

Birmingham

ISSUE 389 MAY 2018

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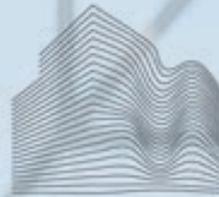
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28 MAY



NITIN SAWHNEY: MUSIC AND ME
23 JUNE

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Birmingham City University



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Les Misérables heading back to Birmingham

The phenomenal Les Misérables is making a welcome return to Birmingham Hippodrome next year.

Cameron Mackintosh's hit musical, based on the novel by Victor Hugo and written by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg, will visit the Hurst Street venue from 2 April to 11 May.

The part of Jean Valjean will be played by Kilian Donnelly, who is currently starring in the role in the West End production.

Les Mis has been seen by over 120 million people worldwide in 45 countries and 22 languages.

The epic show features a raft of now-classic songs, including I Dreamed A Dream, On My Own, Stars, Bring Him Home, Do You Hear The People Sing?, One Day More, Empty Chairs At Empty Tables and Master Of The House. Tickets for the show's Hippodrome performances are on general sale from 21 June and can be purchased by calling 0844 338 5000 or visiting birminghamhippodrome.com

CBSO to perform outdoor fiesta programme

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra will perform an 'outdoor fiesta' programme when they headline Sutton Coldfield's 2018 Concerts In The Park celebration, with more performers set to be announced in the coming weeks.

The popular two-day community event takes place in Sutton Park on Saturday 30 June and Sunday 1 July.

To purchase tickets, ring 0121 296 9543 or visit townhallsuttoncoldfield.co.uk.



Team-up offers insight into the life of a pianist

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Elmhurst Ballet School are teaming up for a second time to provide music students with the chance to experience the working life of a professional ballet pianist.

The venues' Placement For Pianists Programme offers students a very rare opportunity to explore 'the highly specialised artistry and technique of ballet pianism' during mentoring, observational and practical sessions. Commenting on the programme, Julian Lloyd Webber, Principal of Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, said: "I am delighted that this partnership with Elmhurst has come to fruition - the combination of some of the country's best young dancers and pianists working together is simply electrifying, and exemplifies our joint ethos of wanting to further embed ourselves within the city we serve."



More microscopic magic from renowned local artist

A Midlands artist who's become internationally renowned for his microscopic sculptures has created a beautiful ballerina for his latest work.

Dr Willard Wigan's Tiny Dancer was made using miniature handmade tools and the artist's own eyelashes, attached to an acupuncture needle and used as a paintbrush.

The sculpture will eventually be auctioned to raise funds for young ballet students, particularly those who need financial assistance in order to realise their dance dreams.

Michael Jackson tribute

A 'spectacular music tribute' to Michael Jackson is coming to the Midlands this month. The Michael Jackson History Show is a full-scale stage production featuring a playlist of the King of Pop's greatest hits, including Thriller, Billie Jean, Bad, Beat It, ABC and Don't Stop Til You Get Enough. The show stars highly regarded impersonator Dantanio and visits the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on 6 May.

Museum initiative supports visitors with autism

An award-winning Birmingham museum founded by world famous chocolate-maker George Cadbury is to launch a series of resources to support visitors with autism.

Commenting on the innovation, Daniel Callicott, Manager of Selly Manor Museum, said: "We hope that these resources, once launched, will make the museum even more accessible and enjoyable to all."

To find out more about the museum, visit sellymanormuseum.org.uk



Fundraising with Fun Family 5 walk

Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity is calling on people to get involved in its second annual Fun Family 5 five-kilometre walk.

Taking place in Sutton Park on Saturday 16 June, the event will raise vital funds for the sick children and families at the hospital, and aims to raise in excess of last year's near-£20,000 total. To sign up for the event and receive a fundraising pack, visit bch.org.uk/Event/funfamily5



Conservatoire's opening festival now under way

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's opening festival is now under way.

A 15 month-long event, the festival features performances by, among many others, Sir Lenny Henry, Julian Lloyd Webber, Peter Donohoe, Nitin Sawhney and Jennifer Walshe. The event's programme also includes the Flatpack Film Festival and the Supersonic Festival. For more information, visit bcu.ac.uk/opening-festival

Region set to benefit from new railways

The West Midlands region is set to benefit from seven new railways, one of which would serve West Midlands Safari Park. The multi-million pound proposals rest on the outcome of 'feasibility assessments' currently being undertaken. If the project gets the green light, it would also mean 20,000 extra seats and standing room being made available for an additional 50,000 peak-time passengers in and around Birmingham.

Tickets now on sale for annual Birmingham festival of European performing arts

Tickets are now on sale for Birmingham's forthcoming BE Festival. The annual event, which comprises five days of European performing arts and culture, takes place at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from 3 to 7 July. At the time of going to print, festival organisers were adding the final touches to the 2018 programme. For more information about purchasing tickets and to keep up to date with developments, visit befestival.org.





Birmingham Rep launches autumn/winter programme of shows

A new written-for-the-stage story featuring novelist Ian Rankin's popular detective Rebus features among the highlights of Birmingham Repertory Theatre's autumn/winter season of shows. Other notable offerings in a high-quality package of productions include Hugh Dennis, Lesley Garrett and John Marquez starring in a new staging of Patrick Barlow comedy *The Messiah* (pictured), and a brand new visual story by celebrated local theatre

company Stan's Cafe.

Commenting on the season, The REP's Artistic Director, Roxana Silbert, said: "New work is the lifeblood of theatre, and The REP is honoured to be working with the best writers of their generation, with 11 new plays across our three stages, of which six will be premiering at the venue."

For full details of the recently announced season and to book tickets, visit birmingham-rep.co.uk

Tackling the taboos of death and dying...

A Birmingham arts & culture festival is this month aiming to tackle the taboos of death and dying.

A Matter Of Life And Death (various venues across the city, 10 - 26 May) aims to encourage 'open and honest conversation about death and dying' through an extensive programme of events. The festival includes theatre, film, food, art & crafts, exhibitions, tours and discussions. For more information and tickets, visit brumyodo.org.uk

Blockbuster movie *The Hunger Games* in concert at Birmingham's Symphony Hall

Blockbuster movie *The Hunger Games* is being screened at Birmingham's Symphony Hall this summer, complete with live musical accompaniment from a full symphony orchestra.

The hit movie, which stars Jennifer Lawrence and Woody Harrelson, will be screened in HD on Sunday 15 July.

For more information, visit thsh.co.uk



Birmingham Design Festival set to launch

The first Birmingham Design Festival takes place at various venues around the city next month (7 - 10 June).

A celebration of the industry, the event will include contributions from printmakers, illustrators, typesetters, animators, architects, product designers and digital talent.

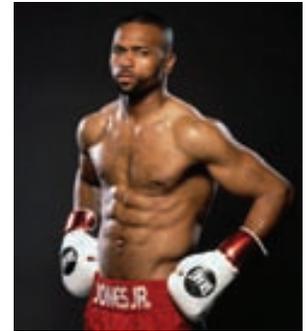
Commenting on the festival, its organiser, Daniel Alcorn, said: "Birmingham is starting to act and feel like the creative powerhouse it has always had the potential to become. It's been a long road but we're nearing the finish line, and we have been blown away by the support for the festival."

To find out more, visit birminghamdesignfestival.org.uk

Champion boxes clever in Brum

A man once considered by many to be boxing's greatest ever pound-for-pound fighter is telling his story in Birmingham this month.

Legendary world champion Roy Jones Jr appears at The Hagley (IBIS) on Thursday 24 May. Tickets for the event are being sold at showfighter.co.uk/rjj



Drag superstar Ginger presents a Glamorous Gran

Birmingham's Symphony Hall is this month hosting a lively collection of original children's stories inspired by the lives of LGBTQIA+ people (Sunday 27 May).

Glamorous Gran And Other Tall Stories is written and performed by 'nightmare in nylons and drag superstar' Ginger Johnson.

Ginger describes the show as featuring "gutsy, hilarious stories for switched-on kids that just so happen to feature queer characters".

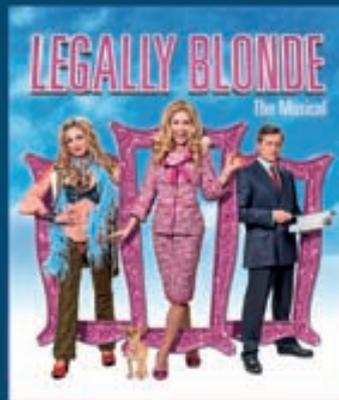
Visit thsh.co.uk for more information.



COMING SOON TO THE NEW ALEXANDRA THEATRE



TUE 15 – SAT 19 MAY
AD: SAT 19 MAY 2.30PM



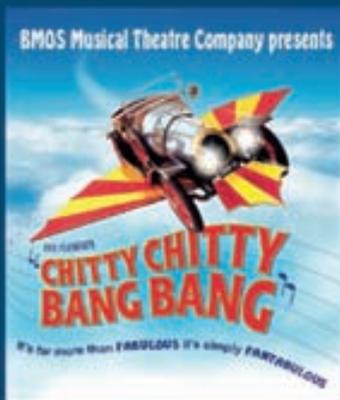
MON 21 – SAT 26 MAY
£g THU 24 MAY 7.30PM



TUE 12 – SAT 16 JUN



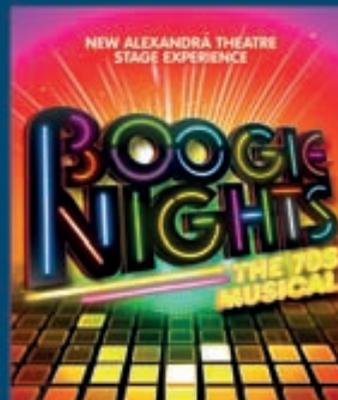
MON 18 – SAT 23 JUN
£g THU 21 JUN 7.30PM



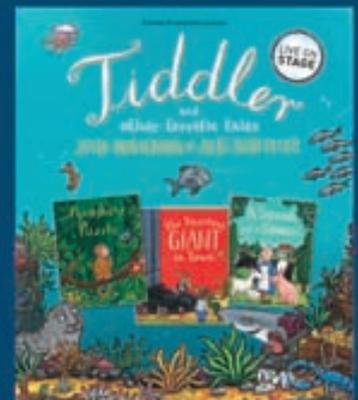
TUE 26 – SAT 30 JUN



TUE 31 JUL – SAT 4 AUG
R THU 2 AUG 2.30PM



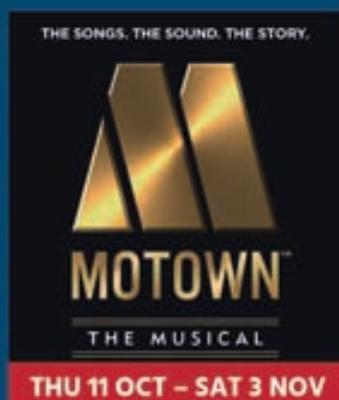
WED 22 – SAT 25 AUG
CAP SAT 25 AUG 2.30PM



THU 30 AUG – SAT 1 SEP



TUE 25 – SAT 29 SEP



THU 11 OCT – SAT 3 NOV
CAP TUE 23 OCT 7.30PM
£g WED 24 OCT 7.30PM
AD: WED 31 OCT 2.30PM



MON 5 – SAT 10 NOV



TUE 13 – SAT 17 NOV
AD: THU 15 NOV 7.30PM

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A HUMAN CONDITION

Calixto Bieito talks about bringing sex and anxiety to *The REP*

Anxiety - a 'feeling of worry, nervousness or unease about something with an uncertain outcome' - is a human condition that seriously intrigues Catalan director Calixto Bieito. So much so, in fact, that it's become the focus of his latest work - a co-commission with Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Holland Festival.

Making its debut at The REP next month and fusing drama and music - four actors and a string quartet - *The String Quartet's Guide To Sex And Anxiety* explores where anxiety and depression come from, and how our 'innermost thoughts wage battle with our artistic impulses'.

What's On recently caught up with Calixto to talk about his latest production and his reputation as one of Europe's most ambitious theatre directors...

"About three or four years ago, I was talking to The REP, who were asking me to come back and do another show. We started talking about how anxiety is affecting our lives. How all of us have a moment in our life where we ask existential questions: Why are we here? What is the sense of what we're doing? Is it normal to have fear about our own death and have fear about losing the people we love?"

"We now know that anxiety disorder is a very common issue and is affecting a lot of people for a lot of reasons - genetics or economics, for example. I thought, why not do a show about anxiety as an illness? A show about anxiety as an existential language. I decided this was an important issue to address, and in doing so, I think I've created a sort of symphonic poem."

One could assume that a dark and weighty production awaits audiences at The REP. Calixto claims not. "It will be both dark and light because anxiety is not just about darkness. It's humanistic. It's a poem that has extreme beauty when combined with the music from the Heath Quartet."

Award-winning British chamber ensemble the Heath Quartet will be at the forefront of the production. In addition to showcasing their musical prowess - performing string quartets by Beethoven and Ligeti - the quartet will also make their debut in an acting capacity.

"They are so passionate about the music, and this is our second collaboration. They

will be on the stage all of the time. They are characters. They're not just the orchestra making the soundtrack of the piece."

Famous for his operatic productions - he's worked with all of Europe's major opera houses - Calixto's repertoire is impressive but not always without criticism. His infamous staging of *Macbeth* (Barbican, 2003) and provocative interpretation of Verdi's *A Masked Ball* were described by some as 'scandalous', with his use of illicit content referred to as 'pornographic sensationalism'. Others have praised his work as 'reveatory'.

"This is just the need of society to put a label on things and people. If people look at my curriculum, they'll see that it includes a variety of different things and styles. I'm not always doing nudity or violence.

"I did *Carmen*, which was a spiritual show and nothing to do with nudity. I see myself like a painter, and sometimes I'm painting a nude. Nobody goes to a museum and says, 'Oh my God, I want to destroy this picture of a woman because it's full of nudity!'"

"When you create a label, people may come to see my shows full of prejudices. They may know nothing about me but just go with what they've read and therefore have a very closed mind. I feel sorry for them.

"My *Macbeth* many years ago was full of violence, and a lot of people were scandalised. Now you have the new movie, which is full of violence, and people are used to it."

Another label that seems to have attached itself to Calixto relates to his style as a director, which on occasion has seen him likened to Quentin Tarantino.

"I'm quite a humanistic director. I do so many different things and my style changes to fit whatever it is I'm doing. I get likened to Tarantino, but my style is nothing like Tarantino. You will never, ever read anything about me where I'm trying to get self-publicity. Nothing.

"I'm always very relaxed in rehearsals. I try to encourage an atmosphere of generosity, but at the same time, discipline. Everybody must feel that they're a creative part of the project."

While English scholar and author Robert Burton's essay, *Anatomy Of Melancholy* (1621), and Byung-Chul Han's *The Burnout Society* (2015), are documented influences on this current piece, Calixto cites numerous others who've had an effect on his work

since his formative days in northern Spain, where he studied history of art and philology at university.

"When I was very young, I was influenced very much by Luis Bunuel, the filmmaker. Through art, Francisco Goya has been very strong for me for the lighting, and has influenced the way I light the stage. Music has played a big part too, especially the work of Ligeti, but I suppose my biggest influence is the human race. My work takes me to lots of places, and I'm constantly learning from my everyday environment and the people I meet."

With his diary currently fully booked until 2023, does Calixto ever get anxious about his hefty workload?

"No. It's a privilege to be doing what I do. I love my work very much, and I'm fortunate to work in the best opera houses and theatres on the continent."

Home for Calixto is now Basel, on the border of Switzerland, Germany and France. His house overlooks the Rhine, and it's this stretch of water that helps him relax and escape the everyday world. "I love to look at the flow and get lost in thought. It relaxes me a lot, and I also like to walk - both into the city or the forest nearby. I like to walk, and sometimes, if I can't sleep, I'll walk in the night. I'm a little bit boring, I think."

Calixto is looking forward to returning to the Midlands this month - his last REP production, *Forests*, showed at the city's Old Rep Theatre in 2012 whilst the Centenary Square venue was closed for renovation. "I have to confess that I like to work in Birmingham. They're a good team at The REP!"

So what lasting impression does he hope to leave this time round? "I think the one thing I'd like audiences to take away is that you can share your anxieties with people. Maybe encourage them to talk about anxiety and our fears in society today.

"For me, I just want to produce the best show that I can, and share with the audience a fantastic poem."

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The String Quartet's Guide To Sex And Anxiety shows at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Saturday 12 to Saturday 19 May.



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Restaurant business given green light for Birmingham premises

Restaurant business Pint Shop has been given the green light to open a venue in Birmingham.

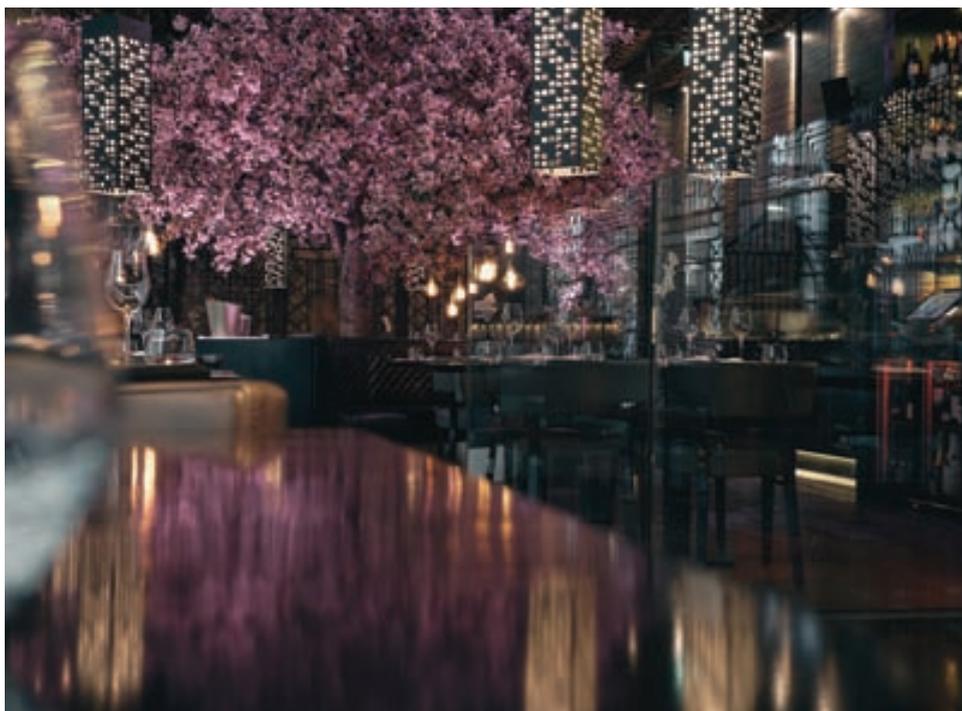
Specialising in meat, bread and beer - and with restaurants already established in Cambridge and Oxford - Pint Shop is set to open in a three-storey Grade II-listed building on the city's Bennett's Hill. The venue will be open from 7am to 1am Sunday to Thursday and 7am to 2.30am Friday and Saturday. For more information, visit pintshop.co.uk

New cocktail bar opens in Birmingham

Cocktail bar chain Dirty Martini has opened in the Birmingham premises formerly occupied by the Viva Brazil restaurant. Offering a bespoke range of martinis and signature cocktails, the city centre venue is the chain's 11th UK branch.

'Home of the real meal deal' opens in the city

A new cafe has opened in Birmingham. Situated on Holloway Circus, Holloway's describes itself as 'the home of the real meal deal', and is open from Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4pm. The new venue offers lunchtime meal deals at £3.49, including either a sandwich, toastie, tortilla, mega bap, panini or baguette with a drink and kettle crisps, or a jacket or sweet potato jacket with one filling and a drink. Breakfast deals, a 99p range and a selection of vegetarian and vegan options are also available.



Trendy Chinese eatery to open premises in Birmingham

The Grand Hotel's 5,000 sq ft basement is set to become home to trendy Chinese restaurant & bar Tattu by the end of the year. Described as a 'modern Chinese' eatery, the venue will be Birmingham's biggest single-level bar & restaurant.

Having already opened two other UK sites, in Manchester and Leeds, Tattu offers a menu featuring yuzu black cod, szechuan lobster, chef's cut wagyu beef and red pepper lamb chops.

Each Tattu has its own identity, 'taking guests on a sensory journey from East to West through its award-winning interior design and astute attention to detail'.

For more information, visit tattu.co.uk

Tropical tipple set to make special night 'a rum do!'

An evening featuring Ian Burrell and celebrating 'all things rum' takes place at MAC Birmingham on Saturday 26 May.

In addition to being creator of UK RumFest, the world's first international rum festival, Ian is the rum & cocktail specialist on Channel Four's Sunday Brunch. Visitors to the event will learn all they need to know about the ever-popular tropical tipple, along the way getting to sample a selection of world-class varieties.

The event is strictly for over-18s only. Tickets can be bought online at macbirmingham.co.uk.





TITANIC THE MUSICAL

drops anchor at Birmingham Hippodrome



In the final hours of 14 April 1912, the RMS Titanic, on her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York, collided with an iceberg. The 'unsinkable ship' slowly sank. It was one of the most tragic disasters of the 20th century, with 1,517 men, women and children losing their lives.

Based on real people aboard the most legendary ship in the world, Titanic The Musical is described as 'a stunning and stirring production focusing on the hopes, dreams and aspirations of her passengers, who each boarded with stories and personal ambitions of their own.'

The musical, with music and lyrics by Maury Yeston and a book by Peter Stone, first opened on Broadway in 1997 and won five Tony Awards, including best musical, best score and best book.

This new production, helmed by the artistic director of Charing Cross Theatre, Thom Southerland, and coming direct from London, has enjoyed critical acclaim across the board. The production visits Birmingham, Thom's home town, next month as part of its UK tour.

"We did it at Southwark Playhouse in 2013," says Thom. "Since then, it's been across to Toronto, Tokyo and many other theatres in Japan, then back to London - and now it's embarking on its first UK tour. I think it's really important that she finally sails around the country.

"It's so lovely that I've been able to work in the US and go around the world with it, but when I had the phone call to say that it's going to be in Birmingham, I was just ecstatic. It's in Birmingham over my birthday week, and it was always my birthday treat to go and see something at Birmingham Hippodrome. It's beyond my wildest dreams, and it's going to be very emotional when the show finally arrives there. I never, ever thought it would happen, I sort of dreamed it, but to think it's my piece that's coming home is really quite special."

Thom was encouraged to become a director by his teachers and his family. "I loved watching theatre and desperately wanted to be a part of it. I was a terrible actor, but I needed to find some way into the industry whereby I could still work in a theatre. It was my first love."

So he moved from Walsall to London, took an undergraduate course at Rose Bruford College, and following his graduation started work on the London fringe. "Making my own shows is sort of where Titanic was born. It was in a very small theatre, and then it sort of took over. It's been very lovely that, for the past five years, the show has been my life and has taken me around the world. It's been tremendously exciting.

"I was on holiday in New York in 2001 and bought an original souvenir brochure for a dollar from the original Broadway production of Titanic. I looked at it and thought, "Oh my god - this is the most lavish and huge-scale show!" I'd heard about it but hadn't heard any of the music. I needed to hear what the show was like. How is it even possible to do a musical about the Titanic story? I immediately went across to the record store in Time Square, bought the CD, the original cast recording, went back to my hotel room and listened to this music. As always with Maury Yeston's music, he gives you everything, and suddenly I became rather obsessed with the musical. I asked him whether we could do the show in London in a 200-seat theatre and he said yes."

