the Fatea Music Awards 2014. Expect a fast-paced, high-energy performance from this talented four-piece.



## Public Service Broadcasting

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,  
Fri 20 October

Fusing electronic sound and spectacular visuals with samples from public information films, Public Service Broadcasting visit Coventry in support of latest album *Every Valley*. The trio play instrumental music because, as J Willgoose Esq notes: "Singing is never going to work. I'm not going to be comfortable playing it to other people."

## Louis Berry

The Copper Rooms, Coventry, Fri 20 October

Specialising in standout melodies and hard-hitting lyrics, Louis Berry delivers rock'n'roll for the 21st century.

"I want to be the biggest male artist on the planet," says Louis. "You name me one song in the charts right now that says anything about your life or my life. I can't name *one*! Chart music now is just candy - it doesn't feed your soul. An hour later you're hungry again."

Louis brings his UK tour to the Midlands following triumphant performances at Reading & Leeds this summer.

## Martin Turner

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Sat 21 October

Wishbone Ash's founding lead vocalist and key creative force here performs some of the band's best-loved works with the assistance of his current line-up.

Formed in 1969, Wishbone Ash were long admired for their unique blend of blues, jazz and English folk - but it was the way their guitars played melodic leads together that became their trademark, inspiring bands such as Thin Lizzy and Iron Maiden. Classic album releases including *Argus*, *Pilgrimage*, *There's The Rub*, *New England* and *Live Dates* have defined the band's sound, touching the hearts of generations of music fans.



# 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**



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## Armonico Consort

Bushell Hall, Solihull, Wed 11 October;  
Worcester Cathedral, Thurs 12 October;  
The Albany Theatre, Coventry,  
Fri 13 October

Founded by organist and conductor Christopher Monks in 2001, Armonico are one of the largest organisations of their kind in the UK. Using authentic period instruments, the baroque consort regularly perform with some of the best solo musicians in the world. These Midlands concerts see them putting to music the saga of Beowulf, as recounted in the oldest-surviving poem in Old English.

The new piece, written by Armonico composer-in-residence Toby Young, boasts strong folk-pop influences, a fact that should make it an engaging experience for the whole family to enjoy. Beowulf sees Armonico being joined by Catrin Finch (pictured), one of the most accomplished harpists of her generation and a regular collaborator with some of the world's top orchestras.



## Julian Bliss Plays Weber

Stratford Arts House, Tues 3 October

Stratford's Orchestra Of The Swan team up with celebrated clarinettist Julian Bliss for this hometown performance.

Widely considered to be one of the UK's most talented young soloists, Bliss here performs Weber's virtuoso showpiece for clarinet.

The programme also features the overture to Rossini's Barber Of Seville and Beethoven's eighth symphony, widely thought to be one of his finest.

## St Petersburg Symphony Orchestra

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,  
Sun 15 October

Founded in 1931 and, famously, the only orchestra to stay and perform in the besieged city of Leningrad during the Second World War, the St Petersburg Symphony Orchestra (originally the Leningrad Radio Orchestra) are widely considered to be one of the finest in Europe. And this month's Coventry concert certainly provides an excellent opportunity for them to demonstrate exactly why they're held in such high regard... Artistic Director Alexander Dmitriev conducts a programme that features two much-loved works: Rimsky-Korsakov's musical tales of the beautiful Scheherazade and Mussorgsky's Halloween shocker, Night On A Bare Mountain. The orchestra is joined by British piano virtuoso Peter Donohoe for a performance of Rachmaninov's brilliant Fourth Concerto.



## Navarra String Quartet

Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa, Fri 6 October

The Navarra String Quartet appear in Leamington for the first time since 2008, presenting a programme featuring works by Haydn, Shostakovich and Schubert.

Playing together since 2002 and boasting a reputation as one of the most dynamic and poetic string quartets of the 21st century, Navarra visit the Midlands following recent performances at three hugely prestigious venues: Wigmore Hall, the Royal Festival Hall and Sydney Opera House.

## Florian Kitt & Carlos Rivera-Aguilar

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 20 October

This latest entry in the Bromsgrove Concerts season sees distinguished Austrian cellist Florian Kitt present a programme of work that features 'the drama of Beethoven and the romantic sweep of Prokofiev's melodies'. Florian also performs Takemitsu's Orion, a work of great contemplative stillness written especially for him.

He's joined for the concert by pianist Carlos Rivera-Aguilar.



## City Of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

Malvern Theatre, Fri 6 October

Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla takes charge of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra for what will be one of her first touring engagements as the CBSO's music director. The concert programme includes Weber's Overture to Der Freischütz and Brahms' Symphony No 1.

Clarinettist Jorg Widmann joins the orchestra for a performance of Mozart's autumnal Clarinet Concerto.

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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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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

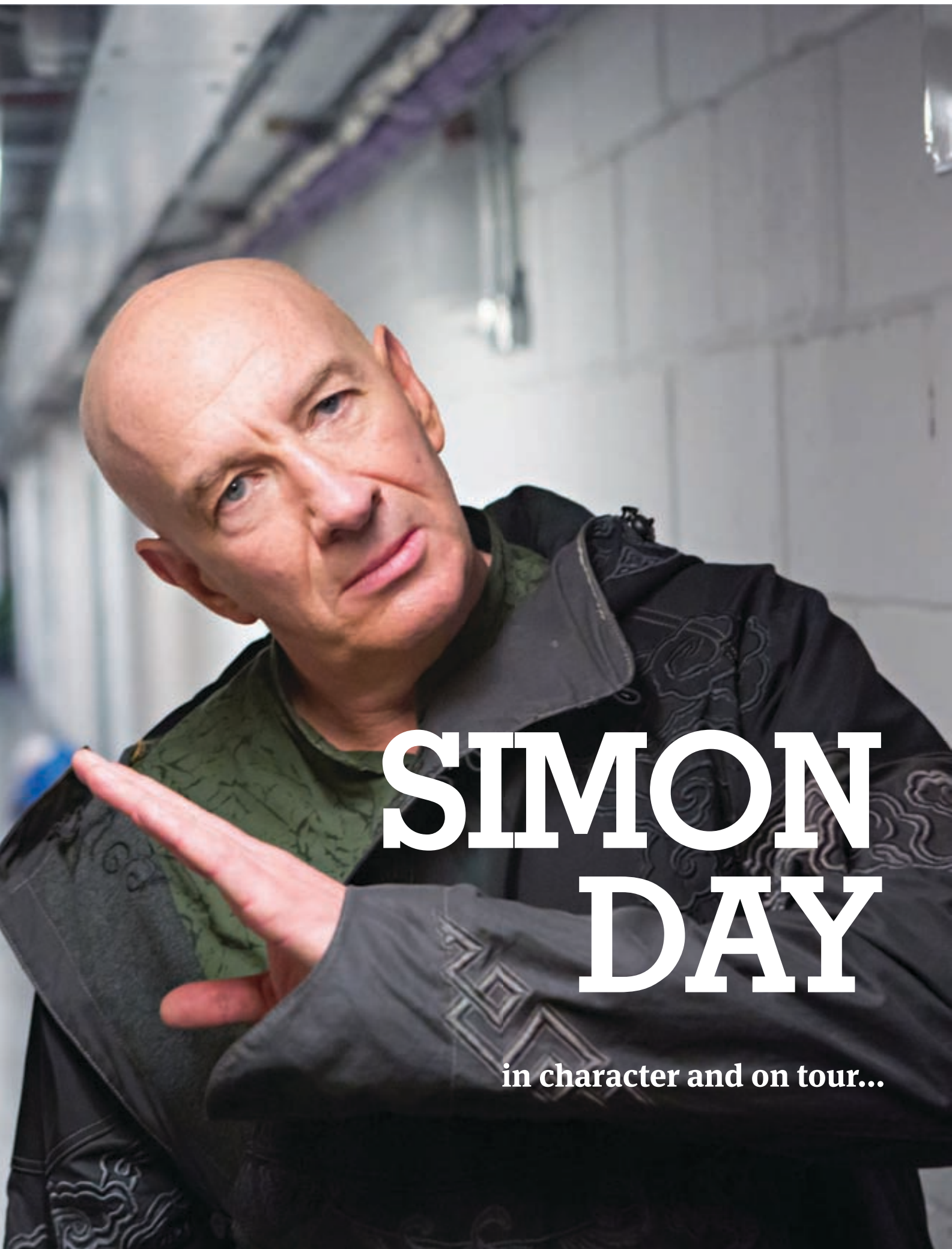
Comedy Junction, The Station Pub, Sutton Coldfield, Fri 13 October

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 overseas I get a lot about it – lots of expats, especially miserable expats 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 hoofer 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.**





# 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.**



## 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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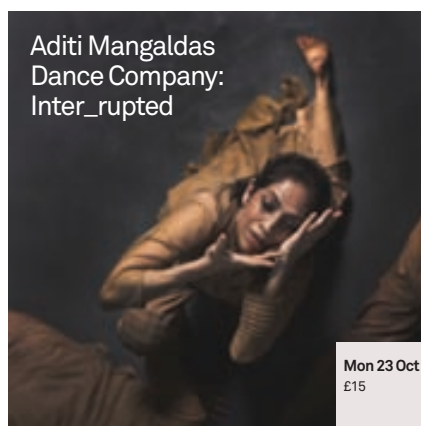


Tales of Birbal  
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Indian sub-continent

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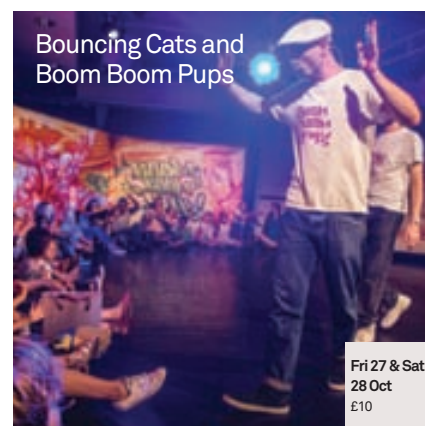


