

Worcestershire

ISSUE 393 SEPTEMBER 2018

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thelist

Your 16-page week
by week listings guide

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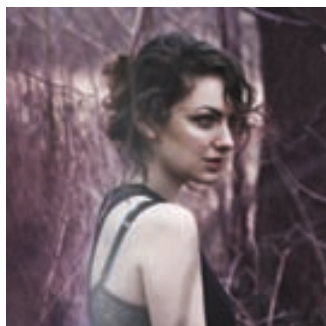
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New Coventry musical drama pays homage to The Enemy

A brand new musical drama paying homage to Coventry rock band The Enemy premieres at the city's Belgrade Theatre this month.

Taking the title of the group's first album and featuring its music, *We'll Live And Die In These Towns* focuses on the efforts of a young musician to break into the big time. Commenting on the show, its writer, local playwright Geoff Thompson, said: "When I first heard that album, it felt so raw and truthful and full of anger. It captured everything I was feeling, and I just had an intuition that I could put it into a story. This is a universal story with universal themes, but first and foremost it's a Coventry story. The poetry and the rhythm of it is Coventry, and that's why I wanted to do it at the Belgrade. It felt like it belonged here."

We'll Live And Die In These Towns runs at the Belgrade from Saturday 29 September to Saturday 20 October.

For more information, visit belgrade.co.uk

New comedy-drama takes a look at British Asian life

A theatre company that specialises in celebrating and reflecting contemporary British Asian culture and society is next month bringing a brand new show to Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre.

Rifco Theatre Company's *Dishoom!* is a comedy-drama featuring music from the smash-hit Bollywood film *Sholay*. The production is helmed by the company's Artistic Director, Pravesh Kumar, who started Rifco in 1999 to make 'a different kind of theatre for a community that couldn't see themselves represented on English stages'.

Dishoom! shows at Warwick Arts Centre from Tuesday 16 to Saturday 20 October.



Plenty to laugh about at Midlands comedy festival



The award-winning Birmingham Comedy Festival brings another 10 days of 'cracking comedic entertainment' to the city next month (Friday 5 to Sunday 14 October). Headlining the event is Joanna Lumley (9 October, Symphony Hall), with James Acaster, The Infinite Monkey Cage's Robin Ince and the brain behind BBC One's *Hospital People*, Tom Binns, also contributing. Commenting on the 2018 edition of the event, a spokesperson for the festival said: "We've got another packed line-up this year, with over 70 performances featuring not only stand-up comedy but also sketch shows, improv, spoken word, theatre, music, game shows, podcasters, fine art and loads more, with over 20 shows being free or pay-what-you-want." For more information, visit bhamcomfest.co.uk

Half-term digital festival fun for 'little geeks'

A homegrown digital festival designed to entertain 'little geeks' and their guardians is taking place at Birmingham's MAC during the autumn half-term holiday.

The sure-to-be-popular event, which runs from 27 October to 3 November, will feature live shows, virtual reality, gaming, workshops, robotics and a retro arcade game play-zone.

For more information, visit macbirmingham.co.uk

Festival set to mark 50 years of Reggae music

The impact, legacy and heritage of 50 years of Reggae music will be celebrated in next month's BASS2018 festival.

Taking place at various Birmingham venues across October, the event features concerts, films, exhibitions and discussions. Highlights include appearances by Toots And The Maytals and Loversrock pioneer Carrol Thompson. The festival also commemorates the 40th anniversary of the release of iconic Steel Pulse album *Handsworth Revolution*. Visit weare-punch.co.uk for more information.



New season, new look at Coventry's Albany Theatre

Jason Donovan and Ann Widdecombe are among the well-known names featured in the autumn entertainment line-up at Coventry's Albany Theatre. Other forthcoming attractions at the venue include *Woman On Fire*, a celebration of the centenary of women winning the right to vote, and two specially created productions to commemorate the centenary of the Armistice. The Albany has recently been upgraded with a new studio and brand new entrance. For full details, visit albanytheatre.co.uk

Ghost hunting at Warwick mansion

Guy's Cliffe House in Warwick is set to get 'all spooked up' this autumn when it plays host to an evening of ghost hunting (10 November). With caves, a masonic lodge, chapel and dark basement to explore, the gothic mansion is said to be a place where paranormal activity can be experienced at all times of the day. The event runs from 9pm to 3am and costs £59 per person.

Festival celebrates Alcester's famous Elizabethan son

The man who turned the derelict fortification of Warwick Castle into a lavish stately home is this month being celebrated in a special festival. Sir Fulke Greville was Alcester's most famous Elizabethan figure. Along with his transformation of the castle, he also funded Alcester Town Hall some four centuries ago this very year. The three-day festival - which is being held in and around Alcester - features organised events, lectures, talks and guided walks. It takes place across the weekend of Friday 28 to Sunday 30 September.



The Canterville Ghost's in the festive 'spirit' in Coventry!

Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre will this Christmas present two festive shows based on the works of Oscar Wilde.

Wilde Creatures (Wed 28 Nov - Sun 30 Dec) is an adaptation of the writer's classic fairytales, and features 'original live music, imaginative storytelling and a generous dash of comedy'.

The Canterville Ghost, meanwhile, is 'a gruesome ghost story for brave souls aged 12-plus'. The show runs from Tuesday 18 to Sunday 23 December and then from Thursday the 27th to Sunday the 30th. Both shows are presented by Olivier-nominated theatre company Tall Stories, whose previous productions include *The Gruffalo* and *Room On The Broom*.

For more information and to purchase tickets for the shows, visit warwickartscentre.co.uk

Jazz star Clare in Bewdley



Award-winning jazz vocalist Clare Teal and her trio will visit the Midlands next month to perform as part of the Bewdley Festival. Clare's brand new show features 'a rich landscape of timeless and sparkling material', including standards from grand masters of the Great American Song Book, Cole Porter and Rodgers & Hart. Clare performs in the town's St George's Hall on Thursday 18 October.

Ten days of music and art in Kenilworth

Great British Bake Off finalist Ruby Tandoh, MOBO Award-winning pianist Zoe Rahman and Man Booker Prize-nominated author Donal Ryan are among the guests lined up for the third Kenilworth Arts Festival (Thursday 20 to Saturday 29 September).

Joining them on the eclectic bill are more than 40 other acclaimed writers, musicians and artists, including US songwriter S. Carey, nature writer John Lewis-Stempel, novelist Fiona Mozley and The Wardrobe Ensemble (pictured).

For more information, visit kenilworthartsfestival.co.uk





New campaign aims to promote the lives and contributions of older members of the LGBT community

A Midlands charity for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (LGBT) has launched a campaign aimed at promoting the lives and lived experiences of older LGBTs. Birmingham LGBT's Ageing With Pride initiative will highlight the positive contributions made by gay and trans people over the age of 50 who are living or have lived in the city.

Commenting on the importance of the campaign, the charity's Director, Steph Keeble, said: "I'm really excited that we're able to deliver Ageing With Pride. The aim is for it to be highly visible, addressing the issues that older LGBT people face but also celebrating the lives and achievements of our LGBT elders, many of whom fought discrimination and campaigned for the achievements in human rights we all now share." For further information, visit blgbt.org

Symphonic Fantasy

Birmingham's Symphony Hall next month hosts the London Concert Orchestra and the Canzonetta choir as they present an evening of music from the world of film and epic fantasy. The programme features music from movies including Lord Of The Rings, Pirates Of The Caribbean, Jurassic Park, Harry Potter and The Chronicles Of Narnia... Symphonic Fantasy takes place on 19 October. To book tickets, call 0121 780 3333 or visit thsh.co.uk

Exploring the issue of skin lightening

The controversial issue of skin lightening comes under the spotlight in a 'powerful and provocative exploration of identity and beauty' at Birmingham's MAC venue this month. Combining drama and humour, Marlene McKenzie's Lite explores the emotional and physical journey required by many people to fit into modern society, where pressure from the media constantly reinforces the need to conform. The Friday 14 September production is followed by a discussion about the themes of the performance.

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New exhibition set to explore childhood through art at Compton Verney gallery



An exhibition celebrating children, childhood and innocence will next spring bring together a selection of iconic paintings, sketches and sculptures at Compton Verney Art Gallery & Park in Warwickshire. Painting Childhood: From Holbein To Freud will explore the creative process and specific challenges posed by painting children. It will also contemplate the place of family within an artist's life, and the ongoing tension between biography and creativity. The exhibition shows at the venue from 16 March to 16 June.

Plans for new world-class cultural centre revealed

Proposals for a new centre for heritage, community arts, learning and skills development, led by Birmingham Museums Trust, have taken a step forward after a plot in the east of the city was approved for regeneration by Birmingham City Council.

Due to open in 2021, the proposed purpose-built facility will offer 'a completely new type of cultural proposition to engage and inspire new audiences'.

The initial phase will create a new storage facility to house the collections currently held at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, in readiness for the redevelopment of the city's flagship museum.



Worcester war

A collection of stories from documents and images recounting the experiences of Worcestershire people during the First World War is available to view at Henry Sandon Hall throughout September. Visiting various venues across the county, The People's Exhibition has been created by Worcestershire World War 100, a special project managed by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service.

NEC hosts Open Mic auditions

Open Mic UK, the country's premier music competition for unsigned acts, is this month holding auditions at Birmingham's NEC (Saturday 22 September).

Singers, songwriters, rappers and vocal groups of all ages are encouraged to enter, and can do so by registering at Open Mic UK for £5.

The competition winner will get the chance to record a debut album and music video.

For more information, visit openmicuk.co.uk

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TOWN HALL



SIR CHRIS HOY HOW TO RIDE A BIKE

TUESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2018, 7:30PM

TOWN HALL



INDIANA JONES

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK IN CONCERT!

FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2018, 7:30PM

SYMPHONY HALL



ÓLAFUR ARNALDS

FRIDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2018, 8PM

TOWN HALL



JOANNA LUMLEY IT'S ALL ABOUT ME!

BIRMINGHAM COMEDY FESTIVAL

TUESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2018 7:30PM

SYMPHONY HALL



AT LAST: THE ETTA JAMES STORY

THURSDAY 18 OCTOBER 2018, 8PM

TOWN HALL



MISS MONEYPENNY'S HALLOWEEN PROMS

SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 2018, 8PM

SYMPHONY HALL



ONE MAN STRANGER THINGS - A PARODY

SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 2018, 8:30PM

TOWN HALL



GRAYSON PERRY

SUNDAY 28 OCTOBER 2018, 7:30PM

SYMPHONY HALL



NEIL OLIVER

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MONDAY 29 OCTOBER 2018, 7:30PM

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FESTIVAL OF IMAGINEERS

presenting a unique mix of arts and engineering on the streets of Coventry...



Festival of Imagineers brings a plethora of outdoor art and performance to Coventry this month. All pieces are based around the merging of the arts with engineering. The festival is now in its fifth year and is a recurring part of Imagineer's calendar of projects.

"Our aims as a company really are to create extraordinary, new and exciting outdoor work in creative spaces, with the hope of engaging as broad a range of audience as possible," says Claire Maddocks, Creative Producer at Imagineer, and the festival's director. "We want to support the development of new artists and young people through our work, but mainly we want to create work that's really memorable."

The eyes of the nation were drawn to Imagineer when they unveiled their project for the London 2012 Olympics.

"The thing that everyone would know us for is our Godiva Awakes project for the Olympics," says Claire. "We made a massive Lady Godiva puppet and cycled it down to London. I think since then it's been a slightly challenging journey because there was a period after 2012 where a lot of funding dried up - this happened nationally."

Despite those funding difficulties, the company managed to create a very unusual and distinct identity for Festival of Imagineers.

"The concept came out of quite a long

journey," Claire continues. "We ran a small-scale festival of invention at that time, which was to do with the fact that Coventry has historically been a very inventive city. We left that behind when we did our major Olympic project in 2012, where we'd mixed with a whole series of engineering companies across the region. So it seemed like a natural progression to link all our future work to those engineers, and to explore further the synergy between creative engineers and creative artists."

"For the festival, quite a lot of the performances will use structures or machines or other things that have been engineered to create a framework for facilitating performance or art of some description."

We've managed to really fuse those elements together over the years, and I think that's very much what Imagineer is about. I feel it really makes sense to our audience now, and they really appreciate the festival as something a little bit different, quirky and unexpected."

Each year sees the festival programme take on different themes: "We're doing two themes this year - connectivity and play. The connectivity part is all about exploring what connects people, communities, places and more. Our theme of play partly links to some work the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum are doing exploring the subject. It also links to our major new commission, Bridge, where one of the main things we're exploring is creating an environment in which members of the public are invited to play in the public space, or behave differently from usual in relation to a public space."

Claire is immensely proud that Festival of

Imagineers presents a balance of local, national and international work.

"I do feel like you need to do stuff that's locally rooted, but is interesting nationally and internationally. I think the important thing is creating a platform upon which there can be a cross-fertilisation between local, national and international artists. So I think it's about striking a balance between nurturing, supporting and showcasing local artists, and bringing in work from outside that can influence the local art scene, or be influenced by it."

Claire is also optimistic about the festival's future.

"We're exploring a slightly different model and different partnerships, so it may become a festival where you might visit Coventry and stay for the duration. I can't reveal much else about what we're actually trying to do, but the plan is to grow and explode the festival

over the next five years."

Claire hopes Coventry becoming City of Culture 2021 will help propel Imagineer, the festival and Coventry itself towards new heights: "I'm really excited because I've spent almost my whole career in Coventry, insisting the city isn't the cultural desert many presume it to be! This is Coventry's opportunity to really change people's perceptions of it. In terms of what it means for the festival, we really don't know, but we're hopeful. I think it's just a case of waiting to see what happens."

Festival of Imagineers takes place in various locations around Coventry city centre from Monday 17 - Saturday 22 September

For more information, visit festivalofimagineers.co.uk

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS...



CARMEN FUNEBRE

Sat 22 Sept

As Imagineer celebrates 20 years of working with inspirational outdoor arts company Teatr Biuro Podrozy, and the UK marks the centenary of World War One, Festival of Imagineers presents Teatr Biuro Podrozy's most iconic performance. Carmen Funebre is a visceral and brutal exposé of the horrors of war, based on the Bosnian conflict of the 1990s.



REAR VIEW

Thurs 20 - Sat 22 Sept

Rear View is a unique, interactive experience where the streets of Coventry become part of the performance. Presented by IOU, the action happens on a custom-made conversion of a double decker bus, a mobile auditorium that turns the city into a stage, as participants are taken on a journey during which familiar and not so familiar places are brought to life.



CHILD HOOD

Thurs 20 - Sat 22 Sept

Originally commissioned by Artichoke for Lumiere London in Trafalgar Square, an installation of illuminated balloons fills Broadgate. French company Collectif Coin are experts in site-specific art, exploring a dreamy and somewhat naïve vision of the digital technologies that surround us in everyday life through ideas about body, sound and light.



Fun in the sun!

Although it's the end of the road for long-running television series Benidorm, the show's Midlands fans can still catch up with all their favourite characters, thanks to a new touring stage version of the hit ITV comedy. What's On recently chatted to Adam Gillen - who plays the unusual but loveable Liam Conroy - to find out more about Benidorm Live...

Complete with swingers, cross-dressing and more, would you say Benidorm really embraces the beauty of diversity, Adam?

I reckon so. I think the character of Les/Lesley is a wonderful one. It also shows how someone can be if they're surrounded by an accepting community that allows him to be himself and express himself both as a man and as his alter-ego. I think it portrays an environment of freedom and freedom of expression, and I think that's a really positive thing. I imagine Benidorm's portrayal of all lifestyles with a certain amount of levity, joy and fun can only be a good thing. I think the overall reason for Benidorm's success, though, is that there's a certain amount of irreverence, real warmth and heart in its story. Derren Litten genuinely loves his characters.

Your character, Liam, and Kenneth - played by Tony Maudsley - have a close friendship. What can we expect in the stage version?

Liam and Kenneth are who they are. They care for each other very dearly. I think they're beautiful, well-formed characters who aren't shallow and have layers. They're very wholesome and just fun to watch. I'm not sure if there'll be duets in the Neptune, but certainly there'll be a continuation of the combative, fun, warring siblings relationship they seem to have - just more nonsense. That's the thing with all your best friends; you can have the most horrendous rows and fall out terribly, but you know they're not going to go very far and you're always going to be there for each other. I think that's what happens with us.

Liam is pretty ill-fated and unlucky in love. What dating advice would you give him?

I think I'd say that he shouldn't be afraid to

be himself. That's the beautiful thing about Liam, actually - he doesn't try to be anyone else but who he is. He's sometimes unusual and sometimes quite strange, but nobody should apologise for who they are. So if he keeps on that road, he'll find somebody - eventually.

Some of Liam's fashion choices in the TV series have been questionable. Has he grown up a bit for the stage version?

I'm not sure yet, as we haven't had that costume chat, but I hope so. When I first started playing him, I got the impression he was dressed by his mother and also borrowed a few things from her wardrobe, which is quite a fun angle. Then, as he's grown up, he's been influenced by Kenneth, and I think Kenneth has picked him out a couple of shirts. I think now he's older there may be a change, but we'll see what the costume chat has in store.

What made you want to come back to the character of Liam for a full-on stage show?

The series has come to an end, and I can't think of a better way to pay tribute to that than by doing a sort-of Benidorm roadshow - an extended, bumper episode. To see the freedom that those characters can explore on the stage as well is great. For example, Tony and I, we like the physical, brotherly side of our characters' relationship, and you can't always get all of that on camera effectively. So to be on stage and to have a bit more space that allows you to really have a proper jostle is ideal.

How does preparation for comedy on-stage and comedy for screen differ?

The timings and the rhythm of the comedy is the same, but you're not restricted so much by the technical side of things on stage. On

stage, we're able to have a proper barny, where we can cross over speech when shouting at each other without that being an issue. But I think the core elements are the same.

What's the most outrageous thing you've seen off-set during all your time filming abroad?

God, I've seen quite a few things in Benidorm. People really let loose. People just have the best time of their lives. Even though people are insanely happy, it does sometimes look like you imagine Sodom and Gomorrah would! It's just absolute chaos and pure carnage, but in the most beautifully fun sense. I couldn't even pick out a specific event because there have been too many.

Not planning a holiday trip to Benidorm anytime soon, then?

Well, I've been to Benidorm for four months every year for eight years, but I wouldn't say no to dipping my toe in again - once I've had a little break - because it's enormous fun. You don't have to be going for it party-wise to enjoy the area because there are actually some really lovely things to do there; it's a really beautiful part of Spain. The neon whites always draw you back for a bit of nonsense in the end, though.

What are your plans for the future?

I'm not sure. We've got this until April and then, after that, who knows? There's hopefully more fun, interesting projects to come.

.....

Benidorm Live visits the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, from Monday 24 to Saturday 29 September, and then runs at the New Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham from Monday 3 to Saturday 29 December.

warwick
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CHRISTMAS SHOWS 2018

FAMILY

TALL STORIES

Age 5+

Wilde Creatures

Based on the fairy
tales of Oscar Wilde

Wed 28 Nov – Sun 30 Dec



FAMILY

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REVIEW: Tap & Tandoor

Blending traditional pub dining with contemporary street food

Like Lennon and McCartney, Barker and Corbett, Lee and Lifeson, and Ben and Jerry, craft beer and curry were clearly meant to be together, and their glorious partnership is at the heart of Ajay and Shivani Kenth's latest catering venture.

The team behind Moseley's popular Indian streetfood eatery Zindiya launched the Tap & Tandoor in June, and judging by the fully booked Thursday night I visited, they look to have another success story on their hands.

But as much as there are similarities - both serve upmarket but good value Indian street food alongside a quirky cocktail menu created by Smultronstalle's Rob Wood - the Tap has much more of a pub atmosphere (it was formerly the Saddlers Arms), as well as an extensive selection of craft beers.

Despite the pub vibe - you even order at the bar - the bright,

modern space is tactfully laid out to ensure there's more than enough room for diners, even when the bar area is busy.

After a quick scan of the beer menu, my friend and I settled on ales from near (Longhorn from Purity in Alcester) and far (Big Wave from Kona in Hawaii), both of which were excellent - the latter the sort of light IPA I reasoned would be a perfect accompaniment to the feast ahead.

And a feast it was - not least because everything we ordered arrived at once, street-food style, even though we'd been asked if we wanted the 'small plate' dishes treating as starters, and the rest as main courses. In future I'll make this even clearer, or order each course separately.

No matter. Nothing went cold because we didn't give it time to. My 'small plate'/starter of naan slider - mini naan bread topped

with onions, fresh coriander, pomegranate, mint and coriander chutney plus a filling (I chose seekh kebab) was a case in point. The sensational dish was unlike any 'slider' I'd ever experienced, and could hardly be described as 'mini' in any sense of the word. There was plenty of the fluffy naan to share - we had half each - and the combination of toppings was nothing short of sensational.

My friend's choice of amritsari fish - fried fish in crispy batter spiced with chaat masala - faded by comparison. Served pub-style like goujons in a pot, it looked great but lacked a bit of flavour, particularly given that it was coated in such light batter.

He fared better with his main course - a lamb curry made to a fragrant north Indian recipe with beautifully tender meat in a warming, rich, spicy sauce. It was one of a range of 'home-style' curries on the menu, all of

which are gluten free. As are all the 'tandoor' dishes, from which I chose my main course of bright orange king prawns, the chunky fish cooked over charcoal and served with onions.

Rather than double up on naan activity (there's a choice of three) we shared a lighter tandoori roti and a portion of cumin rice (relatively small by typical restaurant standards), both of which were excellent.

