

Birmingham

ISSUE 384 DECEMBER 2017

What's On

FILM | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS | FOOD BirminghamWhatsOn.co.uk



BEVERLEY KNIGHT
as THE FAIRY GODMOTHER

DANNY MAC
as PRINCE CHARMING

MATT SLACK
as BOTTOMY

SUZANNE SHAW
as CINDERELLA

CINDERELLA

THE FAIRY GODMOTHER
OF ALL PANTOMIMES

THE GRUMBLEWEEDS
as THE BROKERY MEN

CERI DUPREE
as THE UGLY SISTERS

PHIL RANDALL
as THE UGLY SISTERS

Opens
Tue 19 Dec

H BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME
0844 338 5000
birminghamhippodrome.com

Calls cost 4.5p per min. plus your phone company's access charge.

Photo: Manuel Vazson

JACK ASHTON
JOHN MIDDLETON

CHRIS HARPER
HANNAH TOINTON

STRANGERS ON A TRAIN

A PLAY BY **CRAIG WARNER**
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY **PATRICIA HIGHSMITH**

**NEW ALEXANDRA THEATRE
BIRMINGHAM**
WORLD CLASS THEATRE

MON 29 JAN - SAT 03 FEB
0844 871 3011 ATGTICKETS.COM/BIRMINGHAM

*Calls cost up to 1p per minute plus your phone company's access charge.
Subject to booking / transaction fees.



Something Beastly this way bounces!

Midlanders are being invited to unleash their beast at Birmingham's NEC this month, courtesy of the world's largest inflatable obstacle course. At an impressive 272m in length, The Beast is 'the ultimate bouncy castle experience for adults' and features no fewer than 32 obstacles. Visitors to the event, which runs at the venue from Friday 8 to Sunday 17 December, can also enjoy street food, cocktails and craft beers. Live DJs and an 'extraordinary' sound and lighting show also feature.

Dinosaur spectacular set to return to Birmingham

Global sensation Walking With Dinosaurs is returning to Birmingham next summer. The hit production, based on the award-winning BBC television series, has been enjoyed by more than nine million people in 250-plus cities around the world. Popular TV presenter Michaela Strachan will star in the show as 'Huxley' the paleontologist. Walking With Dinosaurs visits Arena Birmingham from 26 to 28 July.

Plans for new dance hub in Birmingham approved

Planning has been approved for a new 'dance hub' at Birmingham Hippodrome, the busiest UK venue for dance outside of London. The new hub will feature a large dance rehearsal studio and ancillary facilities. Commenting on the news, Monique Deletant, Director of Dance Hub Birmingham, said: "I'm delighted that the plans for the new facility have been approved. The plans were developed in response to wider consultation with the dance sector and demonstrate a new wave of collaborative working which will continue to deepen and develop once the building opens its doors in 2019."



Bear Grylls attraction to open at Birmingham NEC

The company behind Alton Towers is next year intending to open a £20million 'Bear Grylls adventure park' at Birmingham NEC. Merlin Entertainments has submitted a planning application to transform the NEC's Pavilion building into a new attraction featuring a range of adventure-style activities. Commenting on the news, NEC Group CEO Paul Thandi said: "Merlin Entertainments are the perfect partners to create this large-scale first-of-its-kind attraction.

"Coupled with the opening of Legoland Discovery Centre at our Arena Birmingham venue next year, this news further enhances the NEC Group's credentials and offers in both the leisure and business markets."

Film festival returns with its Silent Night series

Flatpack film festival's Christmas-screening series Silent Night returns this month, with Buster Keaton movie The Cameraman being shown in churches and cathedrals in Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Coventry. Accompanying the silent classic on the piano is renowned pianist John Sweeney. A number of festive silent shorts precede the feature. The movie shows at St John's Church, Wolverhampton, on Wednesday 20 December, St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham, on Thursday the 21st and Coventry Cathedral on Friday the 22nd.

Birmingham's Mailbox welcomes new additions

Interiors heavyweights Heal's and Made.com have opened stores in Birmingham shopping & lifestyle destination The Mailbox.

For Heal's, 'the home of design since 1810', the new store marks the company's first ever foray into the Midlands. Made.com was set up in 2010 'in reaction to the standard ways of thinking, living and buying'.

Modern plays for winter...

In its first year as the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Theatre Company, the former Birmingham School of Acting is presenting three modern works for its winter season. The productions are Patrick Marber's award-winning Closer - featuring a BAME cast (black, Asian and minority ethnic) - Brendan Behan's The Hostage and a brand new revision of Pentecost by its author David Edgar. For more information, visit bcu.ac.uk/events



Photo credit: Charlie Kirkpatrick

Coca-Cola truck heading to Brum

The iconic Coca-Cola truck is visiting Birmingham this month as part of its UK Christmas tour. The truck stops off in the city's Edgbaston Street on 9 & 10 December, providing families with the opportunity to explore a 'snowy winter wonderland'.

"Coca-Cola is synonymous with the Christmas season," says the drinks giant in publicising the visit, "and it's no secret that our much-loved truck tour marks the unofficial countdown to Christmas."

For more information, visit coca-cola.co.uk/stories/keep-on-trucking



Return of Kodo

A world-renowned taiko performing arts ensemble is returning to the Midlands in the new year.

Located on Sado Island in Niigata, Japan, Kodo has given over 5,800 performances in 49 countries since making its debut at the Berlin Festival in 1981. The ensemble's new production, Kodo One Earth Tour: Evolution, features contemporary music and dance based on traditional Japanese arts... The show visits Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Monday 5 February.



X Factor favourite Amelia Lily joins Shrek The Musical tour

X Factor favourite Amelia Lily is to share the role of Princess Fiona with Call The Midwife star Laura Main when Shrek The Musical heads out on a national tour.

Directed by ex-EastEnders Nigel Harman, the production visits Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Stoke-on-Trent next year. Commenting on the news, Lily said: "I had my first taste of performing as Princess Fiona back in 2012 when I donned the famous green dress for a Children In Need special. It was an incredible experience, so when the opportunity came up to reprise the role, I jumped at the chance. I can't wait to set out on a road trip across the country with all my fairytale friends."

For more information about the show, visit shrekthemusical.co.uk



On the run with Acorns Hospice



Acorns Children's Hospice is holding its 10th anniversary Santa Run at Birmingham's Cannon Hill Park on Saturday 2 December.

Entrants are given a free fancy-dress Santa suit and can take part in either a 5km Santa Run or a 2km Santa Stroll.

Entry is £20 for adults, £10 for under-16s and includes a Santa suit and a medal... To sign up for the event, visit acorns.org.uk/santa, ring 01564 82 5000 or contactevents@acorns.org.uk

Birmingham Royal Ballet joins forces with Sadlers Wells in new dance initiative

Birmingham Royal Ballet will next year present the first shows to be produced as part of a five-year project called Ballet Now. The new initiative will see two new one-act ballets being created each year for the duration of the project, providing up-and-coming choreographers with the chance to lead a creative process in a major ballet company.

Commenting on the project, Abigail Reeve, producer of Ballet Now, said: "This is a unique programme of development and new work that Birmingham Royal Ballet is delighted to be launching in association with Sadler's Wells. Its aim is to develop the next set of creative voices for the dance world. The first three choreographers commissioned through the programme bring with them fresh outlooks and ideas which will excite audiences across the world."

The first Ballet Now commission, choreographed by George Williamson, will be performed as part of the In The Upper Room mixed programme at Birmingham Hippodrome from 20 to 23 June.





World record bid as Peter Pan heads for panto fun in Neverland!

Arena Birmingham is this month hosting a festive family show that's bidding to enter the record books.

The company behind Peter Pan: Christmas In Neverland is hoping the production will be confirmed by Guinness World Records as the biggest-ever Christmas show.

Starring Bradley Walsh and Martin Kemp, the production features numerous 'stunning' special ef-

fects, including a lifesize Jolly Roger galleon which will 'sail' around the arena in front of a 10,000-gallon water wall.

The show also includes a team of BMX stunt riders, six aerial mermaids, a 'crazy collection' of trapeze and trampoline stuntmen and 'the biggest, scariest animatronic crocodile you've ever seen'.

Peter Pan: Christmas In Neverland runs at Arena Birmingham from 20 to 24 December.

City apartment scheme revealed

Property developers St Joseph Homes has applied to Birmingham City Council to construct five buildings housing a total of 400-plus apartments in the city's Gun Quarter.

A document submitted to the council on the applicant's behalf said: "The development can accommodate a variety of apartment sizes to create balanced, inclusive communities across ages, incomes and household composition. If planning permission is granted, it will enable the regeneration of a previously developed site to deliver 404 residential units, which will contribute significantly to meeting Birmingham's housing needs."

Brum the most rapidly improving city in which to live and work, research reveals

New research has revealed that Birmingham is the UK's most rapidly improving city in which to live and work, with falling unemployment and numerous regeneration projects being highlighted as two of the main reasons for its success.

The research was carried out by consulting group PwC and thinktank Demos for their 2017 Good Growth For Cities index.



Time to pull on your Kinky Boots!

Hit musical Kinky Boots is heading to the Midlands next year.

Featuring songs by award-winning pop icon Cyndi Lauper, the show stops off at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday 16 to Saturday 27 October. It then returns to the region early in 2019, running at the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, from Monday 28 January to Saturday 9 February.

For more information, visit kinkybootsthemusical.co.uk



A brand new role for Slade's Noddy

Music icon Noddy Holder has been announced as the first ever Patron of Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre.

The former Slade frontman, who's been a long-time supporter of the venue, will represent the theatre in a bid 'to keep the arts alive for future generations'.

Commenting on the news, Noddy said: "The New Alex was part of my life growing up in the Midlands and has a large heritage at the heart of Birmingham. The arts must be kept alive for future generations to benefit from, and the whole team at the Alex are playing their part in making sure this happens."

LAS VEGAS, NEW YORK AND NOW BIRMINGHAM.

THE ONLY SHOW AS COLOURFUL AS LIFE.



PRESENTED BY

THSH

TOWN HALL SYMPHONY HALL
BIRMINGHAM BIRMINGHAM

IN THE ICC HALL 1

28 DEC 2017–
6 JAN 2018

**WORLD
TOUR:
UK
EXCLUSIVE**

BOOK NOW AT
WWW.THSH.CO.UK/BLUEMANGROUP
0121 780 3333



ROYAL
BIRMINGHAM
CONSERVATOIRE

WHAT'S ON



WED 6 – SAT 9 DEC

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE
THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS:
THE HOSTAGE

The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

By Brendan Behan
Directed by Jake Murray

THU 7 DEC

**CBSO WIND QUINTET
WITH JOHN THWAITES**

6pm Concert Hall,
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire



THUR 7 – SAT 9 DEC
OPERA SCENES

The Lab,
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Conductor Paul Wingfield
Director Greg Eldridge

MON 11 DEC

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM
CONSERVATOIRE JAZZ
ORCHESTRA: LET IT BE TOLD

6.30pm & 7.45pm Eastside Jazz Club,
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Enjoy arrangements of South African Township
music by Julian Argüelles in this regular Big
Band night at Eastside Jazz Club

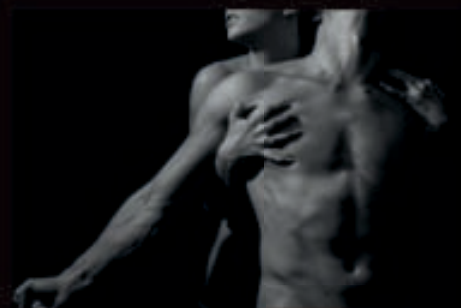


WED 13 – SAT 16 DEC

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE
THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS:
PENTECOST

The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

By David Edgar
Directed by Aleksandar Dundjerovic



WED 13 – SAT 16 DEC

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE
THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS:
CLOSER

Crescent Theatre

By Patrick Marber
Directed by Vik Sivalingam

FRI 15 DEC

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM
CONSERVATOIRE REPERTOIRE
ORCHESTRA

7pm Concert Hall,
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Conductor Daniele Rosina
Arthur Bocaneanu piano

Featuring Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and
Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No.1*

SUN 11 MAR
RBC ROYAL GALA
OPENING CONCERT

Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla
conducts RBC Symphony
Orchestra 7pm Tickets
on sale Spring 2018



Beverley Knight - Midlands-born Queen of Soul set to add a touch of magic to Hippodrome panto page 20

Jersey Boys



Award-winning jukebox musical returns to Brum
feature page 8

Crisis At Christmas



Joe Lycett comperes an all-star line-up at the Glee Club
page 21

Illuminating Brum



Magic Lantern Festival lights up Kings Heath Park
page 45

the list



Your 16-page week-by-week listings guide
page 51

inside:

4. First Word

11. Food

15. Music

20. Comedy

22. Theatre

37. Film

42. Visual Arts

45. Events



@whatsonbrum
Birmingham What's On Magazine



fb.com/whatsonbirmingham
Birmingham What's On Magazine



@whatsonbirmingham
Birmingham What's On Magazine

What's On

MEDIA GROUP



Managing Director: **Davina Evans** davina@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281708
Sales & Marketing: **Lei Woodhouse** lei@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281703 **Chris Horton** chris@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281704
Editorial: **Lauren Foster** lauren@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281707 **Brian O'Faolain** brian@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281701
Sue Jones sue@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281705 **Abi Whitehouse** abi@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281716
Ryan Humphreys ryan@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281722 **Adrian Parker** adrian.parker@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281714
Contributors: Graham Bostock, James Cameron-Wilson, Heather Kincaid, Katherine Ewing, Jenny Ell, Lauren Cole, Jack Rolfe, Elly Yates-Roberts, Daisy Sparkle, Carol Lovatt
Publisher and CEO: **Martin Monahan** Accounts Administrator: **Julia Perry** julia@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281717

This publication is printed on paper from a sustainable source and is produced without the use of elemental chlorine.

We endorse the recycling of our magazine and would encourage you to pass it on to others to read when you have finished with it.

All works appearing in this publication are copyright. It is to be assumed that the copyright for material rests with the magazine unless otherwise stated. No part of this publication may be reproduced, or stored in an electronic system, transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recording or otherwise, without the prior knowledge and consent of the publishers.



THE RETURN OF THE

JERSEY BOYS

The award-winning jukebox musical telling the story of Frankie Valli And The Four Seasons is returning to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre this month. Heather Kincaid caught up with Jersey Boys stalwart Michael Watson to find out more...

After three years playing Frankie Valli at London's Piccadilly Theatre, as well as a stint understudying the role at the Prince Edward Theatre, actor Michael Watson has spent a considerable amount of time trying to get inside the head of the 1960s music icon.

But it seems he's not quite finished with the character yet. With the smash-hit musical Jersey Boys kicking off a UK tour at the New Alex this month, Watson is now helping to bring the magic from the West End to the West Midlands. We caught up with him to find out more about the man behind the music, and the Four Seasons' enduring appeal.

"All of us playing the members of the Four Seasons have been in the show before, three of us in the West End," he explains. "With this production, they've really taken their time and thought about who they wanted to be in it, since it's going to be the only one in the UK when we take it out. Also, because the show hasn't been running for a little while, I think it's going to come back very fresh and with a really strong energy, kicking down the door of musical theatre."

Watson isn't the only one to have stuck with the show for a long time. His West End predecessor, Ryan Molloy, played the role for an impressive total of six years.

"I think for a male in the West End - especially of a certain height - it's the ultimate role. Not only do you get to do a marathon sing, as an actor it's hugely challenging because you never leave the stage, and you have to go from age 15 to 45 in the space of two-and-a-half hours. It's like the musical theatre equivalent of Hamlet - it's a true arc of someone's life you have to go through."

The extensive period of time the story covers is a crucial part of what holds its actors' interest. As they themselves grow older, their understanding of the characters' journey deepens.

"Now that I'm 30, I'm right in the middle of that age range, and starting a family of my own, so I do feel a deeper connection to the scenes where Frankie interacts with his wife and children. I think I play it more honestly because I know how I'd feel if something like that happened to me."

The need for this emotional range and maturity might go some way to explaining why Watson was unsuccessful in his first audition for the part at the tender age of 21.

"At the time I felt like they were just starting to get excited about me, but then I did another round and the audition just suddenly stopped. It was a couple of years later when the next opportunity came up, but instead of being put off, the knock had actually made me more determined. I thought, if I could get them interested two years ago, I'm definitely ready for it now!"

It's a unique and doubtless strange experience to perform the life story of a person who's not only real, but still alive and taking an interest in the show.

"I was actually lucky enough to meet Frankie - he came and watched me in the show, and fortunately he shook my hand and gave me his seal of approval. But I think for me, it was more about developing the character that's in the script, because as much as I might try to emulate the legend that is Frankie Valli, I don't want to do an impression."

Indeed, inaccuracies - or at least differences of opinion - are at the very heart of this story. Jersey Boys is famous for its 'Rashomon effect' - that is, presenting differing accounts of events from a variety of perspectives.

Inspired by the lack of information available about the band members outside their glittering pop career, scriptwriters Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice based the novel format on interviews they conducted with the surviving members, complete with contradictions.

"Everyone remembers it differently, as they say. I think there's an overarching story that's true, but the way each character tells it in their monologues might stretch the truth a bit. But it's more complex than that because you're getting different age perspectives as well. I think that's the best thing about the show - it takes you through the four seasons. So when you're with Tommy at the beginning in spring, everything has this kind of wide-eyed quality about it because they're all very young. Then in summer, it's all bright and fun and the band is very successful, and in autumn, we have this crash where everything starts to go wrong. Eventually, you get to winter, where it's much darker, with Frankie trudging along doing all these gigs to pay off debts."

Much has been said about the Four Seasons as a 'blue collar' band, speaking to the experiences of America's urban working-class. Yet at the same time, their appeal clearly reaches beyond national borders, and even across generations.

"Sometimes after a show, you'll have someone who's about 15 come up to you and say how much they loved it, but then you'll also meet someone who's 65 or 70, who's excited to have relived the songs from their childhood. I think if you asked Frankie or Bob Gaudio, they'd tell you that this show has brought their music to the masses again, and made it bigger than they ever expected it to be at this point. But a big part of the appeal is just that the songs are so beautifully simple and elegant. If you look at Sherry, for example, it's about asking someone out, which is something anyone can relate to. And they're so catchy! Start singing Sherry to anyone, and they'll sing the repeat back to you."

.....
Jersey Boys shows at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Saturday 16 December until Saturday 6 January

COMING SOON TO THE NEW ALEXANDRA THEATRE



TUE 16 – SAT 20 JAN



MON 29 JAN – SAT 3 FEB



MON 5 FEB



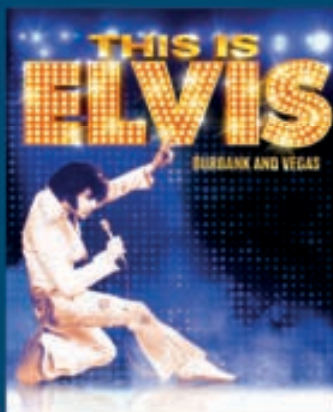
WED 7 & THU 8 FEB



WED 14 – SUN 25 FEB



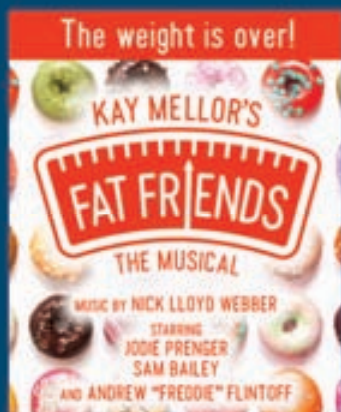
WED 14 – SUN 18 MAR



MON 19 – SAT 24 MAR



TUE 27 – SAT 31 MAR



TUE 3 – SAT 7 APR



MON 16 – SAT 21 APR



TUE 15 – SAT 19 MAY



MON 21 – SAT 26 MAY

NEW ALEXANDRA THEATRE
BIRMINGHAM

WORLD CLASS THEATRE

ATG TICKETS BOX OFFICE 0844 871 3011**
ATGTICKETS.COM/Birmingham*

*Booking fees apply. **Calls cost up to 7p per minute, plus your phone company's access charge.



REVIEW: Fumo

New restaurant brings authentic Italian flavours to the heart of Birmingham

A recent addition to Birmingham's ever-expanding list of high-quality eateries, new £1million restaurant, Champagne and cocktail bar Fumo has opened on the top floor of Selfridges, replacing Searcy's Balcony Bar & Brasserie.

Having launched in June 2012, Fumo is part of the award-winning San Carlo Group, which operates successful, modern Italian restaurants throughout the UK. They also own the legendary Signor Sassi - located opposite Harrods in London's fashionable Knightsbridge Green - which is now in its 28th year.

Fumo serves an all-day menu of delicious, regional, small plate dishes to share or eat alone. It also specialises in cocktails and Laurent Perrier Champagne.

On arrival, we were politely greeted and shown to our table. We were wowed from the moment we walked in. The stunning décor and sophisticated atmosphere certainly made a fantastic

first impression.

With views overlooking the iconic Bullring, Fumo's interior features a grand marble bar and wine displays, and solid marble tables. The curved balcony area features bespoke, hand-stitched Italian leather seating.

We perused the mouthwatering menu over some olives and tapenade and a delicious rhubarb fizz cocktail, served in a metal cup and decorated with brightly coloured flowers and fruit.

As with Spanish tapas, it's recommended that diners choose three dishes per person. We kick-started proceedings with the sausage and friarielli flatbread, the burrata (a special mozzarella) served with parma ham and marinated black truffle, and the crab and avocado served with a Sardinian flatbread. Stuffed full to the brim with delicious Italian sausage, green vegetables and cheese, the flatbread was to-die-for. Indeed, it ended up being one of my favourite

dishes of the evening.

I once heard that burrata is the Italian cheese that dreams are made of - and I couldn't agree more. The outer shell comprises solid mozzarella while the inside contains stracciatella and cream. That flavour, combined with the salty parma ham and the rich, earthy truffle, really did make for heaven on a plate!

The crab dish came in the form of a generous helping of shredded white meat, neatly presented on top of a mashed avocado puree. Served with a wedge of lemon, a crab claw and some creme fraiche, it was seriously tasty and left us excited for the dishes that were to follow.

Next up, the baby lobster Thermidor and the prawn and monkfish spiedino. The latter comprised some perfectly cooked prawn and monkfish pieces, chargrilled and marinated in lemon and olive oil. The lobster, from the evening's specials menu, was served in a traditional Thermidor sauce, gratin with parmesan cheese.

Being huge seafood fans, we happily devoured both dishes within a matter of minutes.

Being the ever-so-greedy foodies that we are, we then decided that we couldn't leave without sampling both a pizza and a pasta - it is an Italian restaurant, after all! After much deliberation, we opted for the pollo parmigiana pizza - smoked chicken, mozzarella, parmesan and fresh basil - and the spaghetti vongole - baby clams with white wine, garlic and chilli.

The homemade pizza dough was light and perfectly made, the toppings of a high quality - a delicious pizza indeed.

As for the spaghetti vongole - I've never before eaten such a delicious pasta dish. The salty taste of the baby clams was perfectly partnered by the strong-flavoured sauce.

To end the evening, we shared an extremely tasty and outrageously naughty dessert. Comprising a chocolate-filled dome with a dark chocolate outer layer and a sweet caramel sauce (which our friendly waiter poured at the table), it proved to be the perfect end to a perfect dining-out experience.

Overall, Fumo was nothing short of outstanding. The service was exemplary and the food ridiculously good.

I'm yet to visit mainland Italy, but I'm confident that Fumo's outstanding dishes ably replicate something you'd find in Naples, Florence, Rome and the rest. Bellissimo!