Aditi Mangaldas  
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Boom Boom Pups

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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

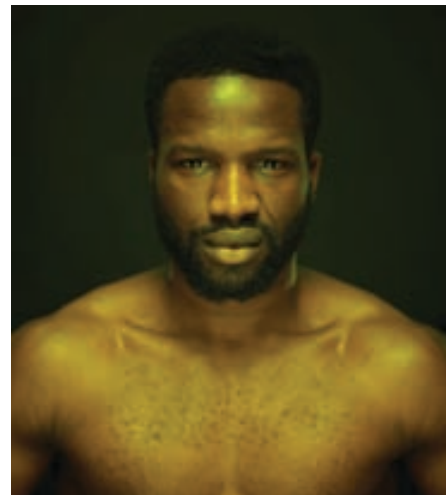
By the time Andrea Dunbar was 20, she had written two critically acclaimed plays - The Arbor, at the age of 15, and the wickedly funny Rita, Sue And Bob Too, four years later. Hailed a genius straight from the slums, Dunbar spent time in a Women's Aid refuge, had three children by three different fathers, 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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**MAMMA MIA!**





## 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 conmen 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.





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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 & Tickle 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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# FULLY CHARGED

**Motionhouse Artistic Director talks about the company's new multimedia show which makes its debut in Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre this month...**



Motionhouse's new production will be aiming to spark our interest as it explores the power of electricity in our lives, loves and logic.

Charge explores the energy in our bodies and its relationship to the world around us in a dynamic combination of dance-circus and digital technology.

Forming the third part of a trilogy inspired by the earth and created by Motionhouse founder and artistic director Kevin Finnan, Charge follows the phenomenal success of Scattered and Broken.

"I wanted to make a show about energy and I wanted to tell it through the human body," Kevin says. "I became really interested in the idea of the human body as an electrical system and its relationship to the world we live in. It's all a flow and exchange of energy. "We tend to think of energy as something external to us rather than something we are part of. But as soon as you start to look at it there's a sense of wonder at how the body operates as energy.

"The idea of making a show about energy has been in my mind for a very, very long time

but its actual form and the commitment to making it started about three years ago. That's when I started a general period of research and it started coming together."

Kevin's research saw him working with professors at the University of Oxford as he sought to understand more of the mechanics of energy and of how humanity has discovered and comprehended electricity in human beings and in the world around us.

"I was looking for a poetic narrative that would tell the story of our relationship to energy," he says. "And what I discovered was



that it all comes down to a simple thing – ultimately thought is an electrical process. If your brain wasn't able to pass electrical signals around then there would be no love, there would be no memory, there would be no empathy. And that is so fundamental. When you turn on a light bulb you don't think 'without energy I couldn't love someone' but it's true.

"So I began to delve into a story where energy is the movement of our lives. A city is a hive of energy and moves things around by energy and we are familiar with that but we also have an internal energy hive in which energy moves from cell to cell. And so I began to overlap things. If you look at a map of a city at night or the planet from outer space and you see it all lighting up, well you have the same process with the human brain. When the brain is imaged, it's a massive fluctuation of light.

"It's also fascinating that with various mental conditions, things like Alzheimer's, when they scan people's brains it's like a city with certain areas blocked out. What happens is that areas of the brain just go dark and the messages that should pass through just don't go and gradually you're not making short term memory and you forget the ones you love. It's incredibly sad." Kevin then looked at how to tell these stories in a dance piece.

"From all of this research I could feel the strands of the show coming together. It's about how the body is a cauldron of energy living in a cauldron of energy, which is our society, and then how all the subtlety of our lives is all electrical signals in our minds. So I began to make the poem that can be told in movement - and dance-circus is the perfect form for that because the body is energetic." And added into this cauldron are elements of humanity's relationship with scientific discoveries around electricity.

"The first animation of tissue with an electrical charge was a massive conceptual shift in a society which understood, when it saw frogs' legs twitching, that we were electrical beings," says Kevin. "This was a massive revelation and there was an outbreak of wonder.

"And in Mary Shelley's book Frankenstein, it's not about mad scientists, it's this idea that electrical energy is within us. With the information they had at the time the idea that if biological elements were arranged and given energy it could create a life force was an interesting concept.

"This whole opening up of humanity in beginning to grasp that we are electrical is fascinating. There's a moment of comprehension of us being electrified beings and then something more once consciousness is present. That had to be part of the story – how we understand we are electric beings but then how we kind of forget that."

Founded in 1988 and based in Leamington Spa in Warwickshire, Motionhouse has built up a reputation for strongly physical and dynamic work, which blends dance, spectacle, circus and often digital projection. Kevin was keen for Charge to include these elements.

"I'm very interested in working with film as a digital element both on the environment and on the body. How you interact with the film is really important," he says. "Film can take you to places quickly and I really love film in theatre but it is two-dimensional, so for us it's all about 'how do we stretch that into a three-dimensional sense of space?' It's about how we interact with the imagery and the realities that we are able to create.

"For a show like Charge where one minute we are in a spinning urban environment and then for the next part of the scene we are inside the human heart and then in someone's house and then within someone's brain, that kind of mercurial transmission between places is really only possible with a real interaction with digital."

Having performed at venues and festivals both nationally and internationally, Motionhouse has become one of the leading independent dance companies in the UK. Founded by Kevin with his partner Louise Richards, former performer and now executive director of the company, Kevin says the priority has always been producing top quality and innovative work. This has seen them performing alongside diggers and JCBs, using giant sandcastles and taking to the air.

"With the hubris of the young you think 'I want people to see my work' but you don't really see beyond that when you first start up," recalls Kevin. "You really don't see beyond the next show – you are just struggling to build your reputation so you can get the money for the next show and then the next show. But you have a passion to make your work. And for us, it was always a passion to express ourselves through our work.

"Largely due to Louise guiding and developing the company, we are now in a

position where the company is nearly 30 years old and what is really exciting for both of us is that, as we approach 30 years, we are more successful than we have ever been. We are more followed and more people come to our shows than ever happened in the past.

"It's a massively significant milestone for the company to be achieving 30 years and to be touring and growing and developing is incredible really. A lot of this is down to the hard work of everyone in the company.

"We seem to have expanded on three fronts – we've just been in Denmark working on a massive aerial piece working with aeroplanes and skydivers - so something really huge scale, then we're making Charge and we've already got two tours booked and our previous works are still touring and then our outdoor work has gone from strength to strength."

Motionhouse is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. Charge is supported by Warwick Arts Centre, The Rothschild Foundation, the Ernest Cook Trust and TippingPoint Stories of Change with the Official Energy Partner of Charge being First Utility.

And the company's success has been supported by Arts Council England which has granted Motionhouse a 38 per cent uplift in funding for 2018-22. Kevin says this is a testament to the company's success.

"We have ever-expanding audience figures which is tremendous and the kind of physicality that we are exploring in our work really chimes with people," says Kevin. "We want to challenge our audiences, we want to engage them, we want to thrill them, we want to delight them and we want to share with them.

"We are a very audience-centric company and I think that is a large part of why we were awarded the uplift. The testament is the wide range of audience who come to our work. We know a lot of people who see our shows haven't seen a dance show before and when we do our outside work we touch huge numbers of people who may never have been in a theatre."

.....  
**Motionhouse's Charge will be showing at Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry from Wed 4 - Sat 7 October; The Roses, Tewkesbury on Tues 31 October and Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 13 March, 2018**

# Sir Peter Wright's The Nutcracker



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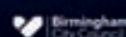
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## Birmingham Royal Ballet: Aladdin

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."

# 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.**



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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 Issitt'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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# 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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## 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**

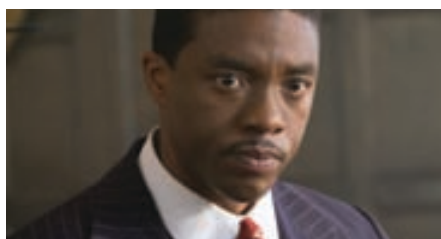
## Marshall

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

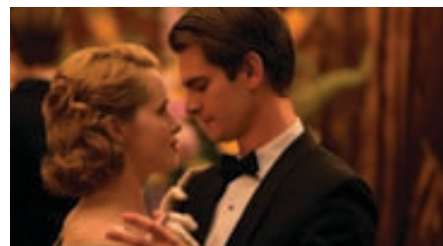
CERT 12a (117 mins)

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, Jonathan - 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.