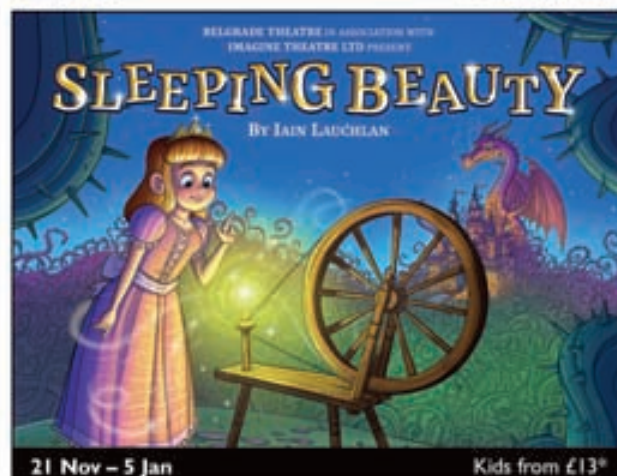
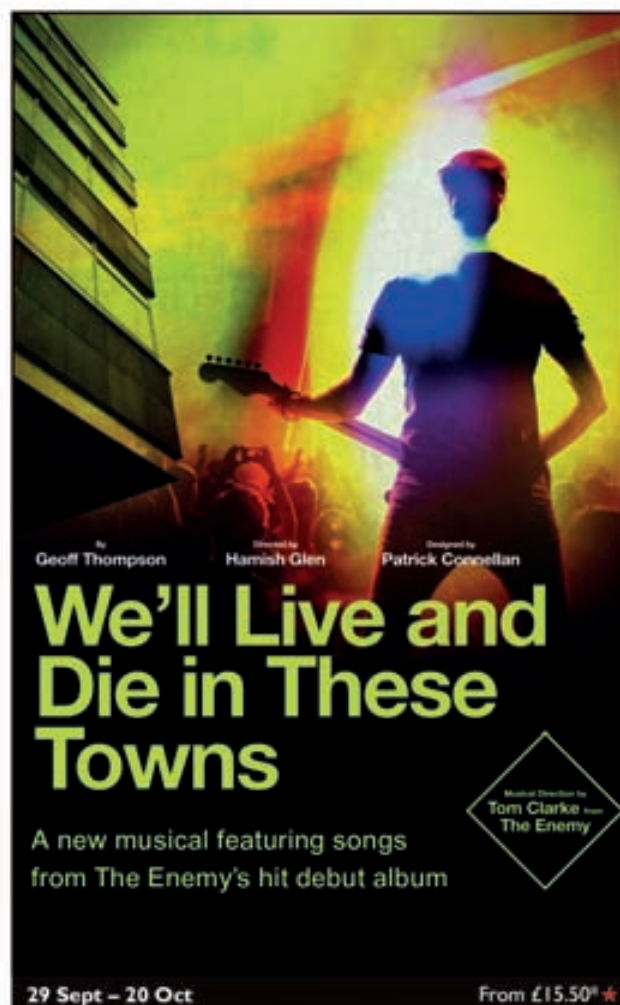
The portion sizes also ensured we weren't too full for dessert - something I doubt would have been the case if we'd added anything from the fascinating range of side dishes, which include okra fries, mogo chips and beer-battered bhajis.

And if the latter sounds like textbook Indian pub food, then how about the Tap's very own sticky toffee pudding 'with an Indian twist'? Sadly I can't provide details, as it was the one element of the dessert menu unavailable on the night, so instead I opted for another fun/fusion dish in the form of apple and cinnamon samosas. I was initially disappointed that it took the form of three mini samosas rather than a standard-size one, but the combination was nonetheless another winner, the lovely filo pastry parcels perfectly augmented by delicious chai-flavoured ice cream.

It was another inventive blend of traditional pub dining with contemporary street food from a venue that's making good on its promise to provide winning combinations. *Steve Adams*

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

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New pizzeria opens in Rugby shopping park

A brand new pizzeria has recently opened at Elliott's Field Shopping Park in Rugby.

Brooklyn Pizza specialises in the best of New York-inspired pizzas, including 'smoked balsamic' and 'three-cheese white'. Cheesecakes and fresh cinnamon buns feature among the restaurant's desserts, while its beer is imported directly from the Brooklyn Brewery.

Talking Italian...

New family-run Italian restaurant Pinocchio is set to open in Birmingham's Mailbox this month. Taking up residence alongside the Mailbox's other canalside restaurants, the eatery will serve pasta, pizza and risotto dishes, as well as steak, lamb, veal and a daily fish option.

Cooking up a storm at Solihull Food & Drink Festival

Award-winning chef Jean-Christophe Novelli (pictured), Britain's Best Home Cook star Chris Bavin and Bake Off contestant Selasi will be among the celebrity guests cooking up a storm when the Solihull Food & Drink Festival returns this month.

The event, which is taking place at Mell Square from Friday 28 to Sunday 30 September, will be the biggest yet, featuring 150 food and drink stalls, numerous demonstrations, live music, children's entertainment and the Big Ale Trail.



Popular food festival returns to Leamington for 11th year

The hugely popular Leamington Food & Drink Festival returns to the town's Royal Pump Room Gardens on 8 & 9 September.

Now in its 11th year, the free-to-attend event will feature 130 exhibitors serving up the very best local food and drink, including meats, organic produce, wines, cakes and chocolates. There will also be live music, demonstrations in the cookery theatre and a free kids' cookery school.

New grill restaurant opens in the Touchwood centre

New restaurant Firejacks has opened in Solihull's Touchwood Shopping Centre, replacing American-style eatery Coast To Coast. Taking the slogan 'Meat. Fire. Friends', the family-friendly restaurant serves up delicious grill dishes over an open fire and boasts an impressive cocktail selection.

For more information and to book a table, visit firejacks.co.uk



Bollywood in Brum

**Bold beats and explosive dance as
new musical arrives in the Midlands**



Taj Express, which visits the Midlands this month, is a one-way ticket to experiencing the flavour of Bollywood. Expect a musical bursting with bold colours, fabulous dancing and a soundtrack by famous composer AR Rahman. What's On spoke to producer and director Shruti Merchant about the show...

This month, the Midlands will be hit by a wave of Indian culture when Taj Express comes to both the Birmingham Hippodrome and the Regent Theatre in Stoke.

The feelgood musical has been a success across the globe, including during its stint in London last year. Audiences will get the opportunity to explore the glamorous world of Bollywood through a young man's desire to follow in the footsteps of composer AR Rahman - the man behind the music from hit movie Slumdog Millionaire.

Director and producer of Taj Express, Shruti Merchant, comes from a family who's heritage is deeply rooted in dance and choreography.

"I'm born into a family of choreographers," she says. "Not just in Bollywood, but also from a background of Indian classical dancing - predominantly Kathak, like all my ancestors from Rajasthan.

I started off my career assisting my sister, Vaibhavi Merchant, in films, and that's when we got an offer to do a musical about her life. I quickly preferred sitting in a theatre to being on a set because the experience was exhilarating - the audience reaction to your work was so instant. The kind of love and adulation we received when taking our culture and dance choreography on stage is something that made me never want to go back on a film set. So I started my company, Quintessence, to produce not only Taj Express but a lot more content from India."

Shruti believes that Bollywood is the perfect platform upon which to base the most vibrant of musicals.

"I guess in India we still believe in dreams and fairytales. We believe very heavily in romance, and the drama surrounding romance, and we show this in our films. However, we wanted to do something different with Taj Express. We came up with the idea of telling the story of a young boy who tries to follow in the footsteps of AR Rahman. He wants to be the next big composer in

Bollywood because the whole world knows who Mr Rahman is. This story contemplates who carries on his legacy, and it acts as a catalyst to explore all the different music and dance of India through different choreography.

"I always like to think that the audience enjoys being transported into a new world where they feel happy, relaxed and, most importantly, are completely entertained. I'm not here to put across any content that depresses anybody, or that makes them want to check their phones. The fact that everyone wants to dance at the end of the show is great; there's some kind of release the audience feel when they come out of a Bollywood musical. I'm not here to show the technique of Bollywood dancing or to brag about the kinds of fabulous extensions we do in our dancing. I just want my audience to be entertained!"

Shruti believes Taj Express is bringing a true and diverse flavour of India to theatres across the world.

"I think Taj Express is a perfectly curated show of the best parts of India. Everything - from the team we have to the songs we sing, the script by Toby Gough and the dance in the show - makes this happen. We didn't want to bore people with Indian history, so the script is very easy to follow. Even the fabrics and colours of the costumes have brought in a palette that is pan-India.

"Audiences find our dance styles so intriguing and wonder how we Indians move our necks in that certain way, so these are the kinds of moments we've incorporated into the musical. It doesn't only feature traditional dance performed in the temples in India, it also speaks to current India, which is in tune with hip-hop and other modern forms of dance and music. The way our show has been styled is in tune with popular world standards, but also brings true India through. It's such a unique, diverse production for audiences all over the world to enjoy."

Shruti is particularly excited about bringing Taj Express to the UK.

"This is my favourite country. I desperately want to move to the UK because I feel very connected to the world of musical theatre here. In Mumbai, where I'm currently living, I feel all alone. When I walk around the streets of London, I see so many musicals playing and so many people lining up to watch theatre. That's something that doesn't exist in my country - films and Bollywood are the predominant entertainment. So yes, the UK is special to me."

Directing musical theatre and leading her company is incredibly hard work, but the rewards more than make up for it.

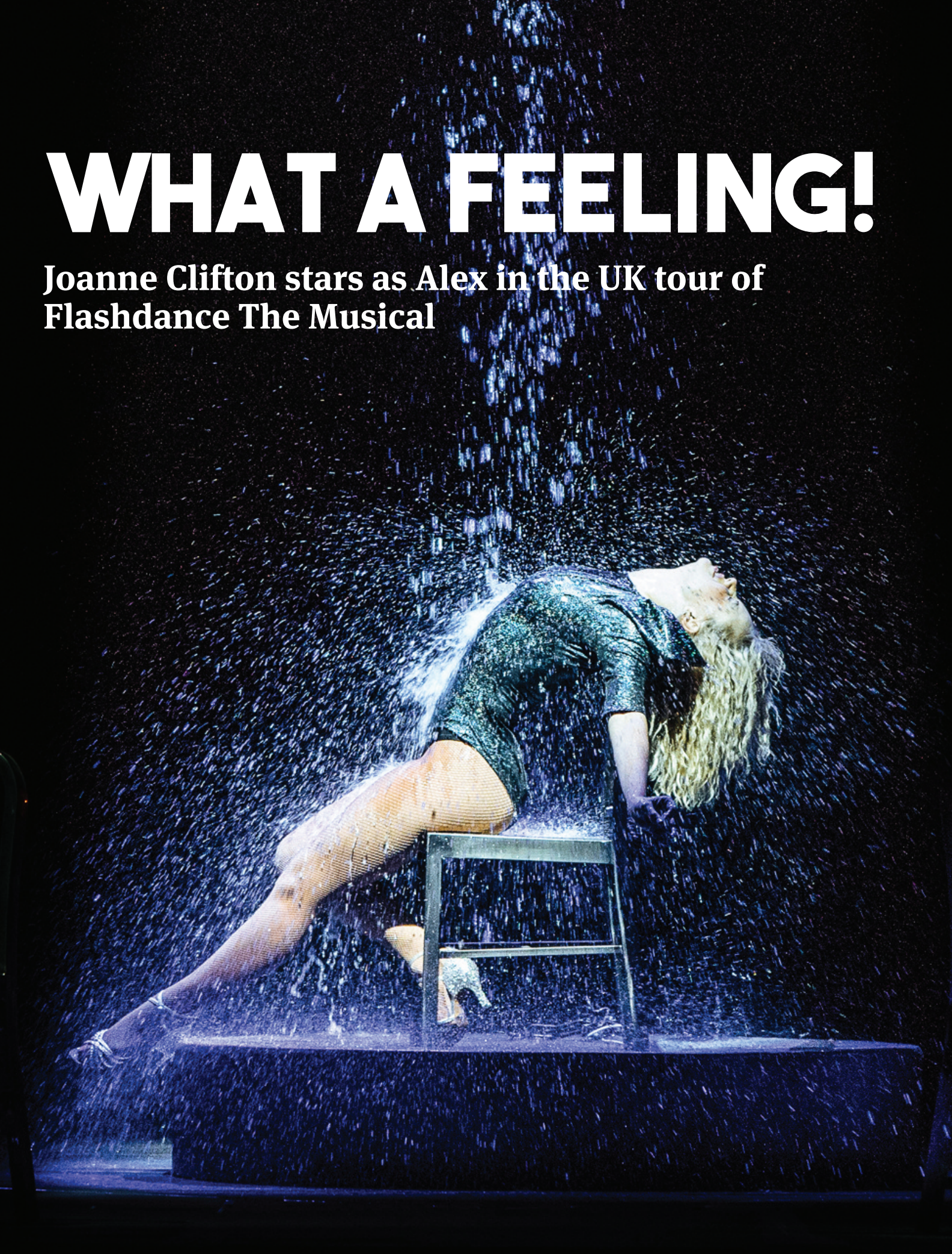
"Theatre is the life I've chosen, but I've had to sacrifice my personal life because the only thing I'm doing is focusing on the productions. It's an endless job. There are times when I say, "I'm never going to do this again". Then, after finishing the production and sleeping for two or three days straight, I'm trying to get back on it. Yes, there are a lot of sacrifices, but I think at the same time the madness is what I enjoy the most. The reward is when the audience stands up at the end to give us a round of applause, and then leaves the theatre laughing, smiling and dancing.

"I have another production that I'll start working on when Taj Express has finished. It will probably be presented next year at the Edinburgh Fringe because we've got a keen interest from there. I've been touring Taj Express for five years now, so it's high time I did something new because there's such a demand. I'll be presenting a lot more stuff from India out there on the world stage."

Taj Express runs at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 11 to Saturday 15 September and is at Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent on Tuesday 18 September

WHAT A FEELING!

**Joanne Clifton stars as Alex in the UK tour of
Flashdance The Musical**



More than 13 million people tuned in to BBC One to see Joanne Clifton and her partner, Ore Oduba, lift the glitterball trophy in the final of the 2016 series of Strictly Come Dancing. For the girl from Grimsby, it was not only a moment of triumph but also a stepping stone to a new career as a star of musical theatre. Now Joanne is taking her dancing to the next level in the new UK tour of Flashdance The Musical...

What's your earliest dance memory, Joanne, and did you want to put on the ballet shoes and tutu or throw yourself into body popping?

My earliest memory is being at my mum and dad's dance school. When they couldn't find anyone to babysit us, they used to take me and my brother Kevin along. We were just toddlers, but Kevin would join in, and as soon as he did, I would copy him. Then mum put me into ballet, but I was just awful at it; they used to call me the 'pregnant plug' because I wore the little black leotard with the pink tights and was one of those kids whose belly really stuck out! I was absolutely rubbish at it and hated it. So I stopped the ballet but did ballroom, Latin, disco and little group dances. Then we started entering competitions when Kevin was five and I was four. Quite a lot of people think we're twins, but there's a whole year and 11 days between us!

You spent a long time in Italy. Do you speak Italian?

Yes, I went over to a dance school at 16 and nobody spoke English there, so I had to learn very quickly. I stayed there for 14 years. When I came back, I'd spent half my life there. It was my first language for quite a long time, and when I came back to England in 2014, I used to think in Italian and had to translate in my head back into English. I dreamed in Italian for about a year after I left. It still comes out in natural reactions - like if I bang my elbow or my knee, I'll swear in Italian rather than English, which can be a good thing if I'm in public!

Do you like Italian food?

I absolutely love it, although I wasn't allowed to eat much of it while I was over there. My male coach was Italian and my female coach was Russian, so we were trained like the Russian ballet dancers and, of course, we needed to be slim. But that's why I'm eating lots of it now!

And do you cook it?

No. I can cook two things. I can do poached eggs and pop tarts - but that's a meal in itself, isn't it? You can have the poached eggs for mains and then the pop tarts for pudding!

2013 was an amazing year for you. You won the World Pro Ballroom Show Dance Championships, the World Dance Sport Games and you performed at the Kremlin.

How was that? And what are Dance Sport Games?

It was an amazing experience. They weren't, like, the loudest audience in Russia, but it was great to be able to say, 'I've done that'. The World Sport Games are basically all the sports that aren't in the Olympics but are on the waiting list to be included. It's always difficult with something that's based on opinion rather than who crosses the line first or who jumped the highest - although ice dancing is in the Olympics, so dance could maybe make it one day, too.

You joined Strictly Come Dancing in 2014 and won two years later with Ore Oduba. What was your favourite dance routine during your winning series?

Singing In The Rain, because I thought that was a turning point for me and that style is just my thing. The audience seemed to love the jive. I'm not keen on Latin, but I'm glad they enjoyed it. But probably equal with Singing In The Rain was the ballroom show dance we did at the end. They've both got all that Hollywood glamour, which I love.

Your brother, Kevin, also a Strictly dancer, was the first to congratulate you, even though you'd beaten him. Was there a little bit of sibling rivalry in evidence during the course of the show?

More on my part. I'm more competitive than Kevin. But he's my big brother and I wanna pay him back for all the wrestling moves he used to practise on me when we were kids. But if he had a good week, I was really happy for him, and he was for me. And as soon as the cameras went off, I went and said sorry because he'd been in the finals four times and not won, and then I just came out of nowhere and took the title!

Having left Strictly, you went into the tour of Thoroughly Modern Millie. Was musical theatre a new direction for you or a return to an earlier love?

I'd never really trained in musical theatre, but I had private lessons in singing and acting when I was a kid growing up in Grimsby. I didn't do anything for 14 years while I was in Italy, but since I came back to do Strictly, I've been taking lessons again. Before Millie, I did two other musicals on the fringe, but Millie was my first big stage show. I've wanted to do musicals since I was a kid. I absolutely love singing and acting, and I like the excitement of the audience coming in,

knowing me only as a dancer, sitting there and thinking, 'Let's see if she can actually act'!

The character you play in Flashdance, Alex Owens, is based on a real-life woman who really did work as a welder by day and danced at night. Are you any good at DIY?

I actually built myself a desk and a shoe-rack! The shoe rack was basically little pipes that you fit together at corners, but the desk was wood and you had to use a screwdriver. It's a bit wobbly, and I got one bit the wrong way round, but apart from that I thought I did quite well.

Could you describe Alex in three words?

Passionate, focused and determined.

In Flashdance, you have to perform several dance routines that are so well known they've become iconic movie moments. How are you feeling about that?

I can't wait! I think the audience will get the same feeling as me. When the music starts, particularly Maniac and What A Feeling, even if I'm tired after a day of rehearsals and the director says, 'Okay, let's do it from the top', as soon as that music comes on, I get an absolute buzz and can't wait to do it.

You're appearing in the show up until December. Are you feeling fit and ready to take that on?

I think so. I've danced since I was four and been trained the hard, sports way in Italy. Obviously I'm older now - I'm 33 and I'm playing a 19-year-old, but I know how to train for it and I know how to eat so that I've got enough energy but can look good in a leotard. Touch wood, my dancing experience will help me through it.

What is it about Flashdance that really appeals to audiences?

It's such an iconic movie with such iconic songs and scenes. Everybody knows Flashdance, everybody knows What A Feeling and everybody knows the Maniac water scene. It's going to be great for those moments, and I just say to people, come and see it! I'm so grateful that I've got the role.

.....
Flashdance The Musical runs at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Tuesday 4 to Saturday 8 September.

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Comedy

Comedy Night

Featuring Robert White, Tom Houghton
and Rahul Kohli

Thursday 11 October, 7.30pm

Hot on the heels of his appearance on
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Tour, Robert White will headline the first
comedy night of the autumn season.

Joining Robert will be Tom Houghton and
compere Rahul Kohli.



Rock and Pop Music

80s Night

featuring Kick up the 80s - the ultimate
party band

Thursday 15 November, 7.30pm

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The ultimate 80s party band - 'Kick up the
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80s hits.



Classical

Magic of the Musicals

Thursday 6 December, 7.30pm

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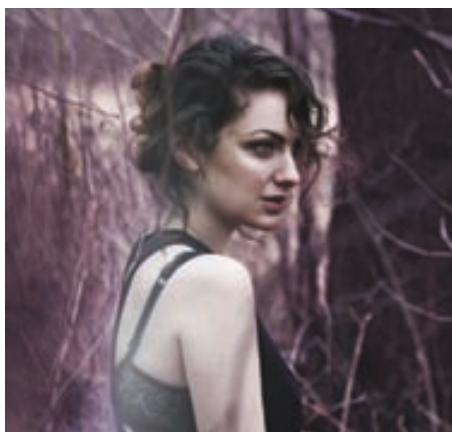
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Fridolijn

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 15 September

Fridolijn's (pronounced 'Free-doe-Line') music blends haunting self-penned songs with covers played in her own unique style, cinematic folk, jazz, electronica and broken beats.

The Amsterdam-born singer previously enjoyed chart-topping success in both Holland and Japan with her band, Finn Silver.



Kylie

Genting Arena, Birmingham, Fri 21 September

Having racked up more than 80 million worldwide record sales, released 14 studio albums, 12 compilation albums and won a coveted Grammy Award, Kylie heads for the Midlands with a brand new extravaganza centred around latest album Golden. But don't worry - the princess of pop will undoubtedly be treating fans to some of the best-loved hits from her extensive back-catalogue too.



Fish

The Assembly, Leamington Spa, Mon 14 September

Scottish singer-songwriter Derek William Dick, better known as Fish, achieved prominence as the lead singer and lyricist of neo-progressive rock band Marillion, with whom

he performed from 1981 to 1988.

With a voice that's been described as a conflation of Roger Daltrey and Peter Gabriel, Fish visits Leamington to perform his Clutching At Straws album in its entirety. The set will also feature songs from new album Weltschmerz, which is scheduled for release this month.

Elles Bailey

The Marr's Bar, Worcester, Thurs 27 September

Boasting a 'smoky vocal' and a rootsy blues, country and soulful rock sound, Elles Bailey's debut album, Wildfire, went straight in at number two on the iTunes Blues Charts when it was released a year ago. Her success has continued into 2018 - she's been nominated for four UK blues awards and made well-received appearances at numerous key country and blues festivals. Elles recently returned to the studio in Nashville to record some eagerly anticipated new material.

Biffy Clyro

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 19 September

Finally finding stardom in 2007 with the album Puzzle, Scottish rockers Biffy Clyro have since established themselves as one of the biggest bands on the music scene. They visit Symphony Hall this month in support of their first acoustic album, MTV Unplugged: Live At The Roundhouse London.

Arctic Monkeys

Arena Birmingham, Sat 15 - Sun 16 September

Formed in 2002, rock band Arctic Monkeys have released five studio albums, won seven Brit Awards - bagging both Best British Group and Best British Album three times - been nominated for three Grammy Awards and won the Mercury Prize in 2006 for their debut album, Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not.

Alex Turner and the band this month visit Birmingham in support of latest album Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino.