Thom is keen to point out that the production is a very long way away from the 1997 smash-hit blockbuster movie. "This version doesn't fictionalise anything. The Titanic famously had more than 2,500 people on board. There's so much drama and so many stories that Peter Stone and Maury Yeston decided they would base everything in the musical version on fact. There are more than 150 characters played by 25 actors, and they all come on stage at certain points and tell us about their own personal journey and what the Titanic meant to them. Of course, the story is the same and there's no spoiler alert - everybody knows what happens at the end.

"I think what's so wonderful and absorbing about this version is that it tells you something that you don't already know about the Titanic. There are so many conspiracy theories, but this just tells you the information as it happened and allows us to indulge in these wildly romantic stories about people who set off for a new life in a new world. When I listened to the score, I realised that it was all about people, and that you didn't need to really see the ship - everybody knows

what the Titanic looks like. I think the musical version very beautifully tells us everything we need to know about the Titanic story, and anything that we can't do is left to the imagination.

"For the production I was very insistent that we didn't replicate the sinking. I think there's a line of taste there. I suppose the success of the show is testament to the material, and it just proves that you don't need to do anything literally. What Maury Yeston's music and lyrics do - and Peter Stone, who wrote the script - is tell you every piece of information in many ways. Musically, you feel like you really are part of this ship.

"It seems like every week there's a TV programme stating that there's new information about the Titanic. There are all sorts of conspiracy theories: Was there a fire in the boiler? Was it a big insurance job? The beauty of the Titanic story is that we will never know. The show never tries to point blame and always tries to give the overview. It allows us not even to try and think about whose fault it was, but just to comprehend what lessons we can learn from the Titanic."

Thom always likes to ask previous cast members back. "I think that's really important. The success of the show is because of the actors who were involved in those original productions. The iconic and incredibly detailed performances are so crucial. We've had more than half returning - this is a bigger production, so there are five extra people in the show - and we have some newbies, which always creates a very lovely dynamic in the cast. It's a true ensemble piece. The actors play so many different roles, and everybody gets their moment. There are no stand-out leading characters."

So what's next for Titanic The Musical? "Another production is heading to Japan. It's going to be revived there, and we're just about to announce another season at Charing Cross. I think when you've done a show as big as Titanic, there's nothing that can rival that."

.....

Titanic The Musical drops anchor at Birmingham Hippodrome from Monday 4 to Saturday 9 June.

BIRMINGHAM

Pride 2018

BIRMINGHAM'S GAY VILLAGE

SATURDAY 26TH MAY

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HSBC UK MAIN STAGE

BETH DITTO JAX JONES LOUISA STEFFLON
LOUISE KELLI-LEIGH KIM PETRAS MNEK DON

DANCE ARENA

LOW STEPPA CLINTON SHAWE
REDLIGHT SPECIAL GUEST
THE ACID EXPERIMENT **FLAVA D** LISA SHARRED SUM CELLAR
ANTIX DAVEY BOY JOE HUNT YAN
FELTON FEAT. KAISHA SMITH

THE MANCHESTER AIRPORT CABARET STAGE

THE D.E. EXPERIENCE LORRAINE BOWEN SANDRA GINNY LEMON
KELLY WILDE BAGA CHIPZ TANYA HYDE SUM TING WONG MISS THUNDERPUSSY SHANIA PAIN MISS PENNY
DAVE LYNN AND MAISIE TROLETTE TWIGGY LOLA LASAGNE

THE FUTURE STAGE

BIG FREEDIA BEEP ME 911 HARD C'CK LIFE JAYDONCLOVER ALLIE X TSAR B
KARTEL BROWN UNPRONOUNCEABLE DUPE'S DEN JAMAAL MONARCH I'M NOT OKAY KILL GLASS
MS BANKS

SUNDAY 27TH MAY

HSBC UK MAIN STAGE

RUDIMENTAL DJ SET **JAKE SHEARS** OF SCISSOR SISTERS
COURTNEY ACT HOWARD JONES

THE BIG GAY DAYTIME PARTY! FEAT. LIVIN' JOY FT LUZAHN, KYM MAZELLE, ROZALLA, RACHEL MCFARLANE, BABY D, WE LOVE POP, GLITTER SH'T,

DANCE ARENA

GORGON CITY DJ ZINC TOM SHORTERZ HOOKER CLUB 02:31
LOVE MUSCLE JAMIE BULL (HOMOELECTRIC)

THE MANCHESTER AIRPORT CABARET STAGE

VICKY JACKSON AS PINK KELLY O'BRIEN IN THE DOLLY SHOW GLITTER LIPS CHAMPAGNE SHIRLEY ROSE GARDEN
DRAG WITH NO NAME TOTALLY TINA MARTHA D' ARTHUR AMY LA QUEEFA MYRA DUBOIS SANDRA MISS MARTY DIVINE MISS M

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Birmingham Pride

Birmingham Gay Village, Sat 26 - Sun 27 May

Birmingham Pride attracts more than 50,000 visitors per year and boasts a diverse array of activities and entertainment, including music, cabaret, dance and a hugely popular carnival parade. This year's two-day celebration is based around the theme



of Be You. Tickets are available from birminghampride.com.

2018 line-up includes: Courtney Act (pictured), Beth Ditto, Jake Shears, Rudimental (pictured), Jax Jones, Stefflon Don, Howard Jones, Gorgon City, Louisa, Kim Petras, Mnek, Louisa Redknapp, Twiggy, Tiara Thunderpussy and Miss Penny.



Staffs Fest

Lower Drayton Farm, Staffordshire, Fri 25 - Sun 27 May

Beginning as a small-scale blues festival in Stafford, this 'great-value-for-money' event has expanded year on year to encompass an exciting array of rock, reggae, soul and blues acts. In addition to enjoying live, loud and local music, visitors can take a stroll through the nearby woods, enjoy a guided tour of the farm on Farmer Ray's tractor trailer, and vote for the winner of the Star of Staffs competition, open to budding musicians aged 14 to 18. All tickets include free onsite camping, but rooms are also available in the farmhouse B&B for those who prefer their indoor comforts.

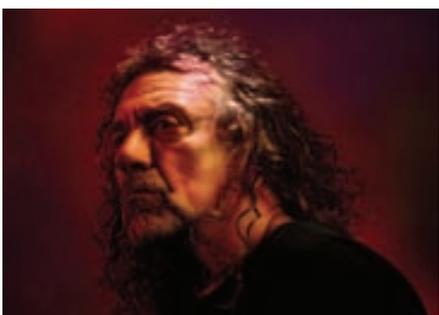
2018 line-up includes: The Rock Dogs, Cold Flame, The Gabbidon Band, Voodoo Stone, Slyder, Shallow Boys, The Sick Notes, Bloke, Pistol Pete Wearn, Pig-Man & The Rubber Band, Ged Wilson, Judy Emeline, Bobby KP Woods and The Spirit Drummers.

Bearded Theory

Catton Park, South Derbyshire, Thurs 24 - Sun 27 May

Taking place in the grounds of Catton Hall in the heart of the National Forest, the 10-year-old Bearded Theory has been rapidly gaining a reputation as one of the UK's best independent festivals. Ever expanding to meet demand, the award-winning event features fantastic acts spread across six stages - including a dance tent, a cinema and a comedy & cabaret area - as well as a superb Children's Village, top-notch facilities and an award-winning bar with affordably priced drinks.

2018 line-up includes: Robert Plant & The Sensational Space Shifters (pictured), Jimmy Cliff, Blossoms, Sleaford Mods, Jake Bugg, Jesus & Mary Chain, Fun Lovin Criminals, The Coral, Milburn and Gentleman's Dub Club.



Cheltenham Jazz Festival

Various venues arounds Cheltenham, Wed 2 - Mon 7 May



With 20,000-plus music fans attending the event each year, Cheltenham has become one of the country's best-loved jazz festivals. Showcasing its trademark mix of international icons, up-and-coming artists and unique performances, the festival includes Jamie Cullum and Moira Stuart among its legion of fans.

2018 line-up includes: Randy Crawford, Beth Hart, Caro Emerald (pictured), Christian McBride Big Band, Kamasi Washington, Seun Kuti & Egypt 80, Portico Quartet, Imelda May, China Moses, Gilles Peterson & Jordan Rakei and Corinne Bailey Rae.

Slam Dunk Festival

NEC, Birmingham, Mon 28 May

Showcasing the best in contemporary emo, punk and ska, this three-stop touring festival returns to Birmingham's NEC for the third time since its move from Wolverhampton. Linked to the Leeds-based club nights and indie record label of the same name, Slam Dunk takes place over the May bank holiday weekend and boasts more than 40 acts across multiple stages. DJ sets, exclusive signings and a riotous afterparty also feature.

2018 line-up includes: Good Charlotte, Jimmy Eat World, Pvrís (pictured), Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes, Taking Back Sunday, Sleeping With Sirens, State Champs, Creeper, Every Time I Die, The Skints, Four Year Strong, Thursday and Zebrahead.



Friday 4 May 7.30pm

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VIV McLEAN piano RICHARD BALCOMBE conductor
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Friday 25 May 7.30pm

JOSEPH CALLEJA

The celebrated Maltese tenor returns to the UK with a selection of his favourite arias and songs including:

- Verdi *Celeste Aida* from *Aida*
- Verdi *Ah, si ben mio* from *Il trovatore*
- Puccini *E lucevan le stelle* from *Tosca*
- Massenet *Pourquoi me réveiller* from *Werther*



Andrew Greenwood conductor
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Gaz Coombes

O2 Institute, Birmingham, Mon 21 May

Supergrass frontman Gaz Coombes is embarking on a series of UK headline dates this month in support of his third solo album, *World's Strongest Man*. Released on 4 May, the record is inspired by, amongst other things, Grayson Perry's *The Descent Of Man*, Frank Ocean's *Blonde*, Californian weed, British woodlands, unchecked toxic masculinity and hip-hop.

"I shot the *Deep Pockets* video on a shoestring, mostly in LA at the end of 2017. The idea came from the lyrics and memories of weird night drives over the years - a never-ending car journey laced with paranoia, intermittent hallucinations and unexpected car pooling.



Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds

Arena Birmingham, Tues 1 May

Here's a man who requires no introduction. Having now released three chart-topping albums under the solo moniker of Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds, the former Oasis lead guitarist brings his *Stranded On The Earth* world tour to the second city this month. For those not in the know, the band's name is taken from the 1963 song *High Flying Bird*, a number most famously recorded by psychedelic '60s band Jefferson Airplane.



Josh T Pearson

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Wed 16 May

"In the last years, I learned to dance, take drugs, make love... choose life," explains American musician Josh T Pearson. "I got rid of the beard, cut my hair and started wearing colour. I burned down all my idols and realised in the process that I needed to burn my reputation."

Described as 'the greatest male vocalist of our time' by Elbow's Guy Garvey, Pearson has released two solo albums since his work with critically acclaimed band *Lift To Experience*. He visits Birmingham following the release of new record *The Straight Hits!*.

Echo And The Bunnymen

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sat 26 May

Echo And The Bunnymen's new studio album, *The Stars, The Oceans & The Moon*, sees them revisiting, rearranging and transforming some of their greatest songs.

"I'm not doing this for anyone else," explains Ian McCulloch. "I'm doing it because it's important to me to make the songs better. I have to do it."

The band, still led by McCulloch and Will Sergeant, are bringing their dark, swirling fusion of post-punk and Doors-inspired pop psychedelia to Birmingham as part of a national tour.



Bryan Adams

Genting Arena, Birmingham, Fri 25 May

The Ultimate Tour sees megastar Bryan Adams return to Birmingham to perform a set that features both new material and an array of hits from his extensive back catalogue. Expect old favourites including *Summer Of 69*, *(Everything I Do) I Do It For You*, *Can't Stop This Thing We've Started* and *Heaven*.

Scott Matthews

St Paul's Church, Birmingham, Sun 20 May



Scott Matthews' new record, *The Great Untold*, has been described as 'a masterclass in honesty, instinct and reflection', and is the sixth studio album by the Ivor Novello Award-winning singer-songwriter.

"It's a collection of songs that lots of people will relate to," says Scott. "It's a real mood-shift of a record. The songs always start from a personal angle, but listeners will hear them in different ways."

UK Subs

The Robin, Bilston, Thurs 3 May

With 2016 marking their 40th anniversary, UK Subs, led by 70-year-old Charlie Harper, represent the true spirit of punk rock. With a new lineup in place - of Charlie, Steve Straughan on guitar, Alvin Gibbs on bass and Jamie Oliver on drums - the band continue to entertain, enlighten and enthuse audiences around the world. Expect to hear classics from albums such as *Brand New Age* and *Crash Course*, as well as tracks from more-recent offerings *Yellow Leader* and *Ziezo*.



Lee Mead

James Rampton talks to Lee Mead about his new album Lee Mead – 10 Year Anniversary and his tour Lee Mead – 10 Years – The Anniversary Tour.

Looking back on the last decade, how would you encapsulate it?

I'm very happy with the way my career has gone. I don't feel that I have had to compromise along the way. I've been approached a few times to do reality TV and I love watching some of those shows, but I'm not sure I would do very well on something like I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! The idea of eating crocodile testicles is not on my agenda! Touch wood, I like to think that over the last 10 years I've made the right career choices.

When you won the role of Joseph on the TV show Any Dream Will Do, how did you feel?

Weird things go through your head when Graham Norton says, "The winner is..." I was thinking, "If I don't win this, I don't care because I've had the most wonderful experience." Then Graham said, "3 million people have voted."

Did it feel like fate that you won Any Dream Will Do?

Yes. If I may say so, it did feel like it was my time. Everything came together. Joseph was the first show I'd seen. It was my favourite show and had always been part of my life. I simply love performing it.

What will the show "Lee Mead – 10 Years – The Anniversary Tour" consist of?

I'll be doing more than 20 songs. I really believe in giving people their money's worth. I'll be doing the songs that have had an impact on me over the last 10 years - for instance, I'll be performing Maria from West Side Story which is one of, if not the, greatest musical ever written. I thought it would be really nice to perform my own take on that particular song.

You also have a new album out - tell us about the songs you have chosen on your new album?

Amongst the tracks are Dancing Through Life from Wicked, Hushabye Mountain from Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Close Every Door from Joseph, Bring Him Home from Les Miserables, and As Long As You're Mine, a duet with Rachel Tucker from Wicked. I loved working on the album.

Are you looking forward to reconnecting with your very loyal fans on tour?

Absolutely. Every singer needs that support. If you're lucky enough to have it, then it's fantastic. People come to see me from LA, Norway, Holland. There are about 400 of them who are hard-core fans. They come lots of times to every show I am in.

Now you're starring in Holby City. How did you land that role?

I was a guest in an episode of Casualty, playing Harry, a schoolteacher. Afterwards I got a handwritten letter from Oliver Kent, the executive producer. He wrote, "We were so impressed with what you did. You were such a gentleman on set. We'll keep our eye on you." I thought, "Yeah, you hear that all the time." But two years later, the producers asked, "Could you come and audition? We have a character called Lofty who we think might be up your street." Within two weeks, I was in Cardiff filming my first scene with Derek Thompson. He's a lovely guy and has become a close friend.

The opportunity to move over to Holby which is filmed close to London has been fantastic as it allows me to spend more time with my daughter Betsy. I see my life as a pyramid, and Betsy is at the top of that. I'm fortunate in that I have a very busy career. It's great to have work, but if ever I feel I'm not getting the balance right, I check myself and get back to the idea of the pyramid. Betsy always comes first.

.....
Lee Mead brings his 10 Years - The Anniversary Tour to Malvern Theatres, Worcester on Sunday 20th May and Palace Theatre, Redditch on Sunday 28th October.



Joseph Calleja & the CBSO Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 25 May

Malta's superstar tenor, Joseph Calleja (pictured), has been attracting comparisons with the young Luciano Pavarotti and boasts an impressive fanbase, a good number of whom will no doubt be making the journey to Symphony Hall for this mouthwatering concert. Alongside the ever-wonderful City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Calleja performs a programme featuring pieces by, among others, Verdi, Massenet and Puccini. Andrew Greenwood conducts.

Benjamin Grosvenor & Friends

Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 26 May

The winner, aged 11, of the keyboard section of the BBC Young Musician of the Year 2004 award, Benjamin Grosvenor is a still-rising star of the UK's classical music scene. The evening's programme features pieces by Schubert, Brahms and viola player Brett Dean, who also performs in the concert.



Michael Poll: Bach On 7 Strings

The Bramall, University of Birmingham, Fri 11 May



Bach's lute works in E major and E Minor for seven-string guitar are featured in this concert by the London-born Michael Poll.

"I was 14 when I started noticing special patterns in the music of Bach," Michael recalls. "Sequences. Cyclical progressions. Harmony. An approach to composition that mimics nature, using the Golden Ratio, Phi, as a guiding structure. The complexity and intricacy of Bach's music, and the years required to study and understand it, make it antithetical to the breakneck pace of modern life."

Orchestra of the Swan featuring Julian Lloyd Webber

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Mon 28 May

As well as being held in high regard for their championing of new music, having presented more than 70 world premieres, the Stratford-based Orchestra of the Swan are also much admired for their performances of works by such legendary composers as Berlioz, Brahms, Mozart, Strauss, Schumann and Vaughan Williams.

This latest concert sees them presenting a programme that features pieces by Elgar, Haydn and Vivaldi. Julian Lloyd Webber conducts, with cellists Jian Wang and Julian's wife, Jiaxin, also contributing.



Bruckner Orchestra Linz

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 6 May

Now under the baton of new chief conductor Markus Poschner, this long-established orchestra hails from Anton Bruckner's home town (Linz) and has garnered a worldwide reputation for performing the composer's work with a level of unparalleled insight.

This latest concert is one which any Bruckner admirer will want to catch, including, as it does, his majestic Eighth Symphony. Mozart's Haffner Symphony also features.



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 SUN 27 MAY 9PM
 SYMPHONY HALL



CAITLIN MORAN HOW TO BE FAMOUS
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 TOWN HALL



A CHANGE IS GONNA COME
 TUE 29 MAY 7:30PM
 TOWN HALL



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GRAHAM NASH AN INTIMATE EVENING OF SONGS & STORIES
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NOUVELLE VAGUE
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ALEXANDRA BURKE – THE TRUTH IS TOUR
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Chris Ramsey

Dudley Town Hall, Fri 18 May; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 23 May; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 25 May

As well as being a highly rated stand-up on the UK comedy circuit, Geordie boy and one-time Newcastle United supporter Chris (he can't be bothered supporting them anymore) has also developed an impressive telly career, appearing on shows including 8 Out Of 10 Cats and South Shields-set sitcom Hebburn. Gags include: "My venue for the Edinburgh Festival is a portacabin; it's literally a portacabin! I'm a Geordie, in a portacabin. I was going to call the show Auf Wiedersehen Pet Live".

Phill Jupitus

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 12 May; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Sun 13 May

Well known for the unusual spelling of his Christian name, his memorable surname (an anglicised version of the original surname Šeputis) and his impressively padded physique, Phill Jupitus is an actor, performance poet, cartoonist and podcaster as well as a stand-up comedian.

Phill was also a team captain on BBC Two's long-running music quiz Never Mind The Buzzcocks, his other work includes television's QI and BBC Radio Four's I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue.

He describes his latest touring show, Juplicity, as 'containing adult themes and situations, but delivered childishly'.



Simon Evans

The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-on-Trent, Thurs 10 May; The Glee Club, Birmingham, Tues 22 May

The late Caroline Aherne considered Simon Evans 'an absolutely brilliant comedian' - and judging by the popularity of his shows over the last few years, hers was by no means a lone voice in the wilderness.

Best known from shows such as The News Quiz, The Unbelievable Truth and Armando Iannucci's Charm Offensive, Evans is undoubtedly one of the most exciting and distinctive talents to emerge from the UK comedy circuit in recent times.



Suzi Ruffell

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 20 May

Gay, quirky and delightfully self-deprecating, Suzi Ruffell is making good progress in the challenging world of stand-up comedy. Presenting an unquestionably likeable persona, she imbues her act with an impressive dynamism - although critics point out that she'd probably benefit from developing a 'unique selling point'. As well as being a comedian, Suzi's also a writer, contributing to shows including 8 Out Of 10 Cats, The Last Leg and Stand Up For The Week.

Away from comedy, she lists her 'likes' as 'cooking' and 'those cats with no hair'.



The Indians Are Coming

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 14 May

This touring show features some of India's most accomplished comedians, with the Chuckle Singhs (pictured) acting as hosts for the night.

Performers include Jay Sodagar, who describes his act as "social conscience comedy", and Rahul Kohli, an up-and-coming Geordie Asian who combines fierce political satire with surreal storytelling.



Alfie Moore

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Sat 5 May

Staunch Sheffield socialist Alfie Moore is a master raconteur and a very funny man. He's also a serving police officer. Indeed, referencing his two careers, his website advises that 'if you would like to see Alfie live', your options are either to 'catch him at one of his gigs' or 'drive to Scunthorpe and park on a double yellow line'. Alfie made it to week five of ITV's Show Me The Funny back in 2011, and is a much-in-demand after-dinner speaker. Jokes include: "I'm in a same-sex marriage... the sex is always the same."



Shazia Mirza

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 11 May;
Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 26 May

Shazia Mirza is one of the UK's most creative female comedians - and she's a Brummie too! Muslim Shazia's not averse to treading a delicate line when it comes to her material. Her post-9/11 joke, "My name's Shazia Mirza - at least, that's what it says on my pilot's licence", marked her out as a comedian happy to balance on the very precipice of acceptable humour.

Other examples of her style and content in-

clude: "My parents really want me to get married. But Muslim men don't want to marry me because... I speak", and "My dad said if I went out with a black man, he'd burn me. Which would be good, because then I'd be black too".

Not to everyone's taste, obviously, but then which comedian ever could be?

Her latest stand-up offering is *With Love From St Tropez*, a show which takes a look at lies and truth, nudity and the periodic table, and the merits or otherwise of daring to wear 'more than dental floss on a French beach'...

Michael McIntyre

Arena Birmingham, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 May

For some, the very sight of Michael McIntyre is enough to make their blood pressure soar. For others - included among whom are those who ensure his tours are always a sell-out - he's one of the funniest comedians of the modern era. Like him or hate him, there's certainly no getting away from McIntyre - and with DVDs of his stand-up shows having sold in excess of three million copies, it's fair to assume he'll be popping up all over the place for many a year to come.

He's here making a Midlands stop off with his *Big World Tour*.





AN OFFICER & A GENTLEMAN

The iconic 1982 Richard Gere movie *An Officer And A Gentleman* has been turned into a touring musical. We speak to Jonny Fines, who gets to don that legendary white suit in the drama-packed production hitting Birmingham this very month...

What was the first musical you saw?

My dad was a teacher and took his school to see Jason Donovan in *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. I think I tagged along and saw that. I think it was in Leicester at DeMontfort Hall.

Was theatre a big part of your childhood?

My parents are both quite musical, plus I've got a sister who's in the industry. We always did acting and singing lessons, and my sister danced too. It all kind of went from there, really. When I was about 10, they saw something in the paper for *Oliver!* at the town hall in Loughborough, which is where I'm from, and I went and auditioned for it. I got the part and that's where it all started. After that, it was the only option for me.