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**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](http://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 p.m., with Fireworks at 8.00 p.m. 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 p.m. 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 Raive 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  
Adult themed slots every half hour from 8.00pm-9.30pm

**Plan your family event now**

**Tamworth Borough Council**

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For more information please call 01827 709 618  
[www.tamworthcastle.co.uk](http://www.tamworthcastle.co.uk)  
Tamworth Castle, The Holloway, Tamworth, Staffordshire B79 7NA



Great  
half-term  
events

## 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 ghoulish of outfits.





# BLISTS HILL VICTORIAN TOWN

## GHOSTLY GASLIGHT

**SAT 28 OCT**  
**6pm - 9pm**

Includes  
family  
fireworks  
display



**SAT 4 NOV**  
**6pm - 9pm**

Includes spectacle  
of hot metal being  
poured in the foundry

## FIREWORKS NIGHT

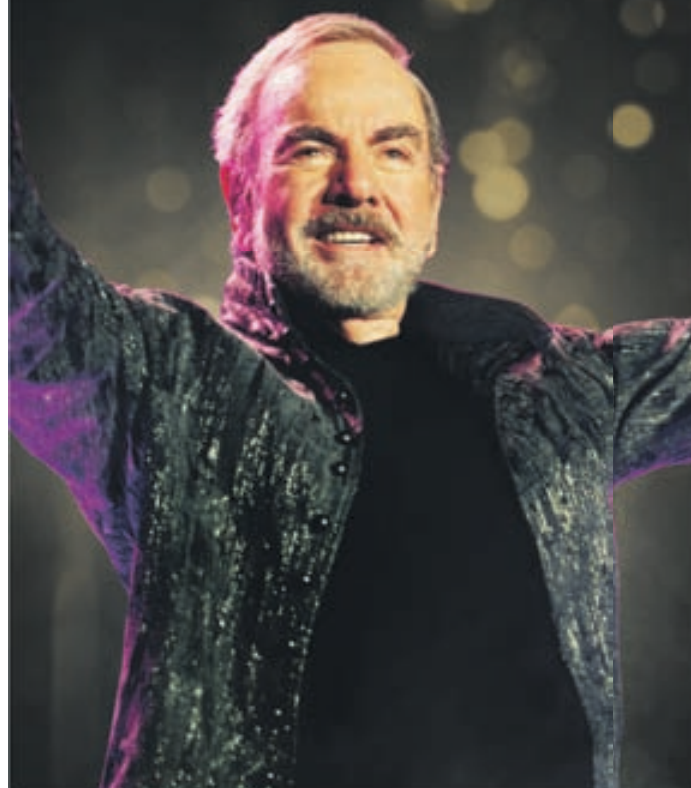
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SUNDAY 15 OCTOBER 2017

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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

Bodenhams 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...

# ANTIQUES

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\*Offer only available in advance for a limited time. Advance box office closes at midnight on 22 November 2017. Offer applies to the standard ticket price of £16.

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



# 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 on 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 Stilettos, 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**



Your week-  
by-week  
listings guide  
**October 2017**

# the list



Lulu at Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry - Wed 18 October

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

## What's On

Sun 1 to Sun 8 October



Simon Amstell at Warwick Arts  
Centre, Coventry  
**Sat 7 October**

Mon 9 to Sun 15 October



Cabaret at Malvern Theatres  
**Tues 10 - Sat 14 October**

Mon 16 to Sun 22 October



Ellie Taylor at Artrix,  
Bromsgrove  
**Thurs 19 October**

Mon 23 to Tues 31 October



International Dirt Bike Show at  
Stoneleigh Park  
**Thurs 26 - Sun 29 October**

### THROUGHOUT OCTOBER

## Visual Arts

### Artrix, Bromsgrove

**SUE HAYDEN: UP CLOSE AND FAR** Bewdley-based Sue produces work that's based on the relationship between texture, shape and light, until Sun 1 Oct

**NEW 5 CUBED: RETROSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE** 5 Cubed is a group of four mature, contemporary artists who trained together and exhibit regularly, Wed 4 - Sun 29 Oct

### 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

### Compton Verney Gallery, Warwick

**SEURAT TO RILEY: THE ART OF PERCEPTION** Exhibition taking you on a fascinating and stimulating journey that looks at the ways in which our visual

perceptions have been explored by artists, until Sun 1 Oct

**PORTRAIT MINIATURES** Over 40 miniature paintings from the Dumas Egerton Trust Collection, until Sun 17 Dec

**NEW THE LOST WORDS** Exhibition combining the creative talents of writer Robert Macfarlane and artist Jackie Morris, celebrating the relationship between language and the living world, and nature's power to spark the imagination, Sat 21 Oct - Sun 17 Dec

**NEW QUENTIN BLAKE: INSIDE STORIES** Exhibition celebrating the work of one of the world's most important and best-loved illustrators, offering a unique insight into some of his most characteristic and popular creations, Sat 21 Oct - Sun 17 Dec

### Forge Mill Needle Museum,

**INSPIRED BY MACHINERY** Exhibition by the Westhope Group - a diverse ensemble of textile artists who primarily work with lace techniques, until Sun 22 Oct

**NEW HISTORICAL ARTEFACTS OF THE REDDITCH LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY** The Redditch Local History Society has collected a wide range of artefacts relating to the history of the town. These include an extensive collection of original photographs, ledgers, journals, paintings, prints and service awards, Wed 25 Oct - Sun 26 Nov

### Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

**PICASSO: LINOCUTS FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM** Exhibition featuring some of Picasso's most important works in linocut, presented alongside a selection of ceramics on loan from Leicester Arts & Museums Service, until Sun 3 Dec

**NEW SECRET VALENTINE** An exhibition of works by Li Hui, a Chinese photographer based in Beijing who explores intimacy in the heavily self-conscious context of a world obsessed with social media, Fri 6 - Sun 22 Oct

**NEW CRAFTS OF THE PUNJAB: EXPLORE THE V&A SOUTH ASIAN COLLECTION** Using the exceptional collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum, Crafts Of The Punjab presents an extensive range of arts and crafts made across the area from the 2nd to the 19th century, Fri 20 Oct - Sun 21 Jan

### Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

**THE BENEVOLENT DESPOT: ALDERMAN ALFRED HOLT (1858 - 1943) AND THE FOUNDATION OF LEAMINGTON ART GALLERY** The story of Alderman Alfred Holt's contributions as a 'public-spir-

## Gigs

**LORDE** Sun 1 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**SAINT PHNX** Sun 1 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**SANDRA GODLEY** Sun 1 Oct, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**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

**LOYLE CARNER** Tues 3 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE SKINTS** Tues 3 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

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

**THE STRYPES** Wed 4 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**EMPIRICAL** Wed 4 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**WILLE AND THE BANDITS** Wed 4 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**PRETTY VICIOUS** Wed 4 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**SUNDARA KARMA & THE MAGIC GANG** Wed 4 Oct, The Empire, Coventry

**JARROD DICKENSON** Wed 4 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

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

**FAITH: GEORGE MICHAEL** Thurs 5 Oct, Bedworth

Civic Hall

**THE ESKIES** Thurs 5 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**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

**THE HOLLIES** Thurs 5 Oct, Malvern Theatres, Malvern

**PAPA ROACH** Thurs 5 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**JUSTIN HAYWARD** Thurs 5 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall, B'ham

**STIPE** Fri 6 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

**TOM GRENNAN** Fri 6 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**BELLEVUE DAYS** Fri 6 Oct, Kasbah, Coventry

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

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

**SHELLAC** Fri 6 Oct, The Asylum, B'ham

**OAS-IS & BLURD** Fri 6 Oct, The Empire, Coventry

**SINNERGOD** Fri 6 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

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

**MARTY STUART** Fri 6 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

**CHINA CRISIS** Fri 6 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**FRED ZEPPELIN** Fri 6 Oct, Route 44, B'ham

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

**ARCANE ROOTS** Fri 6 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

**TURIN BRAKES** Fri 6 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**BLACK CELEBRATION** Fri 6 Oct, The River

Rooms, Stourbridge

**ESTRONS** Fri 6 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

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

**LIPSTICK ON YOUR COLLAR** Sat 7 Oct, Number 8 Community Arts Centre, Worcestershire

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

**GUNS OR ROSES** Sat 7 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

**SALUTE TO SINATRA AND THE HOOSIERS** Sat 7 Oct, Kasbah, Coventry

**ROSIE CARNEY & HENRY JAMISON** Sat 7 Oct, Ork Cafe, Birmingham

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

**THE SELECTER & THE BEAT** Sat 7 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**80'S EXPERIENCE** Sat 7 Oct, Nailcote Hall, Berkswell, Warwickshire

**ONE STOP BOOGIE** Sat 7 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**SURF'S UP** Sat 7 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**GUNS OR ROSES** Sat 7 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

**THINK FLOYD** Sat 7 Oct, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**THE OVERTONES** Sat 7 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall

**BEVERLEY KNIGHT** Sun 8 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**IAN MOSS** Sun 8 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon,

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

**EVERY THREAD** Sun 8 Oct, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

**DANIEL KEMISH** Sun 8 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester



### Classical Music

**THE CRYSTALLINE HEAVEN** Excelsa Voces with Tom McMahon (cello) & Chris Long (keyboards). Programme includes music of the Renaissance from Palestrina & Christobal de Morales; and contemporary music by Morton Lauridsen, Arvo Part, Olivier Messiaen and others, Sun 1 Oct, The Guild Chapel, Stratford-upon-Avon

**ANNELIEN VAN WAUWE & AMATIS PIANO TRIO** Programme comprises Messiaen's Quartet for the End of Time, Mon 2 Oct Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**AMATIS PIANO TRIO** Programme includes works by Mendelssohn & Schubert, Tues 3 Oct Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**JULIAN BLISS PLAYS WEBER** Works by Rossini & Beethoven also feature, Tues 3 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** Featuring Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (conductor) & Jorg Widdman (clarinet). Programme includes works by Weber, Mozart & Brahms, Fri 6 Oct, Malvern Theatre



**NAVARRA STRING QUARTET** Programme comprises Haydn's Quartet in D minor Op 9 No.4; Shostakovich's Quartet No.5 in B flat Op 92 & Schubert's Quartet in G D887, Fri 6 Oct, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**BE LIVE** Sat 7 Oct, Coventry Cathedral

**BLAKE** Sun 8 Oct, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

**DINARA KLINTON PIANO CONCERT** Sun 8 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

### 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

**CHRISTIAN REILLY, SALLY-ANNE HAYWARD AND STEPHEN BAILEY** Mon 2 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**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

**KUM-N-AVALOFF COMEDY NIGHT** Thurs 5 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

**GREG DAVIES** Thurs 5 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ABANDOMAN** Fri 6 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

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

**FESTIVAL OF THE SPOKEN NERD** Fri 6 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**BREAKING TALENT AWARD 2017** Fri 6 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**ROB ROUSE, GERRY K. & MARTI** Fri 6 Oct, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

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

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

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

**SIMON AMSTELL** Sat 7 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**UPFRONT COMEDY** Sat 7 Oct, mac, Birmingham