Bromsgrove Concerts www.bromsgrove-concerts.org.uk
Autumn 2018

Fri 28 September 2018 at 8pm
 Held at Routh Hall, Bromsgrove School
Emily Sun
 with Gamal Khamis (piano)

Schubert: Violin Sonatina in D major D384
 Grieg: Violin Sonata No 3 in C minor Op 45
 Gillian Whitehead: Torus (2013)
 Poulenc: Violin Sonata
 Prokofiev: Concert Fantasy
 (on themes from 'Porgy and Bess')

Fri 9 November 2018 at 8pm
Atea Wind Quintet

Alena Walenlin flute, Anna Hashimoto clarinet
 Ashley Myall bassoon, Chris Beagles horn
 Philip Haworth oboe


Bach: Goldberg Variations (excerpts)
 Bozza: Trois Pieces pour Une Musique de nuit (1954)
 Mike Mower: Jazz Suite (2010)
 Frank Bridge: Divertimenti
 Nielsen: Wind Quintet

Fri 30 November 2018 at 8pm
Gould Piano Trio
 with Robert Plane (clarinet)


Benjamin Frith piano, Robert Plane clarinet
 Lucy Gould violin, Richard Lester cello

Ravel: Piano Trio in A minor
 Huw Watkins: Four Fables (2018) (Gould/Plane Commission)
 Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade (arr Noack and Engell)

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 Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington
HENSCHEL STRING QUARTET
 Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann

9 October at 7:30pm
 St Mary's Church, Warwick
THE YORK WAITS
 Music from Warwick the Kingmaker's time

18 October at 7:30pm
 Unitarian Chapel, Warwick
ROZA BENE - HARPISCHORD
 2018 LEAMINGTON MUSIC PRIZE WINNER
 Couperin, Byrd, Arne, Frescobaldi, Bach

NOVEMBER

2 November at 7:30pm
 Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington
FITZWILLIAM STRING QUARTET
 WITH SOPHIE RENSHAW VIOLA
 Bach, Mozart, Bruckner

9 November at 7:45pm
 Royal Spa Centre Studio, Leamington
KOSMOS
 Balkan, Gypsy, Klezmer, Tango + Bach

13 November at 7:30pm
 St Mary's Church, Warwick
STILE ANTICO
 Queen of Muses - Music of Elizabeth I's time

22 November at 7:30pm
 Leamington Spa Art Gallery
INVENTUS WIND QUINTET
 2018 LEAMINGTON MUSIC PRIZE WINNER
 Debussy, Milhaud, Ibert, Francaix, Ravel,
 Piazzolla. With French wine and nibbles

30 November at 7:30pm
 Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington
MARTINU STRING QUARTET
 Haydn, Schubert, Dvorak

DECEMBER

5 December at 7:30pm
 Lord Leycester Hospital, Warwick
THE MELLSTOCK BAND
 The Leaves of Life

11 December at 7:30pm
 St Mary's Church, Warwick
SIRINU
 From Candlemas to Epiphany -
 The Lord of Misrule

19 December at 7:30pm
 St Mark's Church, Leamington
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Orchestra Of The Swan: English Fantasies

Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon, Tues 25 September

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 legendary composers.

This latest concert sees them bringing together three of the 20th century's finest pieces for string orchestra with the works by which the compositions were inspired. It's an educational as well as entertaining way to present music, and will allow the audience to appreciate first hand the influence and effect of Arcangelo Corelli on Tippett, Frank Bridge on Britten, and Thomas Tallis on Vaughan-Williams. Stacey Watton (pictured) conducts.

Armonico Consort: The Glory Of Old England

St Peter's Church, Wootton Waven, Warwickshire, Fri 28 September



Founded by organist and conductor Christopher Monks in 2001, Armonico are one of the largest organisations of their kind in the UK. Using authentic period instruments, the baroque consort regularly perform with some of the best solo musicians in the world.

This Warwickshire concert sees them presenting music from across the last 500 years, with madrigals, folk songs and close harmony all featuring.

Emily Sun With Gamal Khamis

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 28 September

Pianist Gamal Khamis here lends his support to the winner of last year's Bromsgrove Young Musicians competition, violinist Emily Sun (pictured).

Presenting a programme of tuneful sonatas by romantic and 20th century composers, Emily will draw the evening to a close with much-loved tunes including Summertime from Porgy And Bess.



Chandos Symphony Orchestra

Malvern Theatres, Sun 16 September

Malvern's very own amateur orchestra is here joined by violinist Savitri Grier (pictured) for a concert that includes Bruch's much-loved Violin Concerto.

The programme has been selected to allow the orchestra to 'let down their hair' a little, with music on the lighter side including Gillis's Symphony no 5 1/2 and John Williams' music from Star Wars movie The Force Awakens.



CBSO: Italian Moments

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 27 September



Midlands conductor Alpesh Chauhan (pictured) picks up the baton to oversee a CBSO homage to all things Italian - from Tchaikovsky's Romeo & Juliet to Respighi's depiction of Roman excess in his symphonic poem, Feste Romane. Russian pianist Pavel Kolesnikov also contributes to the evening's programme when he performs Rachmaninov's Rhapsody On A Theme Of Paganini.



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Shiine On Birmingham

O2 Academy, Birmingham, Sat 8 September

Festival brand Shiine On is launching a new one-day event at Birmingham's O2 Academy this month.

Shiine On Birmingham's impressive line-up includes more than 20 iconic bands.

The Hacienda will descend on the city, with Todd Terry headlining a superb line-up alongside Marshall Jefferson and Jon Dasilva. Ticket prices include free entry to two special afterparties.

Line-up includes: Orbital, Shed Seven (pictured), Happy Mondays, Embrace, Glasvegas, Julian Cope, Reverend & The Makers, Black Grape, Cast, The Wedding Present, Dreadzone, A Certain Ratio, Jim Bob (Carter USM), Bentley Rhythm Ace, Thousand Yard Stare, The Stairs, Psyence, Steve Cradock, Clint Boon (Inspirational Carpets) and Ned's Acoustic Dustbin.



Moseley Folk

Moseley Park, Birmingham,
Fri 31 August - Sun 2 September

Tucked away behind Birmingham's busy streets, the beautiful Moseley Park is one of the city's hidden gems, transformed each year into an enchanting escape by one of the Midlands' best-loved music festivals. Traditional folk & low-fi acoustic sets blend seamlessly with dreamy electropop, psychedelia and indie favourites against a magical backdrop of bright hippie colours, lush foliage and a beautiful lake. The perfect way to see out the summer.

Music line-up includes: Levellers, Teenage Fanclub (pictured), Nick Mulvey, Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel, Show Of Hands, Bridget St John, King Creosote, This Is The Kit, Willy Mason, Imarhan, Skinny Lister, Jools Holland and Samantha Parton, Richard Dawson, Martin Carthy, Chris Wood and Siobhan Miller.



Godiva

War Memorial Park, Coventry,
Fri 31 August - Sun 2 September



Proudly reaffirming its status as the UK's biggest and best free music festival, Godiva presents another bumper crop of top-notch talent as it returns for 2018. Veteran performers join emerging artists working across a dazzling array of genres. While the traditional Godiva procession continues to this day, the weekend has certainly come a long way since its 17th century origins as a celebration of the medieval Countess of Mercia.

Music line-up includes: Editors, Ronan Keating, Jake Bugg, Gaz Coombes (pictured), Cradle Of Filth, Asian Dub Foundation, Jonas Blue, Peace, The Neville Staple Band, Gabrielle, Professor Green, Little Comets, Hazel O'Connor and Blood Red Shoes.

Bromyard Folk Festival

Bromyard, Worcestershire,
Thurs 6 - Sunday 9 September

Taking place for the 51st time, Bromyard's much-loved celebration of traditional music is now a well-established tradition in and of itself. This year's event promises more than 170 hours of entertainment, with some of the finest national and international folk musicians headlining a programme that also includes workshops, sing-arounds, ceilidhs, dance displays, children's entertainment and a traditional craft market.

Line-up includes: Oysterband, The Young'uns (pictured), Rura, Cosmotheke, Chris Wood, Fara, Moore Moss and Rutter, The Rheingans Sisters, Granny's Attic, Crows, The Hut People, Cardboard Fox, Jack Rutter, Cohen Braithwaite-Kilcoyne, Steamchicken, Rosie Hood, Ben Robertson and Keith Donnelly.





Marcus Brigstocke

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 23 September; Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, Sun 30 September; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 24 November; Evesham Arts Centre, Sat 1 December

Peddling a line in dark, intelligent humour, the award-winning Marcus Brigstocke is one of the most inventive talents on the comedy circuit. Jokes include: "I realised I was dyslexic when I went to a toga party dressed as a goat," and "If Pac-Man had affected us as kids, we'd all be running around in dark rooms, munching pills and listening to repetitive electronic music."

Marcus's latest touring show, Devil May Care, finds Lucifer himself arbitrating on the increasingly tricky issue of what's good and what's bad 'in these challenging divisive times'.

Gary Delaney

Stafford Gatehouse, Fri 7 September; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Thurs 20 September; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 11 October; The Glee Club, Birmingham, Sun 4 November

"The hardest part of running competitively in Wales must be keeping up with the Joneses," quips the ever-popular Gary Delaney.

And Gary's certainly no one-gag pony: "My girlfriend's dog died, so to cheer her up I went out and got her an identical one. She was livid and yelled, 'What am I going to do with two dead dogs?'" Or how about: "The president of France said that the English are arrogant with their refusal to learn foreign languages. At least I think that's what he said. It all just sounded like haw-he-haw-he-haw-he-haw."

Suffice to say there'll be plenty more where those came from when Sarah Millican's Solihull-born husband returns to his Midlands roots this month.

Suffice to say there'll be plenty more where those came from when Sarah Millican's Solihull-born husband returns to his Midlands roots this month.

Scummy Mummies

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 14 September; Sutton Coldfield Town Hall, Wed 10 October

"Our speciality is comedy for less-than-perfect parents, so that means *all* parents!" says Ellie Gibson about Scummy Mummies, her popular double act with Helen Thorn. "Our live comedy shows cover a wide range of parenting topics - from pelvic floors and play-dates to farting and fish fingers. Expect songs, sketches, stand-up and very scummy stories!"



Rich Hall

Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford, Tues 25 September; Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 11 October; Evesham Arts Centre, Sat 20 October; Stourport Civic Centre, Wed 21 November

His official biography somewhat less than modestly describes American funnyman Rich Hall as 'a comic genius' - albeit a 'grouchy, deadpan' one.

With much of his comedy focusing on making fun of life across the pond in his homeland, Rich is best known for his creation of Otis Lee Crenshaw, a bourbon-swilling red-neck jailbird from Tennessee whose many wives have all been named Brenda.

Rich returns to the Midlands with a show that he describes as a hoedown: "There's stand-up comedy, improvised ballads, cracking good musicianship, and ultimately a hilarious, foot-stomping, s**t-kicking good time to be had by all. Even if you don't own a hoe."



Stephen Lynch

The Glee Club, Birmingham,
Sun 16 September

American funnyman and theatrical star Stephen makes a welcome return to the UK for the first time in five years this month. A Broadway award winner for his performance in hit musical *The Wedding Singer*, Stephen describes himself as a musician trapped in a comedian's body - so it's little wonder that he's made the singing of witty ditties a real front-and-centre element of his stand-up set.



Jason Byrne

Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 29 September

Watching Jason Byrne on stage has been likened by one reviewer to watching footballer Lionel Messi play for Barcelona: it's not a matter of 'if' the magic will come, but 'when' and 'how often'. Byrne comes to the Midlands with brand new offering *You Can Come In, But Don't Start Anything*, a show which he promises will hotwire his audience's funnybones big time!

"Everyone's welcome," says Jason, "unless you're under 14, in which case come back when you're older."



Dylan Moran

New Alexandra Theatre, Sat 22 September;
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 6 October;
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 30 October

Once labelled 'the Oscar Wilde of comedy', it's fair to say that Dylan Moran is a fella with a style of humour all his own. A star of hit films *Shaun Of The Dead* and *Run Fat Boy*

Run, the hugely entertaining Irishman specialises in stand-up rants that are often bizarre and always unpredictable. Jokes include: "I don't do drugs. If I want a rush, I just stand up when I'm not expecting it," and "I can't swim. I can't drive either. I was going to learn to drive but then I thought, well, what if I crash into a lake?"

Geoff Norcott

Henry Tudor House,
Shrewsbury, Wed 12
September; The Core
Theatre, Solihull,
Fri 16 November

High-energy Geoff is one of the sharpest tools in the comedy shed, presenting shows which blend observational humour with satire - and even the odd impression or several! A former teacher, plenty of Geoff's gags relate to school experiences and the education system. He's also made something of a name for himself in the field of sports-related humour, a niche that's yielded him plenty of work both on television and radio.

Chris Tucker

Arena Birmingham, Thurs 27 September

- Probably best known for playing
- Detective James Carter in the Rush
- Hour movies, American stand-up
- comedian Chris Tucker has been a big
- hit at the cinema, starring in films
- which have collectively
- grossed more than one billion
- dollars at the box office. He's
- been plying his trade as a
- comedian for a couple of
- decades now, and released his
- first stand-up movie, *Chris*
- *Tucker Live*, on Netflix back in
- 2015.
- Jokes include: "Have you ever
- had a neighbour that borrows
- your shit for so long, you have
- to borrow it back?" and "You
- loan your friend money. You
- see them again, they don't say
- nothin' 'bout the money. 'Hi, how
- ya doin'? How's ya mama doing?'
- Man, how's my money doin'?"





JOSH PUGH

KEEPS IT PERSONAL WITH THE CHANGING MAN

A harrowing tale of confinement rests at the heart of Josh Pugh's latest show. What's On finds out more from the award-winning Warwickshire comedian...

Josh Pugh was just 10 years old when he experienced the traumatic incident that lies at the heart of his latest stand-up show, *The Changing Man*.

"I got stuck in a puffer jacket," he confesses, "for 48 hours!"

Hailing from Atherstone, Warwickshire, Josh made his stand-up debut in the spring of 2014. Within 18 months, he'd won the Birmingham Comedy Festival Breaking Talent Award, and in 2016 he picked up the English Comedian of the Year title - the prize for which included a string of Australian gigs.

"The weirdest thing was the ex-pats who came to the show because I was billed as English Comedian of the Year. I'd have people coming up to me saying, 'I used to live in Coventry', or 'I've been to The Roadhouse' (a now-closed venue in Birmingham). I found that dead odd - being so far away, on the other side of the world, and having people coming up to me who knew where I lived!"

It seems that bumping into local folk in far-flung places is more common than you might think.

"I did a gig in Switzerland, which is this real melting pot of a place, and there was one guy there from Worcester!"

The Changing Man is Josh's second one-hour Edinburgh Fringe show.

"The Changing Man was my nickname. That's what my dad used to call me because I was always into different fads and different stuff every time I went round to see him. So it's a bit more personal this year. Last year's show, *A Boy Named Pugh*, was just jokes and me being daft - which this is as well - but there's also a story this time. I've enjoyed doing a story, actually; when people are quiet, they're listening, but if you're doing

jokes and they're quiet, they're not enjoying themselves."

At the centre of the story is that agonising puffer jacket incident.

"I went to my dad's one weekend and he was just angry all the time. The next weekend he bought me this puffer jacket I wanted, as a present, and I zipped it up and realised the zip was stuck, and I was too scared to tell him. I was worried that he'd shout at me, so I kept it on for the whole weekend."

As those two horrendous days progressed, the young Josh's stress levels sky-rocketed. Would his father be furious that he'd just ruined his expensive new present? Would someone have to tear him out of the snug jacket? Or would he be forced to live in it for the rest of his life?

"Then something happens where I realise I don't have to be scared of my dad, so the show is about how you think people are one way, but they can be another way."

The show is one of two he'll be bringing to the Birmingham Comedy Festival next month. The second is the live premiere of his podcast, *Josh And Phil's Knowledge Club*, with fellow West Midlands comedian Phil Pagett.

"The premise of *Knowledge Club* is that we're working for a fictional university and we're pitching the university to potential students. I'm a freelance lecturer who hasn't really got a clue and Phil's the straight man. We're still working it out, but it'll be good live. Phil's got a good ear and eye for stuff like that."

The first series of podcasts saw the duo explore subjects including money, crime, dating and technology.

"Doing different subjects is a good way to generate stuff; it's a good exercise. I've

enjoyed doing it."

Although the podcast's University of East Coventry setting is entirely fictional, it's certainly plausible.

"You can see these universities online, and they're so embarrassing. You see these students wandering around campus saying, 'Wow! There are so many shops and facilities here! I can really see myself getting a great education here!' So it started off as a parody of that."

With the first six episodes available online for free, listeners will be pleased to know that there are more shows on the way.

"We've started working on another series now. People who've listened to it have enjoyed it, and we've enjoyed doing it - it's nice to do something other than stand-up. You have all these ideas sometimes that don't work as stand-up, so it's nice to have a different vehicle for it. If you listen to a lot of podcasts, they're often just two people chatting, but we wanted to produce it more like a radio show. It's scripted a bit more and edited a bit more - there aren't that many podcasts like it. I don't think anyone else is doing anything like it. We might do it at the Fringe next year if it goes down well in Birmingham."

.....

Josh Pugh performs *The Changing Man* at 1000 Trades in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter on Saturday 13 October.

John And Phil's *Knowledge Club* is at The Victoria, Birmingham, on Sunday 14 October, as part of the second Free Half-Dayer.

For more information about Birmingham Comedy Festival (5 - 14 October), visit bhamcomfest.co.uk



Benidorm Live

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 24 - Sat 29 September;
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Mon 3 - Sat 29 December

Sangria in Stoke is the name of the game this month when Benidorm Live jets into the Potteries. Darren Litten's brand new stage show is of course based on the hit ITV1 comedy series that's been delighting viewers for more than a decade now.

Benidorm regulars Jake Canuso (Mateo), Janine Duvitski (Jacqueline), Adam Gillen (Liam) and Sherrie Hewson (Joyce Temple-Savage) are all present and correct in a production that promises to bring plenty of sunshine to six early-autumn evenings at the Regent. The production is then back in the Midlands in a couple of months' time, for a Christmas run at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre. *Check out our online interview with Adam Gillen who plays Liam at whatsonlive.co.uk*

The Goon Show

New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham,
Tues 18 September

Comedy enthusiasts of a certain vintage will well recall The Goon Show. Presenting a highly original and utterly zany style of humour, the 1950s radio programme made stars of its three main contributors, Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers and Harry Secombe. This brand new homage to the show is presented by the same team who recently adapted another classic radio comedy for the stage - Round The Horne.



Pop Music

The REP, Birmingham,
Wed 12 - Sat 22 September



Described in its publicity as an emotionally contagious rollercoaster for anyone who's ever been a dick on the dancefloor, Pop Music finds G and Kayla taking advantage of the free bar at a wedding they're attending. With lashings of cheap prosecco offering them the chance to forget their troubles, the pair embark on an epic journey through 30 years of pop - in the process discovering that they have far more in common with one another than their taste in tunes...

Nazanin's Story

The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham,
Wed 19 & Thurs 20 September

Nazanin's Story focuses on the real-life experience of Iranian British charity worker Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe. In 2016 she was convicted of plotting to overthrow Iran's clerical establishment and sentenced to five years in the country's prison system. A judge in Tehran recently admitted that Nazanin will not be released from prison until Iran receives payment for a 1970s debt owed by Britain...

Long-listed for the Amnesty Freedom of Expression award, the play is constantly being updated to take into account new developments in the ongoing saga.



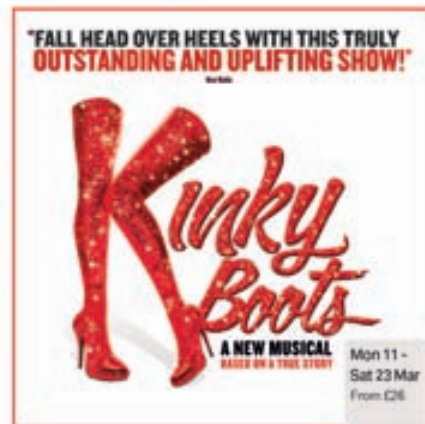


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Bollywood in Brum

**Bold beats and explosive dance as
new musical arrives in the Midlands**



Taj Express, which visits the Midlands this month, is a one-way ticket to experiencing the flavour of Bollywood. Expect a musical bursting with bold colours, fabulous dancing and a soundtrack by famous composer AR Rahman. What's On spoke to producer and director Shruti Merchant about the show...

This month, the Midlands will be hit by a wave of Indian culture when Taj Express comes to both the Birmingham Hippodrome and the Regent Theatre in Stoke.

The feelgood musical has been a success across the globe, including during its stint in London last year. Audiences will get the opportunity to explore the glamorous world of Bollywood through a young man's desire to follow in the footsteps of composer AR Rahman - the man behind the music from hit movie Slumdog Millionaire.

Director and producer of Taj Express, Shruti Merchant, comes from a family who's heritage is deeply rooted in dance and choreography.

"I'm born into a family of choreographers," she says. "Not just in Bollywood, but also from a background of Indian classical dancing - predominantly Kathak, like all my ancestors from Rajasthan.

I started off my career assisting my sister, Vaibhavi Merchant, in films, and that's when we got an offer to do a musical about her life. I quickly preferred sitting in a theatre to being on a set because the experience was exhilarating - the audience reaction to your work was so instant. The kind of love and adulation we received when taking our culture and dance choreography on stage is something that made me never want to go back on a film set. So I started my company, Quintessence, to produce not only Taj Express but a lot more content from India."

Shruti believes that Bollywood is the perfect platform upon which to base the most vibrant of musicals.

"I guess in India we still believe in dreams and fairytales. We believe very heavily in romance, and the drama surrounding romance, and we show this in our films. However, we wanted to do something different with Taj Express. We came up with the idea of telling the story of a young boy who tries to follow in the footsteps of AR Rahman. He wants to be the next big composer in

Bollywood because the whole world knows who Mr Rahman is. This story contemplates who carries on his legacy, and it acts as a catalyst to explore all the different music and dance of India through different choreography.

"I always like to think that the audience enjoys being transported into a new world where they feel happy, relaxed and, most importantly, are completely entertained. I'm not here to put across any content that depresses anybody, or that makes them want to check their phones. The fact that everyone wants to dance at the end of the show is great; there's some kind of release the audience feel when they come out of a Bollywood musical. I'm not here to show the technique of Bollywood dancing or to brag about the kinds of fabulous extensions we do in our dancing. I just want my audience to be entertained!"

Shruti believes Taj Express is bringing a true and diverse flavour of India to theatres across the world.

"I think Taj Express is a perfectly curated show of the best parts of India. Everything - from the team we have to the songs we sing, the script by Toby Gough and the dance in the show - makes this happen. We didn't want to bore people with Indian history, so the script is very easy to follow. Even the fabrics and colours of the costumes have brought in a palette that is pan-India.

"Audiences find our dance styles so intriguing and wonder how we Indians move our necks in that certain way, so these are the kinds of moments we've incorporated into the musical. It doesn't only feature traditional dance performed in the temples in India, it also speaks to current India, which is in tune with hip-hop and other modern forms of dance and music. The way our show has been styled is in tune with popular world standards, but also brings true India through. It's such a unique, diverse production for audiences all over the world to enjoy."

Shruti is particularly excited about bringing Taj Express to the UK.

"This is my favourite country. I desperately want to move to the UK because I feel very connected to the world of musical theatre here. In Mumbai, where I'm currently living, I feel all alone. When I walk around the streets of London, I see so many musicals playing and so many people lining up to watch theatre. That's something that doesn't exist in my country - films and Bollywood are the predominant entertainment. So yes, the UK is special to me."

Directing musical theatre and leading her company is incredibly hard work, but the rewards more than make up for it.

"Theatre is the life I've chosen, but I've had to sacrifice my personal life because the only thing I'm doing is focusing on the productions. It's an endless job. There are times when I say, "I'm never going to do this again". Then, after finishing the production and sleeping for two or three days straight, I'm trying to get back on it. Yes, there are a lot of sacrifices, but I think at the same time the madness is what I enjoy the most. The reward is when the audience stands up at the end to give us a round of applause, and then leaves the theatre laughing, smiling and dancing.