What was your first professional acting job?

The UK tour of *The Sound Of Music* in around 2010, which, weirdly, Jason Donovan ended up doing as well.

Was that quite a nervewracking experience for you?

Oh god, yeah! I went to the School of Acting for three years, and they train you for auditions and to get a job, but you never expect it to happen so quickly. I was really lucky, as it was one of the first auditions I went to. Then I went back for a few recalls and finally ended up getting the phone call. There's nothing that can prepare you for the realisation that something you love doing is actually your job now! It was also quite nervewracking being thrown in with a lot of experienced actors. It was quite daunting for a lad of 21 who'd not done it before.

Did it teach you things you hadn't learned at acting school?

Oh yeah - 100% more. I'm sure any actor will tell you that you learn on the job. I most certainly learned a lot more in a short amount of time. I think college can prepare you for the auditions but not for the industry. You learn thick and fast with it.

Were you already aware of the story of *An Officer And A Gentleman*?

I knew the iconic theme. I knew of the white uniform and he sweeps the girl off her feet, and I think I'd seen a *Friends* episode where they referenced it. I didn't know the story, though. I actually workshopped the musical about two years ago when they first thought of it. Before the workshop started, I watched the film and can absolutely understand why it's such a cult movie.

Can you tell us a bit about your character, Zack?

Zack is fascinating. He's got a lot of pent-up frustration that he's held down for a long time. He's got a fractured relationship with his father - they don't really get on - and his mother died when he was very young. I think he's been repressing all of these feelings for a long time and goes to join the army. That's what he wants to do; he wants to fly jets. That's when he meets Paula, and it's the first time he's ever connected with a woman on

that kind of level. It makes him feel things he's never felt before, and feeling those emotions is strange for him. He starts as a bit of a loose character but becomes stronger throughout the journey.

Was it a challenge to relate to him?

Everyone experiences hardships in their lives; his were pretty individual. It's always hard approaching a completely new character that's got such a detailed past - so yeah, I did find it quite difficult. Luckily, we've got a wicked crew around us to help with all that. They take the time to help us bed it in and think about where we need to go. The script for the musical is written by Douglas Day Stewart, who wrote the original screenplay for the film. He's been here for the entire process and always helps out when needed. The part of Zack was originally about himself, so it was really helpful to have him there to give you the right answer.

How does the story in the musical differ from the film?

There are slight changes, small adaptations but nothing big. If you know the story of the film, it follows a very similar path. People want to see their favourite movie on stage, so we try to give them the story that they want to see. So yeah, there are slight differences but nothing major.

Have you worked with any of the cast before?

Yes, I've worked with quite a few of them previously. George Ioannides and Keisha Atwell I've worked with on Grease and Annie in the West End, which has just finished. I've worked with the production team a lot too: Nikolai Foster the director, George Dyer, Sarah Travis the musical supervisor.

How have you and Emma Williams managed to capture the romance in the musical?

Emma is so open and such a lovely person, as well as a brilliant actor. It's been so easy. We

talked about it all and spent a lot of time discussing how we feel comfortable in the part, and what we feel is the right way to go with it. It's quite an intimate time in rehearsals. When you spend that amount of time with someone, you just become comfortable together. It's such a strange thing. We had to do a photoshoot just after we'd met for the first time. You meet and they say, "Right, you're in love", and that's weird. Being open in that kind of environment is key, and Emma most definitely is. We went for it from day one and said that if something didn't feel right, we'd address it there and then. It's been amazing, and she's so great in the part too.

There are a lot of fantastic '80s hits in the production. Which is your favourite?

Toy Soldiers and Family Man, probably the least well known ones in the entire show! The arrangements that George Dyer has done are amazing. They have a bit of a darker twist so that they fit in with the narrative.

Why should people come to see An Officer And A Gentleman?

It's a brilliant night out. The story is brilliant. It's a tried-and-tested Oscar-winning film, and I've not met anybody yet who hasn't said what a great night they've had. I think if you go to the theatre to enjoy yourself, it's difficult not to enjoy this show. It's got drama, with rock hits, happiness and sadness. It ticks pretty much every box for a good night out; there's nothing else quite like it.

Do you enjoy touring?

It's interesting. I've toured and worked in places across the country quite a few times. It's nice to have a residency, but it's also nice to see the world, or, specifically, England. There are so many places I'm looking forward to returning to, Birmingham being one of them. They're just great cities. If you're not working there, you might not get to see them all. I have a four-week-old little girl, which

might make life a little difficult, but it's just something we have to adapt to. My partner and the baby will come to five or six venues, and I can commute a few as well. That's nice for them, too - that they can get out of the house and come to some nice places.

What challenges have you overcome in your career?

The industry as a whole is a difficult place. There are so many young people who want to do it for a living, but it's hard to get into. For instance, there's no job security. Once one contract finishes, you might not get another. The most difficult thing is trying to maintain a career that is constant. That's something that you're never prepared for. I remember when I got my first job, I thought I was set for life and I'd just keep falling into work. I thought it would get easier and easier, but it's not the case. You've really got to want it and keep working on your technique, and never let that drop. Being constantly employed is certainly a challenge. You've always got to learn new skills.

Looking ahead, are there any particular roles that you'd like to play?

I like creating new roles. Sure, it's brilliant when you go into a production that's been running for a long time, but for me, creating a new character - whether on TV or in the theatre - is what I like to do. So I think anything new is great. As long as I'm creating, I'm happy.

.....

An Officer And A Gentleman The Musical shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 15 until Saturday 19 May, and then at Nottingham Theatre Royal from Monday 23 until Saturday 28 July. Visit officerandgentlemanmusical.com to book tickets.

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An Officer And A Gentleman The Musical

Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 15 - Sat 19 May

An Officer And A Gentleman was the movie that really made a star of Richard Gere. Thirty-six years after the film hit the big screen, this high-energy musical version promises to win the movie a whole new

set of fans. Boasting unforgettable 1980s anthems including Girls Just Want To Have Fun, Livin' On A Prayer, Heart Of Glass, Material Girl and The Final Countdown, the show world premiered recently at Leicester's Curve theatre, and has proved so popular with audiences that an extra matinee performance has been added to its run at the Hippodrome.

Dr Jekyll And Mr Hyde

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
Tues 1 - Sat 5 May

Doctor Jekyll is not himself! Robert Louis Stevenson's classic gothic novella tells the tale of a brilliant but obsessive scientist whose sadistic alter-ego wreaks havoc across Victorian London.

This dark, twisted tale of love, redemption and the seductive power of evil stars Quadrophenia and one-time EastEnders favourite Phil Daniels as the man of science struggling to control his evil other-self...



Our Country's Good

The REP, Birmingham,
Wed 23 May - Sat 2 June



Nottingham Playhouse Theatre Company here team up with Ramps On The Moon - a consortium dedicated to integrating disabled and non-disabled performers and practitioners - to present a show about Australia's first theatrical production. In the late 18th century, a group of convicts and a young officer in a prison colony rehearse and perform a play, despite the very real possibility that their leading lady may soon be hanged...

Goldilock, Stock & Three Smoking Bears

The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham,
Wed 23 - Fri 25 May

This well-reviewed alternative comedy takes the much-loved fairytale about a blonde girl's run-in with a family of bears and adds in a liberal dose of inspiration from Guy Ritchie's 1990s gangster movie, Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels.

Blending songs and in-jokes with rude'n'racy humour, the show finds silver-tongued heroine Goldilock on the run from a pack of bears and a far-from-happy gangster.

Expect multiple plot threads and plenty of cockney chit-chat...





THE BAND
A NEW MUSICAL
BY TIM FURTH *with TAKE THAT*
With the Women from the 80's LET IT BURN

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From £19.50

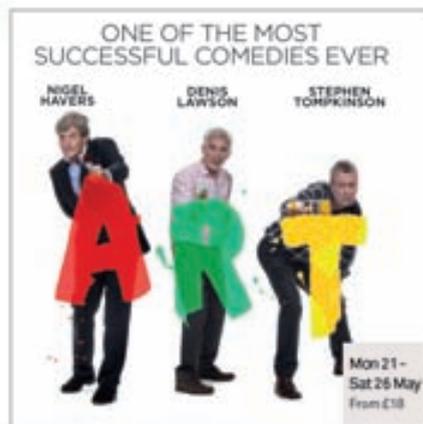


Love Will Let You Fly
An Officer and a Gentleman
the Musical

Tue 15 - Sat 19 May
From £23

ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL COMEDIES EVER

NIGEL HAVERS DENIS LAWSON STEPHEN TOMPKINSON

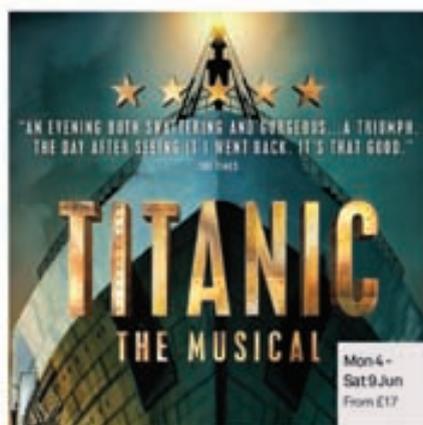


Mon 21 - Sat 26 May
From £18



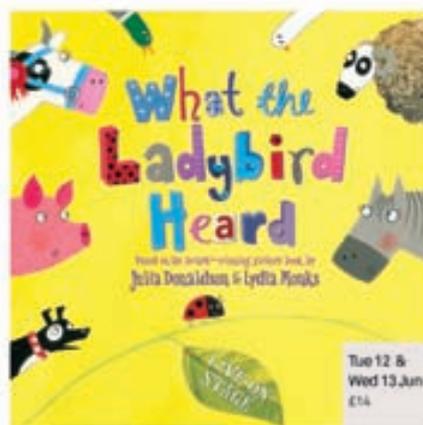
'PURE STAGE MAGIC'
STOMP

Tue 29 May - Sat 2 Jun
From £15



"AN EVENING BOTH SPARKLING AND GORGEOUS... A TRIUMPH THE DAY AFTER SEEING IT I WENT BACK, IT'S THAT GOOD."
TITANIC
THE MUSICAL

Mon 4 - Sat 9 Jun
From £17



What the Ladybird Heard
Based on the award-winning children's book by Julia Donaldson & Lyetta Monk

Tue 12 & Wed 13 Jun
£14

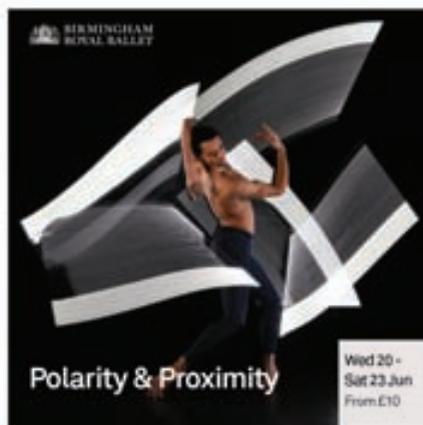
Elements of Freestyle
ISH Dance Collective



dx INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL

Thu 14 Jun
£15

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET



Polarity & Proximity

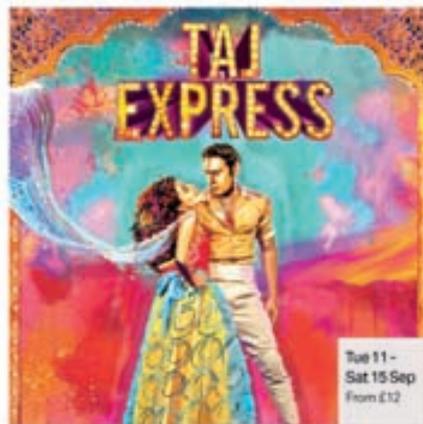
Wed 20 - Sat 23 Jun
From £10

RSC
THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY



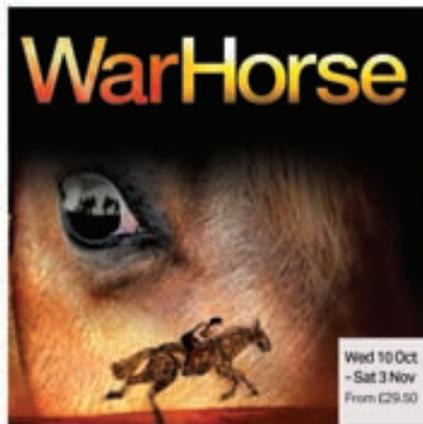
BRAD DAVIS
Matilda
THE MUSICAL

Tue 3 Jul - Sat 8 Sep
From £30



Taj Express

Tue 11 - Sat 15 Sep
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WarHorse

Wed 10 Oct - Sat 3 Nov
From £29.50

'CHUFFING BRILLIANT'
by Neil
THE FULL MONTY
BY SIMON BEAUFOY



Mon 5 - Sat 10 Nov
From £18



The Magic Flute

Following their critically acclaimed English language reimaginings of *La Bohème* and *Carmen*, the Olivier Award-winning OperaUpClose now take on *The Magic Flute* in an innovative new production headed for the Belgrade Theatre next month.

Running in Coventry for one night only, this innovative reworking of Mozart's much-loved flight of fancy uses new orchestration with electronic & urban sounds, stylish design and a poetic new libretto by Glyn Maxwell bring the story firmly up-to-date. Ahead of its arrival on Saturday 12 May, director Valentina Ceschi tells us more about what to expect from the production...

"Its youthful energy is exhilarating!" she exclaims. "For me it was all about harnessing this energy and bringing it to today's audience. We did an early R&D with some singers from a group of young people from Soho Young Company. It was important for me that this version of ours appealed to the new generation."

First staged at London's Soho Theatre, the production shifts between states of confused reality and disturbed dreams, recasting the hero, Tamino, as a young man dazzled by the world of the rich and famous. Invited behind the velvet rope at London's "most exclusive" nightclub, *The Queen of the Night*, he has little time for beggars, paparazzi, or even his girlfriend, Pamina.

At the end of the night, following a blazing row, the couple head to bed, only to relive the events and encounters of the evening in dreams made extraordinary by the lateness of the hour, their befuddled senses, and of course, a touch of magic.

"I always thought the story in the original was problematic," says Ceschi. "I don't think I've seen one version where I understood the plot or thought the characters' journeys really made sense. Setting it in a dream (or various people's dreams) meant we didn't have to solve all the problems in the original, but it solved a few and freed us up to have a bit of fun.

"In our version, just like in the original, there are forces of 'good' and 'evil' that play upon

mortals, manipulating them and their desires. In this version, our hero, Tamino, is drawn to the flickering neons of the night, attracted like a moth to the life of the rich and famous. In the original, Tamino finds true love at the end of his quest. In our version, he realises it was there all along, he just needed to think he'd lost it to realise how much it meant to him in the first place."

There could hardly be a better time to bring a show like this to Coventry. Recently named as UK's next City of Culture in 2021, the city's whole campaign for the title hinged upon its youthfulness, creativity and diversity – all very much in keeping with the OperaUpClose ethos.

If you're unsure about opera or classical music, this is a company that prides itself on the accessibility of its productions. Aiming to provide an entry point for even total opera newcomers, the company revitalise established classics to create visceral theatrical experiences that feel relevant to contemporary audiences from all walks of life. Just take Valentina herself as an example.

"I don't have any formal music training," she confesses. "I read music but not very well. I mostly rely on what I hear. I've grown up with a love and understanding of music from my family for which I am very grateful, but our big thing as a family was musicals like *Guys and Dolls* and *Singin' in the Rain*."

"I approach directing opera in very much the same way as directing theatre, making sure the storytelling is clear and the audience have a good time. There are more limitations in opera but those restrictions can be strengths and opportunities for invention and fun. I've learnt that the music, much like the text of a play, usually has all the answers you need. So when in doubt, go back to what the music is telling you."

"I would say, like Shakespeare, if done well, opera is no different to any other genre, and after that short shock of, 'Gosh, it's people singing instead of talking!' it feels very normal. I'd also say if you like musicals you'll probably like opera."

All this is not to say, of course, that there isn't plenty for opera enthusiasts to enjoy. This is still a high-quality interpretation of a classic by a hugely acclaimed company – one that aims to remain faithful to the composer's original vision, while at the same time offering established audiences a different way of looking at the work.

"People who know the opera really well already have a very particular experience. You can hear them recognising references and being tickled by the innovations we've made in our new version. It's like a spot the difference puzzle for them – they feel complicit in the process somehow, and it becomes a fun game."

In fact, as Ceschi herself argues, in some ways, there's a greater "authenticity" to this production than there is to some more high-profile operas nowadays. For one thing, the mischievousness of her direction and Maxwell's writing are very much in keeping with the irreverent spirit of a composer well known for his colourful personality. For another, opera hasn't always been the way we tend to imagine it today.

"I got involved with [OperaUpClose] a few years ago when I worked on reviving *La Bohème*. This production made me fall in love with the company. It was in a tiny theatre above a pub and part of it was even performed in the pub itself during the interval.

"I loved the intimacy and the impact the music and the singing can have when you are up close. Opera really started in much smaller spaces than the big opera houses, so there is also an authenticity to what we do. We aren't as radical as people think."

.....

The Magic Flute is at the Belgrade Theatre for one night only on Saturday 12 May. Tickets are available to book now by calling the box office on 024 7655 3055, or by visiting www.belgrade.co.uk, where prices are even cheaper



Crazy For You

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 8 - Sat 12 May

Just because Crazy For You plays to the old-fashioned strengths of the great American musicals doesn't mean that it's a tired, dated period piece. Quite the opposite, in fact. Indeed, even audiences with a painful aversion to hearty women in gingham dresses, grinning tap

dancers and people who want to 'do the show right here', will be won over by the hit musical's tongue-in-cheek charm.

Based on George and Ira Gershwin's original *Girl Crazy*, the show's masterful score features some real all-time greats, including *I've Got Rhythm*, *Embraceable You* and *Nice Work If You Can Get It*. Tom Chambers and Claire Sweeney star.

The Magic Flute

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Sat 12 May



Mozart's final masterpiece tells the story of two young lovers who, on a perilous journey through a mysterious land of sorcerers and magic, find themselves being assisted by a curious cosmic character who dresses as a bird... The production is being presented by the award-winning OperaUpClose, a talented ensemble who've been garnering plaudits like they're going out of fashion since bagging a coveted Olivier Award back in 2011.

The Damned United

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sun 20 May;
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 21 May;
The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent, Thurs 7 June

A brilliant turn from Michael Sheen as Brian Clough in the film version of David Peace's clever novel was somewhat undermined by the curious decision to cast chubby-looking actors as Leeds United's legendary footballers.

Red Ladder Theatre Company, producing this touring stage adaptation in association with West Yorkshire Playhouse, will be hoping to avoid any such unwelcome distractions. Clough famously hated Leeds United, and Leeds United famously hated Clough. So the decision in the summer of 1974 to make him their manager was not only a curious one but also doomed to failure. This is the story of his 44 days in charge...



The Complete Works Of Shakespeare (Abridged)

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 11 May; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 8 June; The Old Rep, Birmingham, Tues 24 - Sat 28 July

Now if you feel you really should pay heed to the works of the world's greatest ever playwright but just don't fancy hour upon hour spent listening to some terribly earnest actors thee-ing and thou-ing in your general direction, then this is the show for you!

All of Shakey's 37 plays are covered in the blink of an eye, allowing you not only to become very learned very quickly, but also to get down the pub in time for last orders!

Love, Bombs And Apples

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Mon 21 - Tues 22 May

Award-winning playwright Hassan Abdulrazzak's new one-man comic play focuses on four men from different parts of the world, all of whom are experiencing a moment of revelation in their lives... The show scored a big hit at last year's Edinburgh Festival, and visits the Midlands as part of a UK tour.

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WHAT THE LADYBIRD HEARD

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STEPHANIE POWERS AND CLIVE FRANCIS
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ROOSE-EDGARS
RICHARD BEEBON

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GRAND MUSIC HALL

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IAN ADAMS
JULIE PATON
ANDREW ALLEN
ANDREW ALLEN
ANDREW ALLEN

WED 6 JUNE

THE DREAMBOYS

DREAMBOYS

THU 7 JUNE

THE LADYBOYS OF BANGKOK

The Lady Boys of BANGKOK

FRI 8 JUNE

BOWIE EXPERIENCE THE GOLDEN YEARS TOUR

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SAT 9 JUNE

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Directed by RAY McVAY

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STARRING COOPERATION STREET AND BROADWAY'S
HAYLEY TAMADDON

Winner of 6
TONY AWARDS
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A WORK OF ART

Diane Parkes chats to Denis Lawson ahead of Art arriving at the Birmingham Hippodrome



The play Art was a huge hit in the late 1990s into 2000. Written by Yasmina Reza and first performed in France, it was translated by Christopher Hampton and opened on London's West End in 1996 to huge acclaim and a string of awards.

It features three men who have been friends for 25 years but whose friendship is suddenly rocked by one piece of art. When Serge buys a huge white canvas, he expects Marc and Yvan to share his appreciation but is shocked to discover they don't like it.

So much so that what begins as a discussion over a painting soon descends into a full-on argument in which all the hurts and slights of their decades of friendship bubble to the surface.

It's been nearly 20 years since Art last came to Birmingham but it's now on tour again with a cast featuring Nigel Havers as Serge, Denis Lawson as Marc and Stephen Tompkinson as Yvan.

And Denis is the first to admit that although he loves the play he's not so sure the character of Marc is very loveable.

"Marc is a pain in the neck," laughs Denis before trying to explain his character's behaviour. "Marc is quite highly strung, I feel, a bit neurotic, intelligent and a little bit out there.

"But first of all, we have to remember that it's originally a French play so the characters are French and Parisians. Marc thinks of himself as an intellectual and in France that is a very particular thing with so-called intellectuals held in very high regard. So Marc has this thing about himself as an intellectual and he's very particular.

"The play is very much about the relationship these men have, this 25-year friendship, and because his great friend Serge buys a work of art which Marc disapproves of, they have this massive crisis of their friendship."

And the differences in their characters emerges as the drama progresses

"It's interesting that this is a play about male friendship written by a woman," Denis observes. "In terms of the context of the play their relationship feels very real.

"It's a very natural piece in a lot of ways. I mean how do we all view things? We all view objects or so-called works of art in different ways. From movies and plays to sculpture and art, we have different views on it depending on who we are. That's part of being human.

"Art very engrossing. It's not a long play, it's about an hour and 20 minutes, but for actors it's really very intense and full-on but also very funny. It just draws you right in because the writing is so good."

Denis, first saw Art on the West End in the 1990s when the roles were played by Albert Finney, Tom Courtenay and Ken Stott.

"I saw the play when it was first done and I thought it was wonderful then," says Denis. "It never occurred to me that I might be in it though. But that's what I love about this career, things come at you from left field and then you think 'yes, I really want to do this'.

"I had never actually sat down and read the play but when they asked me to do it I read it and I realised it was such a beautiful piece of writing. For me, it always stems from the script itself so it felt like a natural thing to do. Saying yes was a very easy decision to make."

Denis was also pleased to be working alongside Nigel Havers and Stephen Tompkinson.

"I knew Nigel Havers and Stephen Tompkinson and have a lot of regard for them both. I've worked with them both in the past – Stephen and I did a piece called Lucky Jim on television and Nigel and I worked briefly together on something called Brian Pern about an ageing rock band. In fact Nigel and I have gigged together – he was on keyboards and I was on bass!"