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

**JAY HANDLEY** Sat 7 Oct, mac, B'ham

**BARNSTORMERS COMEDY NIGHT** Sat 7 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**DANIEL SLOSS** Sun 8 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**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

**COROLANUS** 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-upon-Avon

**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

**THE CRUCIBLE** Arthur Miller's acclaimed story, inspired by the Salem witchcraft trials, Sat 30 Sept - 7 Oct, Talisman Theatre, Kenilworth

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

**A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT** Music, mirth and merriment with Dandy, Ian 'Sludge' Lees, The Empty Can, Bev Pegg & Jess Silk, Sun 1 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**MAD ABOUT THE MUSICALS** Whistle-stop tour of the shows, from the heart of London's theatreland to the glitz of Broadway, Sun 1 Oct, Malvern Theatres

**ELECTRA** Nuworks Productions present a faithful adaptation of Euripides' Greek tragedy, set to a score inspired by the style of Nick Cave, Mon 2 Oct, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**THAT'LL BE THE DAY** Acclaimed touring show featuring a host of popular hits spanning the 1950s, '60s, '70s & '80s, Mon 2 - Tues 3 Oct, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

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

**ROMEO & JULIET** Nuworks Productions give Shakespeare's classic a contemporary twist via accompanying music from Pink, Coldplay and Muse, Tues 3 Oct, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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

**ANTIGONE** Actors Of Dionysus present a new adaptation of Sophocles' tragedy, reimagined in a dystopian landscape, Wed 4 Oct, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**PSYCHIC SALLY: KISSES TO HEAVEN** Evening of mediumship, Wed 4 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**A HAUNTING 'Nailbiting' drama** combining fiercely original writing with a darkly comic tone, Wed 4 - Thurs 5 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**9 TO 5** Alcester Musical Theatre Company present an amateur staging of the Dolly Parton musical, Wed 4 - Sat 7 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**PROMISE AND PROMISCUITY: A NEW MUSICAL** Penny Ashton brings a full cast of Austen-esque 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

**BUGSY MALONE** Phoenix Theatre Group present an amateur staging of Alan Parker's famous musical, Thurs 5 - Sat 7 Oct, Evesham Arts Centre, Worcestershire

**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

**A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT** Music, mirth and merriment with Dandy, Ian





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Saturday 21 October 7.30pm

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Sir Karl Jenkins *conductor*

Joo Yeon Sir *violin* Kathryn Rudge *mezzo-soprano*

Manchester Chorale Manchester Concert Orchestra

Sunday 5 November at 3.00pm

# MOZART REQUIEM



Mozart's choral masterpiece crowns a sublime afternoon of his greatest works.

THE MAGIC FLUTE  
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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HANDEL Hallelujah Chorus VAUGHAN WILLIAMS The Lark Ascending  
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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COMPLETE WITH CANNON EFFECTS AND INDOOR FIREWORK FINALE

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR

David Bull Philip *tenor* Ilona Domeich *soprano* Alexander Sitkovetsky *violin* Anthony Inglis *conductor*



Sunday 12 November 3.00pm

# GRAND ORGAN GALA

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King of Instruments featuring the magnificent  
'Organ Symphony' by Saint-Saëns

SAINT-SAËNS Symphony No. 3 'Organ'

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*

Fanfare Trumpeters of the Royal Corps of Signals

Birmingham Choral Union London Concert Orchestra

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'Sludge' Lees, The Empty Can, Bev Pegg & Jess Silk, Fri 6 Oct, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

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

**WORLD WAR ONE IN SONG: NO PETTICOATS HERE!** Louise Jordan uses songs to recount the stories of remarkable women of the First World War, Sat 7 Oct, Malvern Theatres

**GODIVA ROCKS** Celebration of Coventry music from the 1950s to the present day, Sat 7 - Sat 21 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**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

## Kids shows

**SNOW WHITE** Brand new musical adaptation which sees the seven dwarfs morph into hip-hop brothers, Sun 1 Oct, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**LIBRARY LION** Children's story featuring songs, laughter and lots of audience participation, Sat 7 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**A MOUSE CALLED CHEDDAR GORGE** Join in the fun, songs and audience participation in Angela Lanyon's tale of a mouse with a penchant for chocolate biscuits, Sat 7 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

## 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

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



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

**CHARGE** Motionhouse's new multimedia work, which delves deep into the human body to trace the story of energy in our lives, Wed 4 - Sat 7 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

## 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

**JEMIMA PARRY-JONES MBE: WHAT IS THAT HAWK IN YOUR GARDEN** Special talk about local birds of prey, and a display of flying birds, Tues 3 Oct, Malvern Theatre

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

**THE GENIUS OF JANE AUSTEN** Austen expert Dr Paula Byrne looks at the comic art of Jane Austen, and her innovative approach to her life via objects and places. Advance booking required. Wed 4 Oct, Compton Verney Gallery, Warwickshire

**GORDON BUCHANAN: ANIMAL FAMILIES & ME** The BBC TV wildlife presenter and cameraman shares stories of the natural world, Wed 4 Oct, Malvern Theatre

**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

**MICHAEL ROSEN** The event is part of the University of Worcester Storytelling Festival for Children, Fri 6 Oct, The Hive, Worcester

**JON SOPEL - IF ONLY THEY DIDN'T SPEAK ENGLISH** The BBC Political Correspondent talks about his new book, which offers a portrait of American life and politics as seen through British eyes, Fri 6 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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

**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

## Film

**WHITNEY: CAN I BE ME (15)** Music /Documentary. Starring Whitney Houston, Bobbi Kristina Brown. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Thurs 28 Sept - Wed 4 Oct

**VICTORIA & ABDUL (PG)** Biography/Drama. Starring Judi Dench, Adeel Akhtar. mac, Birmingham, Fri 29 Sept - Thurs 5 Oct; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 29 Sept - Mon 2 Oct, Sun 8 - Tues 10 Oct

**STAR WARS: EPISODE IV (U)** Action/Fantasy. Starring Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford. Outdoor screening. Priory Park, Malvern, Sun 1 Oct

**PATTI CAKES (15)** Drama/Music. Starring Danielle Macdonald, Bridget Everett. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sun 1 - Wed 4 Oct

**DETROIT (15)** Crime/History. Starring John Boyega, Anthony Mackie. Malvern Theatres, Sun 1, Tues 3 & Wed 4 Oct

**GOD'S OWN COUNTRY (15)** Drama/Romance. Starring Josh O'Connor, Alec Secareanu. Malvern Theatres, Sun 1 - Wed 4 Oct; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 3 - Thurs 5 Oct

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

**MY COUSIN RACHEL (12a)** Drama/Mystery. Starring Rachel Weisz, Sam Claflin. Artrix, Bromsgrove, 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

**A GIRL WALKS HOME ALONE AT NIGHT (15)** Drama/Horror. Starring Sheila Vand, Arash Marandi. Albany Theatre, Coventry, Tues 3 Oct

**HAMPSTEAD (12a)** Comedy/Drama. Starring Brendan Gleeson, Diane Keaton. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Wed 4 & Fri 6 Oct

**LE DOULOS (12a)** Crime/Thriller. Starring Danielle Macdonald, Bridget Everett. Foreign language, subtitled. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Thurs 5 Oct

**BLADE RUNNER 2049 (12a)** Sci-Fi/Thriller. Starring Harrison Ford, Ryan Gosling. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 6 - Thurs 19 Oct

**BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (PG)** Fantasy/Musical. Starring Emma Watson, Dan Stevens. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 7 - Sun 8 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

**AN INCONVENIENT SEQUEL: TRUTH TO POWER** Documentary. Starring Al Gore, Barack Obama. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 8 & Tues 10 Oct

## NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 1 Oct, showing at selected cinemas

**BLADE RUNNER 2049 (tbc)**

**THE GLASS CASTLE (12a)**

**THE MOUNTAIN BETWEEN US (12a)**

## Events

**CARTISTS: REIMAGINING THE CAR** Fourteen artists, one challenge... Transform a car into a work of art! until Sun 29 Oct, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry



**JAPSHOW FINALE 2017** The country's quickest cars compete in the FWD Drag Series, Sun 1 Oct, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough, Northants

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

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

**FUN PALACES** Day of free hands-on arts-and-science activities for all ages, Sat 7 Oct, Shakespeare's Birthplace, Stratford Upon Avon

**SCAREFEST** Compete with spooks, frights, thrills, and remaining open until 9pm, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Oct, Alton Towers, Staffordshire

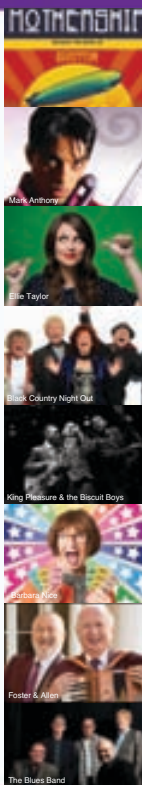
**GREAT ELECTRIC TRAIN SHOW** Featuring more than 25 layouts and over 30 traders, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Oct, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**WEDDING SHOWCASE** Explore this atmospheric ruin and each of the ceremony and reception locations, Sun 8 Oct, Kenilworth Castle

**CHINA REVEALED** Learn about Chinese culture, history and art via a variety of talks, tastings and tours related to the internationally acclaimed Chinese collection, Sun 8 Oct, Compton Verney Gallery, Warwick