"I have another production that I'll start working on when Taj Express has finished. It will probably be presented next year at the Edinburgh Fringe because we've got a keen interest from there. I've been touring Taj Express for five years now, so it's high time I did something new because there's such a demand. I'll be presenting a lot more stuff from India out there on the world stage."

Taj Express runs at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 11 to Saturday 15 September and is at Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent on Tuesday 18 September



Stage phenomenon War Horse is set to return to the Midlands...

What's On spoke to puppeteers Tom Quinn and Lewis Howard about their crucial role in this spectacular, emotive production...

Michael Morpurgo's popular children's book is now a hit National Theatre stage show, which has wowed audiences and moved people to tears all across the world.

The second UK tour of War Horse is underway. Local lads Tom Quinn - from Redditch - and Lewis Howard - who grew up and attended drama school in Birmingham - are puppeteers in the show. What's On spoke to them about the task of bringing huge on-stage horse puppets to life in front of thousands of people...

It takes three puppeteers to work the entirety of the Joey and Tophorn

puppets, so what's each puppeteer's specific role?

Tom: My role as the puppeteer of the head of both Joey and Tophorn is to control what the horse is looking at, what it's thinking and what it's feeling; to bring the horse to life.

Lewis: As Joey's heart, I instigate the breathing so the horse looks alive. Being between the head and the hind means I can see what both are doing, so I can silently translate between the two. If I see the hind wanting to make a certain move, but the head isn't in the right position just yet to do so, I can hold off the hind form pushing the

puppet forwards until the head is in a good position. Then I control the front legs using triggers at the curve of the knee.

How much time have you both spent studying horse behaviour?

Tom: When we first started, we had a fortnight of just 'horse academy', if you like. It was a little puppetry school where all the puppeteers gathered two weeks before the rest of the cast to learn basic movements like walking, trotting and galloping. Then we went to the Kings Troop, the Royal Horse Artillery with all the ceremonial guns and carriages, to watch the real-life Tophorns.

Then, that afternoon, we went to a riding stable to look at more chilled-out riding horses. So we watched a bunch of Joeys as well. We were there watching a lot of little behaviours to refine our skills.

Lewis: One of the most important things is making the horse look as heavy as it should be. The weight of the puppet is on our backs and we're standing on our own feet, so it takes a lot of practice to sell the idea that it's a real horse. But there are things that the puppet can't do, and if you tried to do those things it would make it look less real, so once we got comfortable with the basics, we moved away from horse behaviour and focused on how the puppet can move, and how best to work with what we've got.

Does each team of puppeteers create a slightly different Joey or Tophorn - or even, does each individual puppeteer bring a different personality to the role?

Tom: Yes, it's the same as any other role. So each team that does Joey and Tophorn brings a slightly different characterisation to life on stage, just like an actor would do when interpreting the lines from Hamlet. We still go through the same acting choices as the speaking parts go through, except we don't act through our own bodies. We also change a lot of things from each show. For example, one of the nights, one of the actors may choose to shout one of their lines, or walk towards Joey particularly aggressively, which obviously Joey will need to be startled by. We spend a lot of it improvising how we think a horse would react in the situation that's playing out on stage, and each time something slightly different is created.

Lewis: I know with my team one of us brings more of a focused intensity to it and one of us is a little more cheeky, but I think both are very funny. But, of course, there are certain personalities it's hard to bring to different parts of the horse. It's much easier to bring a sense of cheekiness to the head than to the hind, for example. It's harder to be more aggressive in certain roles. So yes, certain qualities do manifest themselves in each role in the team, while each team also brings something slightly different to the stage.

Tom, how do Tophorn and Joey's personalities differ, and how do you as a puppeteer bring those different characters out on stage?

Tom: Joey is a hunter, so he's half

thoroughbred and half draught horse. He's built for riding, not for a lot of the things he's made to do in the show. He's quite chilled-out and earthy, whereas Tophorn is just pure thoroughbred, so he's like a proper feisty officer's horse. The puppets themselves do a lot of that for us, so Joey in comparison to Tophorn is slightly smaller, and as a head puppeteer, I can extend Tophorn's neck up really tall. He's an enormous horse, and we need to convey that proud, feisty side of him."

It's easy for people who haven't seen the show to be dubious about how a puppet can be made realistic on stage. Do either of you have anything to say to people who aren't yet convinced that they should go and see the show?

Lewis: I first saw it 10 years ago. When my mum told me we were going to see the stage version of War Horse, a book I'd read in school, I didn't imagine it would be puppets. I assumed there would be projections or something, and there would be a way of getting round it that would give the show a slightly more surreal feel.

But when baby Joey appears on the stage, as an audience member you don't want to watch the puppeteers, you want to watch Joey because that's what's amazing. Then, when the big horses come out, from afar you can't see a lot of the mechanisms - the puppets just look so fluid. Anyone who comes to see the show will be surprised by how quickly they forget it's a puppet horse. I mean, we suspend disbelief all the time in theatre, and this is no exception.

Lewis, you trained at the Birmingham School of Acting. Are you proud to be returning to the city in such an important role?

Lewis: Yes, I'm incredibly happy because originally, when we got the contracts, Birmingham hadn't been announced and was still a venue to be confirmed. So when I got that news, it was fantastic. To go back there for four weeks as well is even better. I actually haven't been back to Birmingham since I graduated, so I can't wait to go back and show everyone around because I've been telling the cast all about my favourite places. Going back as Joey is really an honour.

Can you tell us a little bit about the puppets themselves and what they're made of?

Tom: The puppets are made by a South African company called the Handspring Puppet Company. There are 23 puppets in the whole show, and Handspring make most of them. They're made from an aluminium frame that sits on top of the hind and heart puppeteers, and there's a cane cage that sort of sits around them. Then the mane and tail are made using a material called tyvec and bits of leather. So, yeah, those bits rustle and flow but it still has some weight, and between all of the canes there's a thin mesh gauze so the audience can see out mostly, but in the right light the audience's view into the cage is obscured.

Is the puppet as heavy to work with as it sounds?

Lewis: Yes, the cage that we're under is 10 stone, and that's split between the hind and the heart puppeteers' backs. Then, the legs are probably a couple of kg each, and then the head has its own weight that the head puppeteer holds up. We wear it as a backpack and it's something you get used to. It's like wearing one of those big backpacks for hiking - now only once you take it off do you realise how heavy it's been. Early in rehearsals it was quite brutal though. Trying to do stuff, be nimble and make a huge horse puppet look realistic while having this huge weight on your back is quite a challenge.

What are your plans for the future?

Tom: I think this role has given me a bit of a bug for puppetry, but obviously I trained as an actor, so I'm sure I can use all the skills I've gained from this role in a whole range of work.

Lewis: As with most actors, I somehow can't think beyond the current job. I'm sure I've opened other doors by doing this role, and it's taught me new things I wasn't sure I'd enjoy. It's like learning a new language or something - a new realm of opportunities have been opened up for me, so I'll just wait and see what happens next.

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War Horse is at Birmingham Hippodrome from Wednesday 10 Oct - Saturday 3 November, and Regent Theatre, Stoke-On-Trent from Wednesday 27 March - Saturday 6 April 2019.



Salad Days

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Wed 19 - Sat 22 September; Malvern
Theatres, Tues 2 - Sat 6 October

When newly-weds Jane and Timothy Dawes agree to take care of a tramp's mobile piano for a month, they find themselves embroiled in an adventure that involves disruptive music, flying saucers and an irresistible desire to dance...

Julian Slade and Dorothy Reynolds' hit show debuted in the mid-1950s, having been written by the pair as a summer musical for the Bristol Old Vic's resident company.

Featuring numbers including We Said We Wouldn't Look Back, Look At Me, I'm Dancin' and We're Looking For A Piano, Salad Days is the show that famously made a young Cameron Mackintosh fall in love with all things theatrical.

Casting includes Wendi Peters (pictured centre).

Jekyll & Hyde

The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham,
Tues 18 - Sat 22 September

Doctor Jekyll is not himself! Robert Louis Stevenson's 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 is presented by the National Production Company.

The Silence Of Snow: The Life Of Patrick Hamilton

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 21 September

The burning question being asked in this new work by Mark Farrelly is: why do so many people get through life without feeling they ever truly know another person?

Writer and performer Farrelly, who scored a recent hit in the Midlands with previous show Quentin Crisp: Naked Hope, seeks answers to his question via a contemplation of Patrick Hamilton, best known for his plays Rope and Gaslight. But behind Hamilton's raw, unbridled talent there lurked a troubled alcoholic teetering on the brink of self-destruction...

The League Of Gentlemen

Genting Arena, Birmingham,
Thurs 13 & Fri 14 September



The Bafta Award-winning magic of Reece Shearsmith, Steve Pemberton, Mark Gatiss and Jeremy Dyson makes a welcome return to the stage after an absence of 12 years.

Spawned on radio then television in the dying days of the 20th century, The League Of Gentlemen featured a mind-boggling array of grotesque, bizarre and downright unhinged comedy characters, all of whom were going about their decidedly abnormal business in the fictional northern town of Royston Vasey. Favourite creations include Tubbs and Edward Tattsy - who run the 'local shop for local people' - 'dole scum'-hating Restart officer Pauline Campbell-Jones, and gruff-spoken transsexual taxi driver Barbara Dixon. Expect all four and plenty more to be present and correct when the boys take to the stage in Birmingham this month.

Rebus: Long Shadows

The REP, Birmingham,
Thurs 20 September - Sat 6 October

Crime novelist Ian Rankin's celebrated detective, John Rebus, takes to the stage for the very first time in a brand new show helmed by the Birmingham Rep's Artistic Director, Roxana Silbert.

Rankin's most famous creation first hit the bookshelves back in 1987, with this year seeing the publication of the 22nd Rebus novel. The character has also been brought to life on television, first by Four Weddings And A Funeral actor John Hannah and then by Ken Stott.

The new stage play sees a retired Rebus back on the case when the daughter of a murder victim appears outside his flat...



GREAT SHOWS COMING UP AT WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE

TUE 13 NOV

**THE MAGIC OF
MOTOWN**



WED 14 NOV

**AN EVENING OF
ERIC & ERN**



SAT 17 NOV

**THE WICKED WIZARD
OF FIZZOG**



TUE 20 – SAT 24 NOV

DRACULA



TUE 27 NOV – SAT 1 DEC

**WBOS PRESENT
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SAT 8 DEC 2018 – SUN 13 JAN 2019

SLEEPING BEAUTY



THU 17 JAN 2019

**SOUL LEGENDS
FEATURING LEMAR**



FRI 18 JAN 2019

**NIGHTS ON BROADWAY
THE BEE GEES STORY**



SAT 19 JAN 2019

JIM DAVIDSON



SALAD DAYS!



A loved-up young couple, plenty of laughs and a magical piano that makes people dance - award-winning musical Salad Days is coming to the Midlands...

What's On caught up with star of the show Wendi Peters to talk about the hit production and her extensive stage and screen career...

What's Salad Days about, Wendi?

Salad Days holds lots of great memories for me, and I was thrilled when this opportunity came along to do it. I first saw a production of it when I was about 10. It was an amateur production in Accrington in Lancashire and my godmother, Lorna, was in it. I became obsessed with the music and, soon after, there was a TV version of the show. My sister and I videoed it and watched it over and over again. It's really become a family joke/memory, and it's still quoted today! Of course, I'm now feeling very old, as I'm playing one of the parents in the show. The show revolves around Jane and Timothy, who've just graduated from university. Not knowing what to do next, they decide to get married and get a job looking after a piano, which happens to be magic and makes people dance! Tim's parents are desperate for him to get a good job and send him out to visit all his uncles for career advice. Jane's mother wants to find her a wonderfully rich and influential husband - not knowing that she's already married. It's a wonderfully upbeat, fun show with great numbers that a lot of people will know and can tap and hum along to. It's a great 'leave your troubles outside the theatre' show, and I guarantee you'll leave with a big smile on your face.

Lots of audience members will know you from Coronation Street. How does this character differ from Cilla?

They differ inasmuch as Lady Raeburn in Salad Days is the quintessential aristocrat who's very relaxed and laid back until it comes to her daughter and finding the right husband for her. I suppose she really just has Jane's best interests at heart. Cilla in Corrie couldn't give two hoots for her children, Fiz and Chesney, and comes from a very

northern working-class background, so has had to fight for all she has. The only similarity is the fact that both have a roving eye for the opposite sex...

What else can you tell us about your character?

Lady Raeburn likes to look after herself and spends plenty of time in the beauty salon. There's a wonderful scene in Salad Days where she's having her hair and nails done... it's going to be fun!

How do you feel about embarking on this tour?

Most of my career has been on stage, and if someone asked me to pick between TV and theatre, the stage would always win. It's where I first fell in love with acting and singing. My mum would take us to see all the musicals that came to Manchester, and I adored going to the theatre. A lot of my theatre work has been on tour and I love it. It's very exciting to be back on the road again, bringing such a fun show to some wonderful places. I've played all of the theatres on this tour apart from two, so I'm looking forward to new towns and stages. We're mostly doing a week in places, which is the perfect length. By the time you've settled the show in, you have a couple of days to explore and then you move on. It's also great being on tour and catching up with friends and family in various towns.

What would you say to encourage people to come and watch Salad Days?

Salad Days is a fun, feelgood show that will have you humming and tapping all the way out of theatre. It's complete escapism for two-and-a-half hours - and in today's world, that's sometimes needed.

What do you hope the audience will take away from the show?

I'm hoping they'll leave with big smiles on their faces after a glorious evening of uplifting singing and dancing. They may be a little confused as to why everyone's looking for a piano, and why one of Tim's uncles appears from a space ship shaped like a saucer. It's such wonderful, crazy nonsense but very funny!

What's coming up for you once the tour finishes?

I have a week off and then it's straight into panto season. I'm back at the Lyceum Theatre in Sheffield, playing Mrs Darling, Myrtle the Mermaid and Big Chief Squatting Cow. I love Sheffield. I did my very first panto there in 1987 at the Crucible Theatre and have been back a few times since. There are great audiences and it's a lovely city.

Any advice for budding actors?

My advice would be that you really must have the drive and determination to want to succeed. Not in terms of being famous and a 'star', but in having a long and varied career and a love for your art. Take the time to train properly, be it privately or at a drama school. Watch and learn from other actors around you. You never stop learning. If you're still at school, get involved in as many school or local amateur productions as you can and enjoy it! That's really important.

.....

Salad Days The Musical runs at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Wednesday 19 to Saturday 22 September, and then at Malvern Theatre, Worcestershire, from Tuesday 2 to Saturday 6 October.



Tartuffe

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Fri 7 September - Sat 23 February

Described as a wicked comedy about faith, family and #fakingit, this brand new version of a 17th century masterpiece brings events bang up to date.

The story centres around the wealthy Pervaiz family. Living in mod-

ern-day Birmingham, they have in their midst the charismatic and devout Tahir Taufiq Arsuf - or Tartuffe to the sceptical. But is Tartuffe all that he seems - and will family life ever be the same again?...

First performed in 1664, Moliere's famous comedy saw its reputation wildly enhanced when the Archbishop of Paris issued an edict threatening excommunication for anyone who even so much as read the play, so offensive to the church did he consider the work to be.

As You Like It

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 September

A pacy tale of cross-dressing and mistaken identity, As You Like It is one of Shakespeare's most accessible and appealing comedies. And this particular version of the much-loved yarn should be even more accessible and appealing than most, given that it's being presented by the critically acclaimed Pantaloons.

Laughing gear at the ready, then, for an evening of bombastic buffoonery and foot-stomping live music!

Queens Of The Coal Age

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Fri 7 - Sat 29 September

This powerful play by critically acclaimed actor Maxine Peake sees four women taking a stand in the face of a changing world. It's 1993, and although the Parkside Colliery pit is winding down, Anne, Elaine, Dot and

Lesley are not giving up. Instead they go below ground and dig in, determined to do what they can to save their community... Peake's previous written work, Beryl - a warm and witty celebration of British cyclist Beryl Burton - was also performed at the New Vic Theatre.

Super Hamlet 64

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 21 September

Are you tired of all those common-or-unweeded-garden Hamlets in which the prince's father gets bumped off by his uncle who then marries his mother? If so, you may well enjoy the refreshing wind of change that Super Hamlet 64 is blasting across the ram-parts of Elsinore Castle.

Sure, all that dad/uncle/mum gubbins is present and correct, but on this occasion the young Prince Hamlet awakens to discover that his life is actually a computer game. What's more, the person he has a crush on is a samurai-sword-wielding superhero.

Such imaginative stuff-and-nonsense is very much all in a day's work for one-man entertainment machine Edward Day, whose production also features retro animation, live music and comedy songs.

Evita

Malvern Theatres, Tues 4 - Sat 8 September; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 25 - Sat 29 September

Andrew Lloyd-Webber and Tim Rice's third major collaboration opened to rave reviews way back in the late 1970s, since which time it's garnered a reputation as one of the greatest musicals ever to grace West End and Broadway stages.

Telling the real-life story of Eva, the wife of former Argentine dictator Juan Peron, the show is packed to the rafters with memorable numbers, including On This Night Of A Thousand Stars, Buenos Aires and, of course, the classic Don't Cry For Me Argentina. Voice UK 2015 finalist Lucy O'Byrne takes the title role.

Awful Auntie

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 26 - Sun 30 September; New Alexandra Theatre, Tues 27 November - Sat 1 December

Frights, fights and friendships are the order of the day in David Walliams' much-loved story. At the centre of the tale is a young girl named Stella. The sole heir to Saxby Hall, she finds herself in danger of losing both her inheritance and her life when she comes up against her thoroughly unpleasant Aunt Alberta...

Produced by the team behind the hugely successful stage adaptation of Walliams' Gangsta Granny, the show comes complete with a very old car, a very large owl, a very small ghost and plenty of opportunity to enjoy a jolly good chuckle.



Teletubbies Live

Oakengates Theatre, at The Place, Telford, Sat 1 - Sun 2 September; Malvern Theatres, Wed 19 - Thurs 20 September

Despite having been around for many a year,

the world famous Teletubbies are here appearing in their first ever theatre show, created especially for little ones. Tinky Winky, Dipsy, Laa-Laa and Po continue to enchant and delight pre-school youngsters a full 21 years after making their television debut on BBC Two.

Brand new songs and the popular supporting characters of Tubby Phone, Noo-noo and Sun Baby also feature.

Ensonglopedia Of Animals

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sun 16 September

After scoring a huge success with musical comedies about Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein and Marie Curie, the award-winning John Hinton returns to the stage with a show that features 26 animal songs - one for every letter of the alphabet. So if, as John puts it, you want to 'get to grips with fascinating facts about extraordinary echinoderms, distressed damselflies, crazy corals, batty birds and amazing arachnids', then this is most definitely the show for you.

The Snail And The Whale

MAC, Birmingham, Sat 1 & Sun 2 September

Following on from versions of The Gruffalo and Room On The Broom, highly rated ensemble Tall Stories here present a show that blends imaginative storytelling, live music

and plenty of humour... When a tiny snail, who longs to see the world, hitches a lift on a humpback whale, she finds herself embroiled in an exciting adventure - particularly when the whale unexpectedly gets beached...



Milkshake! Live

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sat 22 September; Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 27 October

Here taking youngsters on a journey through the world's favourite fairytales are, among others, Bob the Builder, Little Princess, Noddy, Fireman Sam and Shimmer & Shine. If you've watched the TV series and/or been to a previous live production, you'll already know what to expect. If not, get ready for an event that promises lots of laughter, bucket-loads of family fun, bags of audience participation and plenty of singing and dancing.



Matilda The Musical

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 8 September

Adapted from one of Roald Dahl's best-loved books, the Royal Shakespeare Company's stage-musical version of Matilda - complete with music and lyrics by comedian Tim Minchin - has been delighting West End audiences for six years.

A staggering eight million people worldwide have so far seen productions of the critically acclaimed show, which has visited more than 50 cities and bagged an impressive 80-plus international awards. Impressive statistics indeed. If you haven't already done so, bag yourself a ticket and find out what all the fuss is about!

**Last
chance
to see!**

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



The Gruffalo



The Canterville Ghost



The Snail And The Whale

This month marks the 21st anniversary of highly acclaimed theatre company Tall Stories, created following a chance meeting between its co-founders and artistic directors, Toby Mitchell and Olivia Jacobs.

“Tall Stories came to be when I was producing a show on my own,” explains Toby. “I went to deliver some flyers to Soho Theatre. I bumped into Olivia there, we got talking and stayed in touch. We decided to set up a company, which wasn’t called Tall Stories at the time, and went to the Fringe. We got reviewed and were regarded as a company to watch.

“When we returned to the Fringe the following year, we came up with the name Tall Stories, as we thought it summed up what we aimed to do. I directed one show and Olivia the other. Olivia did a show based on Oscar Wilde’s *The Happy Prince And Other Stories*, and I did *Alice In Wonderland*.

“We didn’t really know what we were doing, and neither of those shows were particularly aimed at children. They were just ones that we wanted to do, but because they were based around childhood favourites, families were our main audience. They told us how lovely it was to find work that didn’t talk down to their kids. We wouldn’t even have considered talking down to our audience - we were just telling good stories - but that’s been our touchstone ever since.”

Toby firmly believes this approach has been a major factor in Tall Stories’ success: “We don’t patronise the younger people in the audience, and we don’t make it too silly for the

older people. We pride ourselves on making the kind of theatre that we ourselves would like to watch. There are those big and silly shows that parents enjoy on a certain level but not entirely. That’s not what we do. We try to create something where everyone has a wonderful experience, and I think that’s why audiences keep coming back to our shows again and again.

“High points are when audiences really get the show, or when a parent comes up to you and says their child won’t sit still for longer than 10 minutes in front of the television, but that they’ve been absolutely motionless for an hour watching us. Moments like that make me very proud, but are also understandable because we’re talking directly to the audience and taking them seriously, which a lot of children’s television doesn’t do.”

A pinch of good luck, or maybe just sound intuition, also helped Tall Stories become established: “I had a day job in the early years of Tall Stories. I was working for Macmillan Children’s Books, and I read *The Gruffalo* just before it was published. We were looking for a show for a younger age group. We thought the *Gruffalo* was just a lovely story, so we decided to put that on stage.

“Of course, at the time it was an unknown book. Julia Donaldson was also unknown, so it was fairly easy to negotiate the rights. Then, while we had it in rehearsals, it won a major book prize - which was handy, to say

the least! We were wowed by the response to *The Gruffalo*, and from there it snowballed.”

The reaction to the show at the Edinburgh Fringe was one of many highlights for Toby during Tall Stories’ 21 years.

“I picked up a copy of *The Scotsman’s* Fringe pull-out to find the review, and there was a full-page photograph of our *Gruffalo* on the front cover with a five-star review inside. So, it’s moments like that, when we realised we were doing things that people were actually enjoying, that really stand out in our journey.”

Seventeen years on, Tall Stories are still reimagining *The Gruffalo* every time they bring it back to the stage.