Nigel toured with the show in 2000 when he played Serge to Barry Foster's Marc and Roger Lloyd Pack's Yvan.

"Nigel has done this play more than anyone else in the world I think," laughs Denis. "And that's a tribute to the play. He just loves doing it. And I understand that. It's a blast to do, it's so satisfying."

Seventy-year-old Denis first began his acting career in 1969 and has played countless varied roles from Shakespeare to Star Wars over the ensuing decades. Taking the part of X-wing pilot Wedge Antilles, he was in the three films of the original Star Wars trilogy and has appeared in television shows including Robin Hood, Hornblower, Marchlands, New Tricks and Bleak House.

But despite a long career in theatre, television and film, the spring tour of Art is the first time Denis has been on stage in Birmingham.

"I've worked in Birmingham a lot with Pebble Mill. I did a few television programmes in Birmingham and I'm very fond of

Birmingham but I've never been on stage there so I'm looking forward to coming," he says.

"We get this constantly when we tour – we walk into these fantastic theatres we've not been into before. It's part of the interest in doing this, to walk into a new space every week – I'm really enjoying it."

The national tour began in February and Art comes to Birmingham Hippodrome on May 21-26.

"The response so far on the tour has been wonderful," Denis says "One of the pleasures of this play is that audiences really respond to it. It's so funny we always get a really strong reaction. Every night it's my character who starts the play and I just can't wait to get going - it's like getting onto a fast moving train."

"I hadn't been on stage for a few years now and I'm very pleased to be back on. And I've always had a thing about comedy. It was comedy which first drew me to want to be an actor – it was entertainers and comedians. So my favourite stage experience is comedy.

"To get up in front of 800 or 1,200 people and make them laugh a lot for an hour and a half is so satisfying. It is also quite hard though, I think comedy is the hardest thing to do because you have to concentrate so hard on keeping the timings and also keeping it realistic."

With a work of modern painting being the catalyst in Reza's play, the conversation turns to Denis's response to art.

"I have bought original art and sculpture although nothing to the expense of this particular work of art which is huge. I do have one big slightly abstract piece which I'm very fond of," says Denis. "Personally I quite like modern art. I go to a lot of different exhibitions which I enjoy a lot. I'm very drawn to the Impressionists and onwards from there."

But Denis says his response to art might differ from his character's.

"If one of my friends had paid a lot of money for a painting I would certainly say it was fantastic!" he laughs. "I would be very nice about it because what does it matter to me? I'm not going to go into someone else's house and say 'that's awful, what have you done?' I would never do what Marc does."

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Art plays Birmingham Hippodrome from Monday 21st until Saturday 26th May.



Thoroughly Modern Millie

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 22 - Sat 26 May;
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 26 - Sat 30 June

Emmerdale and Strictly favourite Hayley Tamaddon stars in this latest stage version of the hit 1967 film. Set in Manhattan during the Roaring '20s, the show tells the story of Millie Dillmount, a young woman who

arrives in New York from Kansas in search of wealth, excitement and a man to marry. Deciding to stay at the Hotel Priscilla, she meets its proprietor, the eccentric Mrs Meers, before embarking on a series of riotous and not altogether planned adventures, all of which are pleasingly punctuated by dazzling musical numbers and stunning dance routines.

Monty Python's Spamalot

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
Tues 15 - Sat 19 May



This award-winning rip-off of classic 1975 movie Monty Python And The Holy Grail continues to delight Python fans across the globe. Telling the tale of King Arthur and his hapless Knights of the Round Table as they head out on a quest for the elusive Holy Grail, the show is written by Python legend Eric Idle and bagged the Tony Award for best new musical back in 2005. Expect misfit knights, killer rabbits, dancing

nuns and ferocious Frenchmen, not to mention a mainly new score co-written by Idle that includes Life Of Brian classic Always Look On The Bright Side Of Life.

Hound Of The Baskervilles

Stafford Gatehouse, Tues 15 - Sat 19 May

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes is one of literature's most enduring characters, The Hound Of The Baskervilles his most famous adventure. Yet no matter how many actors don the deerstalker and solve the mystery of the monstrous moorland beast, the story remains a popular choice for both stage and screen adaptation.

This latest version offers another always-welcome opportunity to return to the lonely wasteland of the desolate moors...

Love From A Stranger

New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham,
Tues 15 - Sat 19 May

With highly acclaimed versions of Gaslight and Dial M For Murder under her belt, direc-

tor Lucy Bailey once again takes up the reins, this time to present a little-known work by Agatha Christie and Frank Vosper.

A whirlwind romance sees Cecily Harrington recklessly abandoning her old life to settle in the remote and blissful surroundings of a country cottage. But this being an Agatha Christie story, all is not quite as it seems... Edges of your seats for this one, ladies and gentleman, and brace yourself for a typically Christie 'twist in the tail'.



What The Ladybird Heard

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 23 - Thurs 24 May; Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 12 - Wed 13 June

This stage adaptation of the book by Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks finds Hefty Hugh and Lanky Len attempting to steal the farmer's prize cow. But the pair soon find out that the best-laid plans of mice and crafty robbers can sometimes be undone by the tiniest and quietest of creatures - in this particular case, one very small ladybird...



Sarah & Duck's Big Top Birthday

Swan Theatre, Worcester, Sun 13 May; The Old Rep, Birmingham, Mon 14 - Tues 15 May

Young fans of BAFTA award-winning CBeebies programme Sarah & Duck are sure to cry fowl (geddit?) if you fail to take them along to this live version of the show.

Puppetry, storytelling and music are imaginatively combined as seven-year-old Sarah and her somewhat manic companion set out on another adventure. This one sees them planning a birthday party for Scarf Lady, ably assisted in their endeavours by fabulous friends The Ribbon Sisters, The Shallots, Flamingo & John and Umbrella.

A Heart At Sea

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 23 - Sat 26 May

Original songs, 'stunning' visuals, echoing soundscapes, tiny boats, performing puppets, salty sea captains and great big beards are all combined to excellent effect in this whale of a tale from the ever-impressive Half A String theatre company.

Running for 50 minutes and suitable for youngsters aged seven and older, the show tells the story of a boy who bottles up his heart and throws it into the sea...

Pinocchio

Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Sat 26 May - Sat 9 June

The legendary tale of the wooden boy with a disappointing propensity for telling porky pies - to the detriment of his fast-growing proboscis - is here presented by Blue Orange Arts. Toymaker Geppetto wants a son, and is granted his dearest wish by the Blue Fairy (well, kind of!) in the form of Pinocchio. Problem is, Pinocchio is a magic boy puppet without any strings. To become a real boy, he must show kindness, bravery, loyalty and honesty - all of which is easier said than done when all he really wants to do is have fun with his friends...

Mr Silly Pancake And The Land Of Cake & Biscuits

MAC, Birmingham, Sat 26 - Sun 27 May

The title says it all: Mr Silly Pancake pays a visit to the Land of Cake & Biscuits. And your youngsters are invited to join him.

Original music and puppetry are combined in a show that sees our hero and his young audience visiting Jelly Fields, Marshmallow Castle and Milkshake River.

Let's just hope the sugar police aren't visiting MAC over the weekend!



Hoot Owl: Master Of Disguise

Stourbridge Town Hall, Sat 12 May

Yet another kids' theatre company that understands the merit of combining original songs with colourful puppets, Proon Productions here tell the twit-twoingly splendid tale of a hoot owl who fancies himself a master of disguise, using clever camouflage to conceal his real identity from the tiny animals he plans to greedily gobble up.

The only problem is, there's a possibility he's not quite as clever as he thinks he is... Suitable for children aged four-plus.

Dinosaur World Live

Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 19 - Sun 20 May
The Place In The Park, Telford, Shropshire, Tues 7 - Wed 7 August

Not surprisingly being advertised as a 'dino-mite' adventure, Dinosaur World Live provides audience members with the chance to meet a host of impressive creatures - including, of course, every child's favourite flesh-eating giant, the Tyrannosaurus Rex.



Ready Steady Whatever The Weather

Birmingham Hippodrome, Sat 30 June

Award-winning theatre company M6 are the talented people behind this humorous and highly visual production for the very young. A 2016 Off West End Theatre Awards winner, the show focuses on the little man and woman who inhabit 'a weather house that sits on a quiet wall', along the way asking the question, what would happen if they magically came to life?

Horrible Histories: More Barmy Britain

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 30 May - Sat 2 June

If you love the Horrible Histories series - and why the heck wouldn't you?! - then the Barmy Britain shows are well worth catching. Alongside providing answers to such searching questions as 'what would happen if a Viking moved in next door?' and 'would you stand and deliver to dastardly Dick Turpin?', the shows also invite their audience to escape the clutches of Burke & Hare, move to the groove with the partying Queen Victoria and prepare to do battle in the Great War. In short, and as their publicity says, they are truly horrible histories of Britain - 'with all the nasty bits left in!'



FEELING GREEN

Amelia Lily joins the cast of the smash-hit musical Shrek

What do you hope to bring to the role of Princess Fiona?

So many incredible females have taken on the role and have put their own stamp on it and I'd love to do the same. I'm quite young, only being 23, so I definitely want to bring a young essence to the part and just have fun with it.

What do you think the musical offers that the film doesn't?

You really feel like you're a part of the stage production. The beauty of Shrek is that it's suitable for anyone of any age but when you go and watch something live, you feel more involved and, as an audience member, it's so important to feel like you're a part of the show.

You've been on tour as both a musical theatre performer and as a solo artist, what do you most and least enjoy about touring?

My least favourite part is travelling! Travelling tires you out and when you're doing eight shows a week, the last thing you want to be is tired. Saying that, I find touring really exciting because you get to see all these different places around the country.

If you could play any other character in the show, who would you want to play?

It would have to be Donkey. When I was younger, he was always my favourite in the film, with Eddie Murphy bringing so much humour to the character. I've been quoting his scenes since I was a little girl so it would definitely have to be him. I've known Marcus for years who's playing Donkey on the tour, I'll have to ask him one day if he wants to swap roles one evening!

How does it feel to be joining the tour of Shrek the Musical?

Shrek is such an upbeat and energetic show and I'm really looking forward to it because it's so iconic. Shrek is famous all around the world and to step into a role like Princess Fiona is just amazing. It's a dream come true for me and I think I'm going to have such a laugh on stage.

Was a stage career something you ever envisaged after your success on the X Factor?

Before I entered the X Factor, I was looking to go to drama school so a stage career was always on the cards. The fact that the X Factor happened was a blessing in disguise as it got my foot in the door and gave me so many opportunities. Now, to be able to go down the route that I always planned has just been incredible. This is my fourth musical and I'm very grateful I was able to do both music and musical theatre.

How would you describe the show to someone who hasn't seen Shrek on stage before?

If you want to go to the theatre and leave with a smile on your face and have a blast all the way through, then this is the show for you. You don't even have to be a Shrek fan - it's an amazing piece of theatre, and I've never heard a soundtrack like it. It's one of my favourite musical theatre soundtracks and it appeals to all ages.

What's your favourite moment or song in the show and why?

The first time I heard 'I Think I Got You Beat' I couldn't stop laughing because Princess Fiona and Shrek have a burping and farting competition. I was in hysterics and, to be

quite honest, I don't know how I'm going to do that without laughing on stage, so that's definitely one of my favourite songs. I love the whole soundtrack and I think it's very rare to love every song equally.

Why should everyone come and see Shrek the Musical?

We've got an incredible cast and I feel so lucky to be working with them and the director, Nigel Harman. It's a great company with so much talent and so much joy as well. This is such a big show and for me, it's a dream come true. I can't wait to get on the road and have the best time.

Do you have any other projects in the pipeline?

Shrek is taking up most of my time from now until the end of the year. No doubt I'll start a Christmas panto at the end of the year but this is definitely my main priority right now.

What drew you to the part of Princess Fiona?

What I love about Princess Fiona is that she is not your average princess. She wears the iconic green dress but still has this tomboy element to her character which I relate to. I remember watching Shrek for the first time and loving her unpredictable nature. Shrek is not your average fairytale yet it's set in this fairytale land with lots of famous fairytale characters. I would definitely say I'm like Fiona in many ways and I can't wait to wear a princess frock every night AND burp on stage!

.....
Amelia Lily stars as Princess Fiona in Shrek The Musical, which will be at the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent from Wednesday 2nd - Sunday 13th May



UNDER THE SEA

Discover what lies beneath the water's surface at
Birmingham's National Sea Life Centre





Merlin Entertainment owns some of the biggest and best attractions the UK has to offer, including Thorpe Park Resort, Shrek's Adventure! London, Alton Towers, Chessington World of Adventure and Legoland Windsor, to name but a few.

It also owns Birmingham's National Sea Life Centre, which opened in 1996.

Located near the city's Brindleyplace, the venue houses more than 2,000 species from around the world and contains a one million litre ocean tank! Money is regularly invested in the attraction, the aim being to add at least one new exhibit annually. But doing so is a tall order. In 2014 the venue acquired the popular Penguin Ice Adventure. Costing £2million to build, the exhibit is home to 18 Gentoo penguins. Last year's new addition was Octopus Hideout, featuring Beverly, the venue's resident Giant Pacific Octopus.

Exciting new exhibits for 2018 include the interactive Piranha Tunnel and Jelly Invaders. The latter features a variety of breeds from across the world, including the moon jellyfish, the fascinating upside-down jellyfish and the ghost-like Atlantic sea nettles.

Both new areas are included within the general admission fee. The only additional

cost is an optional one - a behind-the-scenes tour that's well worth the money for the extra sights you're shown and the expert knowledge provided by a tour guide.

There's so much for the whole family to enjoy. People are advised to book their tickets in advance (particularly during weekends and school holidays) and to allow at least two hours to get the most out of the attraction.

Visitors can venture through the UK's only fully transparent 360-degree underwater tunnel, along the way enjoying views of 40-year-old Molokai the Giant Sea Turtle and a Bowmouth Guitar Shark, an attention-seeking diva called Beyonc-ray!

The centre dedicates a lot of time and hard work to its Breed, Rescue And Protect conservation project. This includes running programmes to help sustain endangered species, nursing sick creatures back to health before returning them to the wild, and campaigning to protect the marine environment from exploitation or destruction. There's currently a tank in the Jelly Invaders area which houses nothing other than a number of plastic bags. This is to highlight just how much these bags can look like jellyfish, and the danger they can cause to underwater creatures who mistake

them for their food.

Other National Sea Life Centre highlights include the 4D cinema, the zebra shark in Shark Lagoon, the Clownfish Kingdom tunnel - a favourite with children who like Disney's Finding Nemo - and the UK's only tropical Ocean Tunnel, featuring darting sharks, gliding rays and rescued turtles.

There's so much that goes into the upkeep of the centre. Every fortnight, a fresh batch of sea water is brought up from the South Coast, and every three months, a new shipment of seaweed arrives. The cleaning and maintenance of the tanks happens sporadically during visiting hours. Likewise, there are allotted feeding times during the day, so if you want to see the inhabitants dining, plan your visit with this in mind. The centre also has a soft play area for children to enjoy.

Curator Jonny Rudd has been at the centre for just under a year and has a great many plans for the venue. Although most of these remain under wraps. Watch this space for news of more exciting developments!



For more information and to book tickets, visit visitsealife.com/birmingham



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Photo: Frank Threlking



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BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL

For the full festival programme,
1-24 June, see bidf.co.uk

ATOMOS

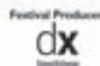
Company Wayne McGregor
Fri 1 & Sat 2 June
New Alexandra Theatre



ELEMENTS OF FREESTYLE

ISH Dance Collective
Thurs 14 June
Birmingham Hippodrome

BOOK NOW at bidf.co.uk
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Celebrating Birmingham Year of Movement 2018



Windrush: Movement Of The People

MAC, Birmingham, Fri 4 - Sat 5 May

“This is an uplifting dance production that’s not only enjoyable,” says Sharon Watson, artistic director of Phoenix Dance Theatre, “but will shine a light on an important era of the history of black people here in the UK. It highlights both the struggles and good times the Jamaican community experienced during those early years.”

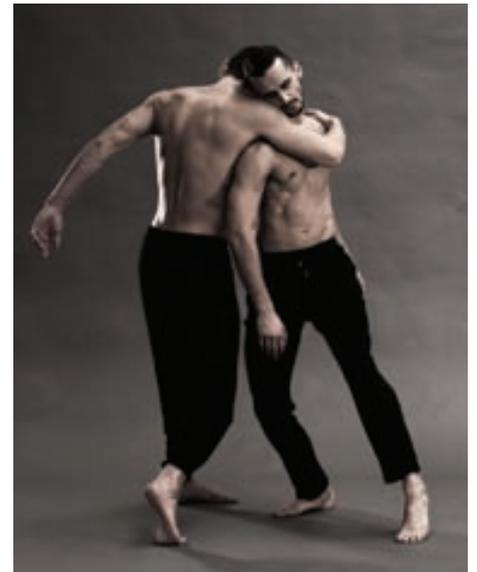
Phoenix’s contemporary dance piece celebrates the 70th anniversary of the arrival of the UK’s first Caribbean migrants, transported to the country on board the SS Empire Windrush. Presented against an uplifting soundtrack of calypso, jazz, blues, gospel and reggae, the piece is a lively celebration of the rise of multi-cultural Britain... The evening also includes performances of Calyx, by Sandrine Monin, and Shadows, by Christopher Bruce OBE.



Jasmin Vardimon Company: JV2

Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Wed 2 May

Founded in 1997, the Jasmin Vardimon Company tour both nationally and internationally, performing at theatres throughout the UK, across Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the United States. The company combine physical theatre and quirky characterisation with innovative technologies, text and (of course) dance, to create widely accessible, socially relevant art. This new triple bill sees work by the award-winning Vardimon presented alongside pieces by two highly rated emerging choreographers, Yunkyoung Song and André Rebelo.



Balletboyz: Fourteen Days

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 9 May;
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 14 May

Balletboyz is a company of male dancers who combine muscle with grace to present a distinctive style that fuses energetic dance with music and film.

This latest touring show features works created in the space of just 14 days by choreographers including Javier de Frutos and Craig Revel Horwood. The show also features the Russell Maliphant-choreographed *Fallen*, a work that won the National Dance Award for Best Modern Choreography in 2013.

Palmyra

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Tues 8 - Wed 9 May

The horrors of the conflict in Syria take centre stage in this thought-provoking new work by Bertrand Lesca and Nasi Voutsas. The pair have previously toured with Eurohouse, a playful and highly acclaimed satire on the European Union.

Moving gracefully from the humour of that earlier work to the tragic subject matter of this latest offering, the duo explore the notion of revenge and the politics of destruction. Along the way, they invite their audience ‘to step back from the news and look at what lies beneath - and beyond - civilisation’.



GET DANCING!

with Birmingham International Dance Festival



Artistic Director Lucie Mirkova tells all...

The sixth Birmingham International Dance Festival (BIDF) takes place next month, and for 24 days will be doing its best to get the people of the city up and dancing.

A programme of theatre performances will be supported by extensive outdoor activities - the majority of which are free - spilling out onto Victoria Square and other city locations. "We want to open up new and surprising ways for the people of the Midlands to experience dance," says Lucie Mirkova, Artistic Director at DanceXchange - the Birmingham-based dance house which produces the festival.

Well versed in every aspect of dance, this is Lucie's first festival in this role, having previously worked as Executive Producer for the company. Having "danced before I could walk", Lucie's passion for the art form shines through. "It's part of my life. Dance is an amazing experience. It gives you the freedom to express yourself in so many ways..."

Originally from Prague, Lucie founded a community dance company before studying choreography at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, going to work as a producer for dance company DOT504. Moving to the UK in 2010, Lucie pursued her love of dance from another angle, undertaking an MA in Arts Management & Policy before moving to Birmingham.

With Lucie at the helm and her 'partner in crime' Paul Russ, the festival's Associate Artistic Director, programming for this year's festival sees a shift towards a more international outdoor content, and more opportunities for people to take part. "We wanted to open up the dialogue between national and international practices, and BIDF is the perfect place to make this happen.

What's also very exciting is the Midlands made programme, new commissions and presentations created by artists living and working in the Midlands. This is about how we bring local artists together and nurture their talents."

Drawing audiences from across the Midlands

and beyond, the festival aims to show choreographic practice at its best, pushing the boundaries of dance as a contemporary art form. So what does Lucie think is the most adventurous aspect of this year's programming?

"New Creation, by Cecilia Bengolea & Florentina Holzinger, which hasn't premiered yet."

Described as a 'collaborative experimentation, reflecting on the interface of nature and the artifice of the human body', New Creation is a brave move for the festival, but one which Lucie is confident will pay off. "We know the artists previous work. Although they aren't too well known in the UK, they are internationally so it's very exciting."

Alongside UK star choreographers like Wayne McGregor (Atomos at New Alexandra Theatre, 1 & 2 June), audiences will enjoy a programme of work from numerous international artists. These include at The Patrick Studios an immersive virtual reality experience VR_1 from Company Gilles Jobin & Artanim (Switzerland); Guide, a dreamy audio visual experience by Vera Ondrasikova & Collective (Czech Republic) which fuses the past with the present; and at Midlands Arts Centre Only Bones, a display of physical buffoonery from the Kallo Collective (Finland/New Zealand).

Challenging preconceived ideas about what dance is, the programme also features performances that people might not normally associate with a dance festival. Take ISH Dance Collective, for example. The Dutch company brings Elements of Freestyle. Dominating Birmingham Hippodrome's main stage on 14 June will be four skating ramps which will be constructed and deconstructed in numerous formations while performers demonstrate their skills in breakdance, inline skating, skateboarding, freerunning, BMX, and freestyle basketball.

"It's a culture," says Lucie. "It's about breaking barriers and realising that dance can be many things."

For 10 days Victoria Square in the heart of the city will be transformed to create a fresh and vibrant festival vibe, with a wonderful pro-

gramme of exciting acts, activities and workshops suitable for any age with food and drink provided by local foodie favourites and live music each evening from Hare & Hounds of Kings Heath. The programme kicks off on 1 June with the first visit to the city of the incredible Morning Gloryville with their high-energy empowering morning sober rave suitable for everyone.

An event on the scale of Birmingham International Dance Festival doesn't happen without support from numerous partners. New additions to the partner programme for 2018 are Colmore Business District, as Festival Square Sponsor, and West Midlands Railway, who've jumped on board as Official Travel Partner.

"I think it's great that these big organisations see dance as a way to promote Birmingham as a destination, driving more people to visit our vibrant city."

Birmingham is increasingly recognised as a city that's good at delivering outdoor festivals which is very appealing for partners to be part of."

Before BIDF 2018 has even got off the ground, Lucie is giving thought to the next festival and beyond. "You're always thinking about future programming and making connections. It's surprising how long it takes to negotiate those big gigs. I'm already in conversation for 2020 and 2022, to tie in with the Commonwealth Games. I'm talking to people about work that combines sports with dance."

For now, though, it's all about 2018 and making sure that everything runs smoothly. Fingers crossed, then, that all goes well in terms of the one thing that festival organisers can't influence - the British weather.



Birmingham International Dance Festival takes place in the venues, streets and squares across Birmingham from 1 to 24 June. A programme of outdoor activities will take place at Victoria Square from 1 to 10 June. Visit bidf.co.uk for details

BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS...