## THE CORE AUTUMN HIGHLIGHTS

5/10	<b>Rock 'n' Roll Back The Years</b> Music & dance hosted by David 'Diddy' Hamilton	£21
6/10	<b>Mothership</b> Led Zeppelin tribute	£15
6/10	<b>The Lost Will &amp; Testament of Jake Thackray</b> Performed in the Studio by John Watterson	£12/£10
7/10	<b>Salute to Sinatra and The Swing Legends</b> Performed by top vocalist Matt Ford and his band	£18
10/10	<b>Mad About the Musicals</b> Starring Michael Courtney and Jai McDowell	£22
11/10	<b>Prince Revelation</b> Performed by Mark Anthony as seen on TV	£20
14/10	<b>Ellie Taylor- This Guy</b> New Comedy Show	£12
19/10	<b>The Electric Strawbs</b> Recapturing those classic songs and more	£20
24/10	<b>The Nutcracker</b> Two Shows by Ballet Theatre UK	£12-£18
26/10	<b>A Black Country Night Out</b> Music & Mirth	£20
27/10	<b>Monstersaurus</b> Big family fun for ages 3+	£10
28/10	<b>Wildlife Road Trip</b> BBC presenters	£20 (£18)
2/11	<b>The Legends of American Country Show</b> Country music tribute show	£19.50
3/11	<b>King Pleasure and the Biscuit Boys</b> Popular UK swing band	£17
10/11	<b>Barbara Nice: Raffle!</b> Barbara returns with her new show	£12
14/11	<b>Foster &amp; Allen</b> Part of their 2017 Autumn tour	£27
15/11	<b>The Blues Band</b> 38 Years and Back for More Tour	£21



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## The Nutcracker

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Thu 23 Nov, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa 01926 334418  
Wed 29 Nov, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-on-Trent 01283 508 100  
Sat 9 Dec, Evesham Arts Centre 01386 446944  
Tue 12 Dec, William Aston Hall, Wrexham 0844 888 9991



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### Gigs

**LADY ANTEBELLUM** Mon 9 Oct, Arena 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

**THE SHEE - CONTINUUM** Wed 11 Oct, mac, Birmingham

**PRINCE REVELATION** Wed 11 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

**SLEEPMAKESWAVES** Wed 11 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

**STEVIE NIMMO BAND** Wed 11 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**GARY NUMAN** Wed 11 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

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

**BAY CITY ROLLERS STARRING LES MCKEOWN** Wed 11 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**DRAGONFORCE** Wed 11 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

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

**LINDYPOP** Wed 12 Oct, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**BELINDA CARLISLE** Thurs 12 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

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

**MAD DOG MCREA** Thurs 12 Oct, The Iron Road,

Evesham

**LIMEHOUSE LIZZY** Thurs 12 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

**NEIL DIAMOND** Fri 13 Oct, Arena Birmingham

**MIDDAY VARIETY** Fri 13 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**JOLIE HOLLAND AND SAMANTHA PARTON** Fri 13 Oct, The Musician, Leicester

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

**HOUSE OF JEALOUS LOVERS** Fri 13 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**BEDWORTH BRASS** Fri 13 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall

**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

**THE COUNTERFEIT STONES** Fri 13 Oct, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

**THE OFFICIAL RECEIVERS** Fri 13 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

**LITTLE MIX** Fri 13 Oct, Genting Arena, B'ham

**DESPERATE JOURNALIST** Fri 13 Oct, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

**COASTS** Fri 13 Oct, Kasbah, Coventry

**LETHAL BIZZLE** Fri 13 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**DETROIT MAGIC** Fri 13 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**J. COLE** Sat 14 Oct, Arena Birmingham

**STEPBACK! 80'S CONCERT FEAT. TONY HADLEY, PAUL YOUNG, NIK KERHSAW, GO WEST, JASON DONOVAN, T'PAU,**

**KIM WILDE & MORE...**

Sat 14 Oct, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

**HMLTD** Sat 14 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**LEGENDS LIVE** Sat 14 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

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

**THE MILK MEN** Sat 14 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**GLAM45 & SWEET45** Sat 14 Oct, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

**LED HENDRIX** Sat 14 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**THE BRITPOP BOYS** Sat 14 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

**TOWER OF POWER** Sat 14 Oct, The Empire, Coventry

**THE MERCIAN REGIMENT: MILITARY BAND** Sat 14 Oct, Number 8 Community Arts Centre, Worcestershire

**BOOTLEG BLONDIE** Sat 14 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**BIG COUNTRY** Sat 14 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**ELKIE BROOKS** Sat 14 Oct, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**THE OVERTONES** Sat 14 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**NEIL DIAMOND** Sun 15 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

**NELL BRYDEN** Sun 15 Oct, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth

**HOT 8 BRASS BAND** Sun 15 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**COASTS** Sun 15 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**BACK TO BACHARACH** Sun 15 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**WILD WILLY BARRETT'S FRENCH CONNECTION** Sun 15 Oct, The Musician, Leicester

**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 LUNCHEON 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

**EX CATHEDRA: MONTEVERDI** Directed by Jeffrey Skidmore with Alexander Mason (organ). Programme comprises Monteverdi's In Search of 1610, Tues 10 Oct, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**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) & Christopher Monks (conductor), Wed 11 Oct, Bushell School, Solihull

**ENGLISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** Featuring Kenneth Woods (artistic director) & Raphael Wallfisch (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn, Schumann & Mozart, Wed 11 Oct, Malvern Theatre

**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



**COULL QUARTET: CITY OF LIGHT** Featuring Roger Coull, Philip Gallaway, Jonathan Barritt & Nicholas Roberts. Programme includes works by Haydn, Mendelssohn, Debussy & Chausson, Thurs 12 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**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

**ARMONICO CONSORT: BEOWULF** Featuring Armonico Consort & Academy Singers, Elin Manahan Thomas (soprano), Catrin Finch (harp), Toby Young (keyboards) & Christopher Monks (conductor). Harry Potter actor Mark Williams narrates, Thurs 12 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

**ARNOLD PIANO QUARTET** Lunchtime concert, Thurs 12 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ARMONICO CONSORT: BEOWULF** Featuring Armonico Consort & Academy Singers, Elin Manahan Thomas (soprano), Catrin Finch (harp), Toby Young (keyboards) & Christopher Monks (conductor). Harry Potter actor Mark Williams narrates, Fri 13 Oct, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**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

**LONDON CONCERTANTE: BACH VIOLIN CONCERTOS BY CANDLELIGHT** Featuring Ben Norris (violinist), Fri 13 Oct, Coventry Cathedral



**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

**DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE (MOZART)** Full-length German version of Mozart's magic fable. James Levine conducts, Sat 14 Oct, Malvern Theatre

**WARWICKSHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** Sat 14 Oct, All Saints' Church, Leamington Spa

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

**ST PETERSBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** Featuring Peter Donohoe

(piano) & Alexander Dmitriev (conductor). Programme includes works by Mussorgsky, Rachmaninov & Rimsky-Korsakov, Sun 15 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ENGLISH STRING ORCHESTRA** Featuring Simon Desbruslais (trumpet). Programme includes works by Walton & Elgar, Sun 15 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**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

**ROB ROUSE** Tues 10 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa



**THE HORNE SECTION** Wed 11 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**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, B'ham

**IMPRACTICAL JOKERS** Thurs 12 Oct, Arena Birmingham

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

**JOSH PUGH** Thurs 12 Oct, mac, B'ham

**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

**DARREN HARRIOT, TONY COWARDS & CERYS NELMES** Thurs 12 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

**JAYDE ADAMS** Fri 13 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**SHIP OF FOOLS** Fri 13 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**PATRICK MONAHAN** Fri 13 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**CARL DONNELLY, PAUL MCCAFFERY,**

**MANDY KNIGHT & COMIC TBC** Fri 13 - Sat 14 Oct, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

**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

**ALAN DAVIES, MR DAVID JORDAN, JAVIER JARQUIN, ESHAN AKBARR & CHRISTIAN LEE** Sat 14 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**JOHN HEGLEY** Sat 14 Oct, mac, B'ham

**COMEDY CLUB 4 KIDS** Sat 14 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**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

**NOT ABOUT HEROES** Award-winning play about the unique friendship between celebrated World War One poets Wilfred Owen & Siegfried Sassoon, Tues 10 Oct, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**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

**FACTORY GIRLS** Story which follows a young factory girl in Japanese Korea and her struggles against sexual and class violence during the Korean industrial boom of the 1930s, Tues 10 & Wed 11 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre

**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

**SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER** Oliver Goldsmith's much-loved play, featuring Mozart's glorious music, Wed 11 - Fri 13 Oct, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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

**THE LADYKILLERS** Presented by Swan Theatre Amateur Company, Wed 11 - Sat 14 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**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

**PINK SARI REVOLUTION** True story based on the book by journalist Amana Fontanella Khan. Some scenes contain references to sexual and domestic violence, Wed 11 - Sat 21 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT** Music, mirth and merriment with Dandy, Ian 'Sludge' Lees, The Empty Can, Bev Pegg & Jess Silk, Thurs 12 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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, B'ham

**BLITHE SPIRIT** The Norbury Players present an amateur staging of Noel Coward's classic comedy, Thurs 12 - Sat 14 Oct, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

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

**TRES TRES CABARET** Evening of 'saucy decadence', Fri 13 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**MIDDAY VARIETY** Tribute to the Best of British, Fri 13 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

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



Rosie Kay: 5 Soldiers - The REP, Birmingham



mac, Birmingham

**GOBLIN'S PETER AND THE WOLF** Join Peter on a 'hilarious' adventure through the fields and forest, Sat 14 Oct, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**THE GAME'S A FOOT TRY THE FISH** Two intriguing 1930s one-man whodunits featuring first-time detective Charlie Montague, Sat 14 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch



**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



**PRISCILLA QUEEN OF THE DESERT - THE MUSICAL** Performed by Stourbridge Amateur Operatic Society, Sun 15 - Sat 21 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

## Kids shows

**THE HUNTING OF THE SNARK** Enter the imaginative world of Alice In Wonderland creator Lewis Carroll in this ultra-modern adaptation of his classic poem, Tues 10 Oct, Malvern Theatre



## Dance

**5 SOLDIERS: THE BODY IS THE FRONT-LINE** Award-winning portrait of army life by Rosie Kay's dance company, Fri 13 - Sat 14 Oct, The REP, B'ham