Lauren Foster


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

Fumo Restaurant on
4 Selfridges
Upper Mall East
Birmingham
B5 4BP
Tel: 0121 600 6869

The Loft

FESTIVE MENU
AVAILABLE FROM 20TH NOVEMBER TILL 24TH DECEMBER

Christmas



2 COURSE LUNCH £16.95
3 COURSE LUNCH £19.95
2 COURSE DINNER £21.95
3 COURSE DINNER £24.95

WWW.THELOFTBRUM.CO.UK
THELOFTBRUM @THELOFTBRUM LOFT BIRMINGHAM
143 BROMSGROVE STREET BIRMINGHAM - 0121 622 2444

Christmas at...

The Botanist

We invite you to join us and experience our festive menu this winter. Comforting, hearty and just a little indulgent, this is food for the soul.

BOOK ONLINE
OR
CALL 0121 600 7430

thebotanist.uk.com
birminghambookings@thebotanist.uk.com
14-16 Temple St, Birmingham, B2 5BG

THE NEW WORLD TRADING CO.


PARK REGIS
BIRMINGHAM

Christmas
IN THE *city*

JOINER PARTIES | PRIVATE EVENTS | ROFUTO NYE
CHRISTMAS DINNER & AFTERNOON TEA

160 BROAD STREET | 0121 369 5555
RSVPRBI@PARKREGISHOTELS.COM

REVIEW: Fressh

Birmingham gets a new vegan option

Located in the centre of Birmingham at 5 City Rd, brand new vegan eatery Fressh is simple and unfussy. The layout and serving process calls to mind Subway; servers at the till help you with your choice and add ingredients at your discretion.

What sets Fressh apart are its healthy ingredients and range of choices, all of which are vegan.

I have to confess, as a self-proclaimed carnivore it's very rare that a mealtime goes by without me devouring some meat. However, if all lunches and dinners were served by Fressh, I think I would happily convert to veganism.

My choice on the day was a version of Subway's meatball sub. Made up of mushroom & brown rice meatballs in a marinara sauce with mozzarella, this delicious lunchtime treat was, in my opinion, a far superior experience to the aforementioned sandwich retailer's version.

Accompanying my meal were a pack of obligatory fries plus a healthy serving of kale crisps. I wish I'd taken away another pot of the crisps for my desk. Moreish and tasty, these healthy, bitesize bunches of goodness would make for the perfect elevenses...or twelveses or oneses...

Washing it all down was a freshly made peanut butter smoothie. In no way overpowering in terms of flavour - as I find most peanut butter-containing foods tend to be - this was a light and tasty drink which could be enjoyed both with or without a meal... Convert your lunchtimes into something Fressh; I'm sure you won't regret it. *Ben Wooldridge*



Italian restaurant group opens a second second-city eatery

Leading Italian casual-dining group Gusto has launched its second restaurant in Birmingham. The new 156-cover eatery is located on the corner of the £12million Mulberry Walk leisure & retail development in Sutton Coldfield.

Gusto offers a menu of freshly prepared Italian-style dishes. These include 28-day aged premium steak with garlic butter, whole salt baked sea bass infused with lemon and Italian herbs, tagliatelle

with prawns & garlic and freshly made pizzas. The venue also boasts a comprehensive worldwide wine list, a selection of unique specials, lunch and brunch options, and a 'make your own pizza' children's menu.

The Mere Green branch is the 19th Gusto restaurant to open in the UK. Birmingham's first Gusto eatery was launched in the city centre in 2016.

Lola's handcrafted cupcakes arrive in Selfridges Birmingham

Cupcake-loving visitors to Selfridges Birmingham should prepare themselves for a real treat, thanks to the recent arrival in the store of Lola's Cupcakes.

New to the city, Lola's handcrafts a wide range of themed cakes and cheesecakes for customers to enjoy, either in-store or at home.

With more than 30 flavours from which to choose, including vegan pistachio, gluten-free chocolate and tiramisu - there's a cupcake to suit every taste.

Selfridges Birmingham's General Manager, Sam Watts, said: "We're thrilled to unveil yet another exclusive brand to the store. Our customers really appreciate premium brands and Lola's Cupcakes are an excellent fit for our renowned food hall."

For more info, visit lolascupcakes.co.uk



ARCADE FIRE



WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

PRESERVATION HALL JAZZ BAND

PERFORMING IN THE ROUND

15 April 2018 GENTING ARENA

axs.com — ticketmaster.co.uk — goldenvoice.co.uk

A Goldenvoice, Live Nawlion and Parallel Lines presentation in association with CAA



JP Cooper

O2 Institute, Birmingham, Fri 8 December

Singer-songwriter JP Cooper rose to prominence after featuring on Jonas Blue single *Perfect Strangers*, which was certified platinum in the UK last year.

He continues his meteoric rise with this headline tour in support of recently released album *Raised Under Grey Skies*.



The Twang

O2 Academy, Birmingham, Sat 23 December

The Twang were signed in 2007 and lauded as Britain's best new band by NME. Hailing from Quinton in Birmingham, Phil Etheridge and Jon Watkin came together musically after meeting at Kidderminster College.

The band enjoyed great success with debut album *Love It When I Feel Like This*, which reached number three in the charts.

Fast forward a decade and the energy builds again as they return to play the acclaimed record in its entirety.

Check out our interview with Phil Etheridge on page 19.



Credit: Xavier Vila

Queen + Adam Lambert

Arena Birmingham, Sat 16 December

Replacing the irreplaceable, Queen have filled their Freddie Mercury-sized hole with first Paul Rodgers and now Adam Lambert. By all accounts, great fun was had with Rodgers, but the boys are of the opinion that Lambert's probably a more natural fit for them. "Adam is really like us," said Brian

May shortly after Lambert joined. "He has so many colours, which allows us to head off on some of those strange excursions that Queen enjoy."

With 2017 marking the 40th anniversary of the band's biggest-selling studio album, *News Of The World*, expect to hear all the classics, including *We Will Rock You*, *We Are The Champions* and, of course, the truly awesome *Bohemian Rhapsody*.

Dub Pistols

Hare & Hounds, Birmingham, Sat 16 December

The reformed Happy Mondays recently tweeted that notorious party rockers the Dub Pistols were the best live band they'd seen in years.

Creating a sound that combines big beat, ska, punk and hip-hop-dub, the DP's have worked with a galaxy of stellar names during the course of an 18-year career - The Specials, Busta Rhymes, Madness and Gregory Isaacs among them. Irrefutable evidence, if any were needed, of just how highly regarded they are in the upper echelons of the music industry.

turned to the stage for the first time in 10 years. His shows so far on this tour have received rave reviews, with 16-year-old son Nick taking his dad's place on drums.

Eliza Carthy And The Wayward Band

Birmingham Town Hall, Mon 18 December

A familiar name on the folk circuit, Eliza is the daughter of Norma Waterson and Martin Carthy. An extremely talented singer and multi-instrumentalist, she's been a big name in folk for a good few years now, winning numerous BBC Radio Two Folk Awards along the way.



Phil Collins

Genting Arena, Birmingham, Sun 3 December

With 100 million record sales to his name - not to mention numerous number-one albums and a back-catalogue of songs that have provided a soundtrack to millions of lives - Genesis frontman Phil Collins has re-



BIRMINGHAM
ROYAL BALLET

'Spectacular'

THE TIMES

'Matchless'

THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH



THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

13 – 24 February

From the creator of Birmingham Royal
Ballet's *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*
The perfect Christmas gift



BIRMINGHAM
HIPPODROME

0844 338 5000

birminghamhippodrome.com

Calls cost 4 5p per min plus access charge

Alice IN WONDERLAND

MON 20 NOV - SAT 30 DEC
THE OLD REP, STATION ST,
BIRMINGHAM, B5 4DY

BOOK NOW
OLDREPTHEATRE.CO.UK
0121 359 9444

@THEOLDREP THEOLDREP THEATRE THEOLDREP THEATRE



Last Night Of The Christmas Proms

Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
Wed 27 December

Just when you thought you'd packed away your union jack flags until next summer, along comes a festive-season version of the Last Night Of The Proms! Conductor John Pryce-Jones and the London Concert Orchestra are joined for the event by violinist Joo Yeon Sir (pictured), baritone James Cleverton and tenor Samuel Sakker.

The programme features, among other compositions, Vaughan Williams' The Lark Ascending, Vivaldi's Summer from The Four Seasons and Dukas's The Sorcerer's Apprentice. Proceedings are then rounded off with Rule, Britannia!, Nessun Dorma and Land Of Hope And Glory, providing plenty of opportunity to burn off those Christmas calories with some enthusiastic flag waving!

Ex Cathedra: Christmas Music By Candlelight

St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton, Sat 2 December; St John's Church, Hagley, Birmingham, Tues 5 December; St Paul's Church, Birmingham, Tues 19 - Sat 23 December



What better way to get into the Christmas spirit than by enjoying an evening in the company of one of the country's finest choral music ensembles? Under the directorship of its founder, Jeffrey Skidmore, Ex Cathedra is this month presenting its annual and atmospheric Christmas Music By Candlelight event, an evening that features festive favourites from around the globe and across the ages, interspersed with a variety of seasonal readings.

The Sixteen

Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
Mon 11 December

Conductor Harry Christophers and The Sixteen present Christmas choral music spanning nations and centuries, from Renaissance Italy to 21st century Britain. The programme begins with Alan Bullard's Glory To The Christ Child, a work which the composer himself describes as a sprightly refrain full of seasonal cheer.

The Birmingham Conservatoire Repertoire Orchestra

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire,
Fri 15 December

Pianist Arthur Bocaneanu (pictured) here accompanies the Daniele Rosina-conducted orchestra as they perform a concert featuring compositions by Beethoven and Prokofiev, presented alongside a new work by Leo Lobrev.



G4 Christmas By Candlelight

St Paul's Church, Birmingham,
Thurs 7 December

After scoring a hit on X Factor in 2004, G4 became one of the country's biggest crossover classical groups. They disbanded three years and three albums later - citing as the reason their need to pursue individual interests - but reunited in 2014 for their 10th anniversary.

The boys are performing a series of festive shows in beautiful churches and cathedrals nationwide this month, one of which is this candlelit Birmingham gig. Expect Christmas classics and carols aplenty.



City Of Birmingham Choir: Handel's Messiah

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 8 December



The City of Birmingham Choir's December performance of Handel's magnificent choral masterpiece is a well-established element of the Midlands' festive music scene. In a Christmas nutshell - and as the choir itself describes it - the work 'compresses the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus' life into two-and-a-half hours and sets it to timeless and sublime music'. As re-tellings of the Christmas story go, this is definitely one worth hearing.

2 – 17 FEBRUARY

Kneehigh Theatre and
Birmingham Repertory Theatre present

Noël Coward's

BRIEF ENCOUNTER

Adapted and directed by Emma Rice

**The hauntingly
timeless love story**

Box Office 0121 236 4455 | Book Online
BIRMINGHAM-REP.CO.UK



**BIRMINGHAM
REPERTORY
THEATRE**



Birmingham
City Council



ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Registered in England 265910 Charity No. 223660



Coming soon to the Bramall

FLASH
A TRIBUTE TO
QUEEN



WEDNESDAY 22ND NOVEMBER 7:30PM

Ticket Prices: Adults £14.00 & Students £8.75
(limited availability) plus a £1.25 booking fee

FRIDAY
8TH DECEMBER
AT 8PM


**COMEDY
NIGHT**



ROB ROUSE
GEORGE ZACH
JOLLYBOAT

Ticket Prices: Adults £8.75 & Students £5.75
(limited availability) plus a £1.25 booking fee

POLAR EXPRESS



Sunday 17th December - 10:30am

A relaxed film screening of Polar Express, with opportunity to meet Father Christmas!

*You must pre-book to meet Father Christmas at
www.thebramall.co.uk

Tickets: £2 (plus £1.25 booking fee)

Browse events and buy tickets at www.thebramall.co.uk or call the ticket hotline on 0121 414 4414

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



The
Bramall

FREE PARKING is available after 6:00pm. Or arrive by train at the University Station, which is just a 10 minute walk from the Bramall.

The Bramall, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT



Christmas with The Twang

Voted best Midlands band by What's On readers in 2016, The Twang this month return to Birmingham's O2 Academy for their annual festive shindig. We caught up with frontman Phil Etheridge to talk Christmas, collaborations and career highlights...

This year marks the 10th anniversary of The Twang's debut album, *Love It When I Feel Like This*. Describe how life's been from then to now.

We've just been doing lots of the same, really - trying to have as much fun as possible. We're fortunate that the band has been the biggest part of our lives for going on 10 years now, and long may that blag continue...

I guess the biggest difference is we've all since had kids and stopped the partying to a degree. You don't wanna be that 40-year-old drunk in the corner of a room full of cool 20-year-olds, telling them how your band once played Glastonbury...

We've also just released our 'best of' - *Either Way, It's The Best Of The Twang* - which was a big moment for all of us.

And you're going to be playing the debut record in its entirety at Birmingham's O2 Academy this month...

Yeah, we're super-excited about it and are currently in the studio trying to remember how to play the songs. A number of those tracks we haven't played since 2007, so it's been great listening to them again.

The Twang tend to tour around Christmas. Is there a reason for this?

It's become a bit of a tradition. I think a lot of folk treat it as their Christmas party, so the atmosphere's pretty incredible. The Christmas gigs have been some of my favourite ever. I've noticed a few bands have started doing it now as well. It's 'party season', so it makes sense.

How will you be spending Christmas Day?

Recovering, I guess. The Brum gig's on the 23rd, so the wife's gonna have to bear with me till at least Boxing Day.

What's on the top of your Christmas list?

To be happy and healthy and never have to get a proper job.

The Twang are a Brummie band. What's it like playing to a home crowd? Do the shows feel more special?

I used to find them difficult, as I'd put too much pressure on it being the best night of the year, but now I've kinda realised it's all about the crowd. We've just gotta do what we do and it'll all be grand.

What's your favourite thing about the city?

My mom.

What's your favourite hobby outside of music?

I run quite a bit to clear the head. Most of the friends I've made through the band aren't musicians. Instead they work within fashion or design, or are artists or whatever... I guess that's where my interest lies outside of the band.

What would your dream collaboration or project be?

I'd love to write an album and then have someone completely remix it on a dance tip, but everyone wants to write that *Screamadelica*, don't they? So maybe if I could just get Calvin Harris to do a tune with us, I could get that swimming pool built...

Who were your musical influences growing up?

I liked listening to whatever was on the skate videos. I really liked Op Ivy because of this H street video where Matt Hensley skated to bad town. I also liked bands like Carter, Ned's, The Wonder Stuff and PWEI because my older brother was bang into all that 'weirdo' scene. Then, after skating it was dance, rave, house, whatever you wanna call it. I always kinda listened to the music that was happening at the time. I was never really one for going back and finding records from the '60s etc.. not enough time in the day for that.

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

We've just done *Beyond The Tracks*, which was a really great show for us. It was great to be on the same bill as The Coral again, so I'm gonna say that one. Gerv and the rest of the Moseley Folk lot are top. They deserve all the success they get.

What's your career highlight?

I think definitely just getting a record deal and handing in my notice at work. I think that's the best feeling I've ever had.

What does the future hold for The Twang?

I honestly have no idea, so we'll just keep on keeping on.

The Twang play O2 Academy, Birmingham, on Saturday 23 December.



Jollyboat The Bramall, Birmingham, Fri 8 December

Musical double act Ed and Tommy Croft are a gift from heaven if you're an out'n'proud geek with a nerdy love of Dungeons & Dragons, Game Of Thrones, Star Wars and the like. If you're not, there's the definite possibility that your attention may drift at certain points during the boys' show. Thankfully the amiable siblings churn out sufficient quality material to ensure you're back in the room in two shakes of a dragon's tail. Often compared in style to Flight Of The Conchords, the brothers trade well off their near-psycho connection with one another, and are well worth an evening of your time. Twenty pre-show minutes on Wikipedia, genning up on all things nerdy, may further enhance your appreciation of their comedy endeavours.

Barbara Nice's Christmas Cracker

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 12 December; MAC, Birmingham, Fri 15 - Sat 16 December

Everybody's favourite Kings Heath housewife makes a welcome return to light up the festive season. As well as containing more jokes than you'd find in an oversized yuletide gag-bag (does such a thing actually exist?), Barbara's festive shows usually feature a tombola and raffle, no shortage of mince pies, and even the odd special guest or two.



Omid Djalili

Stratford Arts House, Fri 1 December; Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Thurs 14 December

Award-winning funnyman Omid Djalili is probably one of the most subversive comedians currently doing the rounds on the UK comedy circuit. An actor as well as a standup, Omid has appeared in numerous box office blockbusters, including *Gladiator*, *The Mummy*, *Sex And The City 2* and the James Bond movie *The World Is Not Enough*.

He's visiting the Midlands with his current stand-up show, *Schmuck For A Night...* "I like the word schmuck," says Omid. "It means 'fool' or buffoon. You have to be a schmuck to do comedy in today's climate. I'm embracing the schmuck in me to take on the big issues of our day. Plus, it's a word that ends with 'uck', which can only be a good thing..."



The Harry & Chris Show

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 15 December; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Sat 30 December

Family-friendly fellas Harry Baker and Chris Read combine 'comedy, melody, poetry and best-matery' to excellent effect. Presenting what they refer to as comedy-jazz-rap, their songs' subject matter ranges from panda repopulation to television's *Robot Wars*, all presented via a winning blend of catchy tunes and clever wordplay.



Reginald D Hunter

The Comedy Loft, Birmingham,
Fri 15 & Thurs 19 December

American funnyman Reginald D Hunter is one of the UK's most popular comedians. His no-nonsense style and hugely amusing perspectives on the differences between the US and Britain have struck a real chord with his audiences, earning him an impressive legion of admirers. And with regular gigs on TV shows keeping him in the public eye, it's fair to assume his loyal fanbase is just going to keep on growing...



Jessica Fostekew

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Mon 18 December

"I exist in real life but am also a comedian, actor and writer," says Jessica Fostekew. "Since 2008 I've been throwing this job around like you would a walnut in a sock." Realising herself to be a feminist "the very first time somebody said: You're really funny for a woman", Jessica gets her comedy inspiration from her life, her family and witchcraft - although reassuringly she reveals that the latter source provides only around one per cent of her material!



Crisis At Christmas

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Mon 18 December

Enjoy an evening of quality comedy and help the homeless while you're at it.

Crisis At Christmas is a unique volunteer effort that provides immediate assistance for homeless people at a critical time of year. And by attending this special event, you'll be helping to raise much-needed funds for na-



tional charity Crisis, to provide food, warmth and vital services for people who're having to live on the streets.

Birmingham-born Joe Lycett is host for the evening, with comedy contributions coming from Harry Hill, Joe Pasquale, Tom Ward, Darren Harriot and Kiri Pritchard McLean.

Greg Davies

Civic Hall, Wolverhampton,
Fri 8 - Sat 9 December

If you recognise Welsh funnyman Greg Davies from the telly but can't quite recall from which programme, it's *The Inbetweeners* you're likely to be thinking of. Greg played psychotic Head of Sixth Form Mr Gilbert.

As well as being funny, Greg's other claim to fame is his height - he's six feet eight inches tall in his stockinged feet. Feet, by the way, which are a whopping size 13!

A big man, then, with an ever-growing reputation on the comedy circuit, he's currently touring his latest show, *You Magnificent Beast*.

Greg thinks it's important to be absolutely honest about what punters can expect from one of his gigs. "My shows are funny," he says, "but to be clear, if you're looking for insight into the human condition, you'd be better off eating a bun or picking up a stick..."





Joe Lycett

Birmingham comedian Joe Lycett is hosting Crisis At Christmas, a charity fundraiser in aid of the homeless, at the city's Glee Club this month. He will then be returning to Brum next year with his brand new touring show. What's On caught up with him to find out what audiences can expect...

The phrase 'bigger and better' might have been coined specifically for Joe Lycett's new touring show. Hitting the road with I'm About To Lose Control And I Think Joe Lycett (more on that punning title later), the Birmingham comedian is taking a brand new set of observations, setpieces and gags to larger venues than he's previously appeared in on his solo tours. Not that he's especially fazed by any of it.

"I certainly have some big nights planned on this tour. I said to Sarah Millican that I felt I had to write a show that was big enough for those venues and, in her infinite wisdom, she said, 'No, the show should be good enough for 100 people'. So it's intimidating in terms of the scale of it and the sense that there'll be a lot of eyes on me, but I always try and do the best possible show I can. There's no point otherwise."

Joe's comedy career started off at Manchester University (he won the Chortle Student Award in 2009). He then took several acclaimed shows to the Edinburgh Fringe and supported the likes of Jack Whitehall and the aforementioned Millican in some of the nation's enormo-domes. Given that he's played in rooms of all shapes and sizes, he's in a strong position to know exactly what works for him.

"The beauty of stand-up is that generally it does scale up, and it's about your ability to connect with an audience. I think arenas might be too big for the type of shows I want to do, but the theatres are great. I'll be using PowerPoint again, which gives the crowd something to focus on, and that can scale up as big as you like."

And so to those pun-based show titles. Having brought us Some Lycett Hot in 2012 (the show for which he was nominated as best newcomer at the Edinburgh Fringe), he's since come up with If Joe Lycett Then You Should Have Put A Ring On It and That's The Way, A-Ha A-Ha, Joe Lycett. It's clear, then, that his new show's title, I'm About To Lose Control And I Think Joe Lycett, is simply the latest in a well-established tradition.

"You can't go too far wrong with the Pointer Sisters," Joe insists. "James Acaster suggested that I went the whole hog and went for I'm So Joe Lycett, And I Just Joe Lycett, I'm About To Lose Control And I Think Joe Lycett. There was another long one that was a strong

contender, but then I listened to the Pointer Sisters' song and thought, 'Can I walk on feeling confident to this music?' And yes, I probably can, so let's name the whole tour after that.

"Any time I meet a musician, I request that they write a song with 'I like it' in the title. The thing I love about all this is that there are now proper discussions about the title. I'll be sitting down with my agent, who also represents Frankie Boyle and Jimmy Carr, and the main question is, 'Which Lycett-based pun shall we go for this time?'"

In terms of the actual content of his show, Joe has once more rejected the notion of a fixed theme and instead is riffing on bizarre and funny stuff that's happened to him in the last couple of years. "I'm not the sort of writer who can restrict himself to a theme, just in case nothing good comes of it. I prefer to get annoyed about stuff, and then maybe you can spot loose themes that you can tie together. This one won't necessarily be about losing control. Or if it is, it'll be by pure chance."

Famed for online spats which often become huge viral hits before making their way into his stage act (a local council and an email spammer have previously been put through the Lycett wringer), Joe has a new set of subjects about which to vent his spleen when he hits the road. These include a curious pickle he got himself into involving the head office of a financial establishment which took exception to an on-the-spot jape featuring a friend who worked in a bank's building, a security pass and a ridiculous made-up name. "It's fascinating because this bank went back through all my tweets and Instagram posts to check if I'd done something similar in the past. Whoever could've known that a massive bank would have a sense-of-humour failure? So I want to make a point about banks and power and the way they mould us into what they want us to be."

Taking a broader view on the world, Joe may even be having his say on the divisive man in the White House. "I've been writing about him and trolling him a little bit, but haven't we all? It's like shouting into the void. I haven't really done much political stuff in my stand-up, but I feel that at this point, as many of us as possible have to say, 'We're not

cool with this'. Even if he's impeached and leaves, he's opened so many doors we'll never be able to close in terms of how we expect politicians to behave. People saying appalling things might not seem that appalling because it's already normalised."