IN THEATRES

Elements of Freestyle - ISH Dance Collective Thurs 14 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

Challenging the notion of what can be presented on a traditional stage, on 14 June ISH Dance Collective will bring vert ramps and extreme sports to the stage of Birmingham Hippodrome in Elements of Freestyle. A UK premiere, the show will feature a dynamic fusion of live music, dance and theatre with break dance, inline skating, free running, skateboarding, BMX and freestyle basketball. Age 8+



Atomos - Company Wayne McGregor Fri 1 & Sat 2 June, New Alexandra Theatre

Atomising bodies, movement, film, sound and light morph into miniature shards of intense sensation in a cutting-edge work by contemporary choreographer Wayne McGregor. Ten incredible dancers perform McGregor's unique style - sculptural, rigorous, jarring and hauntingly beautiful. 3D glasses are available to watch part of this cutting-edge show. Age 8+



Morning Gloryville - Fri 1 June, Victoria Square

Opening the Festival Square on 1 June is Morning Gloryville, the original morning ravers. The event, part exercise craze, and

part mass party, is a city premiere in collaboration with firm favourites from the local music scene and a big headline DJ, to be announced soon. Suitable for all ages.

Face In & Let's Talk About Dis - Candoco Dance Company Wed 13 & Thurs 14 June, MAC, Birmingham



Renowned contemporary dance company of disabled and non-disabled performers, Candoco presents a brand new double bill of dramatic and powerful choreography. Yasmeen Godder's new work, Face In, is loud, vibrant and intoxicating whilst Hetain Patel, the artist behind the TED Talk 'Who am I? Think Again', gets you thinking about political correctness in his playful and charming piece Let's Talk About Dis. Age 10+

VR_1 - Cie Gilles Jobin & Artanim Fri 1 to Mon 4 June, The Patrick Studio

A fun, unforgettable, immersive Virtual Reality experience. Ideal to share with friends and family. Tracked by an optical motion capture system, five participants at the same time become their own avatar, physically moving in a virtual environment, meeting five virtual dancers. Age 8+



OUTDOORS

The Midlands Made commissions will take over Victoria Square from 4-8 June, a new strand for BIDF 2018, with new commissions created by artists living and working in the Midlands including Andy Ingamells, Rebecca Randall and Mickael Marso Riviere. Age All (check individual shows for age guidance)



Family weekend at MAC, Birmingham, Sat 16 & Sun 17 June

Enjoy a host of performances and activities for all the family at Midlands Arts Centre on 16 and 17 June. TPO bring two amazing shows for the youngest dance fans including the magical interactive theatre experience *Kindur* which sees the audience take on the role of sheep and *Mini* bringing everyday situations to life through dance. The weekend also features work by Rosie Kay Dance Company, 2Faced Dance Company and Candoco Dance Company.

From Age 2+ (check individual shows for age guidance)



Victoria Festival Square

Victoria Square in the heart of the city is transformed for ten incredible days creating a fresh and vibrant festival vibe right on your doorstep. Expect the best outdoor national and international talent, constantly challenging perceptions and dance forms

with a lightness of expression and highly arresting and visually stunning performances from the funny and original AIR which sees four dancers perform dressed in inflatable latex suits to Simple Cypher's *Roll Up, Roll Up* which combines hip hop and circus.

ON TOUR AND UNUSUAL SPACES

DeepSpace - James Batchelor and Collaborators Fri 22 & Sat 23 June, Quantum Exhibition Space, The Works



Combining dance, sound and installation, *Deepspace* is a mesmerising, intimate performance that examines our curiosity for the unknown. Playing at the intersection of art and science, the body is taken to the extremities of remoteness and proximity, connectedness and isolation, certainty and uncertainty. This is an immersive work where the audience moves through the space with the dancers. Age 8+

Origami – Satchie Noro and Silvain Ohl - Fri 22 & Sun 24 June, location tbc

Watch out for the spectacular *Origami*, an elegant large-scale performance which will be wowing audiences at outdoor locations around the city between 22 to 24 June. Satchie Noro and Silvain Ohl, were inspired by the ancient art of Japanese paper folding to transform a 40-foot shipping container into a shape-shifting performance space. Age 5+



For all Birmingham International Dance Festival listings visit www.bidf.co.uk



DEADPOOL 2

IN LOCAL CINEMAS FROM 15 MAY 2018

Deadpool 2 CERT tbc

Starring **Ryan Reynolds, Josh Brolin, Morena Baccarin, Julian Dennison, Zazie Beetz, TJ Miller**
Directed by **David Leitch (USA)**

Nobody expected the original *Deadpool* (2016) to be such a huge success, but the self-knowing, violent and witty superhero movie accumulated an international gross of more than \$783million.

Ryan Reynolds returns as the irreverent Wade Wilson, the disfigured mercenary who recovered from cancer to become a mocking, sarcastic, self-healing crime-fighter. Here, Wade - aka *Deadpool* - rounds up a posse of mutants to combat the time-travelling cybernetic badass 'Cable' (Josh Brolin). Brolin, who plays the despotic Thanos in *Avengers: Infinity War*, has already signed up to play Cable in a further three *Deadpool* sequels. Let's hope the first film's fondness for British cultural references continues unabated.

Released Tues 15 May



EDITOR'S CHOICE

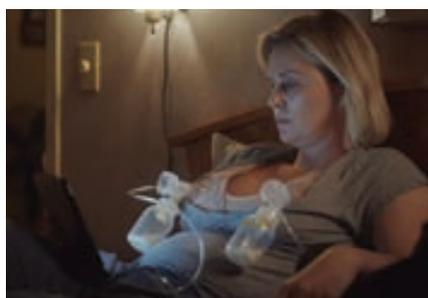
Film highlights released in May...

I Feel Pretty CERT 12a (110 mins)

Starring **Amy Schumer, Michelle Williams, Emily Ratajkowski, Rory Scovel, Aidy Bryant, Naomi Campbell** Directed by **Abby Kohn and Marc Silverstein (USA)**

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder and, following a fall, Renee Barrett (Schumer) believes she is a stunner. Thus transformed, Renee sets out on a new path of confidence and self-belief. Interesting premise.

Released Fri 4 May



Lean On Pete CERT 15 (112 mins)

Starring **Charlie Plummer, Chloë Sevigny, Travis Fimmel, Steve Buscemi, Steve Zahn**
Directed by **Andrew Haigh (UK)**

Shot in Oregon, this British drama stars Charlie Plummer as a restless fifteen-year-old who befriends the eponymous racehorse and decides to rescue him from the slaughterhouse. Adapted from the novel by the alt-Country guitarist Willy Vlautin.

Released Fri 4 May



Tully CERT 15 (96 mins)

Starring **Charlize Theron, Mackenzie Davis, Mark Duplass, Ron Livingston**
Directed by **Jason Reitman (USA)**

From *Diablo Cody*, the Oscar-winning writer of *Juno*, *Young Adult* and *Ricki And The Flash*, this promises much. *Tully* (Mackenzie Davis, from *Blade Runner 2049*) is a 'night nanny' who helps out the hard-pressed Marlo (Theron), mother of three. She is a gift from Marlo's brother... Expect a lot of laughs, and some tears.

Released Fri 4 May

Film highlights released in May...



Redoubtable CERT 15 (108 mins)

Starring Louis Garrel, Stacy Martin, Bérénice Bejo, Grégory Gadebois, Micha Lescot, Jean-Pierre Mocky Directed by Michel Hazanavicius (France/Myanmar/Italy)

From the director of the Oscar-winning *The Artist* (2011) comes another film exploring the rich canvas of cinema. Here, Hazanavicius focuses on the French filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard (Garrel), and in particular on his liaison with the actress Anne Wiazemsky (Martin), on whose memoir the film is based. Initially as playful and free with the grammar of cinema as Godard's own work, *Redoubtable* soon descends into domestic tedium as Godard renounces his earlier work

and searches for a more profound way to express his political angst. Thus, the director becomes cruel, selfish, insensitive, sour and ungracious - in short, an existential caricature. Stacy Martin is delightful as his young gamine wife and there are some amusing, meta moments, but not enough to relieve the ultimate monotony of this strangely petulant character assassination.

Released Fri 11 May

On Chesil Beach

CERT 15 (110 mins)

Starring Saoirse Ronan, Billy Howle, Emily Watson, Anne-Marie Duff, Samuel West, Adrian Scarborough
Directed by Dominic Cooke (UK)

When Florence and Edward fall in love during the summer of 1962, neither are prepared for the impact on their liaison that the sexual revolution will have.

From the 2007 Booker-nominated novel by Ian McEwan.

Released Fri 18 May



CRITIC'S CHOICE



Life Of The Party

CERT 12a (105 mins)

Starring Melissa McCarthy, Gillian Jacobs, Maya Rudolph, Julie Bowen, Jacki Weaver
Directed by Ben Falcone (USA)

When her husband dumps her, Deanna (McCarthy) decides to go back to college and ends up in her own daughter's class. College, Deanna realises, is wasted on the young... The producer-director is Ben Falcone, husband of Melissa McCarthy, with whom he co-wrote the screenplay.

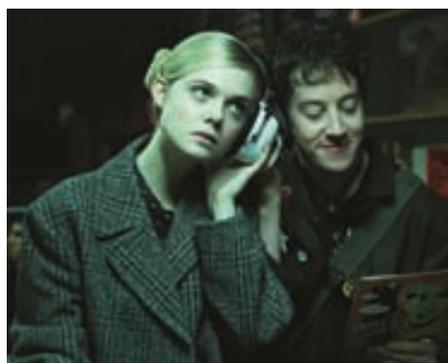
Released Fri 11 May

How To Talk To Girls At Parties CERT 15 (103 mins)

Starring Elle Fanning, Alex Sharp, Nicole Kidman, Ruth Wilson, Matt Lucas, Stephen Campbell Moore
Directed by John Cameron Mitchell (UK/USA)

An alien tourist, Zan (Fanning) finds herself stuck in the most dangerous place in the universe: Croydon in south London. Nicole Kidman plays the punk party animal 'Queen Boadicea'. Based on the 2006 short story by Neil Gaiman.

Released Fri 11 May



Sherlock Gnomes

CERT U (86 mins)

With the voices of James McAvoy, Emily Blunt, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Mary J Blige, Johnny Depp, Michael Caine, Maggie Smith
Directed by John Stevenson (UK/USA)

When certain garden ornaments go missing, Gnomeo and Juliet turn to the eponymous sleuth to help track down the culprit.

A sequel to *Gnomeo & Juliet* (2011), the cartoon is the first fully animated feature from Paramount Animation. The American reviews were not charitable, though. In 3D.

Released Fri 11 May

Entebbe CERT 12a (107 mins)

Starring **Rosamund Pike, Daniel Brühl, Eddie Marsan, Ben Schnetzer, Lior Ashkenazi, Denis Ménochet** Directed by **José Padilha (UK/USA)**

Rosamund Pike and Daniel Brühl take up arms to hijack the Air France Flight 139 from Athens to Uganda in the fourth film to chronicle the historic hostage crisis. Eddie Marsan co-stars as Shimon Peres under the direction of José Padilha (*Elite Squad, RoboCop, etc.*).

Released Fri 11 May



Breaking In CERT 15 (88 mins)

Starring **Gabrielle Union, Seth Carr, Ajiona Alexus, Christa Miller, Billy Burke** Directed by **James McTeigue (USA)**

Moving into her late father's Malibu mansion with her two children, Shaun Russell (Gabrielle Union) becomes the unwitting target of four career burglars. But you really shouldn't mess with Shaun... From the director of *V for Vendetta*.

Released Fri 11 May

The Cured CERT 15 (93 mins)

Starring **Ellen Page, Sam Keeley, Tom Vaughan-Lawlor** Directed by **David Freyne (Ireland/France)**

After the zombie apocalypse, a miracle antidote has rendered the cannibalistic harmless – or, at least, most of them. But the former zombies are finding it hard to re-adjust to normal life, particularly due to the pressures of prejudice and their own disturbing memories... The US reviews have been highly favourable.

Released Fri 11 May



Submergence CERT tbc

Starring **James McAvoy, Alicia Vikander, Ha-Keemshady Mohamed, Alexander Siddig, Alex Hafner, Charlotte Rampling** Directed by **Wim Wenders (USA/France/Spain)**

Two lovers find themselves in different parts of the world following a romantic Christmas together. As Danielle prepares to explore the ocean floor in a submersible, James is barricaded into a small room in Africa by jihadist fighters. Based on the novel by J.M. Ledgard.

Released Fri 18 May



Solo: A Star Wars Story

Starring **Alden Ehrenreich, Woody Harrelson, Emilia Clarke, Donald Glover, Thandie Newton, Paul Bettany** Directed by **Ron Howard (USA)**

The milking machine of Lucasfilm Ltd continues apace with this stand-alone instalment of the Star Wars saga. Alden Ehrenreich plays Han Solo as a young man, long before he joined the Rebellion and met Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia. The London-born Emilia Clarke plays Qi'ra, Han's romantic interest, following in the footsteps of fellow English roses Daisy Ridley and Felicity Jones. In 3D.

Released Thurs 24 May

The Breadwinner

CERT 12a (93 mins)

With the voices of **Saara Chaudry, Soma Bhatia, Noorin Gulamgaus** Directed by **Nora Twomey (Canada/Ireland/Luxembourg)**

Based on the children's novel by Deborah Ellis, this Oscar-nominated cartoon features Parvana, a young girl living in Kabul, Afghanistan, under control of the Taliban. In order to provide for her family, she disguises herself as a boy and sustains herself with the fantastical stories she invents. Executive produced by Angelina Jolie.

Released Fri 25 May



Show Dogs CERT PG (92 mins)

Starring **Will Arnett, Natasha Lyonne, with the voices of Ludacris, Jordin Sparks, Stanley Tucci, Alan Cumming** Directed by **Raja Gosnell (USA)**

Max is a Rottweiler who values his machismo reputation. But he's a police dog and when he's ordered to go undercover as a tarded-up show dog, he has to suffer the consequences. From the director of *Scooby-Doo and The Smurfs*.

Released Fri 25 May



John Piper

Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 1 May - Thurs 21 June

Official war artist during the Second World War, John Piper visited Coventry the day after the Blitz to make a series of drawings of the ravaged city, in particular of the cathedral and other gutted churches. He returned to Coventry in the 1950s, when he was commissioned, along with Patrick Reyntiens, to design a huge stained glass window for the city's new cathedral.

Given these strong connections to Coventry, it's entirely welcome but not at all surprising that this Tate Liverpool show - the first major exhibition of Piper's work since 2003 - is visiting Warwick Arts Centre.

The display also includes a number of the artist's idyllic images of pre-war rural Britain and a selection of his post-war romantic landscapes.

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Birmingham
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Provided by:
Birmingham City Council
Arts Council England
West Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership

Image: Roy Lichtenstein, 'Boy with the Flag' (1963), Tate, London. Photo: Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery



Mad King / Fat Knight

PACCAR Room, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 19 May - Sun 23 September

Wideley regarded as one of the finest stage actors of his generation, Sir Antony Sher has also made a considerable impact as an artist - and now, for the first time ever, the RSC is hosting an exhibition of his work. The Cape Town-born Sher has taken inspi-

ration from the rehearsal room and on-stage performances to create a visual account of his experiences as an actor. Featuring more than 40 pieces - bringing together large-scale oil paintings with drawings and doodles - the exhibition offers an insight into Sher's preparation for two of his most memorable roles: King Lear and Sir John Falstaff.

Miss Black And Beautiful

MAC, Birmingham, until Sun 1 July

An exhibition of photographs taken by the late Raphael Albert, *Miss Black And Beautiful* documents numerous black British beauty pageants organised by Albert from the late 1960s onwards. The pageants were a celebration of the 1970s' 'Black is beautiful' aesthetic, the most notable among them being the annual Miss West Indies In Great Britain contest.



Men Of The Docks

Barber Institute, Birmingham, until Sun 9 September

Despite his significant standing in the US, early 20th century painter George Bellows remains a relatively unknown artist here in the UK - a perhaps unsurprising fact given that there are only two of his paintings in British public collections.

One of them, *Nude, Miss Bentham*, is a 1906 artwork acquired by the Barber in 2015. The other, *Men Of The Docks*, painted six years afterwards and hailed for its radical urban subject matter, is currently on loan to the Barber from the National Gallery. The two paintings will hang side by side during *Men Of The Docks'* stay in Birmingham





DIPPY THE ROCK STAR!

After more than 100 years in London, Dippy the Diplodocus is travelling around the UK and spending the summer in Birmingham...

The Natural History Museum's iconic Diplodocus cast - fondly known as Dippy - is currently on tour, and as of 26 May he'll be on display at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG) for the second leg of his road trip.

Tickets to see Dippy are completely free, and there are extensive additional activities taking place during his stay too, including group sleepovers, curator-led tours and even an opportunity to 'dine with Dippy'.

Anticipation of his arrival is building around Birmingham, with more than 76,000 tickets already booked.

"People just love dinosaurs," says Gurminder Kenth, manager at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. "They're so fascinating; they're impressive to look at, and there's just so much to learn from them."

Some visitors may remember the much-loved papier-mâché T-Rex that used to be on display at the museum. With that in mind, Gurminder was keen to make sure that Birmingham was a stop-off destination on Dippy's tour.

Not only have BMAG had to meet the Natural History Museum's credentials to secure Dippy's visit, getting him into the exhibition space will be a significant task. At an impressive 21.3 metres long, 4.3 metres wide and 4.25 metres high, Dippy is expected to take nine days to install, with help from the Natural History Museum's own technical team. It may sound like quite a feat, but with everything having run smoothly in Dorset (the first stop on Dippy's tour), Gurminder doesn't have any concerns. In fact, she's confident that Dippy will look better at BMAG than he ever has before. "Here at Birmingham we differ from the Natural History Museum and Dorset County Museum in that we have a low roof, so I think Dippy will look much bigger and very impressive in our space."

But Dippy certainly won't be on his own in Birmingham. The exhibition in the Gas Hall

will be focusing on the idea of birds as living dinosaurs - as Lukas Large, curator of Natural Science at Birmingham Museums Trust, explains: "We'll be looking at the evolution of birds from their dinosaur ancestors into the animals that we see today, and encouraging people to look at birds in a different way, to get out into nature and engage with wildlife."

Thanks to funds from Friends of Birmingham Museums, BMAG was able to carry out the necessary conservation work on its bird collection, which hasn't been out on display for about 20 years. The birds will now be meeting their 'distant cousin' Dippy.

So it looks like BMAG is fulfilling the Natural History Museum's precedent in encouraging visitors to explore nature, and drawing attention to an array of biodiversity. "That's what's so great about Dippy's tour," adds Gurminder. "Each venue is able to put their own stamp on the exhibition. There'll be different interpretations and different storylines using Dippy, so there'll be a lot of learning throughout the whole tour, which I think is really exciting."

But with Dippy's stay at BMAG coinciding with the May half term and the summer holidays, there's limited opportunity for school trips and events. For this reason, the museum will be focusing on family programmes throughout Dippy's time at the venue. Visitors will have the opportunity to experience what it's like to be a palaeontologist in the giant sand pit, or enjoy fun activities in the Dippy Family Room.

But it's not all just for kids. Lukas himself will be giving tours of the exhibition, and there'll be additional talks from paleontologists Professor Richard Butler and Dean Lomax.

So what is it about Dippy that makes him so iconic? "He's been at the Natural History Museum for over a hundred years," explains

Lukas. "Generations of people have seen him and they always remember him." "It's like Dippy is a rock star," Gurminder adds, "and the people of Birmingham are so excited to see him."

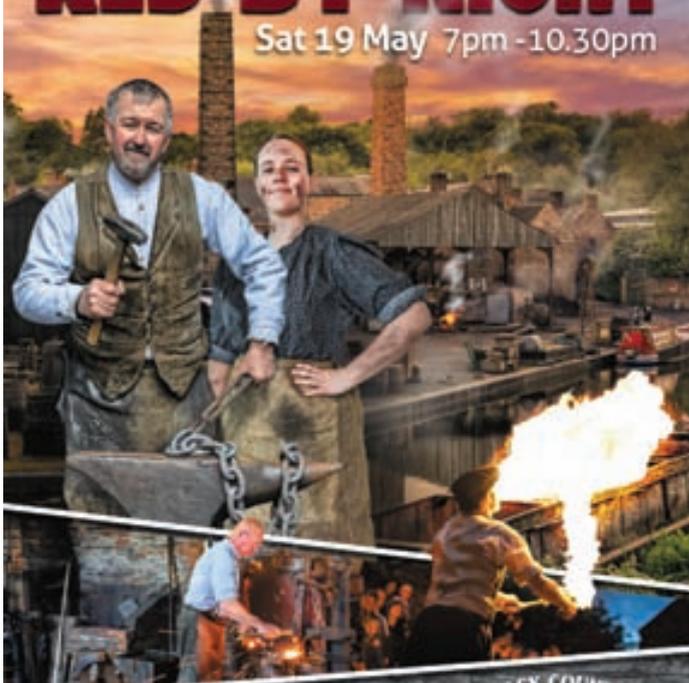
Since his time at the Natural History Museum, Dippy's had a makeover. Those who're familiar with the Diplodocus may notice a few changes, the most notable being his new hands. "The Diplodocus that Dippy is cast from didn't actually have hands when it was found," explains Lukas, "so examples had to be used from a different skeleton. But since digging up more Diplodocus skeletons, we now know what Dippy's real hands would've looked like."

And this isn't the first time that changes have been made to Dippy since his installation in the Natural History Museum. Previously, his tail used to lie flat on the ground; now it's raised, to reflect how a Diplodocus would have used it to balance. "The Natural History Museum used to keep spare parts when Dippy's tail was on the ground, because pieces kept disappearing," Lukas reveals.

With Dippy being such an impressive installation wherever he's displayed, it's hardly surprising that visitors want to take a souvenir home with them. So what does Birmingham have on offer for its Dippy-adoring public? "We're selling a Diplodocus pin badge online, and quite a few of those have already gone," says Gurminder. "There's also the Dippy cuddly toy, which is in high demand at Dorset, and we can't wait to get our hands on that!"

Dippy visits Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery from 26 May to 9 September. Tickets and more info is available at birminghammuseums.org.uk/bmag/what-s-on/dippy-on-tour-a-natural-history-adventure

EXPERIENCE THE MUSEUM AFTER HOURS
RED BY NIGHT
 Sat 19 May 7pm - 10.30pm



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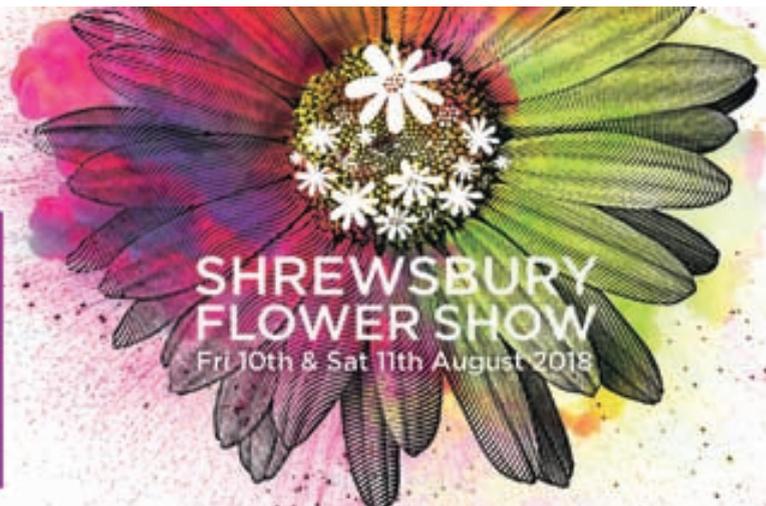
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Events previews from around the region



The Handmade Fair

Ragley Hall, Warwickshire, Fri 11 - Sun 13 May

Kirstie Allsopp's Handmade Fair makes a welcome return to Warwickshire after its hugely successful Ragley Hall debut last spring. Bringing together Britain's best handmade products, crafts supplies and artisan foods, the show also takes place at Hampton Court Palace, where it's already enjoyed four highly successful years.