## Talks

**STORIES CROSSING BORDERS: CHINELLO OKPARANTA IN CONVERSATION** Join Chinello 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

**ADVENTURES IN POETRY: BRUM STANZA FESTIVAL SPECIAL** Roz Goddard talks 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:

**DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST (15)** Drama/History. Starring Tommy Nicks, Cheryl Lynn. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 10 Oct

**THE OMEN (15)** Horror. Starring Gregory Peck, Lee Remick. Albany Theatre, Coventry, Tues 10 Oct

**GHOSTBUSTERS (PG)** Adventure/Comedy. Starring Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd. Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton, Tues 10 Oct

**BELLE DE JOUR (18)** Drama. Starring Catherine Deneuve, Jean Sorel. Foreign language, subtitled. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 11 - Thurs 12 Oct

**MOTHER! (18)** Drama/Horror. Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Javier Bardem. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 13 - Tues 17 Oct

**DESPICABLE ME 3 (U)** Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sat 14 Oct

**VICTORIA & ABDUL (PG)** Biography/Drama. Starring Judi Dench, Adeel Akhtar. Roses Theatre,

Tewkesbury, Sat 14 - Tues 24 Oct

**TOUT EN HAUT DU MONDE (PG)** Animation/Action. Malvern Theatres, Sun 15 Oct

### NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 13 Oct, showing at selected cinemas

**DOUBLE DATE (tbc)**

**HELLRAISER (18)**

**LOVING VINCENT (15)**

**THE LEGO NINJAGO MOVIE (tbc)**

**THE PARTY (tbc)**

**THE RITUAL (15)**

**THE SNOWMAN (tbc)**

## Events

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

**GRAND DESIGNS LIVE** Award-winning show featuring over 400 exhibitors & Grand Theatre feat. Kevin McCloud &

other industry experts... Wed 11 - Sun 15 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

**GROUP LEISURE & TRAVEL SHOW** Travel ideas for days out, holidays and services, Thurs 12 Oct, NEC, B'ham

**GIN TASTING** Including a talk through the history of gin and a tutored tasting of six gins from small, independent producers, 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

**CHARACTER WEEKEND** Pose for photographs alongside Freddie, Caramel Bunny or friends as they meet and greet visitors, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Oct, Cadbury World, Birmingham

**THE ANTIQUE AND COLLECTORS FAIR** Sat 14 - Sun 15 Oct, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**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

# LIVE AT THE ALBANY

Comedy Club: Fri 27 Oct - 7.30pm, £18/£16 concs

HAL CRUTTENDEN KIRI PRITCHARD McLEAN

JUNIOR SIMPSON PIERRE NOVELLIE

**THE ALBANY THEATRE**

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## 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

**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

**LULU** Wed 18 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**FAST LOVE** Wed 18 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**LUCA STRICAGNOLI** Wed 18 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

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

**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

**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

**KATE RUSBY** Thurs 19 Oct, Malvern Theatres

**ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW AND THE LOW RIDERS** Thurs 19 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**ROACHFORD** Fri 20 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

**LIZA SINGS STREISAND** Fri 20 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

**DIZZEE RASCAL** Fri 20 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

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

**MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE: A TRIBUTE TO THE POLICE** Fri 20 Oct, Malvern Theatres

**LOUIS BERRY** Fri 20 Oct, The Copper Rooms, Coventry

**TRIBUTE TO JOHNNY CASH - KEEP IT CASH** Fri 20 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**GEORGIE FAME** Fri 20 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**FRED ZEPPELIN** Fri 20 Oct, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

**GABRIELLE APLIN** Fri 20 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**THE WEST COAST EAGLES** Fri 20 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

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



**THE REAL PEOPLE** Sat 21 Oct, The Empire, Coventry

**HEIDI BROWNE** Sat 21 Oct, Evesham Arts Centre, Worcestershire



**PLACEBO** Sat 21 Oct, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

**THE YOUNG'UNS** Sat 21 Oct, mac, Birmingham

**FASTLOVE: A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MICHAEL** Sat 21 Oct, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

**DEAD PRETTIES** Sat 21 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**JOHN MAYALL** Sat 21 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

**THE AMERICAN HITMEN** Sat 21 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**FRANKIE ROSE** Sat 21 Oct, Kasbah, Coventry

**TRAIN** Sat 21 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**BUDDY HOLLY AND THE CRICKETERS** Sat 21 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**JOHN ILLSLEY** Sat 21 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**THE SOUTHMARTINS** Sat 21 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**TIGERCUB** Sat 21 Oct, The Flapper, B'ham

**MARTIN TURNER EX WISHBONE ASH** Sat 21 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**METRONOMY** Sat 21 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**MARLEY REPRISED** Sun 22 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**KELE OKEREKE** Sun 22 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**VISHTEN** Sun 22 Oct, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

**THE AMERICAN HITMEN** Sun 22 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**BANKS** Sun 22 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

## 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

**BEETHOVEN TRIO** Featuring John Thwaites (piano), Jonathan Martindale (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

**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

**PAUL CHOWDHRY** Wed 18 Oct, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

**BRIAN GITTINS** Wed 18 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**JETHRO** Wed 18 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**ELLIE TAYLOR** Thurs 19 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**THE NOISE NEXT DOOR** Thurs 19 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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

**LEE NELSON** Fri 20 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**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

**LEE NELSON** Sat 21 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

## Theatre

**THE REAL THING** Lawrence Fox stars in Tom Stoppard's award-winning modern classic, Mon 16 - Sat 21 Oct, Malvern Theatre

**FRANKENSHOW A** 'lo-fi monstrosity of epic proportions', Tues 17 Oct, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

**PSYCHIC SALLY: KISSES TO HEAVEN** Evening of mediumship, Tues 17 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**ANTIGONE** Actors Of Dionysus present a new adaptation which sees Sophocles' tragedy reimaged in a dystopian landscape, Tues 17 Oct, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

**FROGMAN** Supernatural thriller experienced in VR headsets, Tues 17 - Thurs 19 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**MADE IN DAGENHAM** Presented by Worcester Operatic Dramatic Society, Tues 17 - Sat 21 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**RITA, SUE AND BOB TOO** Andrea Dun-



bar's semi-autobiographical play, Tues 17 - Sat 21 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**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

**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, B'ham

**HEY LI'L MAN** A story of family life told through the eyes of a stranger who becomes involved when tragedy strikes, Wed 18 - Sat 21 Oct, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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

**BLITHE SPIRIT** The Norbury Players present an amateur staging of Noel Coward's classic comedy, Thurs 19 - Sat 21 Oct, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

**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

**A STRANGE CASE OF DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE** Adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's dark psychological fantasy, Fri 20 Oct, The Roses, Tewkesbury

**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

**PARTUS** Third Angel present a story of love, joy, resilience and bravery, Fri 20 - Sat 21 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**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, B'ham

**WONDERWOMAN: THE NAKED TRUTH** Notnow Collective presents a 'high-octane, visually dynamic & entertaining piece' which probes the ups & downs of parenthood, Sat 21 Oct, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**'FATE'S THREAD'** Stephen Bean's thriller - 'a race against time to save a soul', Sat 21 Oct, Talisman Theatre, Kenilworth

**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

**TEDDY BEARS PICNIC** Interactive musical adventure for children featuring singalong songs, join-in dances & storytelling, Sat 21 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**DINOSAUR WORLD** Interactive new show for all the family, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Oct, Malvern Theatre

## Dance

**A POSITIVE LIFE** An immersive theatre experience featuring dance, physical theatre and spoken word, Tues 17 Oct, mac, Birmingham



## The Real Thing

Malvern Theatre, Mon 16 - Sat 21 October

One of the best-known plays by one of Britain's best-known playwrights, *The Real Thing* by Tom Stoppard is a clever, witty and poignant study of infidelity. When playwright Henry's affair with actress Annie threatens to destroy his marriage to Charlotte, he finds himself wondering whether his new-found love is actually 'the real thing'... Laurence Fox, best known as DS James Hathaway in the Inspector Morse spin-off TV series, Lewis, takes top billing in this new version of the multi-award-winning modern classic

**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, Birmingham Hippodrome

## Talks

**HEADZ** 20 Stories High offer an insight into the lives of Liverpool's young people through a series of contemporary urban monologues, Thurs 19 Oct, mac, Birmingham

**MEL NICHOLLS: PARALYMPIAN & ADVENTURE STORYTELLER** Join Mel as she talks about her ambitions for her sporting future, her love of adventure and her desire to push boundaries, Thurs 19 Oct, The Roses, Kidderminster

**AN EVENING WITH MICHAEL PORTILLO** Featuring a question-and-answer session, Sat 21 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**AN EVENING WITH AGGERS & BUMBLE** Cricket commentators Jonathan Agnew and David 'Bumble' Lloyd team up, Sun 22 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**The RAT PACK**  
FRANK SAMMY & DEAN TH

**20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR**

AS VEGAS

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The Townsend Hall, 52, Sheep Street, Shipton on Stour CV36 4AE  
Doors/Bar - Open 7.00 pm - Concert 8.00 pm  
**Saturday 18th November 2017**  
Tickets £20 - available from:-

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Townsend Hall

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**BRIDGE HOUSE THEATRE & WARWICK HALL**



**FRI 17 NOV, 8pm**  
**AUSTENTATIOUS - THE IMPROVISED JANE AUSTEN NOVEL**

Austentatious is an improvised comedy play starring a cast of the country's quickest comic performers. Every single show the cast conjure up a brand new 'lost' Jane Austen novel based on nothing more than a title suggested by the audience. Performed in period costume with live musical accompaniment.



**FRI 24 NOV, 7.30pm**  
**THE STRANGE CASE OF DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE**

A thrilling adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's dark psychological fantasy, The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde immerses you in the myth and mystery of 19th century London's fog-bound streets where love, betrayal and murder lurk at every chilling twist and turn. Gripping, stylish and thought-provoking, this is unmissable theatre. Go on...treat your dark side!