“Now a lot of the audiences are coming because they know the animation rather than the book. We used to have two narrators and a female actor playing mouse. That worked when people only knew the book. Since the animation, we got the occasional complaint saying that the animals didn’t look convincing because our costumes were a little more suggestive of animals than full costumes. So, we went back to the structure of the show, made it have three narrators at the start and then turned one of them into mouse on-stage in front of the audience.

“This was just gently saying to the audience that they needed to use their imaginations for the show; part of the fun of a storytelling show is that we don’t give it all to them on a plate. They have to get involved for it to be

TO TALL STORIES!



Wilde Creatures



The Snow Dragon



Room on the Broom

believable. It's so rare to get a complaint about our shows now, which is wonderful. It's great that the show is still 80% the same as it was 17 years ago, when it first went on stage. It's just a case of making sure we reinvent enough of it to keep it relevant and modern, so that people keep on coming."

Tall Stories are often approached to adapt children's picture books into theatre productions.

"Whatever themes can be plucked out of a story always create resonances if it's a strong story. We're quite well known as book adapters, and that's despite the fact that only a third of our shows are based on picture books. The other two-thirds are popular fairytales or things we've made up ourselves. We do turn down people if their book hasn't got a strong enough plot."

Sometimes, however, extra layers can be added to the story to make it suitable for the stage.

"The way we made it work with *The Snail And The Whale* was to tell the story through the eyes of a young girl and her father, who's in the navy. So in the story, the snail wants to go on a trip around the world, so hitches a ride on the tail of a whale. This reflects how the girl would rather be with her dad than stuck in her bedroom, so there's a process where we added emotional resonance to that story. In that case, there was a way for us to make it work on stage, but the power of the story always has to come first when we make our shows.

"*The Snail And The Whale* is another Julia Donaldson title, but audiences get something else from Tall Stories that they also enjoy. We make it clear on all our publicity material that there is this extra story added on top of the Julia Donaldson one, and that we've obviously consulted Julia about it and that she's happy with it. That's a definite favourite - a well-loved story in a fresh way."

Luckily for Midlanders, two more of Toby's all-time favourite Tall Stories productions are coming to the region very soon...

"*Wilde Creatures* has four acting-musicians who're extremely talented and manage to, with our help, bring Oscar Wilde's stories to life in a very imaginative and modern way. There's also *Emily Brown And The Thing* (see pages 32/33), a really lovely story about a child who's scared of the dark at bedtime and the way she overcomes it.

"With all my favourites, there's a seamless-ness to them; although the stories are complex and there are lots of scene changes and props, we make it flow over that hour so that it doesn't seem clunky. But that doesn't mean it's simple! We look like swans from the front, but you don't realise how much furious padding is going on behind the scenes!

"For our 21st birthday, we took *Wilde Creatures* and the premier of *The Canterville Ghost* to the Fringe. *Wilde Creatures* had a run in London last Christmas because there was a big Oscar Wilde season. *The Canterville Ghost* uses the same cast as *Wilde Creatures*. We've set it as a grown-ups' show, but

we've set the minimum age guide at 12-plus, so it's still something that caters for lots of people.

"We did a preview in London a few weeks before the Fringe, to what we thought was going to be a very tough crowd of South London school kids. Again, I think because we took them seriously, they were completely on board. It was joyous to watch because we thought they were going to be quite a demanding audience - and actually they were a demanding audience, but what they were demanding was a good story. So that's the aim for our 21st birthday - to do a more grown-up show, seeing as we're hitting 'proper' adulthood. Then we're hoping that the two shows will tour together."

Toby is optimistic about the future of Tall Stories.

"The aim is to continue to give audiences shows that they're enjoying. The challenge for the future is to get more shows in, to keep on creating by seeing if there are any other great picture books out there, or any other stories we want to make up ourselves, and to always be reinventing. Here's to the next 21 years!"

.....

For more information and to find out when the next Tall Stories production is coming to a theatre near you, visit tallstories.org.uk



Emily Brown And The Thing!

It's time for another adventure with award-winning theatre company Tall Stories. Join Emily Brown and her rabbit, Stanley, on their quest to find the key ingredients to a good night's sleep... What's On spoke to Sophie Alice, who plays Emily, about hit production Emily Brown And The Thing, which is coming to the Midlands over Christmas...

Young Emily Brown and her best pal, toy rabbit Stanley, discover a Thing crying outside their bedroom window because he can't get to sleep. Of course, they can't help but go on an adventure to try and assist him...

Tall Stories' version of the book, Emily Brown And The Thing, is a witty and heartwarming children's show that sees Sophie Alice taking the lead role of Emily. "I'd worked with Tall Stories before," says Sophie, "so when they asked me to do this show, I jumped at the chance. It's a truly wonderful book. Emily Brown is a fantastic young female protagonist. She's adventurous, she's strong, she's courageous. I thought it would be brilliant to be involved in a family show that has such a good female role at the heart of it. I just figured it would be such a rewarding role to play."

The production is adapted from the book by Cressida Cowell, the author behind the famous How To Train Your Dragon series.

"The original cast worked with Cressida and the book's illustrator, Neal Layton, to make sure the production was respectful and in keeping with the world of Emily Brown as seen in the original book. If you look at the pictures in the book and then come to see the show, there's a striking resemblance between the characters, and we've tried to do that with the actual content also. Almost all the words from the book are in the stage version. Obviously, some of the characters have been extended, and we've got some original songs

and music in there, just to add to the production element as a whole, but it's been kept as authentic as possible."

Emily Brown And The Thing features physical storytelling that uses not only actors but also puppets. "What puppets allow you to do is include adventure elements on stage that actors just couldn't perform in a realistic way - for example, climbing trees and skiing down slopes. It brings a really exciting dimension to the play for both the audience and us as performers. I think it's very amusing to watch, too - particularly with Stanley, who, for a lot of the play, has been upscaled from cuddly toy to full-grown adult man in a rabbit costume, only to be shrunk back down to tiny puppet size."

Sophie is thoroughly enjoying her time in the production: "I get to go on three different adventures, so what's not to like? Really immersing myself in those worlds is just so exciting. We have so much fun playing our characters. It's not put on at all; a lot of the emotion you see on stage isn't even acting. We're just having the best time, and it means a lot to us if the audience has as much fun watching the show as we do performing it."

Tall Stories' version of Emily Brown And The Thing has been met with widespread critical acclaim wherever it's been presented.

"I wasn't in the original cast, but I was in the second cast, which did a UK tour followed by the Sydney Opera House and Wisconsin. So there are a few nerves now I'm returning, but

mainly the feeling is one of excitement. Yes, there's always the pressure of reviewing well because Tall Stories are so well known, but as they're so supportive, I tend not to notice that pressure too much. We really like to create great shows as a team, so overall I'd say it's definitely more enjoyable than nerve-wracking."

Sophie has some theories as to why, over their 21 years of performing, Tall Stories have been so successful.

"The company are very passionate about telling good stories to anyone and everyone - I think that's the most important thing. They have an incredible team of creatives, directors and visual thinkers. They have such a passion for delivering beautiful messages on stage, and I think that's at the core of what's allowed Tall Stories to flourish."

Currently, Sophie's plans don't extend beyond a future spent with Emily Brown and her friends.

"We're taking the show to America and Canada after Christmas. That's a five-month tour, so that takes me up to May next year. After that, who knows? All I know is that Emily Brown and myself have an amazing adventure ahead of us!"

.....
Emily Brown And The Thing shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Monday 17 December to Sunday 6 January.

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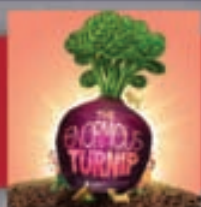
Image: Polish Matilda Book Cover, Translated by Marcin Amos Jaworski, Illustrated by Anita Glowinska, Published by Zysk (S-KA, 1998).



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Rosie Kay: MK Ultra

The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 20 & Fri 21 September; Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Tues 25 September

This critically acclaimed offering from Rosie Kay's highly regarded local ensemble has been inspired by 'the bizarre realm of pop culture, mind-control conspiracies and Illuminati imagery'.

Commenting on the show, Artistic Director Rosie said: "MK Ultra is the result of three years of intense research which has taken me through the world of surveillance, state police, torture and brainwashing, to pop culture, mainstream media and celebrity breakdowns, then all the way back to politics and a comment on the post-culturism state we are now in.

"At a time when everything is fake, or at least we don't trust what's real anymore, MK Ultra looks at what this world really feels like - and what effect it is having on us, whether we know it or not."



Fagin's Twist

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 28 & Sat 29 September

"I've always been excited by the idea of retelling a popular tale," says Tony Adigun, the artistic director of innovative hip-hop and contemporary dance company Avant Garde. "I wanted to add a mischievous twist that would play with and challenge the audience's perspectives on a much-loved classic."

The classic to which he refers is Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist, which Adigun and his company are here reimagining. The piece delves deep into the backstories of the novel's most prominent characters: Oliver, Fagin, Bill, Nancy and the Artful Dodger. "We've examined the relationships between the five of them," explains Adigun. "The backstories will allow the dancers who're playing these dynamic people to be engrossed by the characters and to really embody the roles."



New English Ballet

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 18 September

New English Ballet here performs two works that should perfectly showcase the company's impressive talent and versatility.

The Four Seasons features recomposed music by Max Richter and bold choreography from Jenna Lee...

Performed alongside it is Remembrance, a new ballet created by choreographer Wayne Eagling to commemorate the armistice.

Inspired by the story of Dame Marie Rambert's life during the Great War, the piece is set to Handel's Ode for St Cecilia's Day.

Sampad: Double Bill


MAC, Birmingham, Mon 24 September

Sampad's latest production, bringing together the classical and contemporary, showcases the ability of 'the most exciting young talent in South Asian dance'. A story of love and devotion is explored in TRI, via a series of solos and emotive duets. EKA, meanwhile, presents a show of female unity and strength 'through mesmerising movement'.

The piece imagines the Hindu goddesses of learning, wealth and power as they impact upon a modern world.



BALLET IN BRUM



Tzu-Chao Chou, photo: Fabio Filippi

The much-acclaimed Birmingham Royal Ballet this month launches its new Hippodrome season with two exciting presentations - one of which includes a world premiere. The beautiful balletic shots on this

page and opposite showcase the prowess of the company's dancers. We suggest you grab yourself a ticket or two and check out La Fille mal gardée and Fire And Fury in person. We promise you won't be disappointed...



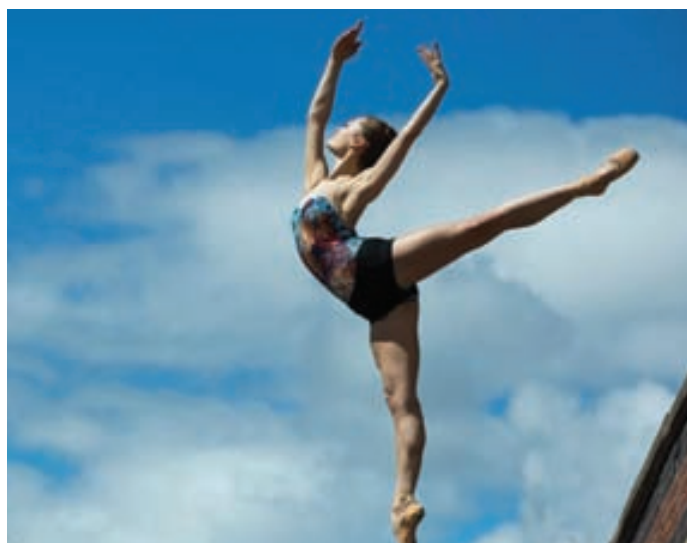
La Fille mal gardée

**Birmingham Hippodrome,
Wed 26 - Sat 29 September**

Frederick Ashton's ever-popular *La Fille mal gardée* (translated as *The Wayward Daughter*) is a choreographed exploration of rural life. A firm family favourite, the simple and engaging story tells the tale of Lise, whose mother is desperately attempting to find her a wealthy suitor. But who will win Lise's hand - the loaded country bumpkin or the penniless but hunky farmhand?...

Ashton's 1960s creation was described by the *Daily Telegraph* as being 'as finely wrought an English comedy as *My Fair Lady* or *The Importance Of Being Earnest*'.

Justified praise indeed for a slick comedy that features a clog-dancing dame, a super-cute pony and no shortage of spectacular classical ballet.



Fire And Fury

**Birmingham Hippodrome,
Wed 3 - Sat 6 October**

The old and the new here combine for what promises to be an evening of truly memorable dance. David Bintley's *The King Dances* focuses on the young King Louis XIV of France as he dances the role of the Sun God in a spectacular court entertainment...

The second production is *Ignite*, by up-and-coming choreographer Juanjo Arqués. Presented as part of Birmingham Royal Ballet's innovative Ballet Now programme - and inspired by Turner's painting, *The Burning Of The House Of Lords And Commons* - the piece is here receiving its world premiere.





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EDITOR'S CHOICE

The King Of Thieves CERT tbc

Starring **Michael Caine, Jim Broadbent, Tom Courtenay, Charlie Cox, Michael Gambon, Ray Winstone, Francesca Annis, Paul Whitehouse**
Directed by **James Marsh (UK)**

The thieves in question are a gaggle of ageing crooks who have the temerity to break into a vault in Hatton Garden, London's jewellery district. It was the biggest robbery in British criminal history and no

sooner had the raid broken across the headlines, than a film version of the events seemed almost inevitable. But nobody could have envisaged such a mouth-watering cast of England's knighted and fêted. The director James Marsh made his mark in the field of documentaries, winning innumerable plaudits for *Man On Wire* and *Project Nim*, before directing the Oscar-winning *The Theory Of Everything*.

Released Fri 14 Sept

Film highlights released in September...

The Nun CERT 15 (96 mins)

Starring **Demián Bichir, Taissa Farmiga, Jonas Bloquet, Charlotte Hope**
Directed by **Corin Hardy (USA)**

The fifth instalment in *The Conjuring* franchise, this supernatural shocker is set in 1952 and features a creepy Romanian monastery. And there's already talk of *The Nun 2*.

Released Thurs 6 Sept



American Animals

CERT 15 (117 mins)

Starring **Evan Peters, Barry Keoghan, Blake Jenner, Jared Abrahamson, Udo Kier, Ann Dowd** Directed by **Bart Layton (USA)**

Heists are suddenly all the rage again (think *Ocean's Eight*, *Logan Lucky*), but this one's based on a true story. Four young fantasists decide to rob a Kentucky university library, as much for the excitement of the crime as for the value of the rare books. The real crooks talk to camera as their escapades are re-enacted on screen.

Released Fri 7 Sept

The Miseducation Of Cameron Post CERT 15 (91 mins)

Starring **Chloë Grace Moretz, John Gallagher Jr, Sasha Lane, Forrest Goodluck, Jennifer Ehle** Directed by **Desiree Akhavan (USA/UK)**

Having been caught making out with the prom queen, Cameron Post (Moretz) is sent to God's Promise, an out-of-the-way treatment centre dedicated to curing the gay. Based on the 2012 novel by Emily M Danforth.

Released Fri 7 Sept



Film highlights released in September...



The Seagull CERT 12a (99 mins)

Starring Annette Bening, Saoirse Ronan, Corey Stoll, Elisabeth Moss, Mare Winningham, Jon Tenney, Brian Dennehy Directed by Jennifer Yuh Nelson (USA)

Yep, this is an American version of Chekhov's 1895 social satire, with Ms Bening as the ageing actress Irina Nikolayevna Arkadina. The film was shot in New York.

Released Fri 7 Sept

The Predator CERT tbc

Starring Boyd Holbrook, Trevante Rhodes, Jacob Tremblay, Keegan-Michael Key, Olivia Munn, Sterling K Brown, Thomas Jane, Alfie Allen Directed by Shane Black (USA)

The human race is in trouble again. The predators - first seen in the 1987 thriller starring Arnold Schwarzenegger - have upgraded themselves by introducing DNA from other species. And now they are intent on wiping out humankind.

Released Thurs 13 Sept

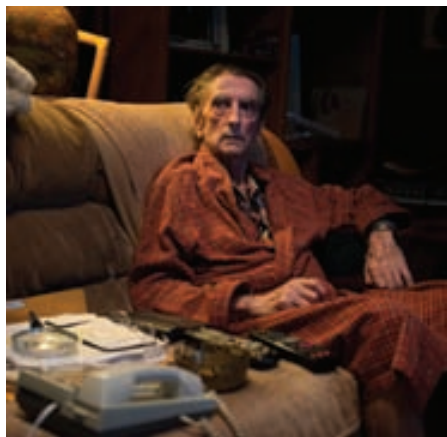


Lucky CERT 15 (88 mins)

Starring Harry Dean Stanton, David Lynch, Ron Livingston, Ed Begley Jr, Tom Skerritts, Melissa Leo, Bill Pullman, Sakina Jaffrey Directed by John Carroll Lynch (USA)

Having reached the grand old age of 90, Lucky, a US Navy veteran, realises that it is time to come to terms with his mortality... Not long after completing this, his first leading role in some time, the veteran character actor Harry Dean Stanton passed on, aged 91, adding an enormous frisson to this noble character study. It marks the directorial debut of the actor John Carroll Lynch.

Released Fri 14 Sept



Reinventing Marvin CERT tbc

Starring Finnegan Oldfield, Grégory Gadebois, Vincent Macaigne, Charles Berling, Isabelle Huppert Directed by Anne Fontaine (France)

At the age of 59, Anne Fontaine can consider herself one of the grande dames of French cinema, with a portfolio that includes Coco Before Chanel (2009), Gemma Boveri (2014) and The Innocents (2016). Here, Marvin Bijoux (Oldfield) is not like other boys in his small village and only after a chance encounter with a drama teacher does he realise that there is another world that can accommodate those who are different... Mlle Huppert plays herself.

Released Fri 14 Sept

40 whatsonlive.co.uk



Superfly CERT 15 (116 mins)

Starring Trevor Jackson, Jason Mitchell, Michael K. Williams, Lex Scott Davis, Jennifer Morrison Directed by Director X (USA)

Following the remake of the blaxploitation thriller Shaft in 2000, there are now a slew of new reboots in the works, with this being the first out of the starting gate. Trevor Jackson takes on the role of Youngblood Priest (made famous by Ron O'Neal in 1972), an Atlanta drug dealer who attempts to quit the business after 'one last job.' For the record, Director X was born Julien Lutz in Toronto.

Released Fri 14 Sept

Mile 22 CERT tbc

Starring Mark Wahlberg, John Malkovich, Lauren Cohan, Iko Uwais Directed by Peter Berg (USA)

A CIA agent (Wahlberg) is tasked with smuggling a police officer with sensitive information out of Southeast Asia. Peter Berg previously directed Marky Mark in the enormously efficient Lone Survivor, Deepwater Horizon and Patriots Day.

Released Wed 19 Sept

The House With A Clock In Its Walls CERT PG

Starring Jack Black, Cate Blanchett, Owen Vaccaro, Renée Elise Goldsberry, Sunny Suljic, Kyle MacLachlan Directed by Eli Roth (USA)



Eli Roth is responsible for such films as Cabin Fever, Hostel and Death Wish, so it makes sense that his first children's film should be based on the Gothic horror novel by John Bellairs. The recently orphaned Lewis (Owen Vaccaro) goes to stay with his uncle (Jack Black), who turns out to be a mediocre warlock living in a house containing the secret to the end of the world. Should be fun.

Released Fri 21 Sept

Faces Places CERT PG (94 mins)

Directed by **Agnès Varda and JR (France)**

Agnès Varda is the grande dame of the French New Wave, JR an anonymous artist and photographer who specialises in colossal pictures displayed in public places. Together, the unlikely duo travel round France to capture the lives of the locals and in the process bond on camera. The result went on to be nominated for an Oscar for best documentary of 2017.

Released Fri 21 Sept



The Little Stranger

CERT 12a (111 mins)

Starring **Domhnall Gleeson, Ruth Wilson, Will Poulter, Charlotte Rampling, Josh Dylan**
Directed by **Lenny Abrahamson (Ireland/UK/France)**

The name to note here is Lenny Abrahamson, the talented director who brought us the gripping, moving and original (and Oscar-winning) *Room* of 2015. His new film is a Gothic drama set in 1947 based on the novel by Sarah Waters. It stars Domhnall Gleeson as a country doctor whose life unravels when he attends a patient at a crumbling manor house.

Released Fri 21 Sept

A Simple Favour

CERT 15 (117 mins)

Starring **Anna Kendrick, Blake Lively, Henry Golding, Andrew Rannells, Linda Cardellini, Rupert Friend** Directed by **Paul Feig (USA)**

It's a case of mistaken intentions when a small-town 'mommy blogger' (Anna Kendrick) attempts to solve the disappearance of her high society friend (Blake Lively). The mystery drama is based on the novel by Darcey Bell, described as 'Gone Girl on steroids, amphetamines and cocaine.' From the director of *Bridesmaids*, *The Heat* and *Spy*.

Released Fri 21 Sept



CRITIC'S CHOICE

Puzzle CERT 15 (103 mins)

Starring **Kelly Macdonald, Irrfan Khan, David Denman, Bubba Weiler, Austin Abrams**
Directed by **Marc Turteltaub (USA)**

The puzzle in question is of the jigsaw variety. It is one of the few pleasures that Agnes (Kelly Macdonald) allows herself, in between caring for her husband and her two sons, all the cooking, the housework and her commitments to the church. Somehow, arranging all these myriad cardboard shapes into their correct order gives Agnes a sense of control, of finding a way to complete the puzzle of her life. And her new obsession is about to transform her world in a way that neither she nor

her blob of a husband could have foreseen. *Puzzle*, the film, is not unlike its protagonist. Its wider ambitions materialise slowly and while it seems to occupy a modest, even safe mind-set, it has the intelligence to feed out its story in its own time, without pandering to the impatient. The result, then, is a splatter of surprises, as our heroine gathers courage to pursue her own dreams and to find her own voice. In short, Marc Turteltaub's subtle, resonant film is a timeless character study of a woman sidelined by life. In a good way.

Released Fri 7 Sept



Night School CERT 12a (111 mins)

Starring **Kevin Hart, Tiffany Haddish, Rob Riggle, Taran Killam, Romany Malco, Keith David**
Directed by **Malcolm D. Lee (USA)**

It seems like only yesterday that Melissa McCarthy went back to school in *Life Of The Party* (2018). Now it's the turn of Kevin Hart and other troublemakers who are forced to attend night school in order to complete their high school exams. From the director of *The Best Man*, *Soul Men* and *Girls Trip*. Just saying.

Released Fri 28 Sept

The Wife CERT 15 (100 mins)

Starring **Glenn Close, Jonathan Pryce, Christian Slater, Max Irons, Annie Starke, Harry Lloyd** Directed by **Björn Runge (UK/Sweden/USA)**

It's early days, but there's already some buzz surrounding Glenn Close's Oscar chances for this drama. She plays Joan Castleman, the wife of a writer (Jonathan Pryce) who is honoured with the Nobel Prize in Literature, an event that prompts her to examine her own life. Based on the 2003 novel by Meg Wolitzer.