Still, in moments of crisis (and the US going head-to-head with North Korea over nuclear weapons certainly has a 1960s Cuban Missile-style vibe to it), the world of comedy is always able to thrive. "It's a good time to be an artist because there's lots to talk about, so weirdly all that stuff helps. Unless things go to a complete state of emergency, there's always scope for people to hear someone talk about the state of things in an intelligent way. To be honest, though, I don't know whether I'm the person to do that. Sure, I can sit here and talk about it at length, but to actually construct something that can change people's minds is quite another thing."

So instead, Joe will be taking his own particular brand of storytelling comedy to his loyal fanbase.

"You should trust that if you find something funny, other people will too. The whole thing about building up an audience is about taking people with you who will be on the same page - but some things that I think are hilarious might die a death, so you then try to reconstruct it. There's one routine in the new show that I really care about and really hope works. It's not quite there yet in terms of working for an audience, but I believe in that routine, so I will keep developing it to make it work. But then there are others that I like but don't quite believe in enough to fight for. You have to pick your battles in writing stand-up comedy. Do you want to make that point or not? If you do, then you always find a way of doing it."

.....

Joe Lycett hosts Crisis At Christmas at Birmingham's Glee Club on Monday 18 December.

He returns to the city with his new tour next year, playing the New Alexandra Theatre May and Symphony Hall in November.

Joe will also be stopping off at various other venues across the Midlands. Full details of his new tour can be found at joelycettcomedy.co.uk

Cinderella

Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 19 December - Sun 28 January
Midlands-born soul diva Beverley Knight takes her bow in pantoland this Christmas, starring as the fairy godmother in this spectacular festive production.

She's joined for a show not to be missed by the hunky Danny Mac and the always delightful Suzanne Shaw. Comedy comes courtesy of Hippodrome panto regular Matt Slack and the still-going-strong Grumbleweeds. Ceri Dupree and Phil Randall don the giant wigs and altogether unpleasant manner to play the not-very-nice Ugly Sisters.

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, until Sat 13 January

This year's Belgrade Theatre version of the famous fairytale features all the usual panto elements, including slapstick comedy, audience participation, stunning sets, breathtaking costumes and plenty of singing and dancing. And also very much as usual, the show has been written and directed by Mr Coventry Panto himself, the inimitable Iain Lauchlan.

Malvern Theatre, Thurs 14 December - Sun 7 January

Former Strictly Come Dancing contestant and This Morning regular Alison Hammond tops the bill this year, as Malvern's ever-faithful panto audience is invited to attend Prince Charming's spectacular ball. Alison is joined by Gemma Naylor from Nick Jr's Go! Go! Go! show and Paul Hawkyard from CBeebies' Old Jack's Boat. Highly rated funnyman Mark James keeps the laughter coming.

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 16 - Sat 23 December

With its comical Ugly Sisters, matchmaking fairy godmother, drop-dead-gorgeous Prince Charming, super-cute mice and fits-one-foot-only glass slipper, Cinderella can justifiably lay claim to being the most popular of all pantomimes. This brand new version is being presented by Artrix regulars All & Sundry.



Birmingham Hippodrome's Cinderella



Cinderella at Coventry's Belgrade Theatre



Cinderella at Malvern Theatre

Robin Hood & The Babes In The Wood

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 7 December - Sun 7 January



They've done it before and now they're doing it again. Yep, Stafford Gatehouse's oft-used strategy of imbuing their annual pantomime with a real rock'n'roll flavour has proved so popular in previous years that the venue is

giving the exact same treatment to its 2017 production. So... they've taken the story of Robin Hood, added a Babe In The Wood or two, stirred in a few time-honoured pantomime favourites and then seasoned liberally with all manner of rock'n'roll hits. A recipe for success if ever there was one - so brace yourself for a fabulous festive feast of fun and frivolity.

Sleeping Beauty

Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sat 2 - Sun 31 December; Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Tues 5 - Fri 8 December; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 2 - Sun 31 December; Swan Theatre, Worcester, Mon 4 December - Sun 7 January

The tragic tale of a young princess who's tricked by an evil fairy and pricks her finger on a spinning-wheel, causing her to fall asleep for 100 years, offers a great story

around which to build a pantomime production of real quality. And if previous panto offerings at each of the above-listed venues are anything to go by, Sleeping Beauty 2017 is likely to be just that. Indeed, we're so confident you'll be wide-eyed with excitement that we'll even bet our best antique spinning-wheel that any snoring you might hear in the auditorium will only be coming from the title character herself!



Sleeping Beauty at the Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa



**BIRMINGHAM
HIPPODROME**

Unforgettable performances, powered by you

0844 338 5000* birminghamhippodrome.com

*Calls cost 4.5p per min plus access charge. Where applicable, a 5% transaction charge may apply excluding cash sales in person.



Until
Wed 13 Dec
From £19



Tue 6 -
Sat 10 Feb
From £19.50



Wed 31 Jan
- Sat 3 Feb
From £18



Tue 19 Dec -
Sun 28 Jan
From £15.50

The Patrick Centre at **Birmingham Hippodrome**



★★★★★

"If you are a kid, if you have kids, if you ever
were a kid, go and see The Snow Dragon"

Three Weeks

Thu 21 Dec -
Sun 7 Jan
£12.50



Gift Vouchers

The **perfect present** for the theatre-goer in your life!

Vouchers can be purchased in any amount and used as payment towards show tickets and dinners or afternoon tea in the Circle Restaurant.

They make the ideal gift for celebrating Christmas, birthdays and anniversaries.

Buy online or **call our team** on **0844 338 5000***



Jack And The Beanstalk

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
Sat 9 December - Sun 14 January

The Wolverhampton Grand is certainly on a roll when it comes to providing high-quality festive fare, with its 2016 panto production having been voted the Midlands' best Christmas show in the 2016 What's On Readers' Awards.

And the venue's Christmas 2017 offering looks set to be every bit as energised and entertaining as its illustrious predecessor. Gareth Gates stars as Jack, with Lisa Riley returning to the venue to take the role of Spirit of the Beans.

Also getting back in the Grand Theatre panto saddle is 'queen of the Black Country' Doreen Tipton, taking on the role of Dame Trott's lazy neighbour.

And speaking of the Dame, pantomime favourite Ian Adams will once again be slapping on the rouge to play her, and no doubt giving his usual outrageous performance. Adam C Booth, meanwhile, is two potatoes short of a Christmas dinner as Simple Simon, while familiar television face Graham Cole offers precious little by way of yuletide goodwill as the oh-so-evil Fleshcreep.

The Core, Solihull, Fri 8 - Sun 31 December

The fee-fi-fo-fumming ogre isn't the only pantomime giant for whom the curtain will be coming down at the end of this brand new show...

The inimitable Malcom Stent is bidding a fond farewell to pantoland come the 31st of December, waving adieu after 27 years of writing, directing and starring in Solihull's favourite yuletide production.

Alongside all the traditional fun and frivolity, Malc's usual festive sackload of local references will ensure the show has a real 'made in the Midlands' feel about it.



Peter Pan

Arena Birmingham, Wed 20 - Sun 24 December;
The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Wed 6 - Sun 31 December

Midlands pantomime audiences this year get two chances to fly away with the boy who wouldn't grow up to a magical island filled with adventure.

Meet a real fairy, marvellous mermaids, wonderful Wendy and the down-on-their-luck lost boys. Oh, and beware the ever-so-wicked Captain Hook and a very hungry crocodile who goes tick-tock (he swallowed a clock)... Martin Kemp and Bradley Walsh star in the Arena Birmingham production, about which you can read more in the First Word section of this issue (see page four).



Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
Wed 29 November - Sun 7 January



The fact that Snow White is a 24-carat classic of a fairytale means that a pantomime version is always a surefire winner. Expect all the usual panto elements in this brand new Theatre Severn offering, including a rouged-up Dame in colourful costumes, oodles of hearty thigh-slapping, singalongs aplenty, slapstick comedy and even a few naughty jokes to make sure the grown-ups don't feel too left out of things. Shropshire's 'favourite Dame', Brad Fitt, once more dons the dress (and probably steals the show!).

Palace Theatre, Redditch,
Wed 6 - Sun 31 December

Everybody knows the story. The nasty old queen is less than keen on her younger and more beautiful stepdaughter, who takes refuge from her royal evilness by holing up in the deep, dark forest with a household of small but splendidly friendly miners... Britain's Got Talent winner Jai McDowall takes top billing as Snow White's handsome prince in this sure-to-be-lively Palace Theatre version... Dave Benson Phillips and Nicole Faraday (Bad Girls) lend strong support.





Aladdin

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Fri 15 December - Sun 7 January

'Son of the Potteries' Jonathan Wilkes dons the tights to star as the lad himself in this ever-popular pantomime tale. Homecoming hero Jonathan's a festive fixture at the Regent Theatre nowadays, and is set to play an inevitably significant part in making Aladdin one of the region's must-see pantomimes this Christmas. He's joined by big pal and fellow Regent panto regular Christian Patterson, who'll be giving his usual larger-than-life performance as the Dame, on this occasion Widow Twankey.

Lichfield Garrick, until Sat 6 January

A perfect story for an evening of family entertainment finds street youth Aladdin trying against all odds to win the hand of the beautiful princess - and being helped in his efforts by the mystical genie of the lamp... CBeebies Cat Sandion stars in this latest version of the classic Arabian Nights tale. She's joined in the show by Sam Rabone (as Widow Twankey) and Ben Thornton (as Wishy Washy), both of whom scored a massive festive hit in the Garrick's Christmas 2016 adaptation of Sleeping Beauty.



A Christmas Carol

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Mon 27 November - Sun 4 February;
Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Sat 16 - Sat 30 December

Of all Dickens' festive stories, A Christmas Carol reigns supreme. The covetous sinning of the miserly Scrooge, the eternal hope offered by Tiny Tim, and the eerie visions of redemption - visiting Ebenezer in the shape of three yuletide ghosts (four if you count the chain-clanking Marley) - all combine to give the tale a real olde worlde charm.

The RSC version of the show has been penned by David Edgar, whose previous work for the Company includes his award-winning adaptation of Dickens' Nicholas Nickleby.



Treasure Island

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme,
until Sat 27 January



When salty old seadog Billy Bones brings his papers to the Admiral Benbow Inn, he draws young Gem into the adventure of a lifetime, one which will see her not only setting sail in search of buried treasure, but also spending time in the company of a one-legged pirate with murder in mind...

Boasting live music, puppetry and swash-buckling sword fights, this brand new stage version of Robert Louis Stevenson's high-seas adventure is helmed by New Vic Artistic Director Theresa Heskins.

Crimes On The Christmas Express

Lichfield Garrick,
Fri 8 December - Sat 6 January

An alternative festive-season comedy for adults, Crimes On The Christmas Express takes its inspiration from sources as diverse as Agatha Christie novels and the Jason Bourne movies. The show features a talented cast of four who between them play an impressively wide range of quirky characters, from jewel thieves and circus performers to lovelorn porters and sleazy Americans. Award-winning theatre company New Old Friends present the production, making a welcome return to the Garrick following a sell-out success at the venue last Christmas.



The Hundred And One Dalmatians

The REP, Birmingham, Thurs 30 November - Sat 13 January

Birmingham Rep is going dotty for dogs this Christmas, courtesy of its brand new stage version of The Hundred And One Dalmatians.

The REP's Associate Director, Tessa Walker, takes the helm for the festive-season family show, having previously directed the venue's yuletide productions of A Christmas Carol and The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe.

Dodie Smith's delightful tale has been transformed for the stage by Debbie Isitt, writer and director of the hugely popular Nativity! films. Isitt's stage show, Nativity! The Musical, began its national tour at The REP in October.

Commenting on the venue's 2017 Christmas offering, Tessa Walker said: "I'm delighted to be bringing to life the magic of The Hundred And One Dalmatians in our unforgettable production, which features wonderful puppets and new music. Debbie's adaptation is packed with enchantment and humour, and brings a thrilling new sense of adventure to the story, making it fun for families and friends of all ages."



Flashdance

New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Mon 4 - Fri 9 December

Based on the popular '80s movie of the same name, Flashdance features hit numbers Maniac, Manhunt, Gloria, I Love Rock And Roll and the Academy Award-winning What A Feeling. The show tells the story of 18-year-old Alex, a welder by day and 'flashdancer' by night, who dreams of winning a place at the prestigious Shipley Dance Academy. But will she get to achieve her ambition against all the odds?... Strictly Come Dancing champion Joanne Clifton (pictured) and A1 heartthrob Ben Adams star



Skellig

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 20 - Sat 30 December

David Almond's eerie and magical story tells the tale of a young boy who discovers a strange creature and nourishes him back to health. Meanwhile, the boy's baby sister is gravely ill in hospital... The critically acclaimed Tin Robot Theatre are the company behind this stage adaptation of Almond's 1998 Carnegie Medal award winner.

The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe

Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, Sun 3 - Sat 16 December

This much-loved tale from the pen of CS Lewis is rightly regarded as an all-time classic of children's literature. The story sees the lion-god Aslan coming to the aid of three youngsters who've accidentally stumbled into his mystical world of Narnia.

Alice In Wonderland

The Old Rep, Birmingham, until Sat 30 December

A timeless classic telling the magical and decidedly topsy-turvy story of a little girl who falls down a rabbit hole and discovers a weird world, Alice's Adventures In Wonderland first made its way onto the stage during its author Lewis Carroll's lifetime; in 1886, to be precise. It's since been adapted for the

theatre countless times and in all manner of ways, including as a ballet, a musical, an opera and a traditional pantomime. With its cast of nonsensical and amusing characters, including the White Rabbit, the Mad Hatter and the March Hare, it invariably makes for a great Christmas show. Read our feature on page 32.

Birmingham Royal Ballet: The Nutcracker

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Wed 13 December

Sir Peter Wright's enchanting version of this firm festive favourite returns to the Hippodrome this month, courtesy of Birmingham Royal Ballet.

Created in 1990 as a thank you to Birmingham for its support of the company following its move to the Midlands from London's Sadler Wells, Wright's production is seen by many as the finest interpretation of Tchaikovsky's magnificent and mesmerising score.

In true Christmas spirit, the story follows the young Clara as she's swept up in a fantasy of soldiers, giant rats, snow fairies, magic and mystery, before finally being transformed into a beautiful ballerina. A magical, must-see show for little princesses everywhere...



Killing can be a murderous game

RUTH RENDELL
GALLOWGLASS

National Theatre

★★★★★
 'A triumphant
 Hedda for our times.'
 - The Guardian

HEDDA
 GABLER

Directed by Nicky Attfield. Hedda: Rachel Watson. Lovborg: Patrick Marber.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
SERGEI BOBROV
MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CHIEF
CONDUCTOR
NATOLY TCHEPURNOV



**The Sensational
60's
Experience**

*A BRAND NEW
PRODUCTION FOR 2018*

DENNY ANDERSSON & BJÖRN LIEVALS'
MAMMA MIA!
THE SMASH HIT MUSICAL Presented by **ADRIAN**

hairspray

★★★★★

NOT RATED
AND ROUGH
AS A SHOUT
OF LOVE

The album cover for Joe Brown's 'Just Joe' features a central photograph of Joe Brown smiling and sitting in a wooden chair, holding an acoustic guitar. The background is a collage of black and white photographs showing him in various musical settings, including playing guitar and singing into a microphone. The title 'JOE BROWN' is at the top in large, bold, black letters, with 'Just Joe' in a red script font below it. The tagline 'FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER...' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

WINNER OF EVERY MAJOR BEST MUSICAL AWARD
• BROADWAY • THEATRE • AUSTRIAN • WHITEHORSE AWARD • OFFICIAL STANDARD AWARD

Kinky Boots
A NEW MUSICAL INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY

BOOK BY **HARVEY FIERSTEIN** LYRICS BY **CYNDI LAUPER** MUSIC BY **JERRY MITCHELL**

PRODUCED BY **JOHN WILSON** EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS **JOHN WILSON & JEFF BONE** PRODUCED BY **JOHN WILSON**

STRUTTING ACROSS THE UK IN 2010

Stick Man

Birmingham Town Hall,
Tues 26 December - Fri 12 January

"Scamp Theatre send shivers down my spine," reveals Julia Donaldson, the co-creator (along with Alex Scheffler) of the hugely popular children's book on which this show is based.

"They're so lively and innovative. I love their production of Stick Man, and so do the audiences."

Julia's not wrong - audiences most definitely do love the show, as a smash-hit season in the West End ably demonstrated.

Featuring a trio of talented performers, the production brings together puppetry, songs, live music and 'funky moves' to tell the story of Stick Man's attempts to get back to the family tree. Suitable for children aged three and older.



Snow Mouse

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Fri 1 - Sun 31 December



A magical forest full of play, puppetry and music is the delightful setting for this 'enchanting winter's tale for the very young'. A child's wintry-woodland discovery of a sleeping mouse buried under the snow kick-starts a friendship that soon sees the warm-hearted pair engaging in all manner of fun-filled frolics... Presented by Travelling Light and The Egg, the production is suitable for children aged between three months and four years.

Santa In Love

Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Fri 1 December;
Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 2 December

Youngsters always have plenty of questions to ask about Christmas, and the People's Theatre Company is here setting out to provide an answer to perhaps the biggest one of all - what's the one thing that Santa secretly loves best?

"You'll never guess," advise the talented en-

semble, "so if you want to find out, then join Santa and his friends in this fun-filled family musical, complete with games, giggles and all your favourite Christmas songs."

Sounds good to us...

Santa's Christmas Wish

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 15 to Sun 24 December;
Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sun 24 December

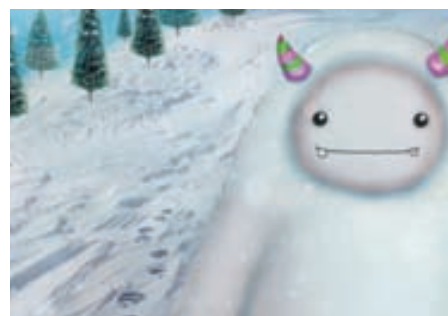
Mrs Claus is wondering what Santa wants for Christmas, and needs all the help she can get to find out. Enter, Dasher the Reindeer, Pom-pom the Penguin and Snowy the Snowman, all of whom think they've got the answer... Festive favourites Jingle Bells, When Santa Got Stuck Up The Chimney, The Twelve Days Of Christmas, Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer and We Wish You A Merry Christmas are among the songs featured in this 40-minute show. Created for kids aged from two to seven, the production also includes a meet-and-greet with Father Christmas, who'll be handing out a gift to every youngster.



The Abominable Snowman

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Wed 27 December

The highly rated Moon On A Stick are the ensemble behind this 'very silly, very snowy adventure'. Blending puppetry, live music and pitch-perfect storytelling for youngsters aged three-plus, the 50-minute production sets out to show that not everything is always quite as it seems. And that includes the legendary Abominable Snowman, who, it turns out, is actually quite adorable!



Home For Christmas

Lichfield Garrick, Tues 12 - Sun 31 December

Wobbling under the weight of an enormous Christmas tree, a mother is struggling to make her way through a to-do list that's longer than her arm. Her festive-season stress levels are then sent through the yuletide roof thanks to encounters with a host of quirky characters, including clumsy sheep, lost birds, stranded farmers and mayors in a pickle... This gentle rhyming story has been widely praised for its generous helpings of wit, warmth and joy.

Father Christmas

MAC, Birmingham,
Thurs 30 November - Sat 30 December

Raymond Briggs is best known for his story about a little boy who makes friends with a snowman. But talented theatre company Pins And Needles are doing plenty to promote two of the author's other less-famous tales. Having last Christmas presented an adaptation of his picture book, *The Bear*, they're this year returning to MAC with an equally well-received version of another of his stories. Suitable for children aged three and older, *Father Christmas* features songs, live music, playful puppetry, secret doors, hidden hatches and plenty of trademark Briggs humour. Expect your children to be suitably enchanted.



Lily And The Little Snow Bear

The Core, Solihull, Wed 20 - Sun 24 December

A heartwarming tale of friendship, *Lily And The Little Snow Bear* takes place 'two sleeps before Christmas'. The story sees Lily heading out into the snowy countryside after discovering a mysterious trail of footprints... 'Exquisite puppets, enchanting music and a magical snowy setting' are here combined to create a feelgood family show for children aged three-plus.



The Wind In The Willows

Albany Theatre, Coventry,
Thurs 7 December - Sat 6 January

A firm festive favourite, Kenneth Grahame's classic story ably demonstrates the way in which one life can command the full attention of three others!

Mole, Badger and Ratty simply don't have time for any of their own interests - they're way too busy having to look after their reckless and irrepressible friend, Toad...



Santa's Mixed Up Martian

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Thurs 7 - Sun 24 December

Coventry panto stalwart Iain Lauchlan is the talented scribe behind this Imagine Theatre show, the fourth in the series. When a space-scooter-riding, multicoloured, mixed-up Martian with a liking for Mars Bars is blown off course by a solar wind, he's forced to make an emergency landing on earth, where he finds himself coming face-to-face with Santa, Ellie and Rudolph... Singalong songs, a Santa meet-and-greet and a gift for every child add to the fun.

The Snow Dragon

Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 21 December - Sun 7 January; Bridge House Theatre, Warwick, Thurs 14 - Fri 15 December

Tall Stories have previously presented hit shows *The Gruffalo* and *Room On The Broom*. The company here return with the enchanting story of a young goat named Billy and his encounter with the legendary Snow Dragon (and some very hungry wolves!).



We're Going On A Bear Hunt

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Wed 29 November - Sun 7 January

Suitable for children aged two-plus, this new adaptation of Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury's popular picture book follows the exciting adventures of a family as they head out on an intrepid quest to find a bear. Catchy songs and interactive scenes are combined with no shortage of swishy swashy grass and oozy, squelchy mud, in a show that seems certain to keep youngsters well and truly entertained.



The Witches

Malvern Theatre, Sat 16 - Sun 31 December

When you take a Roald Dahl book and have it adapted for the stage by hugely respected children's playwright David Wood OBE, you can expect the outcome to be something worth beholding. And that's certainly the case with *The Witches*. Dahl's delightful story sees a young boy and his grandmother take on some rather unpleasant ladies - the witches of the title - who'd like nothing more than to squish and squelch all the wretched children they despise. Presented by the Malvern Theatre Players.



Beverley Knight

The Midlands-born Queen of Soul is this month making her panto debut and working her magic in Cinderella at Birmingham Hippodrome...

With her MOBO Award-winning voice, West Midlands singing sensation Beverley Knight certainly has plenty of experience of casting a spell over her audiences. But this Christmas, the Wolverhampton-born wonder will be exercising magic powers of a very different sort in the guise of Cinderella's Fairy Godmother.

Following more than 20 years' experience as a recording artist, and critically acclaimed stage performances in *The Bodyguard* and *Memphis*, Knight now returns to her regional roots, making her pantomime debut at Birmingham Hippodrome. Flawlessly kitted out in sparkly dress and wings, she's positively glowing with enthusiasm about the task ahead when she meets us for the panto launch - and with good reason.

"I'm really looking forward to it!" she gushes. "This isn't just any panto, it's the biggest one in the world, and to have that as my first - I don't think it gets any better. Often when you're in theatre over Christmas, you kind of feel a bit removed from it all. But panto is Christmas, so this year I'll be the one helping people to get into the Christmas spirit, which will be brilliant."

It's not only the unparalleled reputation of Hippodrome pantos that persuaded her to take up the part. Having previously worked with Qdos' Michael Harrison on *The Bodyguard*, she was initially asked by the producer if she'd consider appearing in the show. That pre-existing relationship was certainly a draw, but perhaps even more important was the location, enabling her to spend the festive season at home surrounded by her family. And if the crowds of fans who flocked to meet her at the stage door during *The Bodyguard*'s Birmingham run are anything to judge by, she can certainly expect a warm welcome back.

"The thing about performing here is that people actually know me - a lot of them are people who've grown up with me or hung out with me, which gives it a whole different energy. There's a sense of ownership, I think, because I'm very much part of the fabric here in the West Midlands. So I can imagine that trying to get home every night after the show will be a process!"