**WED 29 NOV, 7pm**  
**MORGAN & WEST: A (SORT OF) CHRISTMAS CAROL MAGIC SHOW!**

The world's most distinguished duo of time-travelling magicians Morgan & West present Charles Dickens' timeless classic A Christmas Carol. There is only one problem - they haven't read it. Well not just one problem, there are also only two of them to play all the parts. Oh, and Mr West is rather insistent on doing a magic show at the same time. How hard can it be?

MYTON ROAD, WARWICK. CV34 6PP / BOX OFFICE: 01926 776438  
**www.bridgehousetheatre.co.uk**

**ARTRIX** **OCTOBER 2017**

**Tuesday 17 October**  
**SIMON DAY**  
IN CHARACTER INCLUDING BRIAN PERN

**Wednesday 18 October**  
**A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT**  
WITH DANDY & IAN SLUDGE LEES

**Thursday 19 October**  
**DEBORAH ROSE & MARI RANDLE**  
HARMONY & HAUNTING MELODY

**Saturday 21 October**  
**JOHN ILLSLEY**  
OF DIRE STRAITS & HIS BAND

**Thursday 26 October**  
**JIMEOIN**  
ARTRIX FAVOURITE IS RIDICULOUS

**Saturday 28 October**  
**CHRIS & PUI**  
FROM CBEBBIES' SHOW ME SHOW ME

**COMING SOON:** Vienna Festival Ballet, Barnstormers Comedy, Roving Crows Robin Ince, Led Hendrix, Back To Bacharach, Simon Day, Ellie Taylor, Hairly MacIary Hickman & Cassidy, Think Floyd, Rocky Horror Show, Anjali Dance, Dominic Kirwan Carpenters Gold, Half Moon, Raymond Froggatt, Tom Stade, Tenors Unlimited Lady Maisery, Luke Jermay, Sofie Hagen, Phill Jupitus, Paul Sinha...

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**IN-LIGHT II**

**28 & 29 October / 4 & 5 November**  
**6.30pm - 8.30pm**

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### Film

#### INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

##### VICEROY'S HOUSE (PG)

Biography/Drama. Starring Gillian Anderson, Michael Gambon, Hugh Bonneville. Stourbridge Town Hall, Mon 16 Oct

**THE HAUNTING (12)** Horror. Starring Julie Harris, Claire Bloom. Albany Theatre, Coventry, Tues 17 Oct

**EARTH (15)** Drama/War. Starring Aamir Khan, Nandita Das. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 18 Oct

##### TOM OF FINLAND (18)

Biography/Drama. Starring Jakob Oftebro, Werner Daehn. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 18 - Thurs 19 Oct

#### NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 20 Oct, showing at selected cinemas

##### EARTH: ONE AMAZING DAY (U)

##### GHOSTSTORM (12a)

##### HAPPY DEATH DAY (tbc)

##### JUNGLE (15)

##### MARSHALL (15)

##### MY LITTLE PONY, THE MOVIE (tbc)

##### THE DEATH OF STALIN (15)

### Events

**A TASTE OF LEAMINGTON** Three-course dinner, with each course taken at a different restaurant in the centre of Leamington Spa, Tues 17 Oct, Leamington

**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, Brindleyplace, Birmingham

**OKTOBERFEST** Prepare to be entertained Bavarian style, Fri 20 - Sat 21 Oct, Worcester Racecourse

##### THUNDERSPORT GB MOTORCYCLE RACES

Featuring a huge line-up of races, Fri 20 - Sun 22 Oct, Donington Park Racing Circuit, Derby

**SCAREFEST** Complete with spooks, frights, thrills, and remaining open until 9pm, Fri 20 - Tues 31 Oct, Alton Towers

**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

**VINTAGE IN THE VILLAGE** The popular Vintage Market returns, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Oct, FarGo Village, Coventry

**VICTORIAN HALLOWEEN** The residents of Blists Hill Victorian Town celebrate Halloween in traditional style, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, Blists Hill, Ironbridge

**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 with take-home activities, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, Packwood House, Solihull

**BATTY ABOUT BATS** Discover the rare and wonderful world of bats, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, Witley Court, Great Witley, Worcestershire

**OCTOBER HALF TERM FAMILY FUN** Featuring art-based workshops and a brand new, interactive trail, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Oct, British Motor Museum, Gaydon



**WELLBEING DISCOVERY DAY** Featuring scratch and rehearsed readings, free wellbeing workshops and a marketplace where you can meet and talk to organisations working in the mental health field, Sun 22 Oct, The REP, Birmingham



# 2017 October Half Term

## AT COVENTRY MUSEUMS

Monday 23 - Saturday 28 October

Engineering, science, art, history  
and more this half term.

Two free entry museums +  
one Roman Fort +  
low cost activities =  
a half term full of fun.






### Gigs

**IRIT** Mon 23 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**LONDON GRAMMAR** Mon 23 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**MARMOZETS** Mon 23 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**CHARLOTTE CARPENTER WITH AUTUMN EVANS** Mon 23 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, 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

**MATTHEW E. WHITE** Tues 24 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**THE LITTLE MIX EXPERIENCE** Wed 25 Oct, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**EMELI SANDÉ** Wed 25 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

**WILLE AND THE BANDITS** Wed 25 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**JOEY BADASS** Wed 25 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

**KIOKO** Thurs 26 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**SLEAFORD MODS** Thurs 26 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**SKINNY MOLLY** Thurs 26 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**ULRICH SCHNAUSS** Thurs 26 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

**CC SMUGGLERS** Thurs 26 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**BRANDY CLARK** Fri 27 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

**WEEZER** Fri 27 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**TIMMY TRUMPET** Fri 27 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

**OUTLINE IN COLOR** Fri 27 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**THE IRON MAIDENS** Fri 27 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**LIGHTYEAR** Fri 27 Oct, The Assembly, Leam-

ington Spa

**FOZZY** Fri 27 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**THE PIGEON DETECTIVES** Fri 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE RAT PACK WITH SPECIAL GUEST ANITA HARRIS** Fri 27 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**VINNY PECULIAR** Fri 27 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

**THINK FLOYD** Fri 27 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**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, B'ham

**OUTLINE IN COLOR** Fri 27 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**THE IRON MAIDENS** Fri 27 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**LIGHTYEAR** Fri 27 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**FOZZY** Fri 27 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**THE PIGEON DETECTIVES** Fri 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE RAT PACK WITH SPECIAL GUEST ANITA HARRIS** Fri 27 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**VINNY PECULIAR** Fri 27 Oct, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

**THINK FLOYD** Fri 27 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**ROXY MUSIQUE** Sat 28 Oct, The Empire, Coventry

**THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN** Sat 28 Oct, The Assem-

bly, Leamington Spa

**BROKEN WITT REBELS** Sat 28 Oct, Kasbah, Coventry

**WESLEY GONZALEZ** Sat 28 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**ERIC BENÉT** Sat 28 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

**THE ELVIS EXPERIENCE** Sat 28 Oct, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**DIRE STRAITS UK** Sat 28 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**ALEXANDER O'NEAL** Sat 28 Oct, Malvern Theatres

**DECLAN MCKENNA** Sat 28 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE SOAP GIRLS** Sat 28 Oct, The Iron Road, Evesham

**ROXY MUSIQUE** Sun 29 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon,

**METALLICA** Mon 30 Oct, Genting Arena, B'ham

**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

**KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD** Mon 30 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**PULVIS ET UMBRA** Tues 31 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

**JASON ISBELL AND THE 400 UNIT** Tues 31 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**GHOSTPOET** Tues 31 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

**DJ FORMAT & ABDOMINAL** Tues 31 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham



Jason Isbell - Symphony Hall, 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 CB SO 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

**DORIC STRING QUARTET** Featuring Alex Redington & Jonathan Stone (violins), Hélène Clément (viola) & John Myerscough (cello), Programme includes works by Thomas Adès, Haydn & Mendelssohn, Thurs 26 Oct, Malvern Theatre

**THE SIXTEEN: THE CHORAL PILGRIMAGE 2017** Programme includes works by Poulenc & Palestrina, Fri 27 Oct, Coventry Cathedral

**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

**ELGAR CHORALE OF WORCESTER: AUTUMN SERENADE** Sat 28 Oct, St Georges RC Church Hall, Worcester

**RAPHAEL WALLFISCH PLAYS BACH** Programme comprises The Six Cello Suites by Johann Sebastian Bach, Sat 28 Oct, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**CB SO 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

**ALDWYN VOICES: MUSIC INSPIRED BY POETRY** Featuring Adrian Lucas (conductor), Fenella Humphreys (violin) & Nicola Eimer (piano), Sun 29 Oct, Malvern Theatre

**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

**RICH HALL** Wed 25 Oct, Malvern Theatres, Malvern

**LARRY DEAN, NIGEL NG & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON** Thurs 26 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**DAMIAN CLARK, DAVID WARD** Fri 27 Oct, Jongleurs Comedy Club, B'ham

**HAL CRUTTENDEN, PIERRE NOVELLIE, JUNIOR SIMPSON & KIRI PRITCHARD MCLEAN** Fri 27 Oct, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**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

**DANNY BHOY** Sat 28 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ALI COOK** Sat 28 Oct, mac, B'ham

**DAMIAN CLARK, DAVID WARD** Sat 28 Oct, Jongleurs Comedy Club, B'ham

**MILTON JONES** Sat 28 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**PATRICK MONAHAN, PRINCE ABDI, KAE KURD & THAT INDIAN GUY** Sun 29 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

### Theatre

**ALL IN** Atresbandes Theatre Company's darkly playful exploration of the millennial condition, Mon 23 Oct, mac, Birmingham

**EDITH IN THE DARK** Haunting glimpse into the nightmarish world of an author whose reputation for cosy childhood innocence is only half the story, Mon 23 - Sat 28 Oct, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