Released Fri 28 Sept





Out Of The Shadows

MAC, Birmingham,
8 September - 11 November

The human cost of locking up people with learning disabilities and/or autism is the subject of Polly Braden & Sally Williams' *Out Of The Shadows*.

"Sally and I spent 2017 driving between Bristol, London and West Bromwich to visit the 10 people that share their stories with us," explains Polly. "Sometimes we would arrive to find Rodney didn't feel like seeing us, or Harry had got into trouble and was back in prison. On other occasions we would be happy to see Lindsey preparing for her first day of volunteer work after a life spent in and out of prison. This journey, at times sad and frustrating, could also be inspiring and uplifting."

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Frederick Barlow, 'The Head of an Old Man' c.1875
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experienceCOLOUR

Glasshouse Arts Centre, Stourbridge, until Sun 14 October

Standing inside a rainbow, playing with the shadows of an eclipse, exploring reflection and investigating the mystery of coloured shadows are among the activities and experiences which visitors to this 'remarkably beautiful' exhibition can enjoy.

Exploring the science and art of colour

through a selection of large-scale installations, displays and experiments, the presentation aims to explain the ways in which different colours can influence people, and also to pose new questions about 'the meanings of colour in the world around us'.

Within And Without: Body Image And The Self

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, until Fri 1 February

This is the second exhibition to take place in the museum's Story Lab gallery, a space that invites visitors to help shape the future of the venue.

Exploring the ways in which body image impacts on issues such as social status, gender, stage of life, health, aesthetics, religion, politics and sexuality, the exhibition's theme has been shaped into a single narrative by volunteers working with staff on the show's development.



Grace A Williams: Intermission

New Art Gallery, Walsall, until Sun 11 November



Grace A Williams' two-screen projection focuses on the gaze of two unknown black men whose portraits appear on 19th century photographic slides found by the artist.

"Despite being historic images," explains Grace, "their representation in a contemporary context enacts a reading of race and identity that completely undermines their original purpose of defining colonial 'othering'. This feels particularly pertinent in a moment where voices eradicated by white eurocentrism - including women and ethnic minorities, regularly lumped together as 'other' - are being reinstated."



Journeys With 'The Waste Land'

The Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 15 September - Sun 18 November

Taking as its starting point TS Eliot's famous poem, The Waste Land - written in 1922, in the aftermath of the Great War - Journeys aims to explore the meanings of the poem and its relationship to Coventry. The Waste Land's imagery of journeys and fragmentation, redemption through fire and rebirth, connects with the histories and myths of the city.

The exhibition shows at the Mead Gallery until one week after the 100th anniversary of the World War One armistice.



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*Calls cost 13p/min plus standard network charges. Ticket prices include a free show guide. Advance tickets are available until midnight Thursday 8 November 2018. After that date, tickets will only be available at the show. All bookings are subject to a single transaction fee of £1.95. Please be aware the above code does not equate to a discounted rate and is solely for marketing purposes. All information correct at time of publishing. **Book your tickets before Friday 26 October 2018 at midnight and you will be automatically entered in to our free prize draw to win a Jaguar E-type model worth £8,735. Full T&Cs online: www.neccclassicmotorshow.com/tickets



A Place In The Sun Live

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 21 - Sun 23 September

The official exhibition of Channel Four's popular series returns to the Midlands - and it's the perfect place to negotiate the process of finding an ideal property abroad.

More than 150 exhibitors will be flying in from locations including Spain, France, Portugal,

Italy and Florida, showcasing a wide range of properties and answering potential punters' purchasing questions.

Television-show presenters Amanda Lamb, Jasmine Harman, Jonnie Irwin and Laura Hamilton will be on hand to share their experience and offer advice, while a panel of experts will take visitors through the ins and outs of buying a property abroad.

Autumn Steam Gala

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley,
Thurs 20 - Sun 23 September

Check out an array of steam locomotives at Severn Valley Railway's Autumn Steam Gala this month.

Attractions include overnight running on the Friday and Saturday, an early-morning breakfast train from Bridgnorth to Kidderminster, an open-to-visitors Eardington Halt station, and Paddock Railway and Coalyard Miniature Railway in steam.



Midland Game Fair

Weston Park, Shropshire,
Sat 15 & Sun 16 September

As the premier event of its kind in the country, the well-established Midland Game Fair offers a rewarding weekend for those with a passion for traditional country pursuits.

The event showcases a wide range of rural attractions, including clay shooting, gundog competitions, falconry displays and ferret racing. There's plenty of musical entertainment to enjoy as well, with folk, jazz & blues and Celtic & country stages all featuring.

Younger visitors can get up-close-and-personal to some beautiful birds in the falconry classroom, with other kids' entertainments including donkey rides, a bouncy castle and bungee trampolines.



Classic & Retro Show

Himley Hall & Park, Dudley,
Sun 2 September

This popular show presents a selection of 800-plus vehicles and static displays featuring saloons, sports cars, commercial & military vehicles and classic motorcycles. There are trade & autojumble stands too, as well as a contribution from Warwickshire singer Melissa Hollick, who's promising to get the crowds dancing with a variety of vintage music.



The Cycle Show

NEC, Birmingham,
Fri 28 - Sun 30 September



Showcasing more than 300 exhibitors, 500 brands and the very latest bikes and accessories, it's no surprise that the Cycle Show is the UK's biggest cycling event. The 2018 line-up of brands features Canyon, Orange Mountain Bikes, Oakley, Primal Europe and Dolan, to name but a few. Main-stage attractions include industry talks, celebrity interviews and the chance to pick up plenty of hints and tips about cycling - from how to get started to safety for families.

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400 Years of Aston Hall

Aston Hall, Birmingham, Sat 8 September

Aston Hall brings to a close its 400th anniversary celebrations with The Palace of Curiosities, a Vic-

torian sideshow full of 'spectacular and astonishing displays'.

There's also the chance to meet Queen Victoria and learn about her two visits to the venue - first as a princess and then, in 1858, as Queen.

Trampoline, Tumbling & DMT British Championships

Arena Birmingham, Sat 22 & Sun 23 September

With 13 major medals won at the European Championships, British gymnastics is enjoying a brilliant year.

Olympic medal-winning trampolinist Bryony Page (pictured) is here back on home soil, taking on stiff competition from world team bronze medallists Laura Gallagher and Kat Driscoll. Nathan Bailey and Luke Strong go head-to-head for the men's trampoline crown.

Other attractions include performances by the senior tumbling teams, led by 2018 European champion Lucie Colebeck, and the very best of Britain's DMT gymnasts, who'll be executing high-flying stunts in a bid for the British titles.



Malvern Autumn Show

Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Sat 29 & Sun 30 September

A weekend of home-grown family fun is in store at the Malvern Autumn Show.

For green-fingered visitors, there's the chance to glean some useful know-how from the gardening and floral experts in attendance, as well as to stock up on plants and bulbs for winter.

Other show highlights include the Giant Vegetables Championship, an 'old tyme' fairground, free dance lessons and a local arts, crafts & food market.



Every September, thousands of volunteers across England organise events to celebrate the country's fantastic history, architecture and culture. These Heritage Open Days offer you a chance to discover hidden places, try out new experiences and learn fascinating facts about some of England's most interesting visitor destinations - all free of charge. Below, we've selected a few Midlands highlights from the 2018 edition of the festival.

POP-UP EXHIBITION This year's exhibition explores the stories of women in Stratford-upon-Avon across six centuries - from Shakespeare's plays to Stratford's suffragettes and beyond - through the Shakespeare Centre's library, archive and museum collection. Craft activities and a Tudor 'dress-up corner' are also available.

SAT 8 & SUN 9 SEPTEMBER, THE SHAKESPEARE CENTRE, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

OPEN WEEKEND A weekend for steam, engine, canal boat and industrial archaeology enthusiasts. The event features engine rallies and displays of classic cars and commercial vehicles. Crafting activities take place in the Canal Warehouse.

SAT 15 & SUN 16 SEPTEMBER, ETRURIA INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM, STOKE ON TRENT

OPEN DAY TOURS Free-entry event featuring tours of both the museum and the nearby ruins of Bordesley Abbey. Other highlights include children's craft activities, various exhibitions, a family heritage trail and music by local charity Indigo Arts.

SUN 9 SEPTEMBER, FORGE MILL NEEDLE MUSEUM, REDDITCH

MEET 17TH CENTURY COSTUMED CHARACTERS Meet the musketeer and his wife alongside replica arms and armour from the siege of Oswestry in 1644. On the Saturday and Sunday, visitors can also enjoy a guided walk from outside St Oswald's Parish.

FRI 14 - SUN 16 SEPTEMBER, OSWESTRY VISITOR CENTRE, SHROPSHIRE



A PLAY FOR OUR TIMES

Midlands-born actor Tom Silvertown this month makes his Old Joint Stock Theatre debut, playing Michael in a new comic four-hander about sex and commitment in the 21st century. Tom recently chatted to What's On about this much-anticipated play, and about what audiences can expect...

Why is *Four Play* a relevant drama for our times, Tom?

It explores what relationships have become in the time of Grindr, Tinder, Hornet etc. They can be a lot more open and fluid, and I think that people who were in a relationship before this phenomenon kicked off may feel a little bit left behind, as though they've missed out on all this opportunity to be so easily promiscuous and easy-going. There are plenty of contemporary cultural references in the play, and the dialogue is very conversational, which adds to the intimacy.

Four Play exposes the frustrations that can arise for couples in long-term relationships. Are they involving another member to simply spice up their sex life, or are they doing it to save an already-crumbling relationship?

With relationships being a lot more open these days, the definition of monogamous can be slightly looser.

Does the play centre on a throuple or a threesome? What's the difference?

Without giving too much away, one couple propositions half of another couple with an idea which means there's a certain amount of risk involved for them all. There's definitely a great deal of intimacy for the three characters. I would say a throuple is a three-way relationship in every aspect, but a threesome is purely a physical, sexual experience.

Do the characters in the play distinguish between sex and a loving relationship?

Definitely. One of the characters gets about quite a bit, but he still saves 'something' intimate for his partner. He believes what

he's doing is purely physical, whereas what he has with his partner is truly loving and special.

Can you give us some background to the four characters?

We have two couples: Rafe & Pete and Andrew & Michael. Michael's my character. Rafe and Pete are in a seven-and-a-half-year relationship, and one of them instigates the idea to involve one of the other couple. Pete is quite adventurous and likes to pass off the power to Rafe, but he can be a little uptight and is very sensitive. Andrew and Michael have been together a couple of years. Andrew is easy-going and loving, which Michael can take advantage of. He's often out at all hours at the gym.

Where does the comedy angle come from?

Relationships aren't usually one long battle, so there's plenty of playfulness between the couples. I think comedy comes from tension too, so even if the characters aren't being directly funny, their sly comments, slip-ups and mistakes provide plenty of laughs, along with a few tongue-in-cheek moments.

How much sexual content is there, and is there an audience age limit?

Sex is one of the biggest topics of the play, so there's plenty of it explored by the characters - from kinky things to sensual candles, it covers a lot! As for an age limit, it's at your own discretion, but I wouldn't bring your kids - it'd make for a bit of a full-on sex-ed.

What research have you undertaken for the role?

Well, I haven't signed up to Grindr, but I've

spoken to a few friends about their experiences. For my own character of Michael, who's obsessed with fitness, I've been hitting the gym as much as possible. As for the cast as a whole, people have really been delving into the details of the script and then going away to create these rich backgrounds for the characters; where they work, their families, their favourite bars - anything that'll bring them to life.

Is *Four Play* best suited to an intimate performance area like *The Old Joint Stock*, or would it work equally well on a larger scale?

The OJS is the perfect venue for it; the characters are revealing all the intimate details right in front of you. It feels like you're right there with them throughout the whole play.

There's been a big furore over Jack Whitehall - a straight man - playing a gay character in Disney's *Jungle Cruise*. What's your opinion on straight men playing gay characters?

I can understand the frustration from the LGBT community, as it's important to improve representation in Hollywood, giving everyone an equal opportunity. On the other hand, if they felt he was the very best person to fulfil that role because of his acting ability, then that's fair enough. However, Disney may well have played on the controversy a little to generate publicity, which could be considered a little exploitative.

***Four Play* shows at Birmingham's Old Joint Stock Theatre from Wednesday 5 to Saturday 8 September.**

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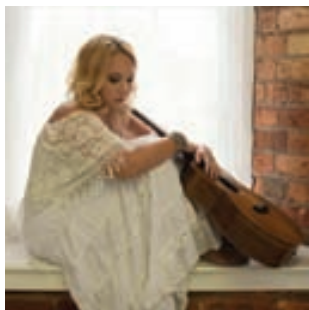


Flashdance at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry - Tues 4 - Sat 8 September

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What's On

Sat 1 to Sun 9 September



Chantel McGregor at Artrix,
Bromsgrove

Sat 8 September

Mon 10 to Sun 16 September



Bright Smoke at The Other
Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

Thurs 13 September

Mon 17 to Sun 23 September



Andy Fairweather Lowe at
Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

Sat 22 September

Mon 24 to Sun 30 September



Rachel Parris at the Royal Spa
Centre, Leamington

Sat 29 September

THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER

Visual Arts

Artrix, Bromsgrove

NEW THE EMBROIDERERS' GUILD: PAGE 17 A specially created exhibition of textile artistry, with each piece taking a book as its inspiration, Wed 5 Sept - Sun 4 Nov

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

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, until Sun 9 Sept

INSPIRE 2018 Now in its third year, Inspire is a youth art competition for five-to-19-year-olds, this year taking its inspiration from the theme of colour, until Sat 15 Sept

COLLECTING BIRMINGHAM: WHO IS BIRMINGHAM? Discover new collections that reflect the experiences of diverse Birmingham people - from working lives to community activists and protest movements, until Sun 27 Oct

FIGHTING FOR OUR HERITAGE Exhibition explores the rich history of amateur boxing clubs and famous boxers from Birmingham, until Sun 2 Dec

WITHIN AND WITHOUT: BODY IMAGE AND THE SELF Exhibition examining how social, historical and cultural factors affect body image, and how this is expressed through objects and artworks, until Fri 1 Feb

Compton Verney Gallery, Warwick

THE MARVELLOUS MECHANICAL MUSEUM Exhibition including early and rare automata and clockwork dating back to the 17th century, from collections such as The British Museum, V&A and Royal Collection, until Sun 30 Sept

RODNEY PEPPÉ'S WORLD OF INVENTION Exhibition offering a fascinating insight into Rodney Peppé's creative career as a toy, automaton and model maker, children's author and illustrator, and graphic designer and artist, until Sun 30 Sept

Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch

NEW THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS Textile artists Hilary Beattie and Jenny Rolf share their enduring love and passion for flowers, demonstrating how they can best be interpreted through the textile medium, Fri 7 Sept - Sun 21 Oct

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

ARE YOU IN THIS? LEAMINGTON SPA IN THE GREAT WAR Exhibition marking the centenary of the end of the First World War, and telling the story of Leamington Spa and its people during the conflict, until Sun 11 Nov

Rugby Art Gallery & Museum

NEW THE QUEEN, THE CHAIRMAN AND I A journey into the entwined histories of China and the UK, traced through the family history of photographer Kurt Tong, Tues 18 Sept - Sat 27 Oct

The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum

NEW A WORLD WAR ONE COMMEMORATION Exhibition including work by contemporary artists and work by artists from the period of the war, Sat 1 Sept (end date to be confirmed)

NEW JOURNEYS WITH 'THE WASTE LAND' Exhibition exploring the contemporary significance of TS Eliot's seminal poem, and the way it has resonated with artists over the years, Sat 15 Sept - Sun 18 Nov

NEW CÉZANNE: MONTAGNE SAINTE-VICTOIRE Opportunity to see a post-impressionist masterpiece and a much-loved work from the Courtauld Gallery's world-class collection. Also on show are landscape paintings by artists like Paul Nash, David Bomberg, LS Lowry and Prunella Clough, Fri 21 Sept - Sun 20 Jan

The Hive, Worcester

LOST LANDSCAPES Exhibition detailing all aspects of what it meant to be human in the Ice Age, until Tues 18 Sept, The Hive, Worcester

Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery

NEW WHAT DO WE WANT? Exhibition exploring ordinary people's voices against a world of corporate and political messages, Sat 22 Sept - Sat 24 Nov

Other VISUAL ARTS

NEVILLE STAPLE - THE ORIGINAL RUDE BOY The exhibition hopes to show many aspects of a man who has done so much for Coventry music, but also so much for other artists, until Sun 2 Dec, Coventry Music Museum

NEW NUNEATON OPEN ARTS TRAIL Eighty talented local artists show a diverse range of work in 24 venues in and around Nuneaton, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Sept, Various venues around Nuneaton



Chantel McGregor - Artrix, Bromsgrove

Gigs

FAUX FIGHTERS (FOO FIGHTERS TRIBUTE) Sat 1 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

BOTOWN - THE SOUL OF BOLLYWOOD Sat 1 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

BLAKE - THE ANNIVERSARY TOUR Sat 1 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

SAVING ABEL Sat 1 Sept, The Asylum, Birmingham

AMNESIA HOUSE Sat 1 Sept, The Empire, Coventry

LADY SANITY Sat 1 Sept, The Flapper, Birmingham

FRANCIS & THE FIEND Sat 1 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TEXAS + IMELDA MAY (SKYLINE SERIES) Sat 1 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PLUVIAM + EARLY DAYS + LUNA KISS Sat 1 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

MARSHALL JEFFERSON Sat 1 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LEMONADE JAZZ/FUNK/SOUL SESSION Sun 2 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

CLARE BOWEN PLUS SUPPORT Sun 2 Sept, Symphony Hall, B'ham

ICEAGE Mon 3 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birm-

ingham

THE DEVON ALLMAN PROJECT, Mon 3 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

INCUBUS Tues 4 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham

SANDY ALEX G Tues 4 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SOCCER MOMMY Tues 4 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BARRY MANILOW Tues 4 Sept, Arena B'ham

PASSENGER Wed 5 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

RIDE Thurs 6 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE WILLOWS Thurs 6 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

THE ELO EXPERIENCE Thurs 6 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

TALON Thurs 6 - Fri 7 Sept, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

FASTLOVE - A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MICHAEL Fri 7 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

INNOVATION Fri 7 - Sat 8 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE THE Fri 7 Sept, Digbeth Arena, B'ham

RUDESIX EP LAUNCH Fri 7 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

THE COUNTERFEIT SIXTIES Fri 7 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE CHICAGO BLUES BROTHERS Fri 7 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE OFFICIAL RECEIVERS Fri 7 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

THE ROY ORBISON STORY Fri 7 - Sat 8 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Sat 8 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

SEASON OF THE SHELLAZ Sat 8 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

GARBAGE Sat 8 Sept, Digbeth Arena, B'ham

THE DARLING BUDS + THE PROCTORS Sat 8 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FOYER FOLK: FLAT-WORLD Sat 8 Sept, Number 8 Community Arts Centre, Pershore

CHANTEL MCGREGOR Sat 8 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

KELLY OLIVER Sat 8 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

GRANDMASTER FLASH Sat 8 Sept, Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon

CLAIRE LOUISE-ROSSI Sat 8 - Sun 9 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Keresley, Coventry

STEVE PLEDGER Sun 9 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

CAMEL Sun 9 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

Classical Music

RODERICK WILLIAMS (BARITONE) & LYNN ARNOLD (PIANO) Sat 1 Sept, All Saints' Church, Burton Dassett, Southam, Warwickshire

LYN ARNOLD & CHARLES MATTHEWS PIANO DUET Programme includes works by Tovey, Stevens & Mendelssohn, Sun 2 Sept, Church of St Peter & St Paul, Butlers Marston, South Warwickshire

LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL Mon 3 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

A FRENCH ACCENT ON THE CLASSICS Featuring Birmingham Conservatoire pianists Domonkos Csabay & Connor Wilcox. Programme includes works by Handel, Chopin & Debussy, Thurs 6 Sept, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

SPIRES CHORUS WITH MEMBERS OF SPIRES CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Featuring Jack Lovell & Daniel Galbreath (conductors), Sat 8 Sept, King Henry VIII School Hall, Warwick Rd, Coventry

DANTE STRING QUARTET (PICTURED) Programme includes works by Haydn, Shostakovich & Beethoven, Sat 8 Sept, All Saints Church, Leamington Hastings, Warwickshire



Comedy

ANDY ASKINS, KEVIN MCCARTHY, STUART MITCHELL, JOHNNY COCHRANE & COMIC TCB Sat 1 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LIVE AT HOT WATER SPECIAL Sat 1 Sept, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

ADAM ROWE, STEVE HALL, MANDY KNIGHT & COMIC TBC Sat 1 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

JARLATH REGAN, ANDREW O'NEILL & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 6 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROY CHUBBY BROWN Thurs 6 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

IAIN STIRLING Fri 7 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

JARLATH REGAN, ANDREW O'NEILL, OLA & GEORGE ZACH Fri 7 - Sat 8 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

GEORGE EGG Sat 8 Sept, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

MO GILLIGAN Sat 8 Sept, New Alexan-

dra Theatre, Birmingham

ADAM BLOOM, SARAH KEYWORTH, MIKE NEWALL & FREDDY QUINNE Sat 8 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

ALFIE MOORE Sat 8 Sept, MAC, B'ham

JEREMY HARDY Sun 9 Sept, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

Theatre

THE FULL MONTY Musical adaptation of the hit film of the same name, until Sat 1 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

DISENCHANTED Birmingham premiere of Dennis T Giacino's off-Broadway hit, until Sat 1 Sept, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

MATILDA THE MUSICAL The Royal Shakespeare Company's award-winning musical, until Sat 8 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

JERSEY BOYS Internationally acclaimed musical telling the real-life story of Frankie Valli And The Four Seasons, until Sat 8 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE COMEDY ABOUT A BANK ROBBERY Smash-and-grab comedy promising swagloads of laughter, until Sat 8 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

MACBETH Starring Christopher Eccleston and Niamh Cusack, until Tues 18 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ROMEO AND JULIET Contemporary production of Shakespeare's story of love at first sight, until Fri 21 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR David Troughton stars as Falstaff, until Sat 22 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

TAMBURLAINE Michael Boyd returns to the RSC to direct a new staging of Christopher Marlowe's famous play, until Sat 1 Dec, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

UNCLE BEN'S FAMILY FEUD Comedy following the ups and downs of family life, Thurs 30 Aug - Sun 2 Sept, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

HANDBAGGED Amateur staging of Moira Buffini's witty drama, Sat 1 - Sat 8 Sept, Criterion Theatre, Coventry

JOHN EDWARD - PSYCHIC MEDIUM Sun 2 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

THE GET OUT Malvern Theatre Players present an amateur staging of Nick Wilkes' technical comedy, Mon 3 - Sat 8 Sept, Malvern Theatres