As one might expect, Christmas in her family household has always been very much a musical occasion.

"I come from a massive musical family and we do all like to sing, so we do a lot of singing together. I don't know what we're doing this year, but we always end up singing something at Christmas - usually a cappella at the dinner table. I love Christmas songs. I think it's a beautiful time of year for inclusivity and getting together with the people you love. Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas I absolutely adore - I've sung that a few times myself."

A rendition of that song is part of a major new recording project for Knight, undertaken together with fellow musical theatre stars Amber Riley and Cassidy Janson. Under the banner *Leading Ladies*, the trio recently released their first joint album, *Songs From The Stage*.

"I'd been in talks with a record label about the possibility of recording an album to reflect the work I've been doing in theatre recently, but I wasn't too sure about it. But soon after that, when I was watching *Graham Norton*, Amber Riley came on to promote *Dream Girls*. She's an amazing singer, and suddenly I had this thought that maybe I could do something with her. And then, when I saw Cassidy in *Beautiful*, it just seemed to me that if the three of us did something together, it would be much more

interesting than me doing an album on my own. It would be unprecedented. Thankfully the label were all over it, and both Amber and Cassidy said yes, so here we are, a new vocal supergroup, and I'm really excited!

"We've got a mix of old classics like *Memory* and *Wind Beneath My Wings* from *Cats* and *Beaches*, and future classics like *Helpless* from *Hamilton*. There are songs that feature in each of our respective shows too - so I'll be doing songs from *The Bodyguard* and *Memphis*. And then there are some that have all of us singing together as an ensemble."

At the time of writing, details of the script and songs for *Cinderella* remain tightly under wraps, from the cast as well as the public. But fans can rest assured that there'll be ample opportunity to hear Beverley sing, including in a duet with *Hear'Say*'s Suzanne Shaw, who takes the title role.

Suzanne's *Cinderella* is certainly blessed in this choice of Fairy Godmother - it's hard to imagine anyone looking more at home in the part. But while it might be Beverley who's ensuring happy endings both for Cinders and her audience, if roles were reversed, what Christmas wishes might she be hoping to have granted?

"Well, number one, my Fairy Godmother would get *Wolves* into the Premiership," she laughs. "But I think the main thing for me would be to make all my endeavours really successful. If I could be sure that I'll still be doing this when I'm really old, I'd be happy. I love what I do and I want to do it for as long as I can."

.....

Beverley Knight stars as the Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella* at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 19 December until Sunday 28 January.



WINTER WONDERLAND

Alice comes to the Old Rep Theatre for Christmas...



Piles of pantos, never-ending Nutcrackers and an abundance of Dickens adaptations: 'tis the season for Theatreland to fall back on tried and tested family favourites. But if you've had your fill of more familiar festive fare, there's still plenty for you and the kids to enjoy around Birmingham, including at the city's Old Rep Theatre, where Birmingham Ormiston Academy (BOA) is putting on a brand new version of Alice In Wonderland.

"Our vision here at the Old Rep is to provide Christmas entertainment using traditional stories for young children, primarily those aged four to 10," explains producer Suzanne Priest. "There's something about fairytales and traditional stories that open up imaginative possibilities in theatre for young people, as well as giving our creative team the opportunity to explore fantasy worlds and characters that really come to life on stage. Then to leave that question at the end as to whether it was real or just a dream - I think that really excites children's curiosity."

Emphasising the traditional aspect, this is a largely faithful staging of the novel, a choice made partly with school visits in mind. Alongside the show, the company has been running workshops with classes also studying the book. This approach to the text can be seen right down to the design, which takes its cues from John Tenniel's original illustrations.

"If you go back to the original books, there are lots of really lovely patterns, especially in the costumes," says designer Libby Todd. "If you look at a character like the Queen of Hearts, for example, a lot of versions now just show her with quite a plain, big red dress, but the illustrations are actually very detailed - a bit like the designs on a pack of cards."

That said, there has been some 'artistic licence'. One key element is the inclusion of Tweedledee and Tweedledum (whose first appearance is in the sequel story, *Through The Looking Glass*), since it was felt the comic duo brought something important to the show's dynamic. Then, there's the matter of Alice herself.

"Sometimes with productions of Alice In Wonderland, Alice can feel slightly on the edge of the show, like an observer rather than an active participant," says director Scott Le Crass. "I think our version is much more feisty, with lots of get up and go. She's an adventurer who's inquisitive and excited and intrigued by everything."

Digital projection and puppetry are among the elements used to develop a fresh and unique landscape for Wonderland. Rather than a sharp transition, strange, slightly

unreal elements are present from the beginning, creating a more natural progression from the 'normal' world into a Wonderland that becomes more weird and wacky as the story progresses.

There's also been room for invention in the score, which combines settings of songs and poems from the book with original numbers imitating Carroll's distinctive style. The Caucus Race, for example, is full of nonsense lyrics, while *Off With His Head* delights in grisly detail.

"The score has all sorts of strange noises in it," says composer Steve Allan Jones. "It's taken me seven months to put it together, and it's unbelievably complicated. I thought it would work really well to bring in toy instruments - things like little pianos and flutes, and whatever I could find really. Some of them are even out of crackers!"

But what really makes this production special is the collaboration between professional and student cast and crew. Six lead actors work alongside an ensemble of post-16 BOA students, while BOA and BSA apprentices are partnered with the in-house team in areas like technical theatre, front of house, marketing and stage management. Acting BTEC student Caleb Clarke is excited about the skills the show has helped them all to develop.

"It's an amazing experience, and so different to anything I've done at school," says Caleb. "This is actually the first musical I've been involved in, so I was a little bit intimidated by it at first. When the audition came along, I thought I'd go for it, because if nothing else it would be good audition experience. So when I found out I'd been cast, I was over the moon, because I'd never thought of myself as a singer or dancer before."

As well as having their own specific animal characters to work on, the students also understudy lead roles, are responsible for scene changes, and get to operate a star attraction of the show: the Cheshire Cat puppet, which has been cleverly designed to appear and disappear in stages.

"It takes seven of us to operate the puppet," explains Caleb. "It's all in different sections - so there's one for the head, four legs, a body and a tail. It's really interesting trying to fit everyone in when you're making the full image - you've got to keep a lot in your head to make it work."

As well as puppetry workshops, rehearsals have also involved learning how to fully engage

young audiences. But perhaps as important as any individual skill they've picked up has been the chance to play around and enjoy the process.

"You've got to have a lot of energy," says Caleb's fellow Acting BTEC student, Ava Ralph. "It's important to really bring out the character in your movements and facial expressions, much more than you would for an adult audience."

"I've got young family coming to see it," adds Caleb, "so I already know how full-on you have to be to keep them entertained for two hours, but it's so much fun! In Wonderland, you get to say and do the most ridiculous things - it's really liberating being able to bring out your inner child and stomp around on stage!"

Alice In Wonderland showa at the Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, until Saturday 30 December.



DELIGHTFUL DAMES!

There ain't nothin' like a Dame - particularly the type you find in pantomimes at this most magical time of year! Here in the Midlands we're lucky to have some of the UK's funniest and most colourful Dames treading the boards of our finest theatres. We caught up with a few of them to find out more about the joys and challenges of playing pantoland's most outrageously glammed-up character...

Visit whatsonlive.co.uk to read the full interviews...

Ian Adams

Seasoned pro Ian started his panto career starring alongside the late Jack Wild as an Ugly Sister. He then branched out on his own as Dame Trot in Jack & The Beanstalk, a role to which he's returning this very festive season. Despite his panto CV also including appearances as Captain Hook and the Mad Hatter, there ain't nothin' like a Dame as far as Ian's concerned.

What makes Christmas magical for you?

I love the buzz in the theatre. For a lot of children it's their first panto, and it's so important that we make their Christmas magical. I'm a great believer in the importance of the story. All the other elements - song, dance, comedy etc - all have their part to play, but it shouldn't be at the expense of the story. The children have to believe it's real.

Do you have a routine to ensure you're 'panto ready'?

Not really. I always think of my Dame as a lady in hibernation - and when the clocks go back, it's time to wake her up and get the heels on!

What's the worst gift anyone could ever give you?

Meringue!

New Year resolution?

Never look back.

Ian plays Dame Trot in Jack And The Beanstalk at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Sat 9 December to Sun 14 January



Steve Boyce

Steve's new to the Dame game but has wanted to play the role for pretty much as long as he can remember. With the opportunity to do so failing to present itself, he took matters into his own hands by writing and starring in his own Edinburgh Fringe show, a delightful little number entitled The Dame Dolly Donut Show.



If you weren't a Dame, what other panto character would you like to play?

Before I became a Dame, I mainly used to play baddies - the Sheriff of Nottingham was one of my favourites - so I'd probably venture back to Sherwood Forest.

What's your all-time favourite panto?

It's fallen somewhat out of favour in recent years, but I love a good production of Mother Goose. She really is the Dame's Dame - all of the usual comedy nonsense, plus the story is all about her too!

Favourite festive tipples?

As retro as it is, I'm partial to a snowball at Christmas.

Do you ever get post-panto blues?

Always. Panto casts start to feel like family, so it's hard when that family has to dissolve again.

Steve plays Mrs Smee in Peter Pan, which shows at The Place, Oakengates, from Wed 6 to Sun 31 December



Christian Patterson

One of pantoland's best known Dames, Christian Patterson has carved out a fantastic career for himself at Stoke-on-Trent's Regent Theatre, where he's 'rouged up' most years since 2006. He's big pals with Jonathan Wilkes, another fella who's very much part of the furniture when it comes to the business of Potteries pantos.

What makes Christmas magical for you?

As far as I'm concerned, panto is Christmas! Well, panto... and mince pies! No panto, no mince pies... NO CHRISTMAS!

Have you ever had any costume malfunctions?

Loads! It's part and parcel of being a Dame! I'm a big lad, and I've got to get in and out of those heavy costumes twice a day, every day - so yes, I've seen my fair share of costume fails! Not to mention the time when Jonny (Wilkes) fell off a chair and ripped his trousers from zip to rear belt loop! Of course, Jonny being Jonny, he just quietly carried on... Not!

Never work with children or animals. Comment...

Ha! Well I would add, "Never work with children... unless they're from the Wilkes Academy!" Can someone tell Jonny I said that and make sure the cheque is in the post! But in all honesty, they're the best! I work with an animal every year... Jonny! It's like working with a trained chimp!

Christian plays Widow Twankey in Aladdin, which shows at the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, from Fri 15 December to Sun 7 January

Brad Fitt

Brad is a familiar festive face at Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn. For the past six years, with one exception, he's starred at the venue as the pantomime Dame - first in Aladdin in 2011 and now in Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs. He's been described by the Telegraph as one of the UK's top Dames, and once upon a time earned his corn writing panto gags for Christopher Biggins.

If you weren't a Dame, what other panto character would you like to play?

I didn't think I'd enjoy playing Buttons last year, but it was actually a really rewarding experience and quite different being onstage with no funny costumes or make up. I do think that I'd like to play a baddie one day. Abanazar in Aladdin would be my first choice, but perhaps I'll save that for when I'm too old and tired for all the quick changes..

Who's your scariest villain?

I'd have to say Abanazar, which is partly why I'd like to play him one day. While he can be an evil character, he also has to try and trick the Twankeys into believing he's on their side. It's certainly a part you could get your teeth into. I once did Aladdin with Victor Spinetti, who was a wonderful Abanazar and such a generous and talented performer.

Brad plays Nurse Nellie in Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs, which shows at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, from Wed 29 November to Sun 7 January



Sam Rabone

Sam first donned the giant wig and slapped on way too much makeup at the tender age of 19, to star as the Dame for Sutton Coldfield am-dram group the Vesey Players. He's since made quite a splash on the professional circuit, both here in the UK and over in the United Arab Emirates - where, he reveals, he's even been known to use that old festive favourite the Brussel sprout as a pizza topping!

What was your first ever experience as a Dame?

I was cast as Sarah the Cook in Dick Whittington for Pantoni Pantomimes down in Yeovil. I'd been working in entertainment for a few years, but it was my first professional job in a theatre and my first working as a Dame.

What's your all-time favourite panto?

Dick Whittington! I love the story, I love the fact we get to travel from London to Morocco, so the scenes are always so different, and in between we go on a boat and under the water. So there's something for everyone in there. I also think it lends itself to some of the best slosh scenes. There's the chance to play either on the boat or in the kitchen. I think it's a great traditional pantomime.

What's the worst gift anyone could ever give you?

Turkish Delight. I can't stand it. It looks so nice and tasty, but then I pop it in and can't stand it!

Sam plays Dame Widow Twankey in Aladdin, which shows at Lichfield Garrick from Thurs 30 November to Sat 6 January



Double Trouble...

Dames Iain Lauchlan and Greg Powrie certainly make a gruesome twosome in Coventry Belgrade Theatre's pantomime production of Cinderella!

With Cinderella being this year's Belgrade Theatre pantomime, Coventry is in for twice the fun as the stage is graced by not just one, but two veteran Scottish panto dames.

But audiences might not be the only ones seeing double this Christmas. Fresh from gallivanting around Glasgow, holidaying in the Highlands and drinking distilleries dry, Cinderella's Ugly Sisters Dyspepsia and Listeria head for the Midlands loaded up on whisky and pizza crunch (that's battered, deep-fried pizza to the uninitiated).

Joining local legend Iain Lauchlan for his Coventry debut is Pitlochry's own Greg Powrie. The pair play sisters Pepsi and Lizzie respectively.

"As people here will know, I always play my dames as Scottish anyway," says Iain, who in 2017 is taking part in his 23rd Belgrade panto, juggling the roles of writer, director and dame once more. "This year we've definitely got a strong Scottish theme, particularly at the beginning."

"I think it's fair to say a lot of English people have certain preconceptions about Scotland," adds Greg, "some of which are apocryphal and some of which are true. But that's something that we play on quite a lot - getting drunk and things like that. I'm actually really intrigued to see how it's going to work because I've never done a panto in England before. I think it'll be weird - at least initially - because Iain and Craig (Hollingsworth, who plays Buttons) know the audience so well, and then you've got this Scottish upstart coming in!"

That 'Scottish theme' will also be reflected in the design: the sisters' top style tips this season involve lots of tropical fruit as well as tartan, which, according to Greg, "never goes out of fashion". Take note, Coventry fashionistas.

"It's always a real treat doing panto here because we get a completely new set, props and costumes every year," says Iain. "The Belgrade is really lucky to have its own wardrobe and workshop."

Despite Iain's extensive dame experience, it's the first time in over 20 years he's played an Ugly Sister. For Powrie it's the second year on the trot - he was an Ugly Sister in a Lauchlan-penned Imagine Theatre panto at Kirkcaldy's Adam Smith Theatre in 2016.

"It's quite odd to be doing Cinderella two years running because, like Iain, I've been doing Dame for the last however many years and usually there's an autonomy about that. So if you choose to go off-piste, you can. Whereas with Ugliers, it's a double-act, so you've got to take a bit of a gamble on who the other half is. That's why you get a lot of comedy double-acts doing it, and duos who just do Ugly Sisters and never play dames independently."

"I'm actually not a great lover of doing Cinderella," Iain admits. "I usually much prefer to be a dame than an Ugly Sister. The last time I did it must've been in the early '90s, although I've directed it here since then. The problem is that sometimes it can become a bit of a competition. It wasn't until I first played it alongside Greg that I felt like this was how it should be done, where you're helping each other out rather than competing."

It might be Greg's first time in Coventry, but the Caledonian co-stars still have history, from Iain's days as creative director of Belgrade panto co-producers Imagine Theatre. Cinderella was the third pantomime he performed in at Inverness' Eden Court Theatre, recruiting Greg as his comedy partner following auditions in Edinburgh.

"I didn't know him before that," says Iain,

"but Greg is just so generous to work with, as well as being a really good performer. So when it was decided that we'd be doing Cinderella this year, I asked him to come down because I needed someone that I really liked and could trust."

With the sisters serving a dual function as both baddies and comic relief, Cinderella often has a different dynamic to other pantos.

"Quite often with Cinderella, you don't have a Stepmother," explains Iain, "or she's just a voice off-stage, so the Ugliers are the out-and-out baddies. But in this show, by bringing the Stepmother in, you've got a figure for the kids to really dislike, which helps to soften their feelings towards the sisters."

"I think that makes it more fun," adds Greg. "You want to be able to laugh at the Ugliers, but if they're the only ones making Cinderella's life a misery, it's more difficult to do that."

Unusually, Maggie Robson will be taking on two very different maternal guises here, doubling up as Cinderella's Stepmother and her Fairy Godmother. Meanwhile, as Buttons, comic Craig Hollingsworth will move away from his usual on-stage camaraderie with the dame, with his and Iain's characters this time at loggerheads.

"Craig is definitely going to be getting some payback this year," says Iain, "because he pretty much always ends up getting the worst of it in the slosh scenes, whereas this year that'll be Greg."

"I've only known him for two days and I can already sense he's going to enjoy that," adds Greg.

.....
Cinderella shows at Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, until Saturday 13 January

Going for Gold

Check out our top picks of golden gifts on offer at
The Mailbox in Birmingham this Christmas...

1



2



3



4



5



1. Lexon Fine Speaker **£50.00** from Heal's 2. Drop tealight holder **£16.00** from BoConcept 3. Sophie Hulme Whistle ochré velvet box clutch **£575.00** from Harvey Nichols 4. Sophia Webster Chiara rose gold winged leather sandals **£525.00** from Harvey Nichols 5. Christmas tree sculptures **From £39.00** from BoConcept 6. Olivia Burton Hackney rose gold-plated watch **£95.00** from Harvey Nichols



12



7. Newbury Cutlery Set **£129.00** from made.com 8. Estée Lauder x Victoria Beckham Highlighter **£55.00** from Harvey Nichols
9. MEMO Irish Leather Eau De Parfum **£195.00** from Harvey Nichols 10. Drop tealight holder **£16.00** from BoConcept
11. Iconic London Rose Gold Contour & Conceal Brush Set **£43.00** from Harvey Nichols 12. Gestuz velvet robe **£199.95** from Harvey Nichols



THE ALBANY THEATRE

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

by Kenneth Grahame | Adapted for the stage by Mike Kenny

Sat 9 Dec - Sat 6 Jan

Will Toad and his friends defeat the stoats and weasels of the Wild Wood and save Toad Hall in time for Christmas?

Join us for this magical, thrilling, award-winning adaptation of the classic tale. Funny, clever and with a warm heart - perfect entertainment for festive, family fun.

Tickets £8- £18 (concessions £9-£14)
 Family tickets: £26 - £39 (1 adult, 2 children)
 £36 - £54 (2 adults, 2 children)

The Albany - Discover Coventry's 1930s Art Deco, hidden gem of a theatre
 Book now: www.albanytheatre.co.uk | Box Office: 02476998964 (10.30am-1.30pm, Mon-Sat) | 53 Butts, CV1 3BH

Birmingham's magical, illuminated trail
 Two miles from Birmingham City Centre

CHRISTMAS at the Botanical Gardens



After-dark festive fun for all the family

- Scented Fire Garden
- Tunnel of Light
- Mistletoe Moment
- Singing Trees
- Including **Santa and his Elves**
- Seasonal food and gifts

BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS
 AN EDUCATIONAL CHARITY
 Westbourne Rd, Edgbaston B15 3TH

UNTIL 30 DECEMBER

0844 873 7336 Calls cost 7p/min plus network's access charge
birminghamchristmasgarden.co.uk Not open every day, check website for full details

Star Wars: The Last Jedi

CERT **tbc**

Starring **Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Adam Driver, Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, Oscar Isaac, Andy Serkis, Lupita Nyong'o, Domhnall Gleeson, Laura Dern, Benicio del Toro** Directed by **Rian Johnson (USA)**

There are still mysteries to be discovered about the Force, so Rey (Daisy Ridley) teams up with Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) to uncover them. Harrison Ford will be sadly missed, but at least Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher) is still in on the action, along with handsome new Resistance fighter Finn (John Boyega). The last Star Wars movie, *The Force Awakens*, expunged the nasty taste left by the previous three, so let's hope this eighth edition is just as good. According to Boyega, Princes William and Harry play a couple of stormtroopers, which really does give the film some royal approval. May the force be with them.

Released Thurs 14 December



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Film highlights released in December...



Happy End CERT 15 (108 mins)

Starring **Isabelle Huppert, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Mathieu Kassovitz, Fantine Harduin, Franz Rogowski, Laura Verlinden, Toby Jones** Directed by **Michael Haneke (Austria/ France/ Germany)**

Selected to represent Austria in next year's Oscars, this is a caustic drama that uses the refugee crisis in Calais for its backdrop. For the most part, though, the film focuses on a family involved in the construction industry and preoccupied with their own predicaments. The director, Michael Haneke, is not to be ignored.

Released Fri 1 December

Wonder CERT PG (113 mins)

Starring **Julia Roberts, Owen Wilson, Jacob Tremblay, Noah Jupe, Izabela Vidovic, Mandy Patinkin** Directed by **Stephen Chbosky (USA)**

Auggie Pullman is not like other boys. He was born with horrendous facial birth defects and has undergone extensive surgery over the years while being home-schooled by his mother. Now, aged 10, he's going to attend a real school for the first time... Based on the children's novel by RJ Palacio.

Released Fri 1 December



Love, Cecil CERT 12a (99 mins)

Directed by **Lisa Immordino Vreeland (USA)**

Documentary on the celebrated fashion photographer and Oscar-winning costume designer Sir Cecil Beaton, with archive interviews of those who knew him and more modern footage with those who have felt his artistic influence. The man's own words - written in his extensive diaries - are read by Rupert Everett.

Released Fri 1 December

Film highlights released in December...

Molly's Game CERT 15 (140 mins)

Starring **Jessica Chastain, Idris Elba, Kevin Costner, Michael Cera, Jeremy Strong, Chris O'Dowd** Directed by **Aaron Sorkin (USA)**

Molly's game is poker and she runs a high-powered poker empire for Hollywood A-listers, top athletes, Wall Street billionaires and the Russian mob. It's all highly illegal and so Molly Bloom finds herself under investigation by the FBI. Based on the unwieldily entitled Molly's Game: From

Hollywood's Elite To Wall Street's Billionaire Boys Club, My High-Stakes Adventure In The World Of Underground Poker by Molly Bloom herself, the film marks the directorial debut of the Oscar-winning screenwriter Aaron Sorkin (The Social Network, A Few Good Men, Steve Jobs, The West Wing). And it's the latter's incomparable dialogue that should guarantee Jessica Chastain an Oscar nomination for best actress.

Released Wed 20 December



CRITIC'S CHOICE

The Man Who Invented Christmas

CERT PG (104 mins)

Starring **Dan Stevens, Christopher Plummer, Jonathan Pryce, Miriam Margolyes, Simon Callow, Ian McNeice** Directed by **Bharat Nalluri (Ireland/Canada)**

Following the story of the creation of Winnie-the-Pooh, we now have the story of the creation of A Christmas Carol. Apparently, Charles Dickens (Dan Stevens) was in dire straits at the time and almost went mad in the confection of his novella, but still managed to change how we now view the festive season.

Released Fri 1 December



The Disaster Artist

CERT 15 (104 mins)

Starring **James Franco, Dave Franco, Seth Rogen, Alison Brie, Ari Graynor, Josh Hutcherson, Zac Efron** Directed by **James Franco (USA)**

Not to be confused with Lenny Abrahamson's gripping and moving film Room (2015), Tommy Wiseau's The Room (2003) has been frequently cited as one of "the worst films ever made." This biographical comedy-drama charts the making of the latter, based on the 2013 book of the same name. James Franco is said to deliver a career-high performance as Wiseau.