**BIRMINGHAM IMPROV FESTIVAL** Featuring completely improvised plays, musicals, sketches, songs, drama, cabaret and workshops, Mon 23 - Sun 29 Oct, The Blue Orange The-



atre, Birmingham

**THE CARPENTERS STORY** Homage to one of the most successful pop duos in history, Tues 24 Oct, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**THE SECRET KEEPER** Political fairytale for adults, Tues 24 - Wed 25 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS** Celebrated production of Jules Verne's famous story, Tues 24 - Thurs 26 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**CRAZY FOR YOU** Caroline Flack, Charlotte Wakefield and Tom Chambers star in George Gershwin's popular musical, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

**WAIT UNTIL DARK** Jack Ellis (Bad Girls/Prime Suspect) and Oliver Mellor (Coronation Street) star in a new staging of Frederick Knott's thriller, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Oct, Malvern Theatre

**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... Wed 25 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**THIS EVIL THING** Inspiring story of the men who said no to war, Wed 25 Oct, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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 RED ROOM** New take on HG Wells' classic ghost story, Thurs 26 Oct, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S SCREAM** Celebration of the dark and decadent side of burlesque and cabaret, Thurs 26 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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

**THE LITTLE CREEPERS** One-woman play about the trials and tribulations of a teenage schizophrenic, Thurs 26 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**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

**LUKE JERMAY: SIXTH SENSE** Evening of psychological tricks from the man who can simply 'read your mind', Fri 27 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**MEET ON THE LEDGE** Evening of music and drama celebrating 25 years of Warwickshire's 'favourite' folk-rock group, Fri 27 - Sat 28 Oct, The Bear

Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**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

**WILDLIFE ROAD TRIP** Natural history broadcasters, Martin & Iolo have teamed up to perform an amusing and informative show packed with facts and fun. This fascinating journey will entertain you about the wonderful world of wildlife and about presenting television programmes, Sat 28 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

**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 28 Oct, Malvern Theatres

**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

**DIRTY DUSTING** Heartwarming comedy starring Crissy Rock, Dolores Porretta, Leah Bell & Lee Brannigan, Sun 29 Oct, The Roses, Tewkesbury

**8 MORE CHANCES TO SEE YOU** Thoughtful and funny exploration of how we remember, what we remember, and why, Mon 30 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ANYONE'S GUESS HOW WE GOT HERE** Barrel Organ present a story of debt, eviction, childhood and the thing under the floorboards... Mon 30 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**LOOK BACK IN ANGER** Rumpus Theatre Company present John Osborne's kitchen-sink drama, Mon 30 Oct - Sat 4 Nov, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

**KHOVANSCHINA** Mussorgsky's epic opera, addressing themes of politics, madness and death, Tues 31 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

**VAMPIRES ROCK - GHOST TRAIN** Tongue-in-cheek fun presented to a soundtrack of classic rock anthems, Tues 31 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**THE DRILL** Consideration of the modern-day anxiety around security and terrorism, Tues 31 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**NEXUS:WHISPERS** Vexed Theatre present an 'edge-of-your-seat experience', Tues 31 Oct, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

**CELEBRATION** Emergency Chorus contemplate the complex world in which we live, Tues 31 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**THE PALACE THEATRE HAUNTING** Murder On The Side present an interactive

tour featuring four separate immersive experiences, Tues 31 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**RAZZLE DAZZLE** Worcester Musical Theatre Company fundraising performance in support of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, Tues 31 Oct - Sat 4 Nov, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**A PRINCESS UNDONE** Harriet Thorpe (Ab Fab & The Brittans Empire) stars as Princess Margaret in a new play inspired by real-life events, Tues 31 Oct - Sat 4 Nov, Malvern Theatres

**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

**YOUR TOYS** Take along toys to join in a 'gigantic adventure', Tues 24 - Wed 25 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**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

**HOOT OWL, MASTER OF DISGUISE** Inventive new show from Proon Productions, based on the popular picture book by Sean Taylor, Wed 25 Oct, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**MONSTERSAURUS** Energetic show with original music and plenty of audience participation! Wed 25 Oct, The Roses, Tewkesbury

**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

**DINOSAUR WORLD** Interactive new show for all the family, Thurs 26 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**THE UGLY DUCKLING** Sea Legs Puppet Theatre presents its version of the much-loved classic, Thurs 26 Oct, The Hive, Worcester

**JACK AND THE BEANSTALK** Lyngo Theatre present their take on the famous fairytale. Suitable for children aged three-plus, Thurs 26 & Fri 27 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**MONSTERSAURUS** Energetic show with original music and plenty of audience participation! Fri 27 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

**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

**SWAN LAKE** The Russian State Ballet & Opera House presents its version of the much-loved story of Odette & Odile, Mon 23 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**THE NUTCRACKER** The Russian State Ballet & Opera House presents this seasonal favourite, Tues 24 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry



Jack And The Beanstalk - Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ROMEO & JULIET** The Russian State Ballet & Opera House presents its version of 'the world's greatest love story', Wed 25 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**THE NUTCRACKER** Ballet Theatre UK presents this seasonal favourite, Tues 24 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

**THE NUTCRACKER** Ballet Theatre UK presents this seasonal favourite, Fri 27 Oct, Stourport Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn

**INFUSION EMPORIUM** Boundary-pushing displays of bellydancing, Fri 27 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

**ENCHANTMENT** A variety of dance styles, beautifully choreographed, with colourful costumes and lyrical music, Thurs 26 - Sun 29 Oct, Evesham Arts Centre, Worcestershire

**THE LIGHT PRINCESS** Ballet Cymru's new full-length ballet, telling the story of a princess afflicted by a constant weightlessness, Sat 28 Oct, The Roses, Tewkesbury

**CHARGE** Motionhouse's new multimedia work, which delves deep into the human body to trace the story of energy in our lives, Tues 31 Oct, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

## 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

**HOW DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHAT THE TEMPERATURE IS?** Institute Of Science Public Lecture, Thurs 26 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**WWI THE QUEENS OWN WORCESTERSHIRE HUSSARS AT HUI** To accompany the exhibition telling the story of the last charge by British Cavalry, Stamford Cartwright will give a talk about the Charge and the role of the Queens Own Worcestershire Hussars, Thurs 26 Oct, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**RAY MEARS: BORN TO GO WILD** Join Ray as he shares stories about discovering the joys of the wilderness, Fri 27 Oct, Malvern Theatres

**FERGAL KEANE IN CONVERSATION** The award-winning BBC Foreign Correspondent discusses a family story of murder, blood and betrayal that tore a town apart... Sat 28 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**IN CONVERSATION WITH BARONESS SHAMI CHAKRABARTI** The UK's leading

voice on human rights shares her views, Sat 28 Oct, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**BLUE - ALL RISE: OUR STORY** An intimate evening celebrating the publication of the band's first book, Sun 29 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

**TAMED: WITH PROFESSOR ALICE ROBERTS** Find out how the taming of various species has left its mark on both them and us, Mon 30 Oct, Malvern Theatres

## Film

### INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

**HAMPSTEAD (12a)** Comedy/Drama. Starring Brendan Gleeson, Diane Keaton. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 24 Oct

**DRACULA: PAGES FROM A VIRGIN'S DIARY (12)** Comedy/Horror. Starring Wei-Qiang Zhang, Tara Birtwhistle. Albany Theatre, Coventry, Tues 24 Oct

**GOODBYE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (PG)** Biography/Family. Starring Margot Robbie, Domhnall Gleeson. Warwick Arts Centre, Tues 24 & Thurs 26 Oct

**NEVILLE RUMBLE (PG)** Romance/Thriller. Starring Sam Foster, Gavin Fowler. Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton, Wed 25 Oct

**LOVING VINCENT (15)** Animation/Biography. With the voices of Douglas Booth, Chris O'Dowd. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 27 - Sat 28, Mon 30 - Tues 31 Oct

**THE SNOWMAN (15)** Drama/Horror. Starring Michael Fassbender, Rebecca Ferguson. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 27 - Tues 31 Oct

**KINGSMAN: THE GOLDEN CIRCLE (15)** Action/Comedy. Starring Taron Egerton, Colin Firth. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 27 - Tues 31 Oct

**BORG/MCENROE (U)** Biography/Drama. Starring Shia LaBeouf, Stellan Skarsgård. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 27 - Tues 31 Oct

**THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (PG)** Animation/Fantasy. With the voices of Danny Elfman, Chris Sarandon. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 28 Oct

**THE CHESS PLAYERS (15)** Comedy/History. Starring Sanjeev Kumar, Saeed Jaffrey. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 29 Oct

**WINNIE THE POOH (U)** Animation. With the voices of Jim Cummings, Craig Ferguson. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sun 29 Oct

**NOSFERATU (12)** Fantasy/Horror. Starring Max Schreck, Greta Schröder. With live orchestral accompaniment.

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Tues 31 Oct

**CITY OF GHOSTS (15)** Documentary/War. Starring Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, Hamoud, Hassan. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, 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)**

## 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

**HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES 2018** Action-packed workshops for young people aged eight to 13, Mon 23 - Tues 24 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**LEGENDS & LIGHTS** Featuring Halloween-themed craft activities and spooky storytelling, Mon 23 - Sat 28 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

**HALLOWEEN AT THE COMMANDERY** Featuring Terrifying Tours, Victorian Ghost Hunt & Spooky Family Fun, Tues 24 - Tues 31 Oct, The Commandery, Worcestershire

**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

**MAD SCIENCE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES** Science-themed shows designed to amaze and entertain, Thurs 26 Oct, Ragley Hall, Alcester

**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

**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 Birmingham Metropole Hotel, B'ham

**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

**SPELLBOUND** Stomp away at the Halloween disco and enjoy 'bone-tingling refreshments', Sat 28 Oct, Selly Manor, Bournville

**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



Fright Nights - Kenilworth Castle



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