FLASHDANCE Strictly Come Dancing Champion Joanne Clifton and A1 heartthrob Ben Adams star in a stage version of the iconic film of the same



The Merry Wives Of Windsor - Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

name, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

EVITA Lucy O'Byrne stars in Andrew Lloyd Webber & Tim Rice's award-winning musical, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Sept, Malvern Theatres

MEEK A haunting story of ruthless state control, tense friendships and one woman's determination not to be broken, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

FREEMAN Inspired by the first man in America to plead insanity as his defence, award-winning writer Camilla Whitehill and Strictly Arts examine the unspoken link between mental health and systemic racism, Wed 5 - Sat 8 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

LADY MACBETH AND HER SERVANTS Jars Of Clay Theatre Company presents its version of Shakespeare's blood-splashed tale, Wed 5 - Sat 8 Sept, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

A BUNCH OF AMATEURS The Priory Theatre present an amateur staging of Ian Hislop & Nick Newman's comedy, Wed 5 - Sat 15 Sept, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

ALLO ALLO Based on the hugely successful BBC television comedy series, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 Sept, The Civic

Stourport, Stourport-on-Severn

MEET ME IN THE RUINS Open-air performance taking place on five fixed points in history, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

BOTHERED & BEWILDERED The Billesley Players present Gail Young's drama of memory, loss, secrets, love and Barbara Cartland... Fri 7 - Sat 8 Sept, Dovehouse Theatre, Solihull

TARTUFFE Brand new version of Moliere's provocative French classic, relocated to Birmingham's modern-day Pakistani Muslim community, Fri 7 Sept - Sat 23 Feb, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE SHAOLIN WARRIORS Featuring rarely seen Buddhist meditation alongside deadly martial arts prowess, Sat 8 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

Kids Show

TIDDLER AND OTHER TERRIFIC TALES Featuring live music, puppetry and a host of colourful characters from Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's best-loved titles, Thurs 30 Aug - Sat 1 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham



Flashdance - Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

China Revealed

Wed 3, Fri 5, Sun 7 Oct

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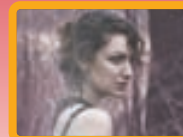
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Wednesday 26 September

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JAW-DROPPING MAGIC



Friday 28 September

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MORE



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THE SNAIL & THE WHALE A Tall Stories musical production inspired by the bestselling picture book by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Sept, MAC, Birmingham

BING LIVE! Join Bing, Sula, Coco and Pando as they learn how to tell stories by pretending, dressing up and singing songs, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE ENORMOUS TURNIP Stuff And Non-sense Theatre Company return with unswerving energy, live music and eccentric puppetry, Sun 9 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

Talks

THE GOLDEN AGE OF STEAM A talk by television programme maker David Parker, Tues 4 Sept, Malvern Theatres

AN EVENING WITH ADAM HENSON Join Adam as he shares stories about his farming life, his TV career and the running of the Cotswold Farm Park, Thurs 6 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (PG) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Hayley Atwell, Ewan McGregor. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, until Tues 4 Sept;

THE CHILDREN ACT (12a) Drama. Starring Emma Thompson, Stanley Tucci. Malvern Theatres, Fri 31 Aug - Thurs 6 Sept

SGT STUBBY (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Helena Bonham Carter, Logan Lerman. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Sept

HEART BEATS LOUD (PG) Drama/Music. Starring Nick Offerman, Kiersey Clemons. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sat 1 - Mon 3 Sept

THE GREATEST SHOWMAN (PG) Biography/Musical. Starring Hugh Jackman, Michelle Williams. Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton, Sun 2 Sept

HEATHERS (15) Comedy. Starring Winona Ryder, Christian Slater. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Mon 3 - Tues 4 Sept

WHITNEY (15) Documentary/Biography. Starring Whitney Houston, Bobby Brown. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Wed 5 - Thurs 6 Sept

THE ESCAPE (15) Drama. Starring Gemma Arterton, Dominic Cooper. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 7 Sept

SAMURAI COP (12a) Action/Crime. Starring Robert Z'Dar, Mathew Karedas. Malvern Theatres, Fri 7 Sept

THE DARKEST MINDS (12a) Sci-Fi/Thriller. Starring Amandla Stenberg, Mandy Moore. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 7 - Sun 9 Sept

THE MEG (12a) Action/Horror. Starring Jason Statham, Ruby Rose. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 7 - Tues 11 Sept

THE BIG BAD FOX AND OTHER TALES... (U) Animation/Family. With the voices of Guillaume Darnault, Damien Witecka. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sat 8 Sept

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 7 Sept, showing at selected cinemas

AMERICAN ANIMALS (15)

PUZZLE (15)

THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST (15)

THE NUN (tbc)

THE SEAGULL (12a)

Events

THE JINNEY RING SCULPTURE TRAIL New and returning artists create an exhibition of dramatic sculptures using a range of media and subject matter, until Sun 30 Sept, The Jinney Ring Craft Centre, Bromsgrove

SHAKESPEARE FOR ALL! Join experts from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust as they read through the bard's complete works, Sat 1 Sept, Stratford upon Avon Library and Information Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon

BIG BUILD EVENT Celebrate the 'Brick Built' exhibition by helping build a giant mosaic using lego bricks, Sat 1 Sept, Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch

CARIBBEAN NIGHT Grass skirts and loud shirts at the ready! Sat 1 Sept, West Midland Safari and Leisure Park, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

MIDDLE EARTH FESTIVAL Two-day event celebrating the life and works of JRR Tolkien and his connections to the city of Birmingham, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Sept, Sarehole Mill, Hall Green, Birmingham

FAMILY WEEKEND Featuring giant garden games, races, a crafts workshop and a stand serving Pimms, home-made lemonade and cake, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Sept, Hampton Court Castle, Leominster

ON THE BUSES All aboard for vintage buses at Bewdley! Sun 2 Sept, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

AUTUMN FAIR Featuring brands, new products, retail insight and 'endless inspiration', Sun 2 - Wed 5 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

FIREWORK CHAMPIONSHIPS Three of the UK's best firework companies battle it out, Tues 4 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

MINI MAKERS Informal drop-in art sessions. Arrive any time and be prepared to get messy! Thurs 6 Sept, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

BACKSTAGE TOUR Journey behind the scenes at one of Britain's premier producing theatres, Thurs 6 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM HERITAGE OPEN DAYS AT SAREHOLE MILL Thurs 6 - Sat 15 Sept, Sarehole Mill, Hall Green, B'ham

BOUNDARY WALK Experience Charlecote by taking a guided walk around the park's boundaries, Fri 7 Sept, Charlecote Park, Warwick

PEAKY BLINDERS NIGHT Walk around the Peaky Blinders film set and enjoy an evening of music and entertainment from the Roaring 20s, Fri 7 - Sat 8 Sept, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

HOME, GARDEN & FOOD SHOW Meet and talk with experts in home & garden design, Fri 7 - Sun 9 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

JEWELLERY QUARTER HERITAGE WALK Sat 8 Sept, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

BACKSTAGE TOUR Journey behind the scenes at one of Britain's premier producing theatres, Sat 8 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

KIDSOUT COLOUR DASH Sat 8 Sept, Drayton Manor Theme Park, Tamworth, Staffordshire

FIREWORK CHAMPIONSHIPS Three of the UK's best firework companies battle it out, Sat 8 Sept, Eastnor Castle, Leicestershire

CARS & COFFEE BREAKFAST CLUB 2018 A wide and varied display of beautiful cars from years gone by, Sat 8 Sept, Coventry Transport Museum

AMIR KHAN VS SAMMY VARGAS Sat 8 Sept, Arena Birmingham

400 YEARS OF ASTON HALL: ROLL UP! ROLL UP! Featuring a Victorian sideshow, Sat 8 Sept, Aston Hall, Birmingham

RETRO TRUCK SHOW Featuring modern classic trucks produced between 1970 and 2000, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

FESTIVAL OF CRAFT Displays of country crafts, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Sept, Coombe Abbey, Binley, Coventry

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS Exploring the stories of women via Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust's world-class collection, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Sept, The Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon

FAMILY MAGIC WEEKENDS Live shows from resident magicians and ventriloquists, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Sept, Cadbury

World, Birmingham

ECO FEST Featuring free workshops, activities, and opportunities to find out how much you can develop your eco-friendly credentials, Sun 9 Sept, MAC, Birmingham

MINI WILDDPLAY Have fun with the Mud Kitchen, bug hunting, den building & rope trail, Sun 9 Sept, Eastnor Castle, Leicestershire

Food Festivals

GIN AND RUM FESTIVAL Fri 7 - Sat 8 Sept, Edgbaston Stadium, B'ham

ALE, CIDER & GIN FESTIVAL Sat 8 Sept, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

TAMWORTH FOOD GUSTO FESTIVAL Sat 8 - Sun 9 Sept, Tamworth Castle, Staffordshire

Music Festivals

COVENTRY GODIVA FESTIVAL Line-up includes Editors, Jake Bugg, Ronan Keating, Jonas Blue, Gabrielle, Professor Green & Blood Red Shoes, Fri 31 Aug - Sun 2 Sept, War Memorial Park, Coventry

MOSELEY FOLK FESTIVAL Line-up includes Levellers, Nick Mulvey (pictured), Teenage Fanclub, Show Of Hands, Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel, Skinny Lister, Willy Mason & more... Fri 31 Aug - Sun 2 Sept, Moseley Park, B'ham



OFF THE TRACKS SUMMER FESTIVAL Line-up includes Transglobal Underground, Jon Otway & His Little Big Band, Dreadzone, Mad Dog Mcrea & more... Fri 31 Aug - Sun 2 Sept, Donington Park Farmhouse, Castle Donington, Derbyshire

ONBOARD THE CRAFT FESTIVAL Line-up includes Vince Ripper & The Rodent Show, Mr Strange, Syteria, Poisoned Electric Head, Underground Zero & BB Blackdog, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 Sept, Stoke Prior Sports & Country Club, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove

BROMYARD FOLK FESTIVAL Line-up includes Oysterband, The Young'Uns, RURA, Chris Wood, Granny's Attic & more... Thurs 6 - Sun 9 Sept, various locations, Bromyard, Herefordshire

SHIINE ON BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL Line-up includes Orbital, Shed Seven, Happy Mondays, Julian Cope, Embrace, Reverend & The Makers, Black Grape & more... Sat 8 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham



FRI 7th & SAT 8th SEPT, 7pm

UNMAN, WITTERING AND ZIGO

Presented by Warwick School Drama Workshop. A new teacher, hoping to make a good impression in his first job, finds that bullying and gambling among his pupils are the least of his worries. Co-directed by students and staff, this play explores the necessity of authority and the need to act morally.



THU 4th OCT, 7.30pm

RE: PRODUCTION

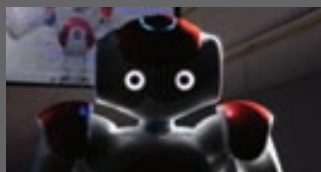
Karen & Tom's friends are painting the spare room sunset-yellow... It's what they want too, isn't it? Karen is a scientist. She knows the facts. By now she should be ready. But what if she's not? Nominated for New Writing South Best New Play.



THU 13th SEPT, 7.30pm

THE JURASSIC PARKS

Superbolt Theatre presents their sellout multi-award winning laugh-out-loud spin on Spielberg's classic. In the unlikely setting of Lyme Regis Community Centre, the Park Family embark on a journey to a misty past.



THU 11th OCT, 7pm

ABOUT A BOT

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Morgan & West's Magic Show.

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Thurs 30 Aug at 2pm

£10

The Barnhart & Huxley Hot Five - Jazz and Jokes III.

Sublime Jazz music hosted by Malc Stent.

Wed 19 Sept at 7.30pm

£17



MOTHERSHIP - Led Zeppelin Tribute.

A brand new multimedia show celebrating the music of the greatest rock band in history.

Fri 21 at 7.30pm

£15, £12 conc.

Rolling Back the Years.

One of the biggest shows of its kind in the UK, taking the audience on a musical journey through the 50s, 60s, the sounds of the 70s.

Tue 25 & Wed 26 at 2.30pm & 7.30pm

£15 mat, £16 eve.



Andy Fairweather-Low's Big Show with The Low Riders & The Hi Riders Big Soul Revue.

Fri 28 Sept at 7.30pm

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Let There Be Love.

Let musical partners Claire Martin OBE and Ray Gelato take you on an irresistible romp through the romantic classics of the Great American Songbook.

Fri 5 Oct at 7.30pm

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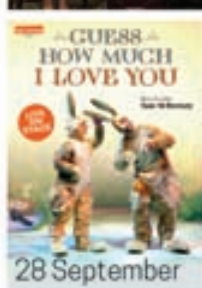
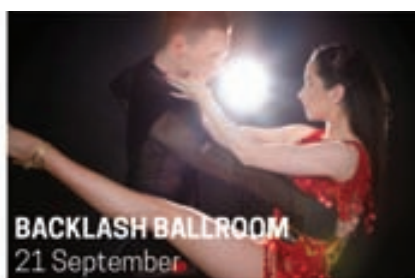


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Benji Kirkpatrick - The Fleece Inn, Bretforton

Gigs

THE LIONEL RICHIE SONGBOOK Tues 11 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ROSE TATTOO Tues 11 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

YOUNGBLOOD BRASS BAND Tues 11 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FASTLOVE - A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MICHAEL Wed 12 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

YUNGBLUD Wed 12 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE DRIFTERS Wed 12 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

MILDLIFE Wed 12 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BENJI KIRKPATRICK & THE EXCESS Wed 12 Sept, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

FIVE STAR SWING: THE BIG BAND Wed 12 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

WHITNEY - QUEEN OF THE NIGHT Wed 12 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

MIKE VERNON & THE MIGHTY COMBO Thurs 13 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

BRINGING ON BACK THE 60S Thurs 13 Sept,

The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

INK. Thurs 13 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CAM Thurs 13 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE KRIS BARRAS BAND Thurs 13 Sept, The Asylum, Birmingham

THE DEVIL MAKES THREE Thurs 13 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC Thurs 13 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

BACK TO THE 60S Thurs 13 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

RAT PACK LIVE Fri 14 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ISLANDS IN THE STREAM Fri 14 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

THEM HEAVY PEOPLE - KATE BUSH TRIBUTE Fri 14 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

PASADENA ROOF ORCHESTRA: PUTTIN' ON THE RITZ! Fri 14 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

TALON...THE ACOUSTIC COLLECTION Fri 14 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

CAMEL Fri 14 Sept, Stratford Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon

AC/DC EXPERIENCE Sat 15 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MOLOTOV JUKEBOX Sat

15 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TOTALLY TINA! Sat 15 Sept, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

JARET REDDICK Sat 15 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FRIDOLIJN Sat 15 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

LE CLUB FONDUE GO Sat 15 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

HERITAGE: SLIPMATT, DJ RATTY AND DJ PILGRIM Sat 15 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

KARKOSA + CANDID + GLASS CEILINGS + YOUNG CHASERS Sat 15 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

MARLEY REPRISED Sat 15 - Sun 16 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

ARCTIC MONKEYS Sat 15 - Sun 16 Sept, Arena Birmingham

JAYCE LEWIS Sun 16 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

NINES Sun 16 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SKATING POLLY - BABE PUNCH - DESENSITISED Sun 16 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WOODEN SHIPS Sun 16 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

YOU WIN AGAIN - CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF THE BEE GEES Sun 16 Sept, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL Mon 10 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

CBSO: DVORÁK'S NEW WORLD SYMPHONY Featuring Omer Meir Wellber (conductor), Gidon Kremer (violin) & Jan Lisiecki (piano). Programme includes works by Dvorák, Bartók & Rachmaninov, Wed 12 - Thurs 13 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE FOUR SEASONS STRING QUARTET Featuring Vyvyan Lucas & Celia Thomson (violins), Naomi Gaffney (viola), Robina Sabourin (cello) & Alan Fairs (baritone), Fri 14 Sept, The Coach House, Malvern Theatre

GRENADIER GUARDS IN CONCERT Fri 14 Sept, Worcester Cathedral

MAYOR OF WARWICK CHARITY CONCERT Featuring Julian Hellaby (piano), Alistair Kennedy & Sue Meteyard (violins) Patrick Hinks (bassoon), Victoria Adams (singer) & Antoine Mitchell (conductor). Programme includes works by Bach/Busoni, Arnold, Mozart & Berlioz, Sat 15 Sept, St Mary's Church, Warwick

COULL QUARTET Programme includes works by Schumann & Dvorak, Sun 16 Sept, Unitarian Chapel, Warwick



CHANDOS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Michael Lloyd (conductor) & Savitri Grier (violin). Programme includes works by Walton, Elgar, Bruch, Gillis, Anderson & Williams, Sun 16 Sept, Malvern Theatres

Comedy

CHRIS RAMSEY Mon 10 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

RACHEL PARRIS Wed 12 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DARREN HARRIOTT, MARTIN MOR & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBISON Thurs 13 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

THE SCUMMY MUMMIES SHOW Fri 14 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

RAW COMEDY Fri 14 Sept, Evesham

Arts Centre

DARREN HARRIOTT, MARTIN MOR & ADAM HESS & JANEY GODLEY Fri 14 - Sat 15 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

SCOTT BENNETT, JENNY COLLIER, JUNIOR SIMPSON & KANE BROWN Sat 15 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

JULIETTE BURTON Sat 15 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

ANDREW LAWRENCE Sat 15 Sept, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

MARTIN MOR Sun 16 Sept, MAC, Birmingham

Theatre

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES The Nonentities present an amateur staging of Arthur Conan Doyle's classic Sherlock Holmes story, Mon 10 - Sat 15 Sept, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

A LOCK-IN WITH TUFFERS AND DAWSON Cricketer Phil Tufnell and rugby star Matt Dawson lift the lid on their hugely successful sporting careers, Tues 11 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

TAJ EXPRESS Brand new musical featuring Bollywood's greatest dancers and the songs of AR Rahman, Tues 11 - Sat 15 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

MALCOLM STENT IN THE AFTERNOON Wed 12 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

FROM THE TRENCHES Sudden Impulse Theatre Company present an evening of song, drama, comedy and poems to mark 100 years since the end of the First World War, Wed 12 - Sat 15 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

SAVE OUR SCHOOL DINNERS... JAMIE! Comedy-drama about a group of dinner ladies and their quest to save the only school in their small community, Wed 12 - Sat 15 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

POP MUSIC A night at the theatre 'for anyone who's ever been a dick on the dancefloor', Wed 12 - Sat 22 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

INTO THE LIGHT Earth Angel fuse music and mediumship to tell the true story of spiritual awakening, Thurs 13 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

FAULTY TOWERS: THE DINING EXPERIENCE A fully immersive, highly improvised and site-specific comedy-theatre production, Thurs 13 - Sat 15 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

MARLENE MCKENZIE: LITE Marlene fuses drama and humour to explore the issue of skin lightening, Fri 14 Sept, MAC, Birmingham

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WOMAN ON FIRE One-woman show celebrating the centenary of women winning the right to vote, Fri 14 - Sat 15 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

LOVE LETTERS Two's Company present an amateur staging of AR Gurney's play, which charts the relationship of two people who met at primary school, Fri 14 - Sat 15 Sept, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

A VICAR OF DIBLEY CHRISTMAS - THE SECOND COMING Stage version of the original TV series, Fri 14 - Sat 22 Sept, Hall Green Little Theatre, B'ham

FLO SMITH - NOW AND THEN One-woman show in which Flo reflects on her life in London, from the Boar War to the Summer of Love, Sun 16 Sept, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

Kids Show

THE GREAT FREDERICO, MAGICIAN EXTRAORDINAIRE Short play for children aged three-plus, Sat 15 Sept, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

ENSONGLOPEDIA OF ANIMALS Entertainment for children featuring a plethora of fascinating facts... Sun 16 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Talks

HENRY BLOFELD: 78 RETIRED - THE FAREWELL TOUR The golden voice of cricket recounts anecdotes from on and off the pitch, and stories from the Test Match Special commentary box that weren't allowed on the radio! Tues 11 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

BRIGHT SMOKE: BRIDGET MINNAMORE A poetry night with a difference, bringing together 'writing and performance, the topical and the transcendent, the entertaining and the cathartic', Thurs 13 Sept, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

AN EVENING WITH BRIAN BLESSED

Join the larger-than-life actor as he talks about his career on stage and screen, Thurs 13 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall



ANDREW MCMILLAN - WORDS Spend an evening with the award-winning poet, whose debut collection, *Physical*, was the first ever poetry collection to win the Guardian First Book Award, Sun 16 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

HEART BEATS LOUD (PG) Drama/Music. Starring Nick Offerman, Kiersey Clemons. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Mon 10 Sept

THE GUARDIANS (15) Drama. Starring Nathalie Baye, Iris Bry. Foreign language, subtitled. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Mon 10 - Tues 11 Sept

THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST (15) Drama. Starring Chloë Grace Moretz, Steven Hauck. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 11, Fri 14 & Sun 16 Sept

SEARCHING (12A) Drama/Mystery. Starring John Cho, Debra Messing. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 14 - Tues 18 Sept

DOG DAYS (12a) Comedy/Drama. Starring Nina Dobrev, Vanessa Hudgens. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 14 - Mon 24 Sept

THE CHILDREN ACT (12a) Drama. Starring Emma Thompson, Stanley Tucci. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sat 15 - Thurs 20 Sept

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Wed 12 Sept, showing at selected cinemas

THE PREDATOR (tbc)

THE KING OF THIEVES (tbc)

THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST (15)

LUCKY (15)

OPERATION FINALE (tbc)

SUPERFLY (15)

Events

HIDDEN HISTORIES RAMBLE Find out about the story of the Four Stones on this five-mile ramble, Wed 12 Sept, Clent Hills, Worcestershire

BIRMINGHAM HERITAGE WEEK AT ASTON HALL Wed 12 - Fri 14 Sept, Aston Hall, Birmingham

HOME ON THE RANGE Discover the challenges of feeding a family in the Victorian period, Thurs 13 Sept, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

OUTDOOR CINEMA AT BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS 'The UK's most luxurious outdoor cinema experience', Thurs 13 - Sat 15 Sept, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS Get inspired by the collections in Tudor House Museum, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 Sept, Tudor House Museum, Worcester

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS Free family event exploring over 1,000 years of history, Fri 14 - Sun 16 Sept, Hartlebury Cas-



Bridget Minnamore - Bright Smoke - The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

tle, Kidderminster

A CLOSER LOOK - EVENING HOUSE

TOURS 2018 Discover the history of the collection, Sat 15 Sept, Packwood House, Solihull

60TH BIRTHDAY DIAMOND GALA PARTY A night of dancing, cocktails, and music, peppered throughout with theatrical surprises, Sat 15 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

YARDLEY MEDIEVAL WALK Join experts from the Birmingham & Warwickshire Archaeological Society in a leisurely 2.5-mile stroll around the village of Yardley, Sat 15 Sept, meet at Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

HERITAGE OPEN DAY STORE TOUR Behind-the-scenes tour featuring some of the museum's hidden treasures and curiosities, Sat 15 Sept, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