Visitors to the Ragley show can learn how to make something for themselves or upcycle a piece they already own.

The show's attractions include the shopping villages, which are 'full to the brim' with handmade products of the highest quality and an impressive range of tools and materials.

There's also the Super Theatre, skills workshops and light creative sessions to enjoy, all hosted by some of the UK's most renowned experts.

This Morning Live

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 17 - Sun 20 May

Inspired by ITV1's This Morning programme and returning for a second year, this four-day lifestyle show features appearances by Phillip Schofield and Holly Willoughby (pictured), the presenters of the popular daytime television series.

The event boasts numerous lifestyle elements, including fashion & style, food & drink, home, gardening, pets, beauty, and health & wellbeing.

Commenting on the show, ITV's Daytime Managing Director, Emma Gormley, said: "With our fantastic presenting talent and the wonderful mix of content that we'll be taking on the road, this event promises to delight fans of the show across the country."



The Baby Show

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 18 - Sun 20 May



Sleep-deprived new parents would do well to call on their reserves of energy and get along to this popular show. Widely considered to be the UK's leading pregnancy and parenting event, The Baby Show brings together leading retailers and brands, includes one-to-one demonstrations and provides the opportunity to 'touch, feel and compare' items, enabling shoppers to make an informed decision about their purchases. The show also comes complete with a host of facilities to help you have a hassle-free day.

Oh, and on the Saturday there's a special live screening of Harry and Meghan tying the knot, meaning you can combine baby shopping with royal wedding watching!

We're fairly sure that if your baby could talk, they'd advise you to attend...

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Family Fun
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 Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum
 Blakesley Hall | Museum of the Jewellery Quarter
 Sarehole Hall | Soho House | Wesley Castle Ruins



Queen Victoria's Birthday

Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire, Sat 26 & Sun 27 May

While our current Queen is celebrating her 92nd birthday, the good folk of Blists Hill are putting out the bunting in honour of another long-reigning monarch. This year's birthday bash for Queen Victoria features a special parade (taking place on both days) and the chance for visitors to try their hand at a range of fun activities using Victorian techniques - candle dipping in the goods shed, anyone? A trip to the pub to toast Her Majesty and a tasty portion of traditional fish & chips should ensure you're splendidly replete as well as delightfully entertained.

Donington Historic Festival

Donington Park, Fri 4 - Sun 6 May

Donington Historic Festival is firmly established as a major fixture on the international historic racing calendar. Featuring hundreds of world-class racing cars, huge numbers of classic car club displays and a wealth of off-track entertainment, the three-day event is this month taking place for the eighth year.



Shakespeare Family Homes

Shakespeare's Family Homes, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 26 May - Sun 3 June

There's a fun programme of activities to enjoy at Shakespeare's family homes this half term. Visitors to Shakespeare's Birthplace can be drawn by a caricature artist (but with a Tudor twist!), while anybody attending Shakespeare's New Place can pass judgement on some of the bard's most famous characters, deciding whether they're a supervillain or a hero. Drop in at Hall's Croft if you fancy becoming a fairy or a sprite, while Anne Hathaway's Cottage is the place to head for if you'd enjoy making a bird feeder from recycled materials in the family activity tent. Mary Arden's Farm, meanwhile, is hosting Woolly Week, allowing visitors to try their hand at spinning wool and making a Tudor braid to take home.

Elizabethan Pageant

Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, Sun 6 & Mon 7 May

Queen Elizabeth I herself (not to be confused with our current queen, of course) will apparently be in attendance at this event. And why the devil wouldn't she be, given that it's being advertised as 'the ultimate party palace, featuring a feast of entertainment fit for the Virgin Queen!' Highlights include a colourful procession, impressive horsemanship, falconry displays and storytelling sessions.



Makers Central

NEC, Birmingham, Sat 5 - Sun 6 May

This brand new event for the maker community brings together crafters, inventors, hobbyists and artists. In attendance at the show will be maker stars from YouTube and social media, while visitors can also watch some top-class demonstrations, try their hand at making, purchase tools and equipment, and check out a range of beautifully handcrafted goods.



Droitwich Spa Food and Drink Festival



Saturday 16th & Sunday 17th June
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- Entertainment featuring local artists

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Shropshire Kids Festival The Quarry Park, Shrewsbury, Sat 19 & Sun 20 May

‘Education through fun’ lies at the heart of this high-energy festival, with plenty of arts & crafts events and workshops allowing children to get hands-on while they learn.

Other popular attractions include ‘a battalion of inflatables’ for youngsters to bounce around on, a monster obstacle course and some ‘not to be

missed’ foam parties.

Donkey rides, active storytelling, a chance to check out solar activity with the Shropshire Astronomical Society, and a sure-to-be-popular family circus - providing the opportunity to juggle, stilt-walk and unicycle - further add to a weekend of top fun.

Ludlow Spring Festival

Ludlow Castle, Shropshire, Sat 12 & Sun 13 May

Now in its 10th year, this popular festival ably illustrates why Ludlow is one of the country’s most reputable foodie towns.

The two-day event features more than 200 beers alongside an array of food stalls, with vendors offering delectable delights ranging from artisan flours to charcuterie, award-winning cakes, gourmet sausage rolls and local cheeses.

The Marches Transport Festival and a wealth of musical entertainment complete the weekend’s programme of attractions.



Telford Balloon and Kite Fiesta

Telford Town Park, Sat 12 & Sun 13 May

Weather permitting, a host of hot-air balloons will take to the skies at this month’s Telford Balloon & Kite Fiesta.

And Telford residents should be particularly vigilant on the Saturday night, when a number of balloons will be transformed into beautiful floating lanterns to create a special ‘night glow’. Acrobatic aerial displays with stunt kites and large-scale kites also feature at this year’s event. Balloon flights courtesy of Virgin will be available over the weekend. They are also offering discounted vouchers to purchase with TELFORD50 code until 31 May. Flights can be taken any time during the next 18 months.

Shropshire County Agricultural Show

Greenhouse West Mid Showground, Shrewsbury, Sat 26 May

An event that first took place in the late 19th century, the Shropshire County Agricultural Show is an annual celebration of the local rural community, highlighting the role it plays in people’s daily lives. Attracting thousands of visitors each year, the show boasts a wide selection of local produce and a range of live entertainment and music.

Castle Quest

Tamworth Castle, Staffordshire, Mon 28 May - Fri 1 June

If you’re a family of riddle-solvers who enjoy have-a-go challenges, Tamworth’s Castle Quest is definitely an event for you. Questers test their wits to unravel puzzles from the clues presented, then use the knowledge they acquire to finish the game. But that’s not the end of the challenge. The ultimate trial comes afterwards - namely, to walk the Quest grid blindfolded!

The Staffordshire County Show

Staffordshire County Showground, Wed 30 & Thurs 31 May

Staffordshire’s annual two-day county show makes a welcome return, complete with its usual eclectic mix of attractions and entertainment.

The main-ring programme of events features displays from the JCB Dancing Diggers, the Rockwood Dog Display Team and young farmers floats. Highlights elsewhere at the Showground include falconry, horse shoeing, donkey rides and sheepdog and duck displays.



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Malvern Spring Festival

Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 May

One of the venue's first major shows of the year, the RHS Malvern Spring Festival is described as 'opening the door to the summer season'. Visitors can enjoy a walk around the show gardens, gain inspiration from exhibitors in the floral marquee and access hints and tips via a range of talks and demonstrations.

Fascinating stats connected to the show include the fact that the festival site is the size of a staggering 40 football pitches, while on average visitors consume around 18,000 cups of tea and 6,000 pieces of cake every year. So if all that strolling around leaves you needing a breather, it's safe to assume the festival's light refreshments are well worth sampling - so many thousands of tea drinkers and cake eaters surely can't be wrong!

Georgian House Party

Aston Hall, Birmingham, Sat 12 May

Visitors to this event are being invited to 'party like a Georgian', as Aston Hall celebrates its 400th anniversary.

Highlights include 'exciting' sword fight duels, the chance to learn the art of fan flirting, an opportunity to experience what went on in coffee houses and an insight into the secret messages a beauty patch could convey.



First World War Activities

RAF Museum, Cosford, Sat 26 May - Sun 3 June

Half-term highlights at Cosford museum include a range of World War One-related activities. As well as the chance to gain an insight into the life of an RAF pilot during the Great War, visitors can take part in drop-in virtual-reality sessions, viewing the content of a World War One aircraft. There's also a 'spot the slang' trail to follow, highlighting the wartime use of slang by service personnel from different countries and backgrounds.



Red By Night

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, Sat 19 May

The Black Country Living Museum this month opens its doors after hours, to provide 'an atmospheric evening of industrial demonstrations, good food, living history and more'. Visitors to the Red By Night evening will be invited to step inside period houses and shops to discover how Black Country folk used to live. The event also features street entertainment and the chance to try the museum's 1930s-style fish and chips!



The Coventry Steampunk Carnival

Coventry Transport Museum, Sat 19 - Sun 20 May

A subgenre of science fantasy that reimagines modern technology powered by 19th century steam, steampunk is all the rage nowadays. So why not get along to this three-day event and find out what all the fuss is about. There's plenty of live entertainment to enjoy, including performances by the splendidly named Ichabod Steam And His Animatronic Band. Shopaholics, meanwhile, are sure to find something to their liking in the steampunk market.



Slam Dunk

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GOLDFINGER

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ZEBRAHEAD **COPDOWN**

SAVE FERRIS **King Prawn**

GREENMOUTH **TEMPLE ON PEK**

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BRUTALITY **LOATHIE**

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Your week-
by-week
listings guide
May 2018

the list



B-SIDE Hip-Hop Festival 2018 at Birmingham Hippodrome - Wed 9 - Sun 13 May

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

What's On

Tues 1 to Sun 6 May



The Vamps at Genting Arena,
Birmingham

Fri 4 May

Mon 7 to Sun 13 May



La Voix at Crescent Theatre,
Birmingham

Thurs 10 May

Mon 14 to Sun 20 May



Diljit Dosanjh at Arena
Birmingham

Sat 19 May

Mon 21 to Thurs 31 May



Slam Dunk Festival at NEC,
Birmingham

Mon 28 May

THROUGHOUT MAY

Visual Arts

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

NEW ART WEST MIDLANDS A mixed-media exhibition including painting, sculpture, digital and sound installations, assemblage, photography & prints by 28 selected artists, all of whom are recent graduates from the region's six university art schools, until Sun 6 May

VANLEY BURKE: PHOTOGRAPHING BIRMINGHAM (1968 - 2011) Exhibition showing how Burke has documented the poignant and everyday moments of life in Birmingham. Burke's photographs capture scenes of childhood, crowds, community and faith, power and protest, as well as portraying influential men and women of our time, until Sun 1 July

NEW DIPPY ON TOUR: A NATURAL HISTORY ADVENTURE The Natural History Museum's famous Diplodocus, known as Dippy, is taking a road trip to Birmingham. This is a free ticketed event, but advanced booking is strongly advised, Sat 26 May - Sun 9 Sept

Ikon Gallery

LANGLANDS & BELL Exhibition of new work by artists Ben Langlands and Nikki Bell, featuring the new iconic architecture of global technology companies such as Apple, Facebook, Alibaba and Google. The show explores the increasingly profound influence these huge companies have on our lives in the age of 'Big Data', until Sun 10 June

MAC, Birmingham

NEW FROM A SMALL ISLAND Exhibition by award-winning photographer Andrew Jackson, who presents a new series of work exploring identity, migration, memory and family. Following a visit to Jamaica in 2017, he investigates the identities of Jamaican Diaspora since the post-war migration to Britain, and the lives of second and third generation migrants born here, Sat 5 May - Sun 8 July

NEW AMPERSAND PROJECTS: GREEN LUNGS A project that introduces recently settled refugees to the city's green spaces through creative activity. The exhibition presents new work created collaboratively by participants and artists which explores their experiences in the landscape, Mon 7 May - Sat 28 July

NEW NEGOTIATING CARIBBEAN IN/SECURITIES THROUGH CREATIVITY The CARISCC exhibition includes commissioned work by sculptural artist Sonia E Barrett. Also displayed are

digital projections of paintings, photographs, documentary film clips and multimedia works by 11 contemporary visual artists of Caribbean descent, Tues 8 May - Sun 1 July

RBSA Gallery

NEW ERIC GASKELL ARBSA Eric's work combines colour, drawing and composition to create bold and vibrant lino-cut prints and mixed-media pieces, Mon 7 May - Sat 16 June

NEW CAROLE BAKER RBSA Carole responds instinctively to capture the movement, liveliness and mystery of the places she visits. This new body of work is inspired by the effect of light on the landscape, Mon 7 May - Sat 16 June

NEW PRIZE 2018 Annual exhibition featuring artworks in a range of media, including jewellery, ceramics, textiles, drawing, painting and printmaking, Thurs 10 May - Sat 23 June

The Barber Institute

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS: ARTIST AND COLLECTOR When The Royal Academy was founded in 1768, it elected Sir Joshua Reynolds, England's most prominent painter at the time, as its first president. To celebrate its 250th anniversary this year, the Barber brings together four fine Reynolds paintings from their collection, along with a number of other works that once belonged to the artist himself, until Tues 8 May

WORKING IN COLOUR The language of colour across four centuries of printmaking is explored in a display that complements The Rhythm Of Light (see above), until Sun 10 June

THE LAST ROMAN Emperor Justinian I (527 - 565 AD), the so-called 'last Roman emperor', rose from peasant beginnings in Serbia to become the most powerful man on earth, until Sun 14 Apr 2019

SOUNDING IMAGES Listen to four paintings in the gallery, including the Henri Matisse loan, Landscape In Corsica, on this audio tour, Fri 27 Apr - Sun 17 June

NEW NEW YORK CITY LIFE Exhibition of prints by John Sloan which provides fascinating historical insights into Manhattan life in a period of rapid social change, Fri 25 May - Sun 16 Sept

Other VISUAL ARTS

NEW WHEN TIME STANDS STILL Exhibition of work by Linden Road Artists, Wed 23 May - Mon 11 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

NEW INHERITED PREMISES Two-person show by Rami George and Tako Taal, Fri 25 May - Fri 3 Aug, Grand Union, Fazeley Street

Gigs

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS Mon 30 Apr - Tues 1 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

DALEY & ETTA BOND Tues 1 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JIMMY LIVINGSTONE Tues 1 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

YO LA TENGO Tues 1 May, Birmingham Town Hall

NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS Tues 1 May, Arena B'ham

RITCHIE, PARRISH & RITCHIE Wed 2 May, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH PUD- DLES PITY PARTY Wed 2 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

HER'S, PIZZAGIRL & CHARTREUSE Wed 2 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WOES Wed 2 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

HONKY TONK ROSE Wed 2 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

MC LARS Wed 2 May, The Asylum, B'ham

TEEDRA MOSES Thurs 3 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LE CLUB FONDUE Thurs 3 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

VUNDABAR Thurs 3 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

KALEIDOSCOPE #4 Thurs 3 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

FISCHER-Z Thurs 3 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

HIBUSHIBIRE, ONE UNIQUE SIGNAL & YELLOW6 Thurs 3 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NOVELISTS Thurs 3 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

MEXRRISSEY - MEXICO GOES MORRISSEY Thurs 3 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

EDDI READER Thurs 3 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

BRAINSTORM Thurs 3 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham



The Vamps - Genting Arena, Birmingham

ERIC BIBB Thurs 3 May, Birmingham Town Hall

HENRI HERBERT & THE FURY Fri 4 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

BLACK PARADE - 00'S EMO ANTHEMS Fri 4 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

COME TOGETHER Fri 4 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

CRAZY FOR GERSHWIN Fri 4 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SINNER BOY Fri 4 May, Route 44, Birmingham

DJ RUSSKE LIVE Fri 4 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BRUNO MAJOR Fri 4 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE ATLANTIC PLAYERS & PRODIGAL SCUM Fri 4 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FALSE MODESTY Fri 4 May, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

THE VAMPS Fri 4 May, Genting Arena, B'ham

THE UNDERCOVER HIPPY Fri 4 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

DEARIST + TO THE WALL Fri 4 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

KLASSIDE Fri 4 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SHANE FILAN Sat 5 May, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

DIG? Sat 5 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

IO EARTH AND THE ORCHESTRA OF SOUND & EMOTION Sat 5 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

SHREYA GHOSHAL Sat 5 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

NOVANA - (A TRIBUTE TO

NIRVANA) Sat 5 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

ECHO GECCO Sat 5 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

OCOCOEUR Sat 5 May, Route 44, B'ham

PINKSHINYULTRABLAST Sat 5 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

JAZZIE B Sat 5 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MEME DETROIT Sat 5 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

WHITNEY - QUEEN OF THE NIGHT Sat 5 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

WILLIAM MCCARTHY Sun 6 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

THE MICHAEL JACKSON HISTORY SHOW Sun 6 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

AMANDA PALMER Sun 6 May, Birmingham Town Hall

THE ROMANO VIAZZANI ENSEMBLE Sun 6 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

MOVEMENTS Sun 6 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

DISCO PUSSY Sun 6 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MOTOWN'S GREATEST HITS - HOW SWEET IT IS Sun 6 May, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

CASPIAN Sun 6 May, The Flapper, B'ham

WE ARE SCIENTISTS Sun 6 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FULL 100 2018! WITH TARRUS RILEY Sun 6 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

Classical Music

SIR SIMON RATTLE & THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: MAHLER'S NINTH Tues 1 May, Symphony Hall, B'ham

EMERGING DIRECTORS: FOREST LABYRINTH Featuring Veronika Tabakova (director & producer), Roxanne Korda & Rosemary Wilkes (sopranos), Maja Pluta & Anna-Maria Olsson (violins), Kate Allsop (recorder) & Weining Pi (MyoSpaT armband), Tues 1 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

SIBELIUS' SECOND Featuring the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Edward Gardner (conductor) & Baiba Skride (violin). Programme includes works by Strauss, Prokofiev & Sibelius, Wed 2 - Thurs 3 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

COMMUTER CONCERT; CONDUCTOR'S ENSEMBLE Featuring Josef Javora & Giannis Giannopoulos. Programme includes works by Copland & Wagner, Thurs 3 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CBSO CENTRE STAGE Featuring Colette Overdijk & Bryony Morrison (violins), Adam Römer & Amy Thomas (violins), Hetty Snell & Helen Edgar (cellos). Programme includes works by Strauss & Schoenberg, Fri 4 May, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

CAMILLE RAVOT (HARPSICHORD) Programme comprises a selection from 6 Sonates A l'usage des Dames by C P E Bach, Fri 4 May, The Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

SIR LENNY HENRY: PETER AND THE WOLF Sir Lenny Henry narrates the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire opening concert. Christopher Houlding conducts. Programme includes works by Bernstein, Copland, Prokofiev, Elfmán & Williams, Fri 4 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

COALVILLE MALE VOICE CHOIR Programme includes Benedictus, (Carl Jenkins), Morte Christe, Lascia Ch'io Pianga, Gwhodidad, You Raise me Up, Rhythm of Life, The Rose, Let it be Me, Sat 5 May, Birmingham Cathedral

BRUCKNER ORCHESTRA LINZ Featuring Markus Poschner (conductor). Programme includes works by Bruckner & Mozart, Sun 6 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

ROB ROUSE, STEVE GRIBBIN & COMIC TBC Thurs 3 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

IVO GRAHAM Fri 4 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JACK BARRY, SIMON LOMAS & HARVEY

HAWKINS Fri 4 May, Cherry Reds Cafe-Bar, Birmingham

NOTES ON COMEDY IN AID OF CANCER RESEARCH Fri 4 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

ROB ROUSE, STEVE GRIBBIN, MICKEY SHARMA & RADU ISAC Fri 4 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RICK KIESEWETTER, BETHANY BLACK & CHRIS PURCHASE Fri 4 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ROB ROUSE, STEVE GRIBBIN, MICKEY SHARMA & COMIC TBC Sat 5 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SOL BERNSTEIN, DARREN WALSH, GORDON SOUTHERN & JAMES ALDERSON Sat 5 May, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

CURTIS WALKER, BABATUNDE & NADZ Sat 5 May, MAC, Birmingham

Theatre

THE FANTASTIC FOLLIES OF MRS RICH Mary Pix's comedy of manners, combining mischief-making and a mind-bending plot, until Thurs 14 June, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI Maria Aberg directs John Webster's tale of revenge, which asks how anyone can survive in a world where masculinity has become toxic, until Fri 3 Aug, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

MACBETH Shakespeare's psychological thriller marks Christopher Eccleston's RSC debut and Niamh Cusack's return to the company, until Tues 18 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ROMEO AND JULIET Shakespeare's most famous story of love at first sight explodes with intense passion in a contemporary production with heart-breaking consequences. Erica Whyman directs, until Fri 21 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE THRILL OF LOVE The Crescent Theatre Company presents its version of Amanda Whittington's heart-wrenching play, which looks at the life and times of Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged in Britain, Sat 28 April - Sat 5 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

YVETTE China Plate present a one-woman show based on a true story about a stolen childhood and growing up with a secret, Tues 1 May, MAC, Birmingham

BLOOD MONEY Thriller where nothing is as it seems, Tues 1 - Sat 5 May, Lichfield Garrick

DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE Phil Daniels takes the lead in this staging of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic gothic thriller, Tues 1 - Sat 5 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE BAND Tim Firth's new musical, featuring the music of Take That, Tues 1 - Sat 12 May, Birmingham Hippodrome



THE DRILL Award-winning multimedia theatre-makers Breach consider anxieties around security and terrorism, Wed 2 - Sat 5 May, The REP, B'ham

ANTIGONE The Young Rep presents its version of Sophocles' tragedy, which centres on fractured relationships and a city in turmoil, Wed 2 - Sat 5 May, The REP, Birmingham

DYLAN THOMAS: CLOWN IN THE MOON A dramatic portrait of the poet's chaotic, frequently hilarious and all-too-brief life, Thurs 3 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

PLAYHOUSE CREATURES Amateur staging of April De Angelis' moving restoration comedy, Sat 5 - Sat 12 May, Oldbury Rep

Dance

ENCORE: A 3RD YEAR PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE The 17 strong cast perform a range of diverse dance works, including Elite Syncopations, choreographed by Sir Kenneth MacMillan with the music of Scott Joplin, Tues 1 May, MAC, Birmingham

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Midlands Theatre Ballet present a choreographed version of the much-loved fairy story, Tues 1 - Sat 5 May, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

JV2 Jasmin Vardimon Company present a triple bill showcasing works by Vardimon and two emerging choreographers - Yunkyung Song and André Rebelo, Wed 2 May, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