Released Wed 6 December



Brigsby Bear CERT 15 (97 mins)

Starring **Kyle Mooney, Claire Danes, Mark Hamill, Greg Kinnear, Matt Walsh, Michaela Watkins** Directed by **Dave McCary (USA)**

James lives underground and is obsessed with the children's TV show Brigsby Bear Adventures. Then one day his parents are arrested and he's told that they aren't his real parents and that the show isn't real either. James's life is about to take a dramatic turn... You certainly can't fault the film for originality and it was well received by the American press.

Released Fri 8 December



Better Watch Out

CERT 15 (89 mins)

Starring **Levi Miller, Olivia DeJonge, Ed Oxenbould, Patrick Warburton, Virginia Madsen** Directed by **Chris Peckover (Australia/USA)**

There are easy babysitting gigs and then there are harder ones. Seventeen-year-old Ashley (DeJonge) thinks she's in for a straightforward, uncomplicated evening, when her 12-year-old ward, Luke (Miller), tries to seduce her. She really shouldn't have refused him...

Released Fri 8 December

Menashe CERT U (82 mins)

Starring **Menashe Lustig, Ruben Niborski, Yoel Weissshaus, Meyer Schwartz**
Directed by **Joshua Z. Weinstein (USA)**

Menashe works at a grocery store in the Hasidic community of Borough Park in Brooklyn, New York. After his wife died a year ago, Menashe had just his 10-year-old son Rieven to fill his life. But because of Hasidic law, Rieven is taken away from him because a single father is not deemed suitable for a young lad's upbringing. So Menashe sets about regaining custody of his only child... Filmed entirely in Yiddish.

Released Fri 8 December



Stronger CERT 15 (119 mins)

Starring **Jake Gyllenhaal, Tatiana Maslany, Miranda Richardson, Clancy Brown, Richard Lane Jr** Directed by **David Gordon Green (USA)**

Jeff Bauman (Gyllenhaal) always wanted to make it up to his ex-girlfriend, Erin (Maslany). So, when she competed in the 2013 Boston Marathon he was determined to be at the finishing line with an outside hand-made placard. He made it, but was blown up just as she completed the course. Based on a true story, the film is drawing major Oscar buzz for Gyllenhaal's performance.

Released Fri 8 December



The Dinner CERT tbc

Starring **Richard Gere, Laura Linney, Steve Coogan, Rebecca Hall, Adepero Oduye, Chloë Sevigny** Directed by **Oren Moverman (USA)**

Two sets of wealthy parents meet at a fancy restaurant to decide what to do about a crime

their sons have committed. Based on the 2009 novel by Herman Koch, the drama is the fourth directed by Oren Moverman, whose films are invariably well met by the critics.

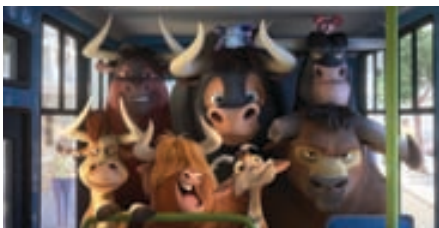
Released Fri 8 December

Ferdinand CERT PG

With the voices of **John Cena, Kate McKinnon, Anthony Anderson, Bobby Cannavale, David Tennant** Directed by **Carlos Saldanha (USA)**

Ferdinand is not your typical fighting bull. He would rather smell the flowers. However, when he's stung by a bee and starts kicking up a storm, he is rounded up and dragged off to Madrid to compete in the ring... Based on the 1936 children's book by Munro Leaf. Appropriately, David Tennant voices a bull called Angus.

Released Thurs 16 December



Pitch Perfect 3 CERT tbc

Starring **Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson, Hailee Steinfeld, Brittany Snow, Anna Camp, John Lithgow** Directed by **Trish Sie (USA)**

The Barden Bellas are back and have one last chance to perform on tour in Europe. This, we are promised, is the last instalment in what is now a trilogy. Yeh, well, the last film made \$287million.

Released Wed 20 December

Jumanji: Welcome To The Jungle CERT 12a

Starring **Dwayne Johnson, Jack Black, Kevin Hart, Karen Gillan, Bobby Cannavale** Directed by **Jake Kasdan (USA)**

A sort-of sequel to Jumanji, the 1995 fantasy-adventure starring Robin Williams, this looks more like a companion piece to Dwayne Johnson's Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (2012). Anyway, four teenage friends end up on a jungle island when they start playing the video game Jumanji - and, more bizarrely, they are transformed into the game's adult avatars! In 3D.

Released Wed 20 December





COMING OUT!

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery's latest exhibition explores sexuality, gender and identity in art

As the UK celebrates 50 years since the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1967, a new exhibition at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG) explores how shifting attitudes towards the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) experience have influenced visual art.

Part of a three-year national partnership between the Arts Council Collection and four UK galleries, *Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender And Identity* comes to BMAG fresh from its opening at Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery, but it's not simply been a case of transferring the exhibition wholesale. The show has been 'reimagined' for Birmingham audiences, featuring new items and with an extensive engagement programme and gallery trail running alongside.

Among the pieces joining the exhibition here will be Grayson Perry's *Claire's Coming Out Dress*, which he designed and wore to mark his entry into the art world as a transvestite, shown alongside his 1996 ceramic *Who Am I?*, marking stages in the artist's personal journey.

Local artists also get a look in, notably with three prints by Birmingham photographer Vanley Burke, capturing scenes from a Pride demonstration called in protest against the infamous 1988 Section 28 Act.

To help make the show more representative of Birmingham's diverse communities, changes have been brought about in consultation with local LGBT groups, notably over-50s support group Ageing Better, and Unmuted, a group for BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) LGBT people. Members of both groups visited Liverpool to give their feedback on the original show.

"What's interesting is that there were slightly contrasting views from the people who could remember pre-1967 and those who couldn't," explains curator Lisa Beauchamp. "The Ageing Better group felt that we needed to explain the context for 1967 more fully, because you can't expect everyone to know what that is any more."

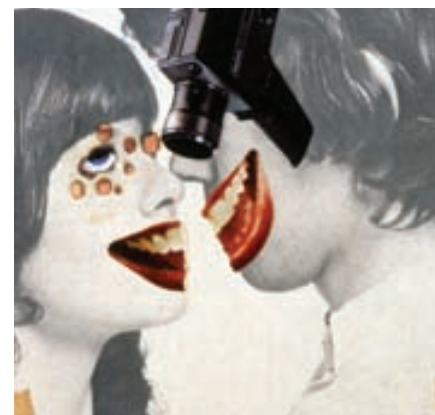
Nevertheless, there was a shared sense by all involved that despite its difficult subject

matter, the show should ultimately be celebratory in tone. To this end, Beauchamp has aimed to create a lively, relaxed and welcoming space, filled with ambient sound and vibrant splashes of colour inspired by Gilbert Baker's original 1978 Pride flag. There'll also be an exciting programme of shows and activities to enjoy, beginning with an action-packed launch developed with SHOUT Festival.

Specially commissioned drag performances, workshops and rainbow crafts for kids are among the things to look forward to on opening day. Later in the run, there'll also be opportunities to take part in a Polari workshop, as well as a Drag And Draw session - a twist on the gallery's popular Drink And Draw series - that will see drag queens posing for sketches.

.....

Coming Out shows at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery from Saturday 2 December until Sunday 15 April





The Past Is Now: Birmingham And The British Empire

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery,
until Mon 12 March

A little less than a century ago, the British Empire covered a quarter of the world and ruled over 458 million people.

But its creation and retention had come at a price, with many lives having been lost along the way.

The Past Is Now takes a look at the history of the Empire and, more specifically, Birmingham's connection to it. Six artists, researchers and activists have co-curated the display, which features numerous objects from BMAG's collection. As well as examining the museum's own bias in telling difficult narratives, the exhibition also explores other perspectives which have been historically misrepresented.

The Past Is Now is located in the museum's new gallery, Story Lab, a space in which visitors are encouraged to interact, feed back and engage in conversation.





The Lost Words

Compton Verney, Warwickshire,
until Sun 17 December

"I want The Lost Words to delight the mind and the eye, and send children to sleep dreaming of wild things," says Jackie Morris. Jackie's watercolour paintings are here juxtaposed with writer Robert Macfarlane's spell-poems to celebrate the relationship between language and the living

world.

Jackie and Robert's exhibition - created in response to the gradual disappearance of nature from children's stories and imaginations - includes a series of immersive floor-to-ceiling graphics. Family interpretation areas and recordings of the duo reading poems also feature.

The Lost Words experience extends beyond the gallery into the Compton Verney grounds via an interactive discovery trail.

Thomas Bock

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham,
Wed 6 December - Sun 11 March

Ikon's celebration of Thomas Bock marks the first ever time an exhibition dedicated to the acclaimed artist has been presented here in the UK.

Having been apprenticed in Birmingham, Bock was convicted of 'administering concoctions of certain herbs... with the intent to cause miscarriage'. He was sentenced in 1823 to transportation to Australia, where he went on to become one of the country's most important 19th century artists. Best known for his watercolours and his use of pencil, chalk and pastel - although he also used oils and experimented with photography - Bock painted everything around him, with Tasmanian Aborigines, criminals, free settlers and landscapes all featuring in his work.

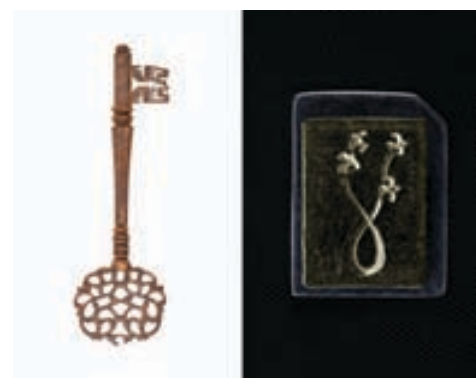


Sacred Things

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, Fri 1
December - Sun 11 February

This thought-provoking exhibition has been created with the intention of introducing recently arrived Syrians to the people of Coventry.

Showcasing the work of photographer and anthropologist Liz Hingley, Sacred Things questions the importance and impact of ownership, personal experience and cultural concepts of beauty. The Syrians featured in Hingley's display have come to Coventry as part of a unique United Nations programme.



Walsall Society Of Artists 68th Annual Exhibition

The New Art Gallery, Walsall, Fri 1 December -
Sun 21 January

Paintings, drawings, prints, watercolours, sculptures and craftwork are all present and correct in this celebration of local artistic talent, with many of the pieces being available for sale. Members of the society will be on hand to demonstrate their skills every Saturday during the exhibition's seven-week run at the gallery.

Tales From History

The Barber Institute, Birmingham,
until Sun 18 February

Tales From History features rarely shown prints and drawings by the great Dutch master Rembrandt and his pupils.

Presented to complement the Barber's Pride And Persecution exhibition, the show includes paintings inspired by stories from the Bible and classical mythology. Among the featured works are the humorous Latoria And The Lycian Peasants, the gravely serious Death Of the Virgin and the hugely dramatic Fall Of Icarus.



THE WORLD'S BIGGEST INFLATABLE

PERFECT FOR
THE WHOLE
OFFICE!!!

DECEMBER
8-17

THE ULTIMATE BOUNCY CASTLE EXPERIENCE

FOR ADULTS!!

272 METRES
OF MADNESS!



THE BEAST

MORNING SESSIONS
FOR KIDS TOO!

BIRMINGHAM'S BEST:

COCKTAILS · CRAFT BEER · PROSECCO ON TAP
STREET FOOD · LIVE DJ'S · PLUS SO MUCH MORE!!!

GROUP RATES
AVAILABLE!!

THE NEC, BIRMINGHAM

THEBEASTBIRMINGHAM.COM

POWERED BY
the ticket
factory

f t i
/THEBOUNCYBEAST



Ice Skate Birmingham

Eastside Green, Birmingham, until Sun 7 January

Birmingham's ice rink and big wheel have made a somewhat unexpected but welcome return.

It was widely thought that the refurbishment of Centenary Square would mean there was no place for the popular attractions in the city's 2017 lineup of Christmas entertainment. But with the clock ticking down to the festive season, the council's events team identified an alternative site at Eastside Green, meaning normal yuletide service could be resumed.

While the wheel offers the opportunity to enjoy fantastic views across the city, the ice rink - complete with a brand new roof - can hold up to 300 people per session. Younger or inexperienced skating enthusiasts can keep upright by using special penguin skating aids, which can be booked online and in advance. And when skaters have finished their Torvill & Dean routine, they can warm themselves up with some festive fare in the nearby Ice Lounge.

Toy Collectors Fair

NEC, Birmingham, Wed 27 December

Britain's biggest toy fair makes its way to Birmingham this month to showcase a huge array of collectables. From diecast models by Corgi and Dinky through to numerous TV and film-related items, this one-day event offers plenty of interest for enthusiasts.

Expert toy valuers are on hand to assess visitors' items for free. So if you have a particular piece that you'd like to know more about - or that you're maybe intending to sell - why not take it along and get it valued? Who knows, you may be pleasantly surprised...



Magic Lantern Festival

Kings Heath Park, Birmingham, until Mon 1 January

As 'illuminating' Christmas experiences go, this one scored a major hit when it debuted last year.

The lakes, woodlands, gardens and pathways of Kings Heath Park provide the perfect backdrop against which to enjoy a trail of life-sized and larger-than-life lanterns, including a giant recreation of Birmingham's iconic library. A food & drink area, a bar, Santa's Grotto and a handful of fair-ground rides also feature.



Santa's Winter Wonderland

SnowDome, Tamworth, until Sun 31 December

This year's all-new Santa Show sees Mrs Claus, Francine the Foxtrotting Fairy, Elvis the Penguin and Santa's very own Jingle Belles Band looking to spread festive cheer by creating 'the best Christmas song ever'. Suitable for all age groups, the show is just one element of the festive fun on offer at Tamworth's snowy indoor attraction. Visitors can also explore Santa's Christmas snow trail, take a walk through the enchanted forest, enjoy a game of snowballs and hitch a ride on a sledge. The less adventurous will be able to observe all the action as they amble along the promenade walkway. There's even an animal village to visit, where you can meet Santa's reindeer and say hi to some of his furry friends.

tz

Twycross Zoo
EXPLORING THEIR WORLD

Christmas at Twycross Zoo

Get closer to the magic!



With so many chances to see Santa,
come along and enjoy a fun-filled
Christmas here at Twycross Zoo – the
perfect day out for the whole family!

Our line-up of activities are **FREE**
with your zoo admission ticket...

To find out more, please visit

www.twycrosszoo.org

*Selected dates only, see the website for details.

Birmingham's magical, illuminated trail

CHRISTMAS at the Botanical Gardens

NEW FOR
CHRISTMAS
2017



After-dark festive fun
for all the family
Scented Fire Garden
Tunnel of Light
Mistletoe Moment
Singing Trees
Including **Santa and his Elves**
Seasonal food and gifts

29 NOVEMBER – 30 DECEMBER

birminghamchristmasgarden.co.uk
0844 873 7336

BIRMINGHAM
BOTANICAL GARDENS



Cable tied. Prices plus tax and service charges. Not open every day, check website for full details.
A charge of £2 per transaction applies for credit at home tickets. £2.50 for tickets sent by post.

Victorian Christmas Weekends

9 & 10 and 16 & 17 December 10am - 4pm

Tickets can be purchased in advance IRONBRIDGE.ORG.UK

**at Blists Hill
Victorian Town**



New for 2017

Pre-book **FESTIVE LUNCHES**
and **BOXING DAY BRUNCH**

Annual Passport Tickets not valid. Annual Passport Ticket holders get 25% discount off entry (T&Cs apply)



12 Crafts For Christmas

Coventry Transport Museum,
Sat 25 November - Sat 23 December

With not one, not two, but 12 yuletide craft activities to enjoy at Coventry Transport Museum, it's fair to say the popular venue is a Christmas cracker of a place to visit if you're looking to keep your little ones entertained.

Youngsters can get hands-on making original ornaments, festive boxes and gorgeous gifts for family and friends. Sessions include how to make rustic reindeers, design a new sleigh for Santa and send a secret 'happy holidays' message. Not only all this, but Mr Claus himself is also in residence, complete with a gift for every child, and can be visited via a ride on an enchanting vintage sleigh...

Victorian Christmas

Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge,
Shropshire, Sat 9 - Sun 10 & Sat 16 - Sun 17
December

Plenty of Victorian festive cheer is on offer at Shropshire's Blists Hill museum this month, as residents busy themselves with preparations for Christmas.

Visitors to the award-winning site can enjoy seasonal music from bands and choirs, experience some festive-style entertainment - including a singalong with carol singers - and partake in a spot of Christmas shopping in the museum's retail outlet.

And just in case all of the above isn't quite enough to ensure your kids are happily entertained, Father Christmas himself - together with his reindeer - will be on hand to hear younger visitors' last-minute gift requests.



Santa Hunts

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley,
Sat 25 November - Sun 24 December

The rumour that's flying like a magic reindeer around the region is that Santa has been spotted at the Black Country Living Museum. He seems to be a little limelight-shy, mind - which is why young visitors to the venue are being invited to join festive costumed guides in a search to find him. Along the way, kids can solve magical clues, sprinkle dust on reindeer shoes and even send letters up the chimney to Santa's workshop. A surprise gift awaits anybody who succeeds in finding the jolly-faced bearded one...

Victorian Christmas Markets

Worcester - Thurs 30 November -
Sun 3 December; Stratford-upon-Avon - Fri 8 - Sun 10 December;
Wolverhampton - Fri 15 - Sun 17
December

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Worcester's hugely popular Victorian Christmas Market.

In addition to the 200 stalls which grace the city's historic streets - selling crafts, gifts and speciality foods - the ever-popular fair also features an array of period entertainment, from choirs and stilt-walkers to an old-style carousel and barrel organ music...

In contrast to Worcestershire's well-established market, Stratford's is debuting this very year. Attractions include choirs, instrumental performances, dance displays, Victorian-themed stilt walkers and approximately 150 stalls...

And also making its first appearance in 2017 is Wolverhampton's three-day event, featuring more than 100 stalls, street artists and a Victorian funfair.

Commenting on the city's new arrival, Councillor Steve Evans said: "We anticipate this will be the largest festive market Wolverhampton has seen. There will be a variety of stalls offering festive goodies, plenty of food and drink, and fun activities for families to enjoy at this special time of year."

Merry Minecraft And A Happy New Robot

RAF Cosford Museum,
Sat 9 December

This one-off technology workshop offers kids the chance to tackle a number of Christmas-themed activities, including advanced features in Minecraft and Christmas coding (with a touch of cyber security and codebreaking on the side).

The workshop is led by qualified teachers from Tablet Academy and supported by the experienced learning team at the museum.



BLACK COUNTRY
MUSEUM

Christmas Season



A season of events from
25 NOV - 24 DEC
West Midlands, DY1 4SQ
0121 520 8054

bclm.com/Christmas

Book now
for a Xmas High Tea

Avoncroft at Christmas

Festive events this Christmas

-  **Candlelit Christmas**
(Sat 2nd Dec – 7-10pm)
- Deck the Halls**
(Tue 5th – Fri 23rd Dec)
- Carol Service**
(Sat 16th Dec – 5pm)
- Visit Father Christmas**
(Sat 16th, Fri 22nd, Sat 23rd)





Please see website
for further details.
www.avoncroft.org.uk

Avoncroft
Museum

JOHN BISHOP

WINGING IT

TOUR 2018

**EXTRA DATES FOR 2018
ONSALE NOW!**

23 MARCH 2018
GENTING ARENA
BIRMINGHAM

TICKET HOTLINE: 0844 33 88 222*
www.gentingarena.co.uk

* Calls cost 7p per minute plus your phone company's access charge.



TICKETS & FULL NATIONAL TOUR DETAILS FROM: johnbishoponline.com | ticketmaster.co.uk | @johnbish100 | @JohnBishop100

Events previews from around the region

Winter Wonderland

Stoke-on-Trent, until Mon 2 January

Free to enter and returning to the city for a second year, Stoke-on-Trent's Winter Wonderland provides visitors with plenty of opportunity to get into the spirit of the season. Attractions include an ice rink, Santa's grotto, a host of Christmas characters, a Christmas market, theme park-style rides including a full-size rollercoaster and a 60m-tall sky swing ride, a ghost train and Santa's train - the latter of which will be running around the site's huge Christmas tree...

In short, it's a one-stop shop for festive family fun, and a welcome addition to the Potteries' lineup of Christmas entertainment.



A Festive Evening At BMAG

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Wed 6 December

Complimentary mince pies and mulled wine kickstart an evening that offers the chance to make some late-night festive purchases in the gift shop. A chance to exercise the vocal chords is also on the festive menu for those who fancy a Christmas carol singalong. A 'make your own wreath' workshop features too, although spaces are limited and only available on a first come, first served basis.



European Christmas Market

Southwater, Telford, Shropshire, until Sat 23 December

Now in its second year, Telford's European Christmas Market has returned bigger and better than in 2016. Featuring wooden chalets decked with garlands and lights and selling festive gifts from around Europe, the market also includes a funfair for youngsters to enjoy and showcases local choirs, acoustic bands and plenty of seasonal music.

Commenting on the attraction, Councillor Shaun Davies, Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council, said: "The market not only showcases food, drink and products from authentic European stallholders, it also gives a number of local businesses the opportunity to have a stall of their own at an event which is likely to attract thousands of visitors. "We've been putting Telford on the map with our astonishing growth over recent years, and this market shows our intention to make the borough a destination of choice."



Victorian Christmas Santa Trail

Tamworth Castle, Sat 9 - Sun 10 & Sat 16 - Tues 19 December

Youngsters might do well to sink a big bowl of energy-boosting porridge before heading along to this fun-filled event, because there's certainly no shortage of activities for them to join in with!

After meeting the Victorian household as they busy themselves making ready for Santa's annual visit, it'll be time to head off round the building in search of St Nick himself. Then they can help the cook make the Christmas pudding, join the butler in preparing for Santa's midnight feast and assist the housemaid with the business of decorating the castle.

And if they have any energy left after *that* little lot, they can visit Santa in his grotto and receive a well-earned surprise gift!



Christmas at Birmingham's Botanical Gardens

Birmingham Botanical Gardens, until Mon 1 January

Birmingham Botanical Gardens has been transformed into a 'winter wonderland', thanks to an impressive Christmas light trail. Glittering trees, giant crystals, a carol-singing cedar coppice and a flickering fire garden all feature on a jewel-coloured trail set to seasonal music. Other festive attractions for visitors to enjoy at the Gardens include vintage fairground rides, a larger-than-life Christmas tree and a chance to meet Santa and his elves. The trail is designed to appeal to visitors of all ages.