BOURNVILLE HERITAGE OPEN DAY Featuring living-history experts Gloriana, Sat 15 Sept, Selly Manor, Bournville, Birmingham

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR 950TH ANNIVERSARY BALL Celebrate the 950th anniversary of William the Conqueror's motte and bailey castle, at an exclusive one-off black-tie anniversary ball, Sat 15 Sept, Warwick Castle

FREE TOUR OF WEOLEY CASTLE Sat 15 Sept, Weoley Castle Ruins, B'ham

WOMEN OF WELLESBOURNE Heritage Open Day taking the theme of 'extraordinary women', Sat 15 Sept, Chedhams Yard, Coventry

ARCHITECTURE TOUR OF BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL Sat 15 Sept, Birmingham Cathedral, Birmingham

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Free, costumed, guided tours of the Smith & Pepper jewellery factory, Sat 15 Sept, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

SEX & THE TUDORS A 'rip-roaring tumble' through the sexual exploits of the Tudors, Sat 15 Sept, The Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon

HERITAGE OPEN WEEKEND Free entry all weekend, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Sept, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

FAMILY MAGIC WEEKENDS Enjoy live shows from the resident magicians and ventriloquists, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Sept, Cadbury World, Birmingham

HIDDEN AREAS WEEKEND - ATTIC TOURS Discover the rarely revealed attics of Harvington Hall, including the second-largest priest hide ever found, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Sept, Harvington Hall, Kidderminster

MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL Have a go at archery or get involved with medieval dancing, Sun 16 Sept, Bewdley Museum, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Take along a picnic and enjoy the beautiful scenery, Sun 16 Sept, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

DRINKS & NIBBLES Featuring live jazz and local artisan food & drink producers, Sun 16 Sept, Eastnor Castle, Leebury

AUTUMN EVENT Featuring apple pressing, children's wildlife activities and live music, Sun 16 Sept, Martineau Gardens, Edgbaston, Birmingham

WOMEN OF WORCESTER'S CIVIL WAR STORY Explore the interactive experience, Worcester's Civil War Story, and join one of the Their Stories tours about extraordinary Commandery women, Sun 16 Sept, The Commandery, Worcester

HIGHBURY DURING THE GREAT WAR Featuring interactive displays, living history and opportunities to research family members, Sun 16 Sept, Highbury Hall, Moseley, Birmingham

Food Festivals

CHILLI FESTIVAL A day of live music, street performances and plenty of chilli-inspired food & drink, Fri 14 - Sat 15 Sept, Brindleyplace, B'ham





Andy Fairweather Lowe - Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

Gigs

SLUG Mon 17 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PSYCHEDELIC PORN CRUMPETS Mon 17 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

TOM CLARKE Tues 18 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LOST HORIZONS Tues 18 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

50 CENT Tues 18 Sept, Arena Birmingham

BROOKE CANDY Wed 19 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CATHERINE MCGRATH Wed 19 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JOYNER LUCAS Wed 19 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BEYOND THE BARRICADE 2018 Wed 19 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

BIFFY CLYRO MTV UNPLUGGED PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS Wed 19 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BARNHART & HUXLEY - JAZZ & JOKES Wed 19 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE GOON SAX Thurs 20 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DIONNE WARWICK Thurs 20 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ONE NIGHT OF QUEEN Thurs 20 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre,

Birmingham

HOME FREE Thurs 20 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

A CELEBRATION OF JOHN DENVER Thurs 20 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

WANNABE - THE SPICE GIRLS SHOW Thurs 20 Sept, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

WE THREE KINGS - OF ROCK N ROLL Fri 21 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

A BEAUTIFUL NOISE - NEIL DIAMOND Fri 21 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

INDIE REWIND Fri 21 - Sat 22 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TROY REDFERN Fri 21 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

THE JAM VS THE POLICE Fri 21 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE MIDNIGHT BEAST Fri 21 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KYLIE MINOGUE Fri 21 Sept, Genting Arena, Birmingham

THE REAL THING Fri 21 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrov

MOTHERSHIP - LED ZEPPELIN TRIBUTE Fri 21 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

DIRE STREETS Fri 21 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE LITTLE MIX EXPERIENCE Sat 22 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

CRESCENDO PRESENTS THE SOUND OF MUSICALS Sat 22 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE FORTUNES: PAST AND PRESENT Sat 22 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

PURPLE ZEPLIN Sat 22 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW & THE LOW RIDERS Sat 22 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE UPBEAT BEATLES Sat 22 Sept, Evesham Arts Centre

KILLERSTREAM Sat 22 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

DURAN: THE TRIBUTE Sat 22 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN Sat 22 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

YOLANDA BROWN Sat 22 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

THE MAGIC GANG Sat 22 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TORY LANEZ Sat 22 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

OYE SANTANA Sat 22 Sept, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

LINDISFARNE Sun 23 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

CLASSIC ROCK SHOWCASE Sun 23 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

JANE MCDONALD Sun 23 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL WITH THOMAS DAHL Mon 17 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

RODERICK WILLIAMS Alongside BBC R3 Voices presenter Iain Burnside, Wed 19 Sept, Evesham Arts Centre

ALBION STRING QUARTET: INTIMATIONS OF MORALITY Programme includes works by Dvorak & Schubert, Wed 19 Sept, Stratford Town Hall

ALBION STRING QUARTET: PORTAMENTO EXPLORED Thurs 20 Sept, Stratford Town Hall

JOHN LILL CBE Thurs 20 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

TAMSI WALEY-COEN (PICTURED) Programme includes works by Bach & Bartok, Fri 21 Sept, Stratford Town Hall



CHOIRMANIA 2018 Featuring over 200 singers from local choirs from around the West Midlands, Sat 22 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

COVENTRY PHILHARMONIC CHOIR Featuring Imogen Russell (soprano), Alison York (alto), Matthew Sandy (tenor), Benjamin Lewis (baritone), Mark Swinton (organ) & Steven Russell (conductor). Programme comprises Mendelssohn's Elijah, Sat 22 Sept, St Mary's Church, Warwick

BENEDICT WILSON: A GOTHIC ORGAN Sat 22 Sept, The Guild Chapel, Stratford-upon-Avon

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN Featuring David Le Page. Programme includes works by Strauss & Beethoven, Sat 22 Sept, Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

AUTUMN CLASSICS: CBSO BENEVOLENT FUND CONCERT Featuring Stephen Bell (conductor), Jennifer Pike (violin) and the City Of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Programme includes works by Shostakovich, Saint-Saëns, Wieniawski, Glazunov, Kreisler & Tchaikovsky, Sat 22 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LEAMINGTON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Featuring Amy Littlewood (violin), Lucy Arch (cello) & Richard Laing

(conductor). Programme includes works by Parry, Stanford & Brahms, Sun 23 Sept, Leamington Town Hall, Leamington Spa

Comedy

DANNY BAKER Mon 17 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

KEVIN BRIDGES Wed 19 - Sat 22 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

LLOYD LANGFORD, GARY LITTLE, RYAN DALTON & ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 20 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

STEVE HENN Fri 21 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

BOBBY MAIR, VINCE ATTA & PETE TECKMAN & BARRY DODDS Fri 21 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

LLOYD LANGFORD, GARY LITTLE, RICH WILSON & GEOFF NORCOTT Fri 21 - Sat 22 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JOSH HOWIE, NICK DIXON, RORY O'HANLON & PETE OTWAY Sat 22 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

BARNSTORMERS COMEDY NIGHT Sat 22 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

TEZ ILYAS, TOMMY SANDHU, SLIM, & SUKH KAUR OJLA Sun 23 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROUGH WORKS: NEW MATERIAL NIGHT Sun 23 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

Theatre

THE WIPERS TIMES Ian Hislop & Nick Newman's drama, telling the true story of a satirical newspaper created in the mud and mayhem of the Great War, Mon 17 - Sat 22 Sept, Malvern Theatre

BURNING BOOKS Powerful and humorous look at an education system buckling under government cuts and targets, Tues 18 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE GOON SHOW From the producers of the 50th anniversary tour of Round The Horne comes another radio comedy classic live on stage, Tues 18 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham

SING-A-LONG-A GREASE Tues 18 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

JEKYLL & HYDE The National Production Company put a fast-paced spin on a classic story, Tues 18 - Sat 22 Sept, The Old Rep Theatre, B'ham

BRASSED OFF Amateur staging presented by Kidderminster Operatic & Dramatic Society (KODS), Tues 18 - Sat 22 Sept, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

BEYOND THE BARRICADE 2018 The UK's longest-running musical theatre con-

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cert tour, Wed 19 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

NAZANINS STORY The true and ongoing story of Nazanin Ratcliffe, currently imprisoned in Iran, Wed 19 - Thurs 20 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

HYMNS FOR ROBOTS Production fusing a heightened performance style with analogue and digital music to tell the story of 'an extraordinary life that was almost forgotten', Wed 19 - Fri 21 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

SALAD DAYS Julian Slade and Dorothy Reynolds' award winning show, Wed 19 - Sat 22 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE DREAMBOYS Thurs 20 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

PSYCHIC SALLY - 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY TOUR Thurs 20 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

TRANZ TALKZ Join prominent queer artist Travis Alabanza for an intimate dinner of burgers, chips and drinks, while discussing, reflecting and documenting experiences of queer and transphobic public harassment, Thurs 20 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE IMPROLECTUALS An evening of comedy improv games in the style of Whose Line Is It Anyway, Thurs 20 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

FAULTY TOWERS: THE DINING EXPERIENCE Fully immersive, highly improvised and site-specific comedy-theatre production, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

REBUS: LONG SHADOWS Brand new play based on Ian Rankin's fictional detective, John Rebus, Thurs 20 Sept - Sat 6 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

THE DREAMBOYS Fri 21 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

SUPER HAMLET 64 Fast-paced retelling of Shakespeare's most famous play, Fri 21 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

STEVE HENN - BACK AGAIN Brand new show featuring an eclectic mix of magic, comedy and mentalism, Fri 21 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

FUNNY FACES A double bill of plays based on the lives and loves of two British comedy legends, Sid James and Joan Sims, Fri 21 - Sat 22 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE DRESSING ROOM Bobby Ball's comedy play, combining sitcom and variety. Tommy Cannon, Bobby Ball, Stu Francis & Johnnie Casson star, Sat 22 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

THE SOUND OF THE MUSICALS Featuring hit songs from the 1940s through to the present day, Sat 22 Sept, The Core, Solihull

ONE MAN TWO GUVNORS The Crescent Theatre present Richard Bean's adaptation of Carlo Goldoni's play, Sat

22 - Sat 29 Sept, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

Kids Shows

TELETUBBIES LIVE Join Tinky Winky, Dipsy, Laa-Laa and Po as they explore their magical world, Wed 19 - Thurs 20 Sept, Malvern Theatres

LITTLE BO PEEP Sea Legs Puppet Theatre bring to life a host of favourite nursery rhymes in a performance for younger audiences, Sat 22 Sept, Henry Sandon Hall, Worcester

YOUNG HERBERT'S HORRORS A pirate adventure with a twist, Sat 22 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

Dance

QUEST Unique family show fusing morris, clog and sword dancing with popping, locking, breaking and martial arts, to the beat of new songs and traditional melodies, Tues 18 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

ROSIE KAY - MK ULTRA 'A visually arresting production' featuring costumes from Lady Gaga's designer, Gary Card, Thurs 20 - Fri 21 Sept, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

BACKLASH BALLROOM Brand new dance spectacular featuring six professional ballroom & Latin dancers, supported by a 'world-class singer', Fri 21 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

Talks

CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH SATHNAM SANGHERA Boy With The Topknot author Sathnam talks about the role of the creative industries in urban place-making, regeneration, education and employment, Mon 17 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE HOWARD ROBINSON HISTORY TALKS: KING JOHN & MAGNA CARTA Talk exploring Britain's path to democracy, Tues 18 Sept, Henry Sandon Hall, Worcester

SUSIE DENT - THE SECRET LIFE OF WORDS Spend an evening with the Queen of Dictionary Corner, Tues 18 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

AN EVENING WITH SIR CHRIS HOY One of the most successful Olympic athletes of all time talks about his new book and incredible career in cycling, Tues 18 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

MARY-ANN OCHOTA & JASON BUCK Join



Hymns For Robots

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 19 - Fri 21 September

Noctium theatre company here bring to bear their unique heightened performance style to tell the story of local legend Delia Derbyshire. The unsung genius behind the Doctor Who theme tune and an electronic-music trailblazer, Delia is often referred to as the mother of modern music. Expect analogue and digital music, strange sounds and weird wobblings as Noctium present 'a sonic experience your ears won't believe'.

TV presenter & archaeologist Mary-Ann Ochota and storyteller Jason Buck for a unique journey through Britain's history, Tues 18 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

DR PHIL HAMMOND: HAPPY BIRTHDAY NHS? Cheer on the heroes, boo the villains and look to the future of robot surgeons, Fitbit nurses and iPhone GPs, Wed 19 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

AN EVENING WITH AGGERS Join the cricket legend as he takes audiences on a trip down memory lane, recounting tales from his career on the field and in the commentary box, Sat 22 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

AN AUDIENCE WITH SIMON REEVE Journalist Simon recounts tales from more than 15 years of travelling to the most remote and extreme corners of the planet, Sun 23 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

toric British cars, Mon 17 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warks

THE GLAMPING SHOW Showcase for the glamping industry, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 Sept, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire

KENILWORTH ARTS FESTIVAL Featuring talks, gigs, workshops and exhibitions, held in different venues around the town, Thurs 20 - Sat 29 Sept, various locations, Kenilworth

THE MONSTER The ultimate bouncy-castle experience, Fri 21 - Sun 23 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

A PLACE IN THE SUN LIVE Find your ideal property abroad, Fri 21 - Sun 23 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

CREATE YOUR OWN RAG RUG Join craft experts and discover the traditional craft of rag rugging, Sat 22 Sept, Birmingham Back to Backs

APPLE DAYS Celebrate the end of harvest at the Michaelmas fair, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Sept, Mary Arden's Farm, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE 2018 TRAMPOLINE, TUMBLING & DMT BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS First-class performances from both the senior squad and up-and-coming stars, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Sept, Arena Birmingham

Events

MINI MOTORISTS Under-fives activity morning, discovering through play the world's largest collection of his

Gigs

SHANIA TWAIN Mon 24 Sept, Arena Birmingham

FISH Mon 24 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

HALESTORM Mon 24 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

HORSE FEATHERS Mon 24 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PALE WAVES Tues 25 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JIMOTHY LACOSTE Tues 25 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MAJOR PARKINSON Wed 26 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JASON DERULO Wed 26 Sept, Arena Birmingham

THE LAFONTAINES: THE UP TOUR Wed 26 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham

JASON DONOVAN Thurs 27 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

ELLES BAILEY Thurs 27 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

REX ORANGE COUNTY Thurs 27 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

STEVE TILSTON Thurs 27 Sept, Evesham Arts

Centre

SPRING KING Thurs 27 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ELVANA: ELVIS FRONTED NIRVANA Thurs 27 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

STARS OF IRISH COUNTRY MUSIC SHOW Thurs 27 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

TALON Fri 28 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

BOTH SIDES NOW PRESENTS THE JONI MITCHELL SONGBOOK Fri 28 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

SCARLXR Fri 28 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham

QUADROPHENIA Fri 28 Sept, Malvern Theatres

THE CHRISTIANS Fri 28 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

VOODOO ROOM: A NIGHT OF HENDRIX, CLAPTON & CREAM Fri 28 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE Fri 28 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

UB40 - LABOUR OF LOVE Fri 28 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

OLAFUR ARNALDS Fri 28 Sept, Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon

ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW AND THE LOW RIDERS Fri 28 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

REMI HARRIS TRIO Sat 29 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

PATSY CLINE AND FRIENDS Sat 29 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

BABBU MAAN Sat 29 Sept, Arena Birmingham

VICKY JACKSON - PINK TRIBUTE Sat 29 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

PLANET ROCK PRESENTS: THE BAD FLOWERS + FEDERAL CHARM Sat 29 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ALTERNATIVE SOUNDS Sat 29 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE BLACK HORSES Sat 29 Sept, Hare & Hounds Keresley, Coventry

QUILL Sat 29 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

ERADIKATOR Sat 29 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TOYAH: ACOUSTIC, UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL Sat 29 Sept, Evesham Arts Centre

YOLANDA BROWN Sat 29 Sept, MAC, B'ham

G2 DEFINITIVE GENESIS Sat 29 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

DIRE STREETS Sat 29 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

LINDISFARNE Sun 30 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

YUSSEF DAYES Sun 30 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

KH WALK OF FAME PRESENT THE STONES Sun 30 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

KEITH JAMES THE SONGS OF LEONARD COHEN Sun 30 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

THE NIGHT CAFE Sun 30 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW AND THE LOW RIDERS Sun 30 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Classical Music

RUSSELL WATSON An intimate evening with one of the world's most prominent tenors, Mon 24 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



ANGELO VILLANI (PIANO) Programme includes late music by Liszt, Mon 24 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: ENGLISH FANTASIES FOR SPRING ORCHESTRA Featuring Richard Watton (conductor). Programme includes works by Corelli, Tippett, Tallis, Bridge, Britten & Vaughan Williams, Tues 25 Sept, Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

RAF IN CONCERT CENTENARY TOUR An evening that charts the development of the Royal Air Force from its formation in 1918 through to the present day and beyond, Wed 26 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ALBION STRING QUARTET GALA CONCERT Programme comprises Bach, arr. Sitkovetsky: Goldberg Variations, BWV 988, Wed 26 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

FRITH PIANO QUARTET Featuring John Tattersdill. Programme includes works by Mozart, Schubert & Hummel, Thurs 27 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

JACK MCNEILL, ROSE REDGRAVE & VIV MCCLEAN Music for clarinet, viola & piano, Thurs 27 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

MENDELSSOHN'S STRING OCTET Featuring Jonathan Martindale, Philip Brett, Kirsty Lovie & Colette Overdijk (violins); Angela Swanson & Amy Thomas (violas) & Miguel Fernandes & Lorenzo Meseguer Luján (cellos), Thurs 27 Sept, CBSO Centre, B'ham

PETER DONOHUE: TALES BY HOFFMANN & BEETHOVEN Thurs 27 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

THE HEATH QUARTET Featuring Oliver Heather & Sarah Wolstenholme (violins), Gary Pomeroy (viola) & Chris Murray (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn, Britten &

Tchaikovsky, Thurs 27 Sept, Malvern Theatres

CBSO: ITALIAN MOMENTS Featuring Alpesh Chauhan (conductor), Pavel Kolesnikov (piano) & the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Puccini & Respighi, Thurs 27 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EMILY SUN WITH GAMAL KHAMIS Part of the Bromsgrove Concerts 2018/19 season. Programme includes works by Schubert, Grieg, Gillian Whitehead, Poulenc & Frolov, Fri 28 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

INTIMATE EVENINGS WITH ARMONICO: THE GLORY OF OLD ENGLAND Programme includes works by Byrd, Tallis & Parsons, Fri 28 Sept, St Peter's Church, Henley-in-Arden

GALLIARD ENSEMBLE: ABSINTHE MAKES THE HEART GROW FONDER Fri 28 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

LES ENFANTS INCROYABLES: THE JUVENALIA OF MOZART & MENDELSSOHN Fri 28 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE A journey through the musical history of the harpsichord, from Sweelink to Bach, Sat 29 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

INTERNATIONAL GALA PROM Featuring favourites from the choral, orchestral repertoire and world of opera, Sat 29 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: THE TESSA JOWELL MEMORIAL CONCERT Sat 29 Sept, King Edward VI School, Stratford-upon-Avon

ORCHESTRA PRO ANIMA Programme includes works by Vivaldi, Handel, Mozart, Bach & Vaughan Williams, Sun 30 Sept, The Roses, Tewkesbury

DARREN JEFFREY (BASS BARITONE) & ANTHONY SEDDON (PIANO) Recital of classical & opera highlights alongside English song & pieces from the musicals, Sun 30 Sept, Townsend Hall, Shipston-on-Sour, South Warwickshire

Comedy

JAMALI MADDIX Wed 26 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

STEPHEN LYNCH Wed 26 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BEN NORRIS, DAVID TRENT & COMIC TBC Thurs 27 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SCOTT GIBSON Fri 28 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

KANE BROWN, ED PATRICK, STEVE HALL & TOM HOUGHTON Fri 28 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

BEN NORRIS, DAVID TRENT, HOWARD READ & LAURA LEXX Fri 28 - Sat 29



Shania Twain - Arena Birmingham

Monday 24 - Sunday 30 September

Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ADAM KAY Sat 29 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

JASON BYRNE Sat 29 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

KUMARSUTRA Sat 29 Sept, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

RACHEL PARRIS Sat 29 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa



TROY HAWKE, ROB THOMAS, ROBIN MORGAN & ANDRE VINCENT Sat 29 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

MARCUS BRIGSTOCKE Sun 30 Sept, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

Theatre

BENIDORM Brand new stage show based on the smash-hit ITV comedy, Mon 24 - Sat 29 Sept, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

IOLANTHE The National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company, accompanied by a full orchestra, Tues 25 - Wed 26 Sept, Malvern Theatre

NEW NIGERIANS Oladipo Agboluaje's satire about the state of populism in politics, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Sept, The REP, Birmingham



SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER Brand new stage version of the hit musical, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Sept, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

NIGHTMARE A Lichfield Players Production, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

LOST THE PLOT Worcester Repertory Company present an amateur staging of Nick Wilkes' dark comedy, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Sept, Swan Theatre,

Worcester

MY FAIR LADY A Lichfield Operatic Society production, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

EVITA Lucy O'Byrne stars in Andrew Lloyd Webber & Tim Rice's award-winning musical, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Rock'n'roll variety show featuring classic hits from the '50s, '60s & '70s, Wed 26 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE The National Gilbert & Sullivan Company present a brand new staging of G&S's much-loved comic opera, Wed 26 Sept, Malvern Theatres

THIS IS THE GREATEST SHOW A cast of West End singers journey through music from shows including The Greatest Showman, Moulin Rouge and Barnum, Wed 26 Sept, Malvern Theatres

WYRD SISTERS The Phoenix Players present an amateur staging of Terry Pratchett's novel, Wed 26 - Sat 29 Sept, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ROLLING BACK THE YEARS Rollercoaster ride of music, dance & laughter through the '50s, '60s & '70s... Thurs 27 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

TRAIL BY JURY & THE SORCERER The National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company present a double bill of G&S favourites, Thurs 27 - Fri 28 Sept, Malvern Theatres

NO SEX PLEASE, WE'RE BRITISH The Abbey Players present an amateur staging of the much-loved farce, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

EARLY DOORS LIVE The hit sitcom, live on stage with a brand new story, Fri 28 Sept, Arena Birmingham

SAID AND DONE Sugarscratch Theatre's two-hander explores friendship, family relations, maternal ties, sibling rivalries and