WINDRUSH: MOVEMENT OF THE PEOPLE Phoenix Dance present a new contemporary dance piece which focuses on the story of some of the first Jamaican people who came to Britain, Fri 4 - Sat 5 May, MAC, Birmingham

ASIAN SPRING DANCE EXTRAVAGANZA Sampad's popular showcase features Kathak and Bharatanatyam dance, Sun 6 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Talks

AN EVENING WITH 'EDDIE THE EAGLE' EDWARDS Fundraising talk in aid of Age UK Solihull, Thurs 3 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

ISLE OF DOGS (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Bryan Cranston, Yoko Ono. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 4 - Thurs 10 May

WESTERN (12a) Drama. Starring Meinhard Neumann, Reinhardt Wetrek. Foreign language, subtitled. MAC, Birmingham, until Thurs 3 May

READY PLAYER ONE (12a) Action/Sci-Fi. Starring Hannah John-Kamen, Ben Mendelsohn. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, until Thurs 3 May

GHOST STORIES (15) Drama/Horror. Starring Alex Lawther, Martin Freeman. MAC, Birmingham, until Thurs 3 May

THE SHAPE OF WATER (15) Drama/Fantasy. Starring Sally Hawkins, Octavia Spencer. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 1 - Wed 2 & Fri 4th May

MARY & THE WITCH'S FLOWER (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Hana Sugisaki, Ryunosuke Kamiki. Foreign language, subtitled. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, from Fri 4 May

JOURNEYMAN (15) Drama/Mystery. Starring Paddy Considine, Jodie Whittaker. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 4 - Thurs 10 May

PLANET OF THE APES (PG) Adventure/Sci-Fi. Starring Charlton Heston, Roddy McDowall. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 6 May

Events

STEALTH - FINDERS KEEPERS! Put your criminal minds together to pull off Birmingham's biggest heist, Wed 2 - Thurs 3 May, Centrala, Birmingham

SUPERNATURAL OFFICIAL CONVENTION Meet the stars from the show, including Jensen Ackles and Jared Padalecki, Fri 4 - Sun 6 May, NEC, Birmingham

JEWELLERY QUARTER HERITAGE WALK Sat 5 May, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

'FEAST' STREET FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL Sat 5 May, Enginuity Museum, Ironbridge, Shropshire

MAKERS CENTRAL A brand new event bringing together thousands of makers, Sat 5 - Sun 6 May, NEC, B'ham

SWASHBUCKLING PIRATES A weekend of pirate activities, Sat 5 - Mon 7 May, Cadbury World, Birmingham

IRONBRIDGE GORGE WALKING FESTIVAL A programme of 53 free walks in and around the World Heritage Site, Sat 5 - Sun 13 May, Ironbridge Gorge, Shropshire

Gigs

NF - PERCEPTION

WORLD TOUR Mon 7 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ANNA BURCH Mon 7 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JOHN WHEELER Mon 7 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CONAN AND MONOLORD Mon 7 May, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

BEN DRUMMOND Tues 8 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

CHRISTY MOORE Tues 8 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RADIATOR HOSPITAL Tues 8 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GANG OF YOUTHS Wed 9 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BROOKE BENTHAM + JESSIE REID + OLIVER RUDGE Wed 9 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

BULLY & DUDE YORK Wed 9 May, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

EDDIE SEAMAN & LUC MCNALLY Wed 9 May, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

BROTHERS OSBORNE Wed 9 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

VULVODYNIA Wed 9 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

CHK CHK CHK Wed 9 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NAP EYES & HALEY HEYNDERICKX Wed 9 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ROOKES + DIDI DOUBLE HEADLINE TOUR Wed 9 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

PROTOMARTYR Wed 9 May, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

MARY CHAPIN CARPENTER Wed 9 May, Birmingham Town Hall

FANGCLUB Wed 9 - Thurs 10 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

BEDROOM/BOREDOM, ECHO BEACH, JACK IN A

BOX & SPILT MILK SOCIETY Thurs 10 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

DON MCLEAN Thurs 10 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LAURENCE JONES Thurs 10 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NICKELBACK Thurs 10 May, Genting Arena, Birmingham

THE FUREYS Fri 11 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

BEYOND FAITH (GEORGE MICHAEL) Fri 11 May, The Civic, Stourport

NADINE COYLE Fri 11 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

DAVID BROWN AND ELIO PACE PERFORM THE BILLY JOEL SONGBOOK Fri 11 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE TESKEY BROTHERS Fri 11 May, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

BAREFOOTIN' WITH JOSH PYE, DAVE LE MODERNE, ADAM ADAM Fri 11 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

VIDA Fri 11 May, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

DISCO SUCKS: PART 3 Fri 11 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE GRIND LIVE WITH CA Fri 11 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BLOXX Fri 11 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

EVLYTYDE, REPAIR TO RUIN Fri 11 May, Scruffy Murphys, Birmingham

DIZZY LIZZY Fri 11 May, Route 44, Birmingham

RAIN (LIVE MOD BAND) Sat 12 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

THE SMALL FAKERS Sat 12 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

INK. Sat 12 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

RISCAS + PARIS YOUTH FOUNDATION + CANDID + THE CLAUSE Sat 12 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

FOR RICHARD "DUB" MORAN: MORE THAN A MEMORIAL Sat 12 May, Scruffy Murphys, Birmingham

RUBELLA MOON Sat 12 May, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

METHODS Sat 12 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

JUNGLE Sat 12 May, O2 Institute, B'ham

MERCURY - THE ULTIMATE QUEEN TRIBUTE Sat 12 May, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

JASPER IN THE COMPANY OF OTHERS Sat 12 May, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

PARTNER SUN Sun 13 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

CATRIN FINCH & SECKOU KEITA Sun 13 May, Birmingham Town Hall

MAKE IT REGGAE! Sun 13 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

BLACK COFFEE Sun 13 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE CARPENTERS STORY Sun 13 May, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham



John Wheeler - The Glee Club, Birmingham

Classical Music

MIDDAY MUSIC; EMILY SUN (VIOLIN)

Also featuring Jennifer Hughes (piano). Programme includes works by Mozart, Fauré & Igor Frolov, Tues 8 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: BARTÓK'S PIANO CONCERTO

Featuring Kazushi Ono (conductor) & Jean-Efflam Bavouzet (piano), Wed 9 May, Symphony Hall, B'ham

THE OPERA BOYS Thurs 10 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MICHAEL POLL: BACH ON 7-STRINGS Fri 11 May, The Bramall, Birmingham

LUCA LUCIANO (CLARINET) & YUKIKO OSEDO (PIANO) - LUNCHEON CONCERT Programme includes works by Schumann, Debussy & Luca Luciano, Fri 11 May, The Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

Comedy

JOHN FOTHERGILL, HENRY PARKER, CAREY MARX & STEVE SHANYASKI Wed 9 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KEITH FARNAN, COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON & COMIC TBC Thurs 10 May, The Glee Club, B'ham

MICHAEL MCINTYRE Thurs 10 - Sun 13 May, Arena Birmingham

SUZI RUFFELL & ANGELA BARNES Fri 11 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KEITH FARNAN, BEC HILL, DANNY MCLOUGHLIN & MARKUS BIRDMAN Fri 11 - Sat 12 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ELEANOR CONWAY Sat 12 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ROGER MONKHOUSE, BOBBY MAIR, BARRY CASTAGNOLA & LAURA LEXX Sat 12 May, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

Theatre

PYAR ACTUALLY A sparkling new comedy by Sukh Ojia, Tues 8 - Sat 12 May, The REP, Birmingham



CRAZY FOR YOU Tom Chambers, Claire Sweeney and Charlotte Wakefield star in a new touring production of the hit musical, Tues 8 - Sat 12 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

AVENUE Q Amateur staging presented by Lichfield Operatic Society, Tues 8 - Sat 12 May, Lichfield Garrick

CRIMES UNDER THE SUN Comedy thriller featuring four actors playing multiple 'outrageous' characters, Wed 9 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ONE WOMAN SEX AND THE CITY A parody on love, friendship and shoes, Wed 9 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

HELLO LA VOIX An evening with the larger-than-life star from Absolutely Fabulous The Movie, Thurs 10 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham



ONE WOMAN SEX AND THE CITY A parody on love, friendship and shoes, Thurs 10 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

GODSPELL Presented by Momentum Performing Arts Production in association with South Staffordshire College, Thurs 10 - Fri 11 May, Lichfield Garrick

THE WEDDING RECEPTION Immersive experience from the team behind Fawley Towers The Dining Experience, Thurs 10 - Fri 11 May, The REP, Birmingham

OUR HOUSE Youth Onstage present an amateur staging of the Tim Firth musical set to the songs of Madness. Thurs 10 - Sat 12 May, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

EVENING OF MEDIUMSHIP WITH NIKKI KITT Fri 11 May, MAC, Birmingham

HEROES The Crescent Theatre Company present Tom Stoppard's translation of Gerald Sibleyras' play, Sat 12 - Sat 19 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE STRING QUARTET'S GUIDE TO SEX AND ANXIETY New production from one of Europe's most exciting theatre directors, Calixto Bieito, Sat 12 - Sat 19 May, The REP, Birmingham

Kids Show

HOOT OWL Inventive show for children featuring original songs, colourful puppets, animation and rapid costume change, Sat 12 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

Dance

B-SIDE HIP-HOP FESTIVAL 2018 Weekend takeover of dance and rap battles, live music, workshops & graffiti in the streets around the Hippodrome. Lots will be free, with some ticketed and some paid-for events too, Wed 9 - Sun 13 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

TRANSLUCENT DANCE COMPANY: SUMMIT 18 Showcase of the very best in youth dance from across Worcestershire, Sun 13 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove



Talks

MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEGENDS LIVE! Five Midlands football legends talk about their careers - including Ron Atkinson, Paul Merson and Peter Withe, Mon 7 May, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

MONOLOGUESLAM MASTERCLASS 2018 (PICTURED BELOW) Workshop analysing how to perform a monologue, Sat 12 May, The REP B'ham



NARCOS - CAPTURING PABLO AND THE CALI CARTEL Meet the men who were the inspiration behind hit Netflix TV series NARCOS, Sat 12 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

THE GREATEST SHOWMAN (PG) Musical. Starring Hugh Jackman, Zac Efron. This showing is a sing-a-long. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Mon 7 May

THREE BILLBOARDS OUTSIDE EBBING, MISSOURI (15) Mystery/Thriller. Starring Frances McDormand, Woody Harrelson. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 8

& Fri 11 May

70 YEARS FROM NAKBA: A PROGRAMME OF PALSTINIAN SHORTS This programme of nine shorts includes the work of young and established Palestinian filmmakers. Foreign language, subtitled. MAC, Birmingham, Wed 9 May

SLEEPY HOLLOW (15) Adventure/Drama. Starring Johnny Depp, Christopher Walken. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Thurs 10 May

LEAN ON PETE (15) Adventure/Drama. Starring Steve Buscemi, Charlie Plummer. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, from Fri 11 May

A QUIET PLACE (15) Horror/Thriller. Starring Emily Blunt, John Krasinski. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 11 - Thurs 17 May

INDIANA JONES TRILOGY (12) Action/Adventure. Starring Harrison Ford. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 12 May

CAROL (15) Drama/Romance. Starring Cate Blanchett, Rooney Mara. Highbury Theatre, Birmingham, Sat 12 May

A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS (15) Western. Starring Clint Eastwood, Gian Maria Volontè. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 12 May

THE ITALIAN JOB (PG) Action/Comedy. Starring Michael Caine, Noël Coward. Beacon Park, Lichfield, Sat 12 May

LOST BOYS (12) Comedy/Horror. Starring Jason Patric, Corey Haim. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 13 May

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 11 May, showing at selected cinemas

BREAKING IN (15)

ENTEbbe (12a)

HOW TO TALK TO GIRLS AT PARTIES (15)

LIFE OF THE PARTY (12a)

REDOUBTABLE (15)

LIFE OF THE PARTY (12a)

REDOUBTABLE (15)

SHERLOCK GNOMES (U)

THE CURED (15)

Events

MAY DAY! Morris dancing, maypole dancing, games and more, Mon 7 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS Grab a maypole ribbon and join the traditional dancers, Mon 7 May, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

BODYPOWER EXPO 2018 Fitness event, inspiring and motivating 90,000-plus health & fitness enthusiasts, Fri 11 -



B-Side Hip-Hop Festival 2018

Birmingham Hippodrome, Wed 9 - Sun 13 May

Birmingham Hippodrome's free annual festival celebrating all things hip-hop makes a welcome return.

Now in its third year, B-SIDE Hip-Hop Festival features outdoor performances, pop-up dance events, interactive talks, live graffiti art and a programme of high-energy workshops. For more information, visit birminghamhippodrome.com/bside and facebook.com/bside2018

Sun 13 May, NEC, Birmingham

BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS Sat 12 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

400 YEARS OF ASTON HALL: GEORGIAN HOUSE PARTY Witness sword fight duels, learn the art of fan flirting, experience what went on in coffee houses, and find out what secret

messages a beauty patch can tell you, Sat 12 May, Aston Hall, B'ham

GAYDON LAND ROVER SHOW Celebrating 70 years of the iconic Land Rover marque, with a huge range of models on display, from 1948 to the present day, Sat 12 - Sun 13 May, British Motor Museum, Gaydon



Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

Gigs

CARTER SAMPSON Mon 14 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

NORA FISCHER Mon 14 May, Birmingham Town Hall

THE NINTH WAVE Mon 14 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ROSE DIVE Mon 14 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE BLUETONES Mon 14 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KELLY OLIVER Mon 14 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

ALBERT LEE Mon 14 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

FOREIGNER Tues 15 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CARMODY Tues 15 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

ASHLEY ALLEN BAND Tues 15 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

BARRENCE WHITFIELD & THE SAVAGES Tues 15 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

REMI HARRIS TRIO Wed 16 May, Lichfield Guildhall

RITA ORA Wed 16 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

JOSH T. PEARSON Wed 16 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SARA COLMAN Wed 16 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

NILS LOFGREN Wed 16 May, Birmingham Town Hall

FEET & CYMBELINE Wed 16 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

NINA NESBITT Wed 16 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SYLVAIN DARRIFOURCQ WITH TONY MALABY AND RICHARD BONNET Wed 16 May, MAC, B'ham

C-JAM Wed 16 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST Wed 16 May, The Red Lion Folk Club, B'ham
WE ARE THE WILDLIFE

Thurs 17 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

KNOW WONDER Thurs 17 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

U.S. GIRLS Thurs 17 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DEAN FRIEDMAN "WELL, WELL," SAID THE ROCKING CHAIR' TOUR Thurs 17 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

MACHINE HEAD Thurs 17 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

IAN MCNABB Thurs 17 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JOHN OTWAY & THE BIG BAND Fri 18 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

CATAPULT CLUB FEAT. ROOKIE Fri 18 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DIG? SOUL AND RETRO CLUB NIGHT WITH SAM REDMIRE Fri 18 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

NICK PRIDE AND THE PIMPTONES Fri 18 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

A PARAMORE PARTY Fri 18 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ISLAND + SPECIAL GUESTS Fri 18 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

MINT Fri 18 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

TRANSMISSION (JOY DIVISION TRIBUTE), ANTHONY PRICE & DISORDER DJs Fri 18 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

MR BEN Fri 18 May, The Jam House, B'ham

DEAN FRIEDMAN "WELL, WELL," SAID THE ROCKING CHAIR' TOUR Fri 18 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

THE BORN AGAIN BEATLES Fri 18 May, Lichfield Guildhall

SACK SABBATH Fri 18 May, Route 44, Birmingham

OHMS! Fri 18 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

DIG? Sat 19 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

ESPRESSIVO CHORUS: MUSIC OF THE LEG-ENDARY SINGER SONG-

WRITERS Sat 19 May, The Bramall, B'ham

DILJIT DOSANJH Sat 19 May, Arena Birmingham



SWEDISH DEATH CANDY Sat 19 May, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

TERRY HALL AND THE GTS Sat 19 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

THE CUTKELVINS Sat 19 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SARA COX PRESENTS JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH 80S Sat 19 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

WIEGEDOOD Sat 19 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

PLANET V Sat 19 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GLASS CEILINGS + STRANGE GHOST + EARLY DAYS + FRIDAY Sat 19 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

MR BEN Sat 19 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

JUST FLOYD Sat 19 May, Route 44, B'ham

ROY ORBISON & THE TRAVELLING WILBURYS Sat 19 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

STONE BROKEN Sat 19 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TIPTINA Sat 19 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

HEAVEN 17 AND THE LIGHTNING SEEDS Sat 19 May, Uttoxeter Racecourse

MOTHERSHIP - LED ZEPPELIN TRIBUTE Sun 20 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SCOTT MATTHEWS Sun 20 May, St Paul's Church, Birmingham

THE ONCE Sun 20 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by Handel, J.C. Pepusch, W. Russell, A. Hollins & H. Mulet, Mon 14 May, Birmingham Town Hall

MIDDAY MUSIC: BRAHMS, FAURÉ & TOMASI Featuring Doris Kuo (violin) & Ella Lee (piano), Mon 14 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: MARVELLOUS MOZART Featuring Reinhard Goebel (conductor) & Mirijam Contzen (violin). Programme comprises J.C. Bach's Amadis de Gaule: Suite, 20'; Mozart's Violin Concerto in D major, K.271a, 29' & Symphony No. 36 in C Major (Linz), 28'; Mozart Idomeneo: ballet music, 10', Wed 16 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PETER DONOHUE: MOZART PIANO CYCLE Thurs 17 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

MIDLAND CHAMBER PLAYERS: THE CZECH ROMANTICS Fri 18 May, The Birmingham & Midland Institute

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: MOZART'S HORN QUINTET Featuring Michael Kidd (horn), Charlotte Skinner (violin), Catherine Bower & Amy Thomas (violins) & Catherine Ardagh-Walter (cello). Programme includes works by Beethoven & Mozart, Fri 18 May, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

ALEXANDER BAILLIE & JOHN THWAITES LUNCHTIME CONCERT Programme includes works by James MacMillan, Bridge & Franck, Fri 18 May, The Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: FAMILY FILM FAVOURITES Featuring Holly Mathieson (conductor) & Catherine Arldidge (presenter). Programme includes music from The Incredibles, Harry Potter, Frozen, Pirates of the Caribbean, Star Wars, The Lion King, Wallace and Gromit, Mary Poppins & The Hobbit, Sun 20 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

LEE NELSON Wed 16 May, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

ROGER MONKHOUSE, COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON & COMIC TBC Thurs 17 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

GEORGE EGG Fri 18 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

CHRIS RAMSEY Fri 18 May, Dudley

Town Hall

GLENN WOOL Fri 18 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DALISO CHAPONDA Fri 18 May, Birmingham Town Hall



ROGER MONKHOUSE, RUDI LICKWOOD, PAUL MYREHAUG & MARK SIMMONS Fri 18 - Sat 19 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROB ROUSE, TOM TOAL, TUDUR OWEN & CAIMH MCDONNELL Sat 19 May, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham



BARNSTORMERS COMEDY NIGHT Sat 19 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Theatre

HITZ FROM THE BLITZ 1940'S MATINEE SHOW A nostalgic afternoon featuring wartime hits from Glenn Miller, Anne Shelton, Vera Lynn and more, courtesy of Five Star Swing, Tues 15 May, Dudley Town Hall

HALF A SIXPENCE Solihull Theatre Company present an amateur staging of the much-loved musical, Tues 15 - Sat 19 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN Nikolai Foster's musical staging of the Oscar-winning film starring Richard Gere. Soundtrack includes Up Where We Belong, Girls Just Want To Have Fun & Material Girl, Tues 15 - Sat 19 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

LOVE FROM A STRANGER Brand new production of Agatha Christie's rarely seen thriller, Tues 15 - Sat 19 May, New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham

SOME MOTHERS DO 'AVE 'EM Joe Pasquale stars as the hapless Frank Spencer and Sarah Earnshaw as his long-suffering wife, Betty, in the stage version of the hit 1970s sitcom, Tues 15 - Sat 19 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Monday 14 - Sunday 20 May

MACBETH Birmingham Ormiston Academy Acting Pathway Year 13 presents its version of Shakespeare's bloodiest play, Wed 16 - Thurs 17 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

A DOLL'S HOUSE New adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's classic tale, presented by Theatrical Niche Ltd, Thurs 17 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

TRUTH New show which looks at the once-simple notion of truth in the messy modern age of fake news, Thurs 17 - Sat 19 May, The REP, Birmingham

SHEN YUN Featuring one of the world's oldest art forms - classical Chinese dance, Thurs 17 - Sat 19 May, International Convention Centre (ICC), Birmingham

RICH STOKES: I'M NOT FINE One-man musical tackling the subjects of anxiety, masculinity, parenthood and sewage through the medium of comedy, songs and storytelling, Fri 18 May, MAC, Birmingham



JAMES PHELAN: TRICKSTER Nephew of the late Paul Daniels, James presents a unique magical prank show, Sat 19 May, The Old Rep Theatre, B'ham

CLUB CAIRO The Arabian Fantasy Dance Theatre retell the story of The Serpent Slayer, a touching tale of how hope can shine through the darkest of skies, Sat 19 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

VERTIGO Birmingham Institute of Theatre Arts present a showcase of musical theatre, Sat 19 - Sun 20 May, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

THE DAMNED UNITED Adaptation of David Peace's ingenious novel about legendary football manager Brian Clough, Sun 20 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Kids Shows

SARAH AND DUCK'S BIG TOP BIRTHDAY Brand new stage show featuring characters from the BAFTA Award-winning CBeebies show, Mon 14 - Tues 15 May, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

THE WITCHES Amateur staging of David Wood's version of the Roald Dahl classic, Fri 18 - Sat 26 May, Hall Green Little Theatre, B'ham

DINOSAUR WORLD LIVE Interactive new show for all the family, Sat 19 - Sun 20 May, Birmingham Town Hall

Dance

BALLETBOYZ - FOURTEEN DAYS Ballet-Boyz are back with four brand new works and the return of an audience favourite, Mon 14 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

PASHA KOVALEV'S THE MAGIC OF HOLLYWOOD Lights, Camera... Ballroom. Pasha Kovalev (from BBC TV's Strictly Come Dancing) returns with a brand new show packed with sequins, glitz and glamour, Sun 20 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Talks

KATIE PIPER: WHAT'S IN MY HEAD Katie embarks on her debut theatre tour, to share what she's learned and what helped her remain positive even through the toughest of times, Fri 18 May, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham



Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

PERSONA (15) Drama/Thriller. Starring Bibi Andersson, Liv Ullmann. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Tues 15 May

THREE BILLBOARDS OUTSIDE EBBING, MISSOURI (15) Mystery/Thriller. Starring Frances McDormand, Woody Harrelson. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 18 May

WITHNAIL & I (15) Comedy/Drama. Starring Richard E. Grant, Paul McGann. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 19 May; Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 20 May

TRAINSPOTTING AND T2 DOUBLE BILL (18) Drama. Starring Ewan McGregor, Ewen Bremner. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 19 May

DIRTY DANCING (15) Drama/Music. Starring Patrick Swayze, Jennifer Grey. Beacon Park, Lichfield, Sat 19 May

THE TWILIGHT SAGA (5 FILM MARATHON) (12) Drama/Fantasy. Starring Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson. Mockingbird Cinema, B'ham, Sun 20 May