MUSEUM &
ART GALLERY
BIRMINGHAM

Christmas

at Birmingham Museum
& Art Gallery



Funded by:



birminghammuseums.org.uk/whats-on



Birmingham
Museums



HERITAGE SITES
Birmingham Museums

Discover Christmases Past



ASTON HALL

- Aston Alive: Christmases Past
- Yuletide Tours



SOHO HOUSE

- Soho By Moonlight
- Georgian Christmas Tours



BLAKESLEY HALL

- Meet Santa
- Tudor Christmas Tours



SAREHOLE MILL

- Festive Bakes
- Carols in the Courtyard



MUSEUM OF THE JEWELLERY QUARTER

- Costumed Tours
- Unique Gift Ideas

Funded by:



birminghammuseums.org.uk/whats-on



Birmingham
Museums

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

the list



Blue Man Group at ICC Birmingham - Thurs 28 December - Sat 6 January

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

What's On

Fri 1 to Sun 10 December



Kasabian at
Arena Birmingham
Fri 8 - Sat 9 December

Mon 11 to Sun 17 December



Christmas with Katherine
Jenkins at Symphony Hall
Sun 17 December

Mon 18 to Sun 24 December



Christmas Celebration
Weekend at Cadbury World
Thurs 21 - Sat 23 December

Mon 25 to Sun 31 December



Toy Collectors Fair at
NEC Birmingham
Wed 27 December

THROUGHOUT DECEMBER

Visual Arts

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

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

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', until Sun 14 Jan

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

THE PAST IS NOW: BIRMINGHAM AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE Exhibition challenging the typical colonial narrative used to present the history of the British Empire, until Mon 12 Mar

BOM (B'ham Open Media)

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

Ikon Gallery

NEW EDMUND CLARK Edmund Clark has been Ikon's artist-in-residence (2014-17) at Britain's only therapeutic prison, HMP Grendon in Buckinghamshire. This exhibition showcases the body of work he's developed in response to the prison, Wed 6 Dec - Sun 11 Mar

MAC, Birmingham

WE OFTEN FIND IT NECESSARY TO KEEP OUR HOMOSEXUALITY QUIET SHOUT presents an exhibition of documentary photography charting the history of the Gay Liberation Front in Birmingham in the 1970s, told through the lens of Ian Sanderson, until Sat 6 Jan

SADDLEWORTH MOOR: RESPONDING TO A LANDSCAPE This photographic exhibition of landscapes by artist Matthew Murray captures the changing moods under glowering skies, creating impressions, partly real and partly generated through the photographic process, until Sun 21 Jan

RBSA Gallery

MEMBERS & ASSOCIATES 2017 Annual exhibition of RBSA members' work, until Sat 23 Dec

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

NEW START 2017 - 2018 Original artwork by RBSA artists, all priced at £300 and under, Sat 30 Dec - Sat 10 Feb

The Barber Institute

KOLLWITZ AND CONTEMPORARIES - GERMAN GRAPHIC ART 1910 - 1923 Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1954) lived through a tumultuous period in Germany's history and unflinchingly depicted the devastating effects of starvation, war and inequality. Drawing and experimenting with print techniques enabled her and her contemporaries to respond powerfully to their times, until Sun 14 Jan

TALES FROM HISTORY History subjects from the Bible, and classical mythology in Dutch prints and drawings, feature in a display that complements *Pride And Persecution* (see above), until Sun 18 Feb

GOLD, SILVER AND BRONZE IN BYZANTIUM Discover Byzantium - the once-great empire whose glittering capital was the city of Constantinople (today's Istanbul) - through this intriguing exploration of its coinage and economy, until Sun 18 Mar 2018

Other VISUAL ARTS

AMBIGUOUS IMPLEMENTS Collection of contemporary works that playfully reconsider familiar objects from day-to-day domestic life, until Fri 15 Dec, Vittoria Street Gallery, Birmingham

BEYOND THE BATTLEFIELDS: KÄTHE BUCHLER'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF GERMANY IN THE GREAT WAR Featuring pictures of injured soldiers returning to Braunschweig, images of women doing men's jobs and photographs recording the contributions of children to the war effort, until Sun 14 Jan, Birmingham City University

IGERS BIRMINGHAM: BEST OF BIRMINGHAM EXHIBITION Featuring the winners of the photographic competition held earlier in the year, until Mon 29 Jan, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

THE PEOPLE OF PARTITION IN BIRMINGHAM New Sampad exhibition exploring how different generations living in Birmingham understand the 1947 Partition of India today, until Sun 29 Apr, Soho House, Birmingham



The Darkness - O2 Academy, Birmingham

Gigs

STEPS Fri 1 Dec, Arena Birmingham

THE CHARLATANS Fri 1 Dec, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN Fri 1 Dec, New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham

SUSAN CADOGAN Fri 1 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DREADZONE Fri 1 Dec, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

ULTIMATE 40 Fri 1 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

EMBER WEIR Fri 1 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

BENJAMIN CLEMENTINE Fri 1 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

FRED ZEPPELIN Fri 1 Dec, Lichfield Guildhall

STICK TO YOUR GUNS Fri 1 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FLEETWOOD BAC Fri 1 Dec, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

GOOD CHARLOTTE Fri 1 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DAN + SHAY Fri 1 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

JAWS Fri 1 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ROBBIE WILLIAMS - OLLIE HUGHES Fri 1 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

LEWIS CAPALDI Fri 1 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TYLER BRYANT & THE SHAKEDOWN Sat 2 Dec,

The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

ONE STOP BOOGIE Sat 2 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

STRAIGHT ACES Sat 2 Dec, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

GORILLAZ Sat 2 Dec, Arena Birmingham

LAIL ARAD & JF ROBITAILLE Sat 2 Dec, Ort Cafe, Birmingham

RAY BLK Sat 2 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE CLONE ROSES Sat 2 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC Sat 2 Dec, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

HERMITAGE GREEN Sat 2 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KING PLEASURE AND THE BISCUIT BOYS Sat 2 Dec, Lichfield Guildhall

MICHAEL MONROE Sat 2 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SCOUTING FOR GIRLS Sat 2 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

FRANK CARTER AND THE RATTLESNAKES Sat 2 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

GO WEST FEATURING PETER COX & RICHARD DRUMMIE Sat 2 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

THE RPMS Sat 2 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

HAZEL O'CONNOR Sat 2 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

THE TAKE THAT EXPERI-

ENCE Sat 2 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE MAJOR TOMS Sat 2 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PHIL COLLINS Sun 3 Dec, Genting Arena, Birmingham

JOHN KIRKPATRICK CAROLLING AND CRUMPETS Sun 3 Dec, Lichfield Guildhall

ALPHADOG FAMILY CHRISTMAS TOUR Sun 3 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DARK SIDE OF THE WALL Sun 3 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BOTOWN - THE SOUL OF BOLLYWOOD Sun 3 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RAYMOND FROGGATT & HIS BAND Sun 3 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

LET'S HANG ON Sun 3 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall

JORDAN MACKAMPA Sun 3 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

EWAN MCLENNAN Sun 3 Dec, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN WINTER CONCERT Sun 3 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

CHASE RICE Mon 4 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MASTODON Mon 4 Dec, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

SIXTH Mon 4 Dec, Mama Roux's, B'ham

SON LITTLE Mon 4 Dec,

Friday 1 to Sunday 10 December

Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SIKTH Mon 4 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PUMAROSA Mon 4 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

'THE THEATRE OF FEAR!' STARRING CREEPER Mon 4 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ARTICLE XI AND FAVOURITE ANIMALS Double Bill Tues 5 Dec, MAC, B'ham

BEN HAENOW Tues 5 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KERRANG! TOUR 2017 Tues 5 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MICK WALL - WALL OF SOUND Tues 5 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

MICHAEL BALL & ALFIE BOE Tues 5 Dec, Genting Arena, B'ham

THE WYTCHES Tues 5 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NANNA RADLEYS Tues 5 - Wed 6 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

MARILYN MANSON Wed 6 Dec, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

HAPPY MONDAYS Wed 6 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PHIL BEER Wed 6 Dec, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

LOVE ACTUALLY WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA Wed 6 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JOHNNY HATES JAZZ PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS Wed 6 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

TOUCH MY SECRET Wed 6 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CARA DILLON Thurs 7 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

CADET Thurs 7 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CONFIDENCE MAN Thurs 7 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE UNTHANKS - ORCHESTRAL Thurs 7 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

DIAMON HEAD Thurs 7 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

UKELELE ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN WITH

BELLS ON Thurs 7 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

UK SUBS Thurs 7 Dec, Mama Roux's, B'ham

RED LEMONS Thurs 7 - Sat 9 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

SEBASTIAN TREE + LUNAFALL Fri 8 Dec, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

NOTHING MORE Fri 8 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE NIGHT OWL NORTHERN SOUL ALLNIGHTER Fri 8 Dec, The Night Owl, Birmingham

MEMORIAM Fri 8 Dec, The Asylum, Hockley

HELLS BELLS Fri 8 Dec, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

JP COOPER Fri 8 Dec, O2 Institute, B'ham

JOY ELLIS Fri 8 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ULTIMATE 40 Fri 8 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

BLACK PARADE - 00'S EMO ANTHEMS Fri 8 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KASABIAN Fri 8 - Sat 9 Dec, Arena, B'ham

STEPS Sat 9 Dec, Genting Arena, B'ham

SENSATERIA Sat 9 Dec, The Night Owl, B'ham

SWEDEN DREAMS Sat 9 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

ALBION BAND Sat 9 Dec, MAC, B'ham

RYDERS CREED Sat 9 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SANTA CRUZ, SKARLETT RIOT & SISTER SHOTGUN Sat 9 Dec, The Flapper, Birmingham



Christmas With The Overtones - Symphony Hall

THE DARKNESS Sat 9 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

FLEETMAC WOOD PRESENT RUMOURS RAVE Sun 9 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE LUKA STATE Sat 9 Dec, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

BAYSIDE Sat 9 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ABBA FOREVER Sat 9 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE SMYTHS: MORE SONGS THAT SAVED YOUR LIFE TOUR Sat 9 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

LANY Sat 9 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PICTURE THIS Sat 9 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JORDAN ALLEN Sat 9 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE STONES Sat 9 Dec, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS WITH THE OVERTONES Sat 9 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

REG MEUROSS Sun 10 Dec, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

NECRO: 'THE NOTORIOUS GORIE' EUROPEAN TOUR Sun 10 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

KODALINE Sun 10 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

LUKE RAINSFORD Sun 10 Dec, The Asylum, Birmingham

MOSTLY AUTUMN Sun 10 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

THAT'LL BE THE DAY CHRISTMAS SHOW Sun 10 Dec, Birmingham

Classical Music

KODALY STRING QUARTET Featuring Attila Falvay (violin), Ferenc Bango (violin), Janos Fejervari (viola) & Gyorgy Eder (cello). Programme includes works by Dohnanyi, Kodaly & Schumann, Fri 1 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

CBSO CENTRE STAGE Featuring Marie-Christine Zupanec (flute), Katherine Thomas (harp), Amanda Lake (violin), Michael Jenkinson (viola), David Powell (cello). Programme includes works by Mozart & Villa-Lobos, Fri 1 Dec, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

ASHLEY FRIPP LUNCHEON PIANO CONCERT Programme includes works by J S Bach, Thomas Adès & Chopin, Fri 1 Dec, The Barber Institute, B'ham

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring the Ex Cathedra Consort & Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Sat 2 Dec, St Peter's Church, Sutton Coldfield

UNIVERSITY CHORUS Featuring Julian Wilkins (conductor). Programme comprises Rossini's Little Solemn Mass, Sat 2 Dec, The Bramall, B'ham

THE BRITISH POLICE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA - PROMS NIGHT SPECTACULAR Sat 2 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

EX CATHEDRA: MONTEVERDI VESPERS (1610) Featuring His Majesty's Sagbutts & Cornetts & Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Sun 3 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA & UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CHOIR Programme includes works by J S Bach arr. Elgar & Tchaikovsky, Sun 3 Dec, The Bramall, Birmingham

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ORCHESTRAS OF GREAT BRITAIN WINTER CONCERT Programme includes works by Gershwin, De Falla, Strauss, Ravel & Anderson, Sun 3 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

SING CAROLS WITH THE CITY ORGANIST AND BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL CHORUS Featuring Thomas Trotter (organ), David Hardie (conductor) & Jeremy Nicholas (compere), Mon 4 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Ex Cathedra Consort & Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Tues 5 Dec, St John's Church, Hagley, Birmingham

SIR WILLARD WHITE Also featuring Eugene Asti (piano), Wed 6 Dec, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

DANIEL LEBHARDT PIANO CONCERT Programme includes works by Chopin & Rachmaninov, Wed 6 Dec, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

THE LIGETI QUARTET Programme includes Harrison Birtwistle's Bach arrangements alongside works by Stravinsky, Sofia Gubaidulina & new works from Stef Connor, Wed 6 Dec, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CBSO: PROKOFIEV'S CINDERELLA Featuring Alexander Vedernikov (conductor) & Martin Helmchen (piano). Programme includes works by Brahms & Prokofiev, Wed 6 - Thurs 7 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

G4 CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT 2017 2017 Thurs 7 Dec, St Paul's Church, Birmingham

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR: HANDEL'S MESSIAH Featuring the City of Birmingham Choir, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Adrian Lucas (conductor), Rowan Pierce (soprano), Anna Huntley (alto), Bradley Smith (tenor), James Cleverton (bass), Christopher Allsop (organ) & Thomas Trotter (harpichord), Fri 8 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



Anna Huntley

FOLIA: TELEMANN IN PARIS, 1737-38 Join Folia as they celebrate the 250th anniversary of the death of Georg Philipp Telemann with a musical journey through two of his groundbreaking 'Paris Quartets', together with chamber music by his French contemporaries Jean-Philippe Rameau, Jean-Baptiste Forqueray and Jean-Claude Balbastre, Fri 8 Dec, The Barber Institute, B'ham

HALESOWEN ORCHESTRA Programme includes works by Mozart, Grieg & Sibelius, Sat 8 Dec, Cornbow Hall, Halesowen

CBSO NOTELETS: CHRISTMAS CRACKERS Featuring Catherine Arlidge (presenter) & the CBSO Brass Ensemble, Fri 8 - Sat 9 Dec, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

ESPRESSIVO CHORUS PRESENTS CHRISTMAS! Retelling of the Christmas story through choral arrangements of well loved Christmas carols & music, Sat 9 Dec, The Bramall, Birmingham

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL CHORUS: HANDEL'S MESSIAH Sat 9 Dec, Lichfield Cathedral

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA - RUSSIAN DANCE Featuring Michael Lloyd (conductor). Programme includes works by Stravinsky & Prokofiev, Sun 10 Dec, Elgar Concert Hall, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS WITH THE SALVATION ARMY Featuring guest soloist Abigail Johnson, Sun 10 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

MAUREEN YOUNGER Fri 1 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

PHIL JERROD, DYLAN GOTT & COMICS TBC Fri 1 Dec, Cherry Reds Cafe-Bar, Birmingham

TOM WRIGGLESWORTH, ADAM ROWE & ALF Fri 1 Dec, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

SOL BERNSTEIN, BEC HILL, JARLATH REGAN & KEVIN MCCARTHY Fri 1 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SCOTT BENNETT, ADAM BLOOM, NICK PAGE & COMIC TBC Fri 1 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

STAND UP COMEDY SHOWCASE Fri 1 Dec, MAC, Birmingham

JERRY SADOWITZ Fri 1 Dec, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

LEE NELSON Fri 1 Dec, Dudley Town Hall

UPFRONT COMEDY Sat 2 Dec, MAC, Birmingham

BEH HILL, HOWARD READ & TIERNAN DOUIEB Sat 2 Dec, The REP, B'ham

THE JUMPROV CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Sat 2 Dec, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

SOL BERNSTEIN, BEC HILL, JARLATH REGAN & KEVIN MCCARTHY Sat 2 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham



FREDDIE QUINN, ADAM BLOOM, NICK PAGE & COMIC TBC Sat 2 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

BARNSTORMERS COMEDY NIGHT Sat 2 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

STAND UP COMEDY SHOWCASE 2 Dec, MAC, Birmingham

JEWELLERY QUARTER COMEDY CLUB Tues 5 Dec, The Rose Villa Tavern, Birmingham

JOHN HASTINGS, CRAIG MURRAY, ANDRE VINCENT & STUART MITCHELL Wed 6 - Thurs 7 Dec, The Glee Club, B'ham

DUNCAN OAKLEY, PAUL SINHA, HANNAH SILVESTER & BEN VAN DER VELDE Thurs 7 Dec, The George Hotel, Lichfield

MIKE NEWALL, MANDY KNIGHT, SEAN PERCIVAL & COMIC TBC Thurs 7 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

KUM-N-AVALOFF COMEDY NIGHT Thurs 7 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall

JASON MANFORD Fri 8 Dec, Birming-

ham Town Hall

YIANNI AGISILAOU Fri 8 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ROB ROUSE, JOLLYBOAT, GEORGE ZACH Fri 8 Dec, The Bramall, Birmingham

JOHN HASTINGS, CRAIG MURRAY, ANDRE VINCENT & DANA ALEXANDER Fri 8 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MIKE NEWALL, MANDY KNIGHT, SEAN PERCIVAL & COMIC TBC Fri 8 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

MIKE NEWALL, MANDY KNIGHT, SEAN PERCIVAL & COMIC TBC Sat 9 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

JOHN HASTINGS, CRAIG MURRAY, SEAN COLLINS & DANA ALEXANDER Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, The Glee Club, B'ham

Theatre

ALICE IN WONDERLAND Modern adaptation of Lewis Carroll's classic tale, until Sat 30 Dec, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

CINDERELLA Panto version of the classic rags-to-riches tale, written and directed by Iain Lauchlan, until Sat 13 Jan, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

TREASURE ISLAND A journey across the high seas, filled with larger-than-life characters and swashbuckling sword fights, until Sat 27 Jan, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

A CHRISTMAS CAROL David Edgar's adaptation of Charles Dickens' festive classic. Phil Davies stars, until Sun 4 Feb, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

IMPERIUM PART 1: CONSPIRATOR Mike Poulton's adaptation of Robert Harris' bestselling Cicero trilogy, Gregory Doran directs, until Sat 10 Feb, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

IMPERIUM: PART II DICTATOR Mike Poulton's adaptation of Robert Harris' bestselling Cicero trilogy, Gregory Doran directs, until Sat 10 Feb, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

TWELFTH NIGHT Ade Edmondson & Kara Tointon star in Shakespeare's tale of unrequited love, until Sat 24 Feb, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE LION IN WINTER The Nonentities present an amateur staging of James Goldman's historical drama, Mon 27 Nov - Sat 2 Dec, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

GREASE The original high school musical, starring Danielle Hope as Sandy, Tom Parker as Danny and Louisa Lytton as Rizzo, Mon 27 Nov - Sat 2 Dec, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



The Band, Take That's New Musical - Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

ERIC OF DOCK GREEN IN MIDWINTER MURDERS A murder, a Christmas party, a comedy, Eric and 20 fantastic Swinging 60s hits, Monday 27 Nov - Sat 9 Dec, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

THE HIRED MAN Classic musical taking audiences on an early-20th century journey from the hard farmlands of the north to the war-torn trenches of the Great War, Tues 28th Nov - Sat 2 Dec, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

THE BAND Tim Firth's hit boyband musical, with the music of Take That, Tues 28 Nov - Sat 9 Dec, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

ONE MAN, TWO GUVNORS Richard Bean's adaptation of Carlo Goldoni's comedy, Servant Of Two Masters, Wed 29 Nov - Sat 16 Dec, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

PLAY ON! Luke Players present Rick Abbot's story about an amateur theatre group trying to put on a play despite interference from a haughty author, Thurs 30 Nov - Sat 2 Dec, MAC, Birmingham

RAYMOND BRIGGS' FATHER CHRISTMAS Pins & Needles present Raymond Briggs' classic festive tale, Thurs 30 Nov - Sat 30 Dec, MAC, B'ham

ALADDIN Fun-filled family panto starring CBeebies favourite Cat Sandion as Princess Jasmine, Sam Rabone as Widow Twankey and Ben Thornton as Wishee Washee, Thurs 30 Nov - Sat 6 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

THE HUNDRED AND ONE DALMATIANS Dodie Smith's delightful tale, adapted for the stage by Nativity! writer Debbie Isitt, Thurs 30 Nov - Sat 13 Jan, The REP, Birmingham

PAUL O'DONNELL: WE'VE GOT EACH OTHER Tragic tale following the story of a docker, a waitress and their forbidden love for one another, Sat 2 Dec, MAC, Birmingham

SANTA IN LOVE People's Theatre Company present a 'fun-filled' family musical complete with games, gig-

gles and all your favourite Christmas songs, Sat 2 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE JUMPROV CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Festive-themed 100%-improvised sketch show for over-18s only, Sat 2 Dec, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY SISTERS Rootin' tootin' spaghetti western in which the glass slippers have spurs and the bells chime at high noon, Sat 2 - Sat 30 Dec, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

SLEEPING BEAUTY Starring JP McCue & Sean Dodds, Sat 2 - Sun 31 Dec, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE Little Arden Theatre Company presents its adaptation of the CS Lewis classic, Sun 3 - Sat 16 Dec, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

FLASHDANCE Strictly champion Joanne Clifton and A1 heartthrob Ben Adams star in a new staging of the hit musical, Mon 4 - Sat 9 Dec, New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham

SLEEPING BEAUTY Tues 5 - Fri 8 Dec, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

SNOW WHITE Starring Britain's Got Talent star Jai McDowall as the prince, TV legend Dave Benson Phillips as Muddles and Bad Girls actress Nicole Faraday as the Wicked Queen, Wed 6 - Sun 31 Dec, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Olivier Award-winning children's playwright Mike Kenny's adaptation of Kenneth Graeme's children's classic, Thurs 7 Dec - Sat 6 Jan, Albany Theatre, Coventry

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BABES IN THE WOOD Innovative rock'n'roll staging of the traditional adventure story, Thurs 7 Dec - Sun 7 Jan, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

JACK & THE BEANSTALK Malcolm Stent's final pantomime, bringing to an end a 27-year stint in Solihull's pantoland! Fri 8 - Sun 31 Dec,

Friday 1 to Sunday 10 December

The Core Theatre, Solihull

CINDERELLA Traditional family pantomime, Fri 8 - Sat 16 Dec, Hall Green Little Theatre, Birmingham

FAULTY TOWERS: THE CHRISTMAS DINING EXPERIENCE Fully immersive theatre experience where audience members become diners in the infamous 'Faulty' restaurant, Fri 8 - Thurs 21 Dec, The REP, B'ham

CRIMES ON THE CHRISTMAS EXPRESS Inspired by Agatha Christie, The 39 Steps and Jason Bourne, and featuring a cast of four bringing to life a host of characters, Fri 8 Dec - Sat 6 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

MR SILLY PANCAKE AND THE LAND OF CAKE AND BISCUITS Interactive show featuring original music, puppetry and a 'stunning' set, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, The REP, Birmingham

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Starring Gareth Gates, Lisa Riley, Ian Adams and Doreen Tipton, Sat 9 Dec - Sun 14 Jan, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

A HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS Festive celebration of the Golden Era of Hollywood, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

Dance

THE NUTCRACKER Birmingham Royal Ballet presents its world famous production, which transports audiences into an enchanting winter wonderland of dancing snowflakes and the Sugar Plum Fairy, until Wed 13 Dec, Birmingham Hippodrome

WHAT THE MOON SAW 2Face Dance present an interactive reimaging of Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale, Fri 1 - Sat 2 Dec, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE LIGHT PRINCESS Ballet Cymru present a new full-length ballet



What The Moon Saw - The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

which draws on elements of circus and features a new score by acclaimed Welsh harpist Catrin Finch, Sat 9 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall

Film

THE DISASTER ARTIST (15) Biography/Comedy. Starring James Franco, Seth Rogen. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, from Fri 1 Dec

THOR: RAGNAROK (12a) Action/Adventure. Starring Chris Hemsworth, Tom Hiddleston. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 1 - Thurs 7 Dec

FILM STARS DON'T DIE IN LIVERPOOL (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Jamie Bell, Annette Bening. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 1 - Thurs 7 Dec; MAC, Birmingham, Fri 8 - Thurs 14 Dec

A VOICE FROM THE FOREST (U) Documentary. Starring Bruce Parry, Ingrid Lewis. MAC, Birmingham, Sat 2 Dec

MADE IN DAGENHAM (12a) Biography/Comedy. Starring Sally Hawkins, Bob Hoskins. Highbury Theatre, Birmingham, Sat 2 Dec

BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB: ADIOS (PG) Documentary. Starring Omara Portuondo, Jesus Ramos. MAC, Birmingham, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Dec

BLADE RUNNER 2049 (15) Sci-Fi/Thriller. Starring Ryan Gosling, Harrison Ford. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Sat 2 & Wed 6 Dec; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 8 Dec

MOULIN ROUGE (12a) Drama/Musical. Starring Nicole Kidman, Ewan McGregor. Electric Cinema, B'ham, Sun 3 Dec

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS (12a) Adventure/Fantasy. Starring Harrison Ford, John Boyega. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Mon 4 Dec

THE ROAD TO MANDALAY (15) Drama.



BRB's The Nutcracker - Birmingham Hippodrome

Starring Kai Ko, Ke-Xi Wu. Foreign language, subtitled. MAC, Birmingham, Mon 4 - Tues 5 Dec

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (U) Drama/Family. Starring James Stewart, Donna Reed. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 5 Dec

OLDBOY (18) Action/Drama. Starring Min-sik Choi, Ji-tae Yu. Foreign language, subtitled. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Wed 6 Dec

THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (PG) Animation/Family. With the voices of Danny Elfman, Chris Sarandon. The Mockingbird Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 6 Dec

GREMLINS (12a) Comedy/Fantasy. Starring Zach Galligan, Phoebe Cates. Followed by Q&A with Zach Galligan. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 7 Dec

MOONLIGHT (15) Drama. Starring Alex Hibbert, Ashton Sanders. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 7 Dec

DIE HARD (15) Action/Thriller. Starring Bruce Willis, Alan Rickman. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 7 Dec

THE GRADUATE (15) Drama/Romance. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Anne Bancroft. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 8 Dec

LA LA LAND (15) Comedy/Drama. Starring Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 8 - Mon 11 Dec

BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL (15) Action/Drama. Starring Takuya Kimura, Hana Sugisaki. Foreign language, subtitled. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 8 - Wed 13 Dec

THE SON OF BIGFOOT (PG) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Cinda Adams, Bob Barlen. MAC, Birmingham, Sat 9 Dec

THE BIG LEBOWSKI (PG) Comedy/Crime. Starring Jeff Bridges, John Goodman. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 9 Dec

BABY DRIVER (PG) Action/Crime. Starring Ansel Elgort, Jon Bernthal. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 9 Dec

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (PG) Family/Fantasy. Starring Emma Watson, Dan Stevens. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 9 - Tues 12 Dec

GREMLINS (15) Fantasy/Horror. Starring Zach Galligan, Phoebe Cates. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 10 Dec

THE GHOST (12a) Drama/Fantasy. Starring Rooney Mara, Casey Affleck. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 10 - Mon 11 Dec

THE RED TURTLE (PG) Animation/Fantasy. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 10 - Wed 13 Dec

Events

BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW Featuring top UK chefs cooking live, and a huge range of independent producers & big bands, until Sun 3 Dec, NEC, Birmingham

MEET SANTA In an experience unique to Birmingham this festive season, visitors are invited to go the North Pole of the city in the Antarctic Grotto, meet the man himself and enjoy the cheeky Gentoo penguins in the exclusive setting of the ever-so-ever-so chilly Ice Adventure area, until Sat 23 Dec, National Sea Life Centre, B'ham

SANTA SAFARI until Sun 24 Dec, West Midland Safari and Leisure Park, Bewdley

BIRMINGHAM FRANKFURT CHRISTMAS

BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS
AN EDUCATIONAL CHARITY

CHRISTMAS GIFT MEMBERSHIP

THE PERFECT GIFT THIS CHRISTMAS





Find us on    

Westbourne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TE
Tel: 0121 454 1840
Email: admin@birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk
www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk

Charles Dickens'

A Christmas Carol



16th - 30th December 2017

Blue Orange Theatre
118 Great Hampton Street, Birmingham, B18 6AD
www.blueorangetheatre.co.uk

mac
Midlands Arts Centre



★★★★★
The Observer

★★★★★
Mumsnet

Raymond Briggs' Father Christmas

Thu 30 Nov - Sat 30 Dec / Ages 3+

Join us for the beloved Christmas classic

macbirmingham.co.uk
0121 446 3232

Midlands Arts Centre
Capitol Hill Park, Birmingham, B12 9DA
Registered Company No. 714290 (Registered Charity No. 120919)
Terms and Conditions Apply

Christmas at the Valley



The magic of Christmas is coming to Sandwell Valley

Saturday 2 to 24 December
Open daily from 10am

Sandwell Park Farm, Salters Lane,
West Bromwich, B71 4BG

NEW FOR 2017
CHRISTMAS CIRCUS

- Visit Santa & his Reindeer
- Children's activities
- Festive food,
- Drink and crafts

Book now: 0333 666 3366
www.sandwell.gov.uk/christmasatthevalley

BOOK ONLINE
TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT
LIMITED TICKETS MAY BE AVAILABLE ON THE DAY

Admission and other charges apply
Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

MARKET until Sun 24 Dec, Birmingham City Centre

SANTA'S WINTER WONDERLAND Explore Santa's Christmas snow trail, take a walk through the enchanted forest, enjoy a game of snowballs and hitch a ride on a sledge, until Sun 31 Dec, The Snowdome, Tamworth

DRAYTON'S MAGICAL CHRISTMAS Live shows, carols, presents plus much more, until Sun 31 Dec, Drayton Manor Theme Park, Tamworth

CHRISTMAS AT BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS Featuring illuminated trail, Scented Fire Garden, Tunnel of Light, Mistletoe Moment, Singing Trees & Santa & his Elves, until Mon 1 Jan, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

MAGICAL LANTERN FESTIVAL Christmas-themed event featuring artistic sculptures, until Mon 1 Jan, Kings Heath Park, Birmingham

ICE SKATE BIRMINGHAM Enjoy this winter sport in beautiful city surroundings, until Sun 7 Jan, Eastside City Park, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS CAROL TRAINS Sing along or just soak up the festive atmosphere, Sat 2 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

ACORNS SANTA RUN Charity event in support of local children's hospice, Sat 2 Dec, Cannon Hill Park, B'ham

CANDLELIT CHRISTMAS Featuring carol singers, bell ringers, live music, roasted chestnuts, entertainers and snow, Sat 2 Dec, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

SANTA BOAT TRIPS Visit Santa by boat in his underground grotto, deep in the Dudley Caverns, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Dec, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust, Dudley

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION WEEKEND See Santa star in his very own stage show, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Dec, Cadbury World, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS IN THE HOME Step back in time and take part in some seasonal activities, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SANTA HUNTS Search for Santa alongside the museum's festive costumed guides, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SANTA STEAM SPECIALS Travel by steam train from Kidderminster to Arley, where you can meet Father Christmas in his grotto, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

CAROLS IN THE CAVERNS With a live on-board choir, Sun 3 Dec, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust, Dudley

SANTA'S SLEEPOVERS Festive sleep-over at one of Alton Tower's themed hotels, Sun 3 Dec, Alton Towers, Staffs

ACORNS SANTA RUN Charity event in support of local children's hospice, Sun 3 Dec, Walsall Arboretum

CHRISTMAS MAGIC LANTERN SHOW

Step back in time & witness a traditional Victorian Magic Lantern Show, Sun 3 Dec, Blakesley Hall, B'ham

RAGLEY BY CANDLELIGHT Sun 3 Dec, Ragley Hall, Alcester

CHRISTMAS RAG RUGGING Workshops where visitors can learn the art of creating a rag rug using scraps of material, Wed 6 Dec, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

TINY TOTS TRAIL OF TREATS Join Mrs Claus at the fireside for milk, cookies and a festive story, Wed 6 - Thurs 7 Dec, Blists Hill, Telford

GEORGIAN CHRISTMAS TOUR Find out how Boulton and his friends would have celebrated the festive season during the 18th century, Wed 6 - Thurs 21 Dec, Soho House, B'ham

TUDOR CHRISTMAS TOURS Featuring pomander making and wassailing, Wed 6 - Thurs 21 Dec, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS EVENING TOURS 2017 Tour of the house, beautifully dressed for Christmas, followed by a two-course supper in the Garden Kitchen Café, Thurs 7 Dec, Packwood House, Solihull

CHRISTMAS HOUSE TOURS Enjoy the house dressed for a traditional Christmas, followed by a three-course festive supper, Fri 8 Dec, Baddesley Clinton, Warwick

TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS EVENINGS Stroll through the museum's beautifully decorated gas-lit streets and take in the sights, sounds and smells of a magical Christmas past, Fri 8 - Sat 9 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SANTA BOAT TRIPS Visit Santa by boat in his underground grotto, deep in the Dudley Caverns, Fri 8 - Sun 10 Dec, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust, Dudley

THE BEAST - THE WORLD'S BIGGEST BOUNCY CASTLE Unleash your beast as the world's largest inflatable obstacle course visits Birmingham, Fri 8 - Sun 17 Dec, NEC, Birmingham

BRITISH MOTOR MUSEUM FESTIVE FAMILY FUN Enjoy the Christmas trail and help Martin the Mechanic get Santa's sleigh back on the road, Fri 8 - Sat 23 Dec, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS Join the theatre's knowledgeable Heritage Guides and Visitor Services Assistants as they share captivating stories from the theatre's past, Sat 9 Dec, Birmingham Hippodrome

CHRISTMAS THROUGH THE AGES Guided tours, with pomander-making sessions and wassailing, Sat 9 Dec, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Blists Hill, Telford

LADIES KENNEL ASSOCIATION The largest dog show in the UK after



Christmas Through The Ages - Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

Crufts, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, NEC, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION WEEKEND See Santa star in his very own stage show, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Cadbury World, Birmingham

BRITISH MOTOR MUSEUM CHRISTMAS CRAFT WEEKEND Motoring-themed Christmas family crafts, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

CHRISTMAS AT CHARLECOTE PARK Join in with mulled wine tasting or write a letter to Father Christmas, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Charlecote Park, Warwick

CHRISTMAS IN THE HOME Step back in time and take part in some seasonal activities, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SANTA HUNTS Search for Santa alongside the museum's festive costumed guides, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

17TH CENTURY CHRISTMAS Taste traditional Christmas recipes, see the house decorated with traditional greenery, toast bread over an open fire, enjoy live music from Merrie Noyse and play games from the past, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton

RAGLEY BY CANDLELIGHT EXPERIENCE Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Ragley Hall, Al-

cester

SANTA STEAM SPECIALS Travel by steam train from Kidderminster to Arley, where you will meet Father Christmas in his grotto, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

CHILDREN'S VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS SANTA TRAILS Meet the Victorian household as they ready themselves for the annual visit of their very special guest, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Tamworth Castle, Staffs

FATHER CHRISTMAS AT WIGHTWICK MANOR Sat 9 - Sun 10 Dec, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS High definition screening while a live orchestra performs John Williams' score, Sun 10 Dec, Genting Arena, Birmingham

CAROLS IN THE CAVERNS With a live on-board choir, Sun 10 Dec, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust, Dudley

SANTA'S SLEEPOVERS A festive sleep-over at one of Alton Tower's themed hotels, Sun 10 Dec, Alton Towers, Staffs

CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT With live music, a 25ft Christmas tree, turkey baps, roasted chestnuts and hot toddies, Sun 10 - Sun 17 Dec, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS AT SYMPHONY HALL

Sunday 17 December 7.00pm

CHRISTMAS WITH KATHERINE JENKINS

Join Katherine for her very own Christmas concert of music and songs.

Mark Vincent *guest singer*
Anthony Inglis *conductor*
London Concert Orchestra



Monday 18 December 2.30pm

CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGALONG

Sing your heart out as Jonathan Cohen leads you through a fun-filled jamboree of his most-loved carols and Christmas hits.

The First Nowell Jingle Bells
Frosty the Snowman
Santa Claus is Coming to Town
Merry Christmas Everyone
O come, all ye faithful
I Wish It Could be Christmas Everyday

With very special guest Louise Dearman
London Concert Chorus London Concert Orchestra



Monday 18 December 7.30pm

CLASSIC CAROLS

Joyous seasonal and traditional music perfectly capturing the true spirit of Christmas.

O Holy Night Sussex Carol Ave Maria
Shepherd's Pipe Carol Silent Night
In the bleak midwinter and CAROLS FOR ALL

With seasonal readings by Sir Tony Robinson.

Nicky Spence *tenor*
Crispian Steele Perkins *trumpet*
Adrian Lucas *conductor*
City of Birmingham Choir
London Concert Orchestra



Saturday 23 December 2.30 & 7.30pm

CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR

MUSIC DANCE LIGHTS FIREWORKS

Hosted by Alan Titchmarsh.

Tchaikovsky Excerpts from The Nutcracker
Puccini Act 1 finale from La bohème
Anderson A Christmas Festival
Adam O Holy Night

SONGS and CAROLS FOR ALL including
Jingle Bells Frosty the Snowman
O come, all ye faithful

plus high kicks from The Jingle Belles ®

Laura Tebbutt *guest singer*
John Rigby *conductor*
Anna Patalong *soprano* Nico Darmanin *tenor*
London Concert Orchestra Canzonetta choir



Sunday 24 December 2.30pm

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT®

An exquisite concert of carols and seasonal classics staged in full 18th Century costume in an evocative candle-lit style setting.

Handel Christmas sequence from Messiah
Gruber Silent Night Cullen Joy to the World
Mozart Alleluia from Exsultate jubilate
Handel Zadok the Priest
and CAROLS FOR ALL

CANZONETTA choir
MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA
in full period costume

Nika Gorič *soprano*
Michael Bawtree *conductor*



Wednesday 27 December 7.30pm

LAST NIGHT OF THE CHRISTMAS PROMS

Rousing classics with a grand flag waving British finale!

Rossini Thieving Magpie Overture
Bizet The Pearl Fishers Duet
Tchaikovsky Waltz from Swan Lake
Dukas The Sorcerer's Apprentice
And all your Proms favourites

Rule, Britannia! Land of Hope & Glory
Samuel Sakker *tenor* James Cleverton *baritone*
Joo Yeon Sir *violin*
John Pryce-Jones *conductor*
London Concert Orchestra



Thursday 28 December 7.30pm

MUSICALS IN CONCERT: LEADING LADIES

Four Leading Ladies bring to life iconic diva showstoppers from the very best of West End and Broadway including

As Long as He Needs Me from Oliver!
Defying Gravity from Wicked
Big Spender from Sweet Charity
What I did for Love from A Chorus Line
All that Jazz from Chicago and many more

LOUISE DEARMAN KERRY ELLIS
LINZI HATELEY VICTORIA HAMILTON-BARRITT
Richard Balcombe *conductor*
London Concert Orchestra



Friday 29 December 2.30pm

GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA

Favourite wartime chart-toppers and hits from the forties directed by legendary band leader Ray McVay.

Little Brown Jug Strike Up the Band String of Pearls
Pennsylvania 6-5000 In the Mood Moonlight Serenade
American Patrol Tuxedo Junction

With special guests The Polka Dot Dolls

Guest vocalists
Mark Porter & Catherine Sykes

The orchestra will perform the second half of the concert in the World War II uniforms of the US Army Air Force.



Gigs

ULI JON ROTH Mon 11 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

RYAN MCMULLAN Mon 11 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NORMANDIE & WILLIAM RYAN KEY (YELLOW-CARD) Mon 11 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ROBERT PLANT Tues 12 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ROY WODD ROCK & ROLL BAND Tues 12 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

LIAM GALLAGHER Tues 12 Dec, Arena Birmingham

DIRTY THRILLS Tues 12 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

WRETCH 32 Tues 12 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE BIG BAND AT CHRISTMAS Wed 13 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE URBAN VOO DOO MACHINE Wed 13 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

JACOB BANKS Wed 13 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE MOULETTES Wed 13 Dec, Lichfield Guildhall

IAN MCNABB Wed 13 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CRIME & PUNISHMENT Wed 13 Dec, The Flapper, Birmingham

JOOLS HOLLAND & HIS RHYTHM & BLUES ORCHESTRA Wed 13 - Thurs 14 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

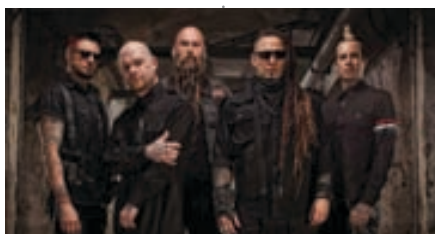
YOUTH CLUB Wed 13 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

PETER HOOK & THE LIGHT Thurs 14 Dec, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

BAIN/O'GALLACHER/EVANS/BONNEY Thurs 14 Dec, MAC, B'ham

AN EVENING WITH SHE MAKES WAR Thurs 14 Dec, Ort Cafe, B'ham

ELO AGAIN Thurs 14 Dec, The Robin, Bil-



Five Finger Death Punch - Arena Birmingham

ston

IAN SIEGAL Thurs 14 Dec, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

THE KATE BUSH SONG-BOOK Thurs 14 Dec, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

NICK HARPER Thurs 14 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE BIRMINGHAM CANOLDIR CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR Thurs 14 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE Thurs 14 - Sat 16 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

THUNDER CHRISTMAS SHOW Fri 15 Dec, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

JAYKAE Fri 15 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE COOPERS & FRIENDS Fri 15 Dec, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

RED SUIT APARATUS Fri 15 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TV SMITH Fri 15 Dec, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

UB40 Fri 15 Dec, Genting Arena, B'ham

SHED SEVEN Fri 15 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

GOGOL BORDELLO PLUS LUCKY CHOPS Fri 15 Dec, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

NOTEBENDERS Fri 15 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE BOOTLEG BEATLES Fri 15 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

HARRY & CHRIS Fri 15 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

BORN IN THE EIGHTIES Fri 15 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

BONEY M Sat 16 Dec, The Robin, Wolver-

hampton

BLACK VOICES Sat 16 Dec, The Bramall, Birmingham

QUEEN + ADAM LAMBERT Sat 16 Dec, Arena Birmingham

THE FAMILY SILVER Sat 16 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

HAPPY SNKA-MAS WITH THE SKA 45'S Sat 16 Dec, The Night Owl, Birmingham

I LOVE REGGAE Sat 16 Dec, Genting Arena, Birmingham

HOODIE ALLEN Sat 16 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TYLA'S DOGS D'AMOUR Sat 16 Dec, The Asylum, Birmingham

STARVING RASCALS Sat 16 Dec, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

DUB PISTOLS Sat 16 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

KATE RUSBY AT CHRISTMAS Sat 16 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

(SPUNGE) Sat 16 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

ROY WOOD'S ROCKMAS 2017 Sat 16 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH & IN FLAMES Sun 17 Dec, Arena Birmingham

WOLFSBANE Sun 17 Dec, The Asylum, Birmingham

EXTREME Sun 17 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE DYLAN PROJECT Sun 17 Dec, Lichfield Guildhall

KEEP THE CHANGE Sun 17 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

BOAT TO ROW CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Sun 17 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Classical Music

THE SIXTEEN - GLORY TO THE CHRIST CHILD Featuring Harry Christophers (conductor), Mon 11 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LUNCHTIME CHRISTMAS MUSIC WITH THE CHOIR OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE Featuring Andrew Nethsingha (music director) & Thomas Trotter (organ), Mon 11 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Tues 12 Dec, Hereford Cathedral

LUNCHTIME MUSIC FEAT. CHUN-CHIEH YEN (CELLO) & I-HSUAN PENG (PIANO) Programme includes works by Solima, Hsiao & Rachmaninov, Tues 12 Dec, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

KONAN TANKO PIANO CONCERT Programme includes works by Ravel, Poulenc, Saint-Saëns & Fauré, Tues 12 Dec, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

RICHARD JENKINSON PHD PERFORMANCE RECITAL Programme includes works by Dohnányi & Kodály, Wed 13 Dec, The Barber Institute, B'ham

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE STRING ENSEMBLE Wed 13 Dec, Concert Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

THE BIRMINGHAM CANOLDIR CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR Featuring James Llewelyn Jones (conductor), Gemini Brass & Denise Leigh (soprano), Thurs 14 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

MIDLANDS HOSPITAL CHOIR: SING NOEL! Festive concert conducted by James Llewelyn Jones, Fri 15 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE REPERTOIRE ORCHESTRA Featuring Daniele Rosina (conductor) & Arthur Boccaneanu (piano). Programme includes works by Leo Lobrev, Beethoven & Prokofiev, Fri 15 Dec, Concert Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL CHOIR: CHRIST-

MAS BY CANDLELIGHT Sat 16 Dec, Lichfield Cathedral

BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY: WINTER'S SNOW Featuring David Wynne (conductor) & Kevin Gill (accompanist), Sat 16 Dec, Ladywood Arc, Birmingham, B16 8TF

THE PEOPLE'S ORCHESTRA: SOMETHING SPECIAL Sat 16 Dec, West Bromwich Town Hall

CHRISTMAS WITH KATHERINE JENKINS Featuring the London Concert Orchestra, Anthony Inglis (conductor) & special guest Mark Vincent, Sun 17 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

Comedy

JASON MANFORD Mon 11 Dec, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

BARBARA NICE'S CHRISTMAS CRACKER Tues 12 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ZOE LYONS, ED GAMBLE, ANDY ROBINSON & MIKE WILMOT Wed 13 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ZOE LYONS, ED GAMBLE, ANDY ROBINSON & CHARLIE BAKER Thurs 14 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROB ROUSE, KANE BROWN, MARK SIMMONS & COMIC TBC Thurs 14 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

HARRY & CHRIS Fri 15 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ROB ROUSE, KANE BROWN, REGINALD D HUNTER & MARK SIMMONS Fri 15 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

BARBARA NICE'S CHRISTMAS CRACKER Fri 15 - Sat 16 Dec, MAC, B'ham

ZOE LYONS, ED GAMBLE, ANDY ROBINSON & MIKE WILMOT Fri 15 - Sat 16 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROB ROUSE, FREDDIE QUINN, MARK SIMMONS & COMIC TBC Sat 16 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

THE LAUGHING SOLE COMEDY FOR KIDS Sun 17 Dec, MAC, Birmingham

ROB ROUSE, MIKE GUNN, ADAM RILEY & CATHERINE BOHART Sun 17 Dec, The George Hotel, Lichfield

ED GAMBLE, JO ENRIGHT, ANDY ROBINSON & MIKE WILMOT Sun 17 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham



The Sixteen - Symphony Hall, Birmingham

TOWN HALL
Sutton Coldfield

COME AND SEE OUR
ENORMOUS
ANIMATRONIC
GIANT!!