The Harlem Globetrotters - Genting Arena, Birmingham

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Tues 15 May, showing at selected cinemas

DEADPOOL 2 (tbc)

Released from Fri 18 May, showing at selected cinemas

ON CHESIL BEACH (15)

Wolverhampton

SUBMERGENCE (15)

Wolverhampton

RED BY NIGHT Skilled craftsmen and live demonstrations bring the reality of 'black by day, red by night' to life, Sat 19 May, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

INDUSTRIAL MIGHT Discover the awe-inspiring industrial might of the Black Country, Sat 19 - Sun 20 May, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

MIDLANDS AIR FESTIVAL Air display, with classic WWI & II fighters, high-energy aerobatics, classic jets, flying circus, parachutes, helicopters and gyrocopter. There will also be a full hot-air balloon festival, with up to 50 balloons, Fri 18 - Sun 20 May, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

THE COVENTRY STEAMPUNK CARNIVAL Steampunk-themed live entertainment and music, Sat 19 - Sun 20 May, Coventry Transport Museum

BRITISH TARANTULA SOCIETY EXHIBITION Bringing together spiders, insects and bugs galore, Sun 20 May, Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, Leamington Spa

Events

THIS MORNING LIVE Live version of the This Morning TV show, Thurs 17 - Sun 20 May, NEC, Birmingham

THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS Fri 18 May, Genting Arena, Birmingham

BIG BANG VW festival featuring drag racing with monster trucks and much more, Fri 18 - Sun 20 May, Santa Pod Raceway, Northants

100 COCKPITS AND CABS Get a closer look inside 100 cockpits and vehicles, Sat 19 May, RAF Cosford, Nr



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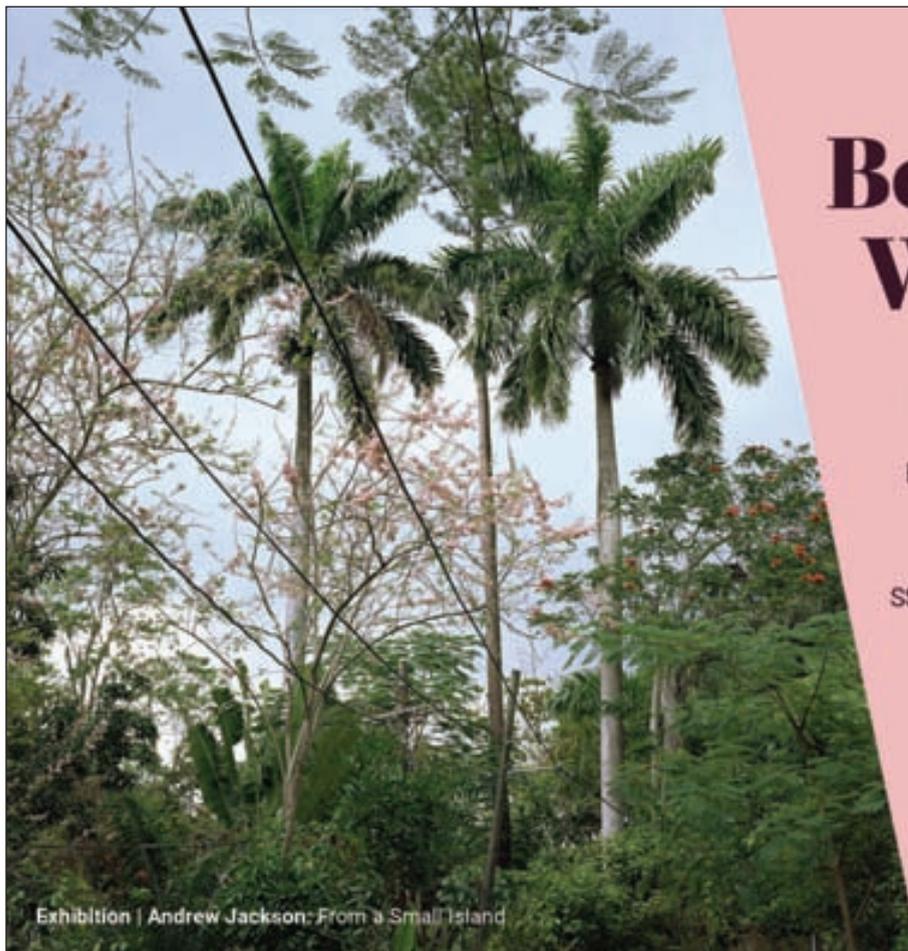
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Gigs

TOMMY EMMANUEL
Mon 21 May, Birmingham Town Hall

NILÜFER YANYA Mon 21 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SAM EVIAN Mon 21 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE UNDERGROUND YOUTH + HISTORY OF SEX Mon 21 May, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

LISA KNAPP Mon 21 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

GAZ COOMBES Mon 21 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CLOUDBUSTING - A TRIBUTE TO KATE BUSH Tues 22 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

CATHERINE NIGHTINGALE & OZ MCGOWAN Tues 22 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

STACEY KENT Tues 22 May, Lichfield Garrick

THE REGRETTES Tues 22 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH SIMONE FELICE Tues 22 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DIRE STRAITS UK Wed 23 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BUZZIN' HORNETS Wed 23 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

EDWINA HAYES & ROSALIE DEIGHTON Wed 23

May, The Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

THE UP-BEAT BEATLES
Thurs 24 May, Lichfield Garrick

YORUBA WOMEN'S CHOIR Thurs 24 May, MAC, Birmingham

PEACE Thurs 24 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

COCO AND THE BUTTERFIELDS Thurs 24 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

SPITFIRE Thurs 24 May, The Asylum, B'ham

LO MOON Thurs 24 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NANNA RADLEYS Thurs 24 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

JAPANESE BREAKFAST
Thurs 24 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JIZZY PEARL/LOVE/HATE
Fri 25 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

BRYAN ADAMS Fri 25 May, Genting Arena, Birmingham

LE FREAK Fri 25 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

CLARE TEAL AND HER TRIO Fri 25 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

CATAPULT CLUB FEAT. LONDON BLACK Fri 25 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE WEDDING PRESENT - "TOMMY" 30TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR Fri 25 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE RED LEMONS Fri 25 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN

Fri 25 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE HANDSOME BEASTS
Fri 25 May, Route 44, Birmingham

THE SEX PISSED DOLLS
Fri 25 May, The Robin, Bilston

GRETCHEN PETERS Fri 25 May, Birmingham Town Hall

THE DMA'S Fri 25 May, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE HUNNA Fri 25 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

BLUES CLUB WITH MIDNIGHT CITY SOUL BAND
Sat 26 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

DIG? Sat 26 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

THE MICHAEL JACKSON HISTORY SHOW Sat 26 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN Sat 26 May, Symphonia Hall, B'ham

GEORGIA BURGESS Sat 26 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

GERD JANSON, ALEXANDER NUT & BYRON THE AQUARIUS Sat 26 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE RED LEMONS Sat 26 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

ENEMO J Sat 26 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE KING OF POP Sat 26 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

SAX IN THE CITY: THE NOTEBENDERS Sat 26 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LITTLE CAVALIER FESTIVAL 2018 Sat 26 - Sun 27 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

THE BEAT, BUZZCOCKS, THE SELECTER & STIFF LITTLE FINGERS Sun 27 May, Genting Arena, Birmingham

AMBIENT STATE Sun 27 May, Ort Cafe, B'ham

BATTLE OF THE BRITS: BEATLES VS STONES
Sun 27 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

HUEY MORGAN'S NYC BLOCK PARTY Sun 27 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Classical Music

MIDDAY MUSIC: KAPUSTIN & SCRIBIN
Featuring Kuan Hua Li (piano), Yu-Syuan (flute) & Fritz Chung (cello), Mon 21 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

BEETHOVEN'S TRIPLE CONCERTO Featuring Hagai Shaham (violin), Arnon Erez (piano), Raphael Wallfisch (cello) & David Curtis (conductor). Programme comprises Beethoven's Coriolan Overture, Op.62 & Triple Concerto in C major, Op.56 plus Mendelssohn's Symphony No4 in A major, Op.90 'Italian', Wed 23 May, Birmingham Town Hall

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: PROKOFIEV AND BERNSTEIN
Featuring Ludovic Morlot (conductor) & Tasmin Little (violin). Programme includes works by Stravinsky, Bernstein & Prokofiev, Thurs 24 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

L'ERACLITO AMOROSO Featuring Mark Chambers (counter tenor), Jamie Savan (cornetto), Paula Chateaufeuf (theorbo/guitar) & Steven Devine (harp/sichord/organ). Programme includes works by Ferrari, Merula & Strozzi, Fri 25 May, The Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

JOSEPH CALLEJA AND THE CBSO Also featuring Andrew Greenwood (conductor). Programme includes works by Verdi, Massenet, Bizet, Cilea, Puccini & Offenbach d'Hoffmann, Fri 25 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE OPERA BOYS Sat 26 May, Lichfield Garrick

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR & FRIENDS: BRAHMS AND SCHUBERT. Featuring Hyeyoon Park (violin), Brett Dean (viola), Kian Soltani (cello) & Leon Bosch (double bass), Sat 26 May, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

TOADALLY FREE COMEDY! Mon 21 May, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

SIMON EVANS Tues 22 May, The Glee

Club, Birmingham

ALLYSON SMITH, COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON & COMIC TBC
Thurs 24 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ANDREW BIRD, WILL DUGGAN & CHRIS PURCHASE Fri 25 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

CHRIS RAMSEY Fri 25 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

LARRY DEAN Fri 25 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham



ALLYSON SMITH, ELLIOT STEEL, TANYALEE DAVIS & COMIC TBC Fri 25 - Sat 26 May, The Glee Club, B'ham

SHAZIA MIRZA Sat 26 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

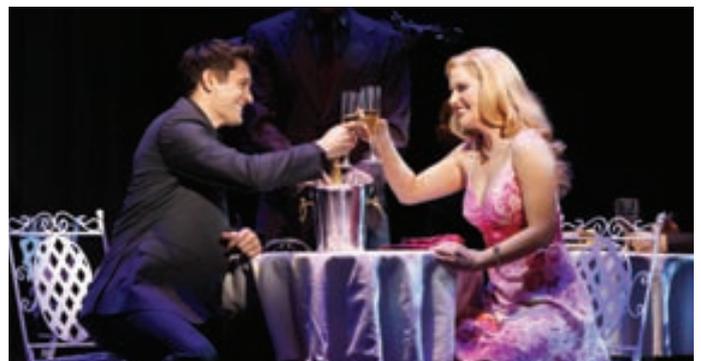
NICK DOODY, DAVE LONGLEY, FUNMBI OMOTAYO & ANDREW ROBINSON Sat 26 May, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

IMPROV COMEDY WITH BOX OF FROGS
Sun 27 May, The Glee Club, B'ham

Theatre

LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL Smash-hit musical starring Lucie Jones, Rita Simons and Bill Ward, Mon 21 - Sat 26 May, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE FINAL CURTAIN
Liza Goddard & Robert Powell star, Mon 21 - Sat 26 May, Malvern Theatres



Legally Blonde The Musical - New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham



Gretchen Peters - Birmingham Town Hall

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ART Nigel Havers, Denis Lawson and Stephen Tompkinson star in the award-winning comedy, Mon 21 - Sat 26 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

DELIVERED DOZEN - A MINERS' TALE The true story of the Nine Locks Ordeal - a mining disaster in the Black Country in 1869, Tues 22 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



DISORDER: CLOUD BUSTING Artrix Youth Theatre Company present a theatrical staging of Malorie Blackman's children's novel of the same name, Tues 22 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE Hayley Tamaddon takes the lead in the Tony Award-winning musical based on the 1967 film of the same name, Tues 22 - Sat 26 May, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

GOLDILOCK, STOCK & THREE SMOKING BEARS Original alternative comedy, Wed 23 - Fri 25 May, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

DARK CORNERS New storytelling performance from Polarbear (aka spoken word artist Steven Camden) about how the decisions we're scared to make can come back to haunt us, Wed 23 - Sat 26 May, The REP, Birmingham

OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD True story of a group of convicts and a young officer who rehearse and perform Australia's first theatrical production, Wed 23 May - Sat 2 June, The REP, B'ham

KING LEAR Return of Gregory Doran's acclaimed production, starring Antony Sher, Wed 23 May - Sat 9 June, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



THE JEFF ASTLE STORY Celebration of the life of the West Brom footballing hero. All proceeds go to the Jeff Astle Foundation, Thurs 24 - Sun 27 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

CATALOGUE D'EMOJIS Interdisciplinary music theatre event fusing traditional piano playing with text, movement, games and virtuosity, Sat 26 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

URINETOWN THE MUSICAL Presented by the Crescent Theatre Company, Sat 26 May - Sat 2 June, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

GINGER JOHNSON: GLAMOROUS GRAN AND OTHER TALL STORIES A lively collection of original children's stories inspired by the lives of LGBTQIA+ people, Sun 27 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Kids Shows

WHAT THE LADYBIRD HEARD Join the woolly sheep, the hairy hog, the fat red hen and the dainty dog in this musical adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Lydia Monks' colourful farmyard adventure, Wed 23 - Thurs 24 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

FIRST STAGES - TOM THUMB Lyngo Theatre presents an innovative piece of theatre for younger audiences - performed entirely on and under a kitchen table, Sat 26 May, The REP, Birmingham

MR SILLY PANCAKE AND THE LAND OF CAKE AND BISCUITS Knees & Toes Theatre fuse original music & puppetry to transport young audiences to the land of Cake And Biscuits, Sat 26 - Sun 27 May, MAC, Birmingham

PINOCCHIO Blue Orange Arts presents its version of Carlo Collodi's much-loved children's tale, Sat 26 May - Sat 2 June, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

Dance

PASHA KOVALEV'S THE MAGIC OF HOLLYWOOD Lights, Camera... Ballroom. Pasha Kovalev (from BBC TV's Strictly Come Dancing) returns with a brand new show packed with sequins, glitz and glamour, Tues 22 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

Talks

DAN AND PHIL: INTERACTIVE INTROVERTS Join the internet-dwelling nerds for an interactive experience of rants, roasts, battles, stories and surprises, Tues 22 May, Symphony Hall, B'ham

MCKELLEN: PLAYING THE PART LIFE Celebrate one of Britain's true icons during his birthday weekend. Hosted by Graham Norton and broadcast to



Art

Birmingham Hippodrome, Mon 21 - Sat 26 May

Nigel Havers, Denis Lawson and Stephen Tompkinson star in the welcome return of Yasmina Reza's award-winning play. The story revolves around a seemingly unremarkable painting and the major dispute it triggers between three longstanding friends - a dispute that uncovers old grievances and crucial unspoken misunderstandings...

cinemas nationwide from London's BFI Southbank, Sun 27 May, MAC, Birmingham & Malvern Theatres

PATRICIA ROUTLEDGE: FACING THE MUSIC Patricia Routledge in conversation with writer and broadcaster Edward Seckerson, Sun 27 May, Lichfield Garrick

HENRY BLOFELD - 78 RETIRED The golden voice of cricket shares unheard anecdotes from on and off the pitch, Sun 27 May, MAC, Birmingham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

WINCHESTER (15) Biography/Fantasy. Starring Helen Mirren, Sarah Snook. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 25 & Wed 30 May

AVENGERS: INFINITY WAR (tbc) Adventure/Fantasy. Starring Robert Downey Jr, Karen Gillan. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 25 - Thurs 31 May

AVENGERS MARATHON (10 FILMS) Adventure/Fantasy. Mockingbird Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 27 May

DARKEST HOUR (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Gary Oldman, Lily James. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Wed 30 May

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Thurs 24 May, showing at selected cinemas

SOLO: A STAR WARS STORY (tbc) Released from Fri 25 May, showing at selected cinemas

SHOW DOGS (PG)

THE BREADWINNER (12a)

THE LITTLE VAMPIRE (U)

Events

DUNGEON LATES 'Scary storytelling' is combined with 'wicked humour and manic theatrics' in this adults-only entertainment, blending special effects with live performance art, Fri 25 May, Warwick Castle

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IRONBRIDGE GORGE WWII WEEKEND Community charity fundraising event in the historic Ironbridge Gorge, Sat 26 - Sun 27 May, Ironbridge, Telford, Shropshire

QUEEN VICTORIA'S BIRTHDAY Join the residents of Blists Hill Victorian Town as they celebrate the birthday and long reign of their much loved Queen Victoria with great pomp and pageantry, Sat 26 - Sun 27 May, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge

WARS OF THE ROSES LIVE Epic new live-action show, Sat 26 May - Sun 3 June, Warwick Castle

MADE IN THE BLACK COUNTRY From door knockers to record-breaking cars, celebrate the Black Country's manufacturing prowess, Sat 26 May - Sun 3 June, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

FIRST WORLD WAR ACTIVITIES Insight into life as a pilot during the First World War, Sat 26 May - Sun 3 June, RAF Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

WITSUN WEEK HALF TERM Craft activities and trails around the grounds, Sat 26 May - Sun 3 June, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

PIRATE FESTIVAL Arrive dressed as a pirate for a swashbuckling day, Sat 26 May - Sun 3 June, Hatton Adventure World, Warwickshire

THE MOTOR SHOW Featuring up to 600 vintage and classic cars, American, kit & custom, motorcycles and commercial vehicles, plus club stands, trade and autojumble stands, Sun 27 May, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

BUBBLE DISCO Featuring a DJ, dancing, glow sticks, games and bubbles, Sun 27 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

OAK APPLE DAY CELEBRATIONS Traditional celebration of the 1660 restoration of the monarchy, Sun 27 - Mon 28 May, The Commandery, Worcester

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The Magic Numbers - Hare & Hounds

Gigs

SEAN MCGOWAN, ANNA'S ANCHOR & MIKE MALONEY Mon 28 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL FEAT. GOOD CHARLOTTE, JIMMY EAT WORLD, FRANK CARTER & THE RATTLE SNAKES Mon 28 May, NEC, Birmingham

THE MAGIC NUMBERS Mon 28 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

A CHANGE IS GONNA COME Tues 29 May, Birmingham Town Hall

BROOKE CANDY Tues 29

May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

EMMA STEVENS Tues 29 May, The Robin, Bilston

THE ACOUSTIC SESSIONS Tues 29 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

REDFACES, KARKOSA & THE LIFE Tues 29 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CHARLES WATSON Wed 30 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PATSY FULLER & THE REVELATORS Wed 30 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

IAN PARKER & HIS BAND

Wed 30 May, The Robin, Bilston

THE LOVELY EGGS Wed 30 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LATINMOTION PRESENTS DEL CAMINO Thurs 31 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE SHADES Thurs 31 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DANNY WRIGHT Thurs 31 May, Scruffy Murphys, Birmingham

KENT DUCHAINE Thurs 31 May, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

HEART OF A COWARD Thurs 31 May, The Asylum, Birmingham



Frank Carter & The Rattle Snakes - NEC, Birmingham

Classical Music

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN Featuring Julian Lloyd Webber (conductor) & Jian Wang & Jiaxin Lloyd Webber (cellos). Programme includes works by Elgar, Haydn & Vivaldi, Mon 28 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: FAURÉ'S REQUIEM Featuring Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (conductor), CBSO Chorus & CBSO Children's Chorus. Programme includes works by Boulanger & Fauré, Thurs 31 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

COMMUTER CONCERT: GOLDBERG VARIATIONS Featuring Kurt Rampton (organ), Thurs 31 May, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

John Hegley takes his audience on a humorous journey through his living library of poems, songs, stories and animal drawings, Tues 29 May, MAC, Birmingham

84 CHARING CROSS ROAD Stefanie Powers stars in the stage version of Helene Hanff's bestselling book, Tues 29 May - Sat 2 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

STOMP Smash-hit production, combining dance, comedy and music, in which familiar objects - dustbin lids, plastic bags and newspapers - are used to create a universal language, Tues 29 May - Sat 2 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

FRANKENSTEIN 1899 Don't Go Into The Cellar present a reimaging of Mary Shelley's Gothic horror story, Wed 30 May, The Civic, Stourport-on-Severn

JOHN FILLMORE FLYING VISIT The writer and star of the award-winning BBC radio programme brings his brand new live show to the stage, Wed 30 May, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

MOUNTAINS: THE DREAMS OF LILY KWOK New play by award-winning writer In-Sofko Chappell, telling the story of the woman behind famous Manchester restaurant Sweet Mandarin, Wed 30 May - Sat 2 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

CONCUBINE Amhara Spence's one-woman show exploring womanhood, sexuality and faith, Thurs 31 May - Sat 2 June, The REP, Birmingham

MISCHIEF FESTIVAL Double bill of new plays exploring global questions of truth, freedom and corruption, Thurs 31 May - Sat 23 June, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

Comedy

TIM VINE Wed 30 May, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent



ELF LYONS Thurs 31 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

NICK DOODY, JIMMY MCGHIE & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 31 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HAL CRUTTENDEN Thurs 31 May, Lichfield Garrick

Kids Shows

OLD MACDONALD AND THE THREE PIGS PLUS... Colourful interactive show for younger audiences which weaves together two popular children's nursery rhymes, Tues 29 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

MY DAD THE MAGICIAN Inventive show for children featuring handmade magic tricks, live music, cassette players, DJ skills, audience interaction and a rabbit called Horace, Thurs 31 May, MAC, Birmingham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

PETER RABBIT (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of James Corden, Fayssal Bazzi. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Wed 30 May

Theatre

JOHN HEGLEY: ALL HAIL THE SNAIL Poet

DARKEST HOUR (PG)

Biography/Drama. Starring Gary Oldman, Lily James. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Wed 30 May



Events

OPERATION EARTH SHOW New family show exploring 'the amazing stories and science of the environment', Mon 28 May - Fri 1 June, Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham

CASTLE QUEST Mon 28 May - Fri 1 June, Tamworth Castle

PIRATE WEEK Mon 28 May - Sun 3 June, Selly Manor, Bournville, B'ham

MAY HALF-TERM CRAFTS Animal-themed craft activities, Tues 29 - Thurs 31 May, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

ANIMAL MANIA Mobile zoo including lizards, snakes, chinchillas, hedgehogs, giant bunnies, tortoises, creepy crawlies and much more, Wed 30 May, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

PICTURE THIS! FAMILY DRAWING TOUR Have a go at drawing challenges, Wed 30 - Thurs 31 May, Aston Hall, Birmingham

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY SHOW Featuring JCB Dancing Diggers, Wed 30 - Thurs 31 May, Staffordshire County Showground

LITTLE SKIPPERS - BOSTIN BLACK COUNTRY Featuring activities and a boat trip, Wed 30 - Thurs 31 May, Dudley Canal & Tunnel Trust

MAY HALF-TERM FAMILY CRAFTS Have a go at bee-themed crafts, make a pot and sow a seed to take home, Wed 30 May - Fri 1 June, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton



Operation Earth

Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham, Mon 28 May - Fri 1 June
Described by its organisers as 'the ultimate interactive experience', Operation Earth is an exploration of environmental science, providing youngsters with plenty of information about how they can help to keep the planet healthy. Activities include an indoor nature survey, air analysis and a microscopic look at 'the world around us'. Children can also get creative with a themed craft and borrow one of the event's fun-filled backpacks, specially designed for youngsters aged between three and seven.

SHOWFIGHTER GOLD STAR

AN UNMISSABLE EVENING WITH SIX-TIME WORLD CHAMPION

ROY JONES JR.

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