JACK

and the Beanstalk

The Pantomime
Written by David Crump

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

TICKETS FROM £13
BOX OFFICE 0121 296 9543
ENQUIRIES@TOWNHALL-SCART.CO.UK

 @suttontownhall
www.townhallsuttoncoldfield.co.uk

WINTER'S SNOW

CHRISTMAS CLARITY CONCERT
16 DECEMBER 6PM
BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY

CONDUCTOR: DAVID WYNNE
ACCOMPANIST: KEVIN GILL

LADYWOOD ARC
DARNLEY ROAD
BIRMINGHAM
B16 8TF

TICKETS £10
UNDER 18 FREE

THIS VENUE HAS WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY



 **thinktank**
Birmingham science museum

Christmas

FUN

- Penguins and Polar Bears Planetarium Show
- Colour & Light Lab Sessions
- Thinktank Elf Trail
- Christmas Storytelling
- Festive Arts and Crafts

LEGO WORKSHOP SESSIONS
Drop in to our new LEGO Education Innovation Studio!



birminghammuseums.org.uk/whats-on

Funded by:

   **ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND** 

 **Birmingham Museums**

Theatre

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS 'Fun-filled' adventure for younger audiences... Tues 12 - Sun 31 Dec, Lichfield Garrick

CLOSER Presented by Birmingham School Of Acting, Wed 13 - Sat 16 Dec, Crescent Theatre, B'ham

RENÉ AND EDITH - LE COMEDY DINNER SHOW Inspired by much-loved BBC sitcom 'Allo 'Allo, Wed 13 - Sat 16 Dec, The REP, Birmingham

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Wed 13 - Fri 29 Dec, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

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

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Charles Dickens' supernatural tale of redemption, Sat 16 - Sun 17 Dec, Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

JERSEY BOYS The story of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons, Sat 16 Dec - Sat 6 Jan, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

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

Dance

ABOUT THE ELEPHANT Performance of physical expression inspired by recent and historical events that have affected society's perception of true reality, Mon 11 Dec, MAC, B'ham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

GET OUT (15) Mystery/Thriller. Starring Daniel Kaluuya, Allison Williams. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Mon 11 & Wed 13 Dec

BABY DRIVER (PG) Action/Crime. Starring Ansel Elgort, Jon Bernthal. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 12 Dec

SCROOGED (PG) Comedy/Drama. Starring Bill Murray, Karen Allen. The Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 12 Dec

THE HANDMAIDEN: DIRECTOR'S CUT (18) Drama/Mystery. Starring Min-hee Kim, Jung-woo Ha. Foreign language, subtitled. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 12 Dec

CALL ME BY YOUR NAME (15)

Drama/Romance. Starring Armie Hammer, Timothée Chalamet. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 12 - Wed 13 Dec

MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET (U)

Drama/Family. Starring Edmund Gwenn, Maureen O'Hara. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 12 & Thurs 14 Dec

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS (12a) Adventure/Fantasy. Starring Harrison Ford, John Boyega. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Wed 13 Dec

STAR WARS: THE LAST JEDI (12a) Adventure/Fantasy. Starring Mark Hamill, Adam Driver. The Mockingbird Cinema, Wed 13 - Sat 23 Dec; Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 14 - Thurs 28 Dec

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (U)

Drama/Family. Starring James Stewart, Donna Reed. Birmingham Cathedral, Fri 15 - Sat 16 Dec; New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Sun 17 Dec

THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL (U) Comedy/Drama. Starring Michael Caine, The Muppets. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 15 & Sun 17 Dec; MAC, Birmingham, Sat 16 Dec; New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Sun 17 Dec

BATTLE OF THE SEXES (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Emma Stone, Steve Carell. MAC, Birmingham, Fri 15 - Thurs 21 Dec

HOME ALONE (U) Comedy/Family. Starring Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 15 - Sat 23 Dec

ELF (12a) Comedy/Family. Starring Will Ferrell, James Caan. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 16 - Sat 23 Dec; New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Sun 17 Dec

LOVE ACTUALLY (12a) Comedy/Family. Starring Hugh Grant, Martine McCutcheon. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 17 Dec

DIE HARD (15) Action/Thriller. Starring Bruce Willis, Alan Rickman. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 17 Dec

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Thurs 14 Dec, showing at selected cinemas

STAR WARS: THE LAST JEDI (12a)

Released from Sat 16 Dec, showing at selected cinemas

FERDINAND (tbc)

Events

A CHRISTMAS WASSAIL 2017 Mulled wine and mince pies are served



Christmases Past - Aston Hall, Birmingham

from 7pm, Mon 11 - Tues 12 Dec, Highbury Hall, Birmingham

TINY TOTS TRAIL OF TREATS Join Mrs Claus at the fireside for milk, cookies and a festive story, Wed 13 - Thurs 14 Dec, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

SOHO BY MOONLIGHT Featuring carol singing and costumed guides showing how to make traditional Twelfth Cake, Wed 13 - Thurs 14 Dec, Soho House, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS EVENING TOURS A tour of the house dressed for Christmas, followed by a two-course supper in the Garden Kitchen Café, Thurs 14 Dec, Packwood House, Solihull

SANTA BOAT TRIPS Visit Santa by boat in his underground grotto, deep in the Dudley Caverns, Fri 15 - Sun 17 Dec, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust, Dudley

TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS EVENINGS Stroll through the museum's decorated gas-lit streets and take in the sights, sounds and smells of a magical Christmas past, Fri 15 - Sun 17 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

ENCHANTED KENILWORTH CASTLE Explore the grounds after dark for a winter fairytale of light, colour and sound, Fri 15 - Sat 23 Dec, Kenilworth Castle, Kenilworth

SANTA'S SLEEPOVERS A festive sleep-over at one of Alton Tower's themed hotels, Fri 15 - Sat 23 Dec, Alton Towers, Staffs

CHRISTMAS PAST Experience the sights and sounds of the festive season from the 17th century right through to the 1940s, Sat 16 Dec, Aston Hall, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS CAROL TRAINS Sing along or just soak up the festive atmosphere, Sat 16 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

FROST FAIR Brand new indoor Christmas market with decoration and card-making activities, seasonal food

and drink, pop-up performances by local musicians, choirs and more, Sat 16 Dec, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE PIZZA & PROSECCO FESTIVAL Sat 16 Dec, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth, Birmingham

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS Sat 16 - Sun 17 Dec, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION WEEKEND See Santa star in his very own stage show, Sat 16 - Sun 17 Dec, Cadbury World, Birmingham

SANTA STEAM SPECIALS Travel by steam train from Kidderminster to Arley, where you will meet Father Christmas in his grotto, Sat 16 - Sun 17 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

17TH CENTURY CHRISTMAS See the house decorated with traditional greenery, toast bread over an open fire and enjoy live music, Sat 16 - Sun 17 Dec, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS SANTA TRAIL Meet the Victorian household as they ready themselves for the annual visit of their very special guest, Sat 16 - Tues 19 Dec, Tamworth Castle

SANTA'S GROTTTO After receiving a special gift from Santa, it's off to see his reindeer, Sat 16 - Sat 23 Dec, Dudley Zoological Gardens, Dudley

CHRISTMAS IN THE HOME Step back in time and take part in some seasonal activities, Sat 16 - Sun 24 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SANTA HUNTS Search for Santa alongside the museum's festive costumed guides, Sat 16 - Sun 24 Dec, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

FESTIVAL OF LIGHT BROMSGROVE Sun 17 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

SANTA AT BLAKESLEY HALL Sun 17 Dec, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

A CHRISTMAS WASSAIL 2017 Mulled wine and mince pies are served from 7pm, Sun 17 - Tues 19 Dec, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham



The Prodigy - Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

Gigs

ELIZA CARTHY & THE WAYWARD BAND Mon 18 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

WHITE TRASH Mon 18 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SOLID SOUL Mon 18 - Wed 20 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE SHADES Tues 19 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE PRODIGY Tues 19 Dec, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

GYPSY FINGERS Tues 19 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

VIOLET Wed 20 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

FLASH-A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN Wed 20 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

MICHAEL BUBLE - KAI MCKENZIE Wed 20 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

MAD JOCKS & ENGLISHMEN Wed 20 Dec, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

THE ED SHEERAN EXPERIENCE Thurs 21 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

FRED ZEPPELIN XMAS BASH Thurs 21 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

NATHAN DAWE 0121 LIVE Thurs 21 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SWAMPBEAT FAMILY CHRISTMAS FEAT. SWAMPBEAT FAMILY

BAND, INDEPENDENT COUNTRY, THE HUNGRY GHOSTS & BLACK CAR Thurs 21 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SUBTERRANEANS Thurs 21 - Sat 23 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

BURNSIDE LIVE JUKE-BOX CHRISTMAS PARTY Fri 22 Dec, The Night Owl, Birmingham

THE ALAMO CHRISTMAS PARTY Fri 22 Dec, The Night Owl, B'ham

A FAMILY CHRISTMAS WITH THE TOWN HALL GOSPEL CHOIR Fri 22 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

KICK UP THE 80'S Fri 22 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

THE SPACEHOPPERS Fri 22 Dec, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

THE BORN AGAIN BEATLES Fri 22 Dec, The Roadhouse, B'ham

CHAS & DAVE Sat 23 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

ston

CRACKER 88'S Sat 23 Dec, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

ARIANA GRANDE EXPERIENCE Sat 23 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

IVOR & LYN'S CLASSIC ROCK NIGHT Sat 23 Dec, Route 44, Acocks Green, Birmingham

THE SLEAZE BROTHERS Sat 23 Dec, Lichfield Guildhall

THE MOTHERS EARTH EXPERIMENT Sat 23 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

GOODALL Sat 23 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE TWANG Sat 23 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DIRTY OLD FOLKERS Sat 23 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE STRAIGHT ACES Sun 24 Dec, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge



Mad Jocks And Englishmen - Red Lion Folk Club

Classical Music

ANDRE RIEU & THE JOHANN STRAUSS ORCHESTRA Thurs 21 Dec, Genting Arena, Birmingham



Andre Rieu

THE SNOWMAN Watch the film on screen whilst a professional 26-piece orchestra, featuring some of the country's top musicians, perform the film's iconic score, Thurs 21 Dec, Lichfield Cathedral

CBSO: CHRISTMAS AT THE MOVIES Featuring Anthony Weeden (conductor), Gary Williams & Jo Gibb (vocalists), Fri 22 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR Featuring the London Concert Orchestra. John Rigby (conductor), the Canzonetta Choir, The Jingle Belles, Laura Tebbutt (guest singer), Anna Patalong (soprano) & Nico Darmanin (tenor), Sat 23 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



Anna Patalong

EX CATHEDRA - ANGELS, STARS & KINGS Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Alexander Mason (organ) & Lucy Wakeford (harp), Sat 23 Dec, St Paul's Church, B'ham

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring the Canzonetta Choir, Mozart Festival Orchestra in full period costume, Nika Gori (soprano) & Michael Bawtree (conductor). Programme includes works by Handel, Gruber, Cullen, Corelli, Mozart & Bach, Sun 24 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

Comedy

CRISIS AT CHRISTMAS 2017 Mon 18 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOADALLY FREE COMEDY! Mon 18 Dec,

The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham
JEN BRISTER, PAUL MCCAFFERY, MICKEY D & SCOTT GIBSON Wed 20 - Sat 23 Dec, The Glee Club, B'ham

JULIAN DEANE, QUINCY, ROGER MONKHOUSE Thurs 21 - Fri 22 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

THE STORYBEAST, JONATHAN PELHAM & CHRIS PURCHASE Fri 22 Dec, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Theatre

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Drama-Link present Alan Bennett's adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved book, Tues 19 - Fri 22 Dec, Crescent Theatre, B'ham

CINDERELLA Soul-diva Beverley Knight makes her pantomime debut alongside Strictly Come Dancing finalist Danny Mac, Hippodrome panto favourite Matt Slack, Suzanne Shaw, The Grumbleweeds and Ugly Sisters Ceri Dupree and Phil Randall, Tues 19 Dec - Sun 28 Jan, Birmingham Hippodrome

PETER PAN - THE WORLD'S BIGGEST PANTO Starring Bradley Walsh and Martin Kemp, Wed 20 - Sun 24 Dec, Arena Birmingham

SKELLIG Haunting story of mystery, imagination and childhood, Wed 20 - Sat 30 Dec, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

LILY AND THE LITTLE SNOW BEAR Snowy tale about a lost bear and a brave little girl, Wed 20 - Sun 24 Dec, The Core Theatre, Solihull

TALL STORIES: THE SNOW DRAGON Toe-tapping songs and 'lots of laughs' for everyone aged three and older, Thurs 21 Dec - Sun 7 Jan, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Staging of Charles Dickens' supernatural tale of redemption, Sat 23 - Sat 30 Dec, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

SANTA'S CHRISTMAS WISH Join in the adventure to grant Santa his secret wish, then meet the man himself afterwards and receive a special present, Sun 24 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove



Monday 18 - Sunday 24 December

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

WHISKY GALORE (15) Comedy/Romance. Starring James Cosmo, Eddie Izzard. Stourbridge Town Hall, Mon 18 Dec

THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (PG) Animation/Family. With the voices of Danny Elfman, Chris Sarandon. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Mon 18 & Wed 20 Dec

HOME ALONE 2: LOST IN NEW YORK (PG) Animation/Family. Starring Macaulay Culkin, Tim Curry. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 19 Dec

THE WAGES OF FEAR (15) Drama/Thriller. Starring Yves Montand, Charles Vanel. Foreign language, subtitled. MAC, Birmingham, Tues 19 Dec

THE MAGIC FLUTE (U) Fantasy/Music. Starring Josef Köstlinger. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 21 Dec

DIE HARD (15) Action/Thriller. Starring Bruce Willis, Alan Rickman. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 22 Dec

PADDINGTON 2 (U) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Sally Hawkins, Brendan Gleeson. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 22 - Thurs 28 Dec; MAC, Birmingham, Fri 22 - Sun 31 Dec



THE MAN WHO INVENTED CHRISTMAS (PG) Biography/Comedy. Starring Dan Stevens, Christopher Plummer. MAC, Birmingham, Fri 22 - Thurs 28 Dec

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Wed 20 Dec, showing at selected cinemas

JUMANJI: WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE (tbc)

PITCH PERFECT 3 (tbc)

Events

STAR VEHICLE STORIES Seasonal stories in the museum, Mon 18 Dec, Coventry Transport Museum

CHRISTMAS QUEST Sing a carol by the Nativity scene, try hot chocolate by the fire and enjoy a delicious seasonal treat in the house, Tues 19 - Wed 20 Dec, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton

DECK THE HALLS! Traditionally decorated for the festivities, illustrating seasonal traditions through the ages, Tues 19 - Fri 22 Dec, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

SANTA SLEIGH EXPRESS Join the steam train at Kidderminster Station for your evening journey with Father Christmas to Highley, Tues 19 - Fri 22 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

TINY TOTS TRAIL OF TREATS Join Mrs Claus at the fireside for milk, cookies and a festive story, Wed 20 - Thurs 21 Dec, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

CHRISTMAS EVENING TOUR Tour of the house dressed for Christmas, followed by a two-course supper in the

Garden Kitchen Café, Thurs 21 Dec, Packwood House, Solihull

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION WEEK-END See Santa star in his very own stage show, Thurs 21 - Sat 23 Dec, Cadbury World, Birmingham



SANTA BOAT TRIPS Visit Santa by boat in his underground grotto, deep in the Dudley Caverns, Thurs 21 - Sat 23 Dec, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust, Dudley

FATHER CHRISTMAS AT AVONCROFT Festive crafts while you wait for the big man to arrive with his sackful of presents! Fri 22 - Sat 23 Dec, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

CHRISTMAS CAROL TRAINS Sing along or just soak up the festive atmosphere, Sat 23 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

SANTA STEAM SPECIALS Travel by steam train from Kidderminster to Arley, where you meet Father Christmas in his grotto, Sat 23 - Sun 24 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

BIRMINGHAM CANOLDIR MALE CHOIR
Musical Director - James Llewelyn Jones

CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR

Denise Leigh
Soprano

St Alphege Song Squad

Featuring
Gemini Brass

TOWN HALL, BIRMINGHAM - 14TH DECEMBER 2017 at 7pm

TH Town Hall/Symphony Hall Box Office -
0121 780 3333 www.thsh.co.uk
Or Canoldir's Ticket Secretary - Glyn Smith
01827 705650

skellig
by David Almond adapted
from the award-winning
novel

20th-30th DECEMBER 2017
THE OLD JOINT STOCK THEATRE
TICKETS - £16 | BOX OFFICE: 0121 200 0946
WWW.OLDJOINTSTOCK.CO.UK

Birmingham Contemporary Music Group presents

Contemporary Connections

Debussy's Heirs



Tuesday 12 December, 7pm
CBSO Centre, Birmingham, B1 2LF

Discover Debussy's music, and how it influenced the generations that followed, from Pierre Boulez, Tristan Murail and Julian Anderson to those only just emerging today.

BCMG Artistic Director Stephan Meier will be joined by pianist Richard Uttley and writer Paul Griffiths for a journey through musical examples that will illuminate the man who Boulez called a 'father of modernity', through the works of contemporary composers such as Tristan Murail, Julian Anderson and Sinta Wullur.

Tickets £5 at bcmg.org.uk

BC
MG
30

HAVE A

COOL
YULE

AT BAR OPUS

ONE SNOW HILL, BIRMINGHAM B4 6GH

BAR
OPUS
at
ONE SNOW HILL



MUSEUM &
ART GALLERY
BIRMINGHAM

FREE
ENTRY

Coming Out

SEXUALITY, GENDER & IDENTITY

2 DEC 2017 – 15 APR 2018

A ground-breaking and vital contemporary art exhibition including works by Grayson Perry, Tracey Emin, Andy Warhol, Derek Jarman, Sarah Lucas, David Hockney, Chila Kumari Burman, Sunil Gupta and Steve McQueen.

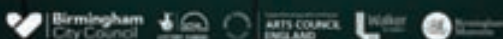
#ACCNationalPartners
#ComingOutBMAG

Arts Council
Collection

@BM_AG @birmingham_mag
/birminghammuseumandartgallery

birminghammuseums.org.uk

Coming Out is a touring exhibition conceived by National Museums Liverpool, in partnership with Birmingham Museums Trust as part of the Arts Council Collection National Partners Programme 2016-19. Arts Council Collection is managed by Southbank Centre on behalf of Arts Council England.



Gigs

ON GIOVI Tues 26 Dec, The Robin, Bilston
THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE Tues Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge
BAD MANNERS Wed 27 Dec, The Robin, Bilston
GOSPEL CENTRAL Wed 27 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham
ROXY MAGIC Wed 27 Dec, The Roadhouse, Birmingham
THE SEX P*SSSED DOLLS

Wed 27 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

DEL CAMINO Thurs 28 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

DIRTY DC Thurs 28 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

FAITH - THE GEORGE MICHAEL LEGACY Thurs 28 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

B'SPOKE Fri 29 - Sat 30 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

DEFINATELY MIGHT BE Fri 29 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

SEX PISTOLS EXPERIENCE

Fri 29 Dec, The Roadhouse, Birmingham
SIGNING OFF (UB40 TRIBUTE) Fri 29 Dec, The Night Owl, Birmingham

LET'S HAVE A ROCK 'N' ROLL PARTY Fri 29 Dec, Genting Arena, Birmingham

SOUL SURVIVORS & THE AMEN CORNER Sat 30 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

SKABUCKS Sat 30 Dec, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

WHITE TYGER + MOOSE JAW Sat 30 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

T.REXTASY Sun 31 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

NEW YEAR'S EVE 2017/18 PARTY WITH BEAT BROTHERS Sun 31 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

NEW YEARS EVE WITH DETROIT SOUL COLLECTIVE Sun 31 Dec, The Jam House, B'ham



Bad Manners - The Robin

Classical Music

LAST NIGHT OF THE CHRISTMAS PROMS Featuring the London Concert Orchestra, John Pryce-Jones (conductor), Joo Yeon Sir (violin), James Cleverton (baritone) & Samuel Sakker (tenor), Wed 27 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MUSICALS IN CONCERT: LEADING LADIES Featuring the London Concert Orchestra, Richard Balcombe (conductor), Louise Dearman, Kerry Ellis, Linzi Hatley & Victoria Hamilton-Barritt, Thurs 28 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE LONDON CONCERT ORCHESTRA: THE BEST OF JOHN WILLIAMS Featuring Anthony Inglis (conductor), Fri 29 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA Also featuring Mark Porter and Catherine Sykes (guest vocalists), Fri 29 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE LONDON CONCERT ORCHESTRA: THE MAGIC MOMENTS OF BURT BACHARACH Featuring Richard Balcombe (conductor), Graham Bickley, Mary Carewe, Alison Jiear & Abbie Osma (special guest singers), Sat 30 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE FOUR SEASONS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring the Mozart Festival Orchestra in full 18th Century costume, David Juritz (director/violin), Rowan Pierce (soprano) & Crispian Steele Perkins (trumpet). Programme includes works by Vivaldi, Stanley, Mozart, Handel, Bach & Clarke, Sat 30 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA Featuring the London Concert Orchestra, Sky Ingram (soprano), Alexander James Edwards (tenor) & Anthony Inglis (conductor). Programme includes works by Rossini, Holst, Verdi, Sibelius, Puccini, Strauss, Brahms & Elgar, Sun 31 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

REAL DEAL COMEDY JAM XMAS SPECIAL Tues 26 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

ANDREW BIRD, STEVE SHANYASKI & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 28 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DANA ALEXANDER, PAUL MCCAFFERY, MICKEY D & JO ENRIGHT (LATE SHOW) Sun 31 Dec, The Glee Club, B'ham

IAN COGNITO, MIKE NEWALL, DAVE LONGLEY & NICK PAGE Sun 31 Dec, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

DANA ALEXANDER, PAUL MCCAFFERY, MICKEY D & ANDY ROBINSON Sun 31 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

STICK MAN Scamp Theatre adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Alex Scheffler's popular children's book of the same name, Tues 26 Dec - Fri 12 Jan, Birmingham Town Hall

THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN Puppetry, live music and 'enchanted' storytelling in a snowy adventure for younger audiences, Wed 27 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

RATATOUILLE (12a) Animation/Comedy. With the voices of Brad Garrett, Lou Romano. Highbury Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 28 Dec

WONDER (PG) Drama. Starring Julia Roberts, Jacob Tremblay. MAC, Birmingham, Fri 29 - Sun 31 Dec

Events

SANTA'S WINTER WONDERLAND Explore Santa's Christmas snow trail, take a walk through the enchanted forest, enjoy a game of snowballs and hitch a ride on a sledge, until Sun 31 Dec, The Snowdome, Tamworth

DRAYTON'S MAGICAL CHRISTMAS Live shows, carols, presents plus much more until Sun 31 Dec, Drayton Manor Theme Park, Tamworth, Staffs

CHRISTMAS AT BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS Featuring illuminated trail, Scented Fire Garden, Tunnel of Light, Mistletoe Moment, Singing Trees & Santa & his Elves, until Mon 1 Jan, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

MAGICAL LANTERN FESTIVAL Christmas-themed event featuring artistic sculptures, until Mon 1 Jan, Kings Heath Park, Birmingham

ICE SKATE BIRMINGHAM Enjoy this winter sport in beautiful city surroundings, until Sun 7 Jan, Eastside City Park, Birmingham

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR Explore 550 stands filled with all kinds of collectables, Wed 27 Dec, NEC, Birmingham

The Bootleg Beatles
with the PEPPERLAND SINFONIA

'the act you've known for all these years!'

December 2017

9th	De Montfort Hall	Leicester	0116 233 3111
15th	Symphony Hall	Birmingham	0121 345 0600
17th	Royal Concert Hall	Nottingham	0115 989 5555

www.bootlegbeatles.com

THE IDEAL GIFT!

**Struggling with Christmas gift ideas?
Then why not give a gift that lasts the whole year...**

For just £24, you can purchase a 12-month subscription to a
What's On magazine of your choice.



Our six editions cover **Birmingham, Coventry & Warwickshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Wolverhampton & the Black Country** and **Worcestershire...**

Simply choose the edition you'd like and call our subscription hotline on
01743 281714 with your credit/debit card details

**And at just £2 an issue to cover postage and packing, there's never been
a better time to get your What's On magazine delivered!**

For iconic furniture and fashion
YOU'VE GOT MAILBOX



mailboxlife.com

Download the brand
new Mailbox app on
the App Store now!

NOW OPEN ON LEVEL 1

MADE[®] • HEAL'S • BoConcept

and more...


MAILBOX
BIRMINGHAM



WE'RE BACK FOR CHRISTMAS!

BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER.

This Year We Are Putting
A Roof On Things too!

16 NOV 2017 - 7 JAN 2018

BOOK
NOW!



10AM - 10PM DAILY • 7 DAYS A WEEK • NEW CANAL STREET



Ice Skate Birmingham is located for 2017 at Eastside Green, Millennium Point - New Canal Street, B5 5RB.

www.iceskatebirmingham.co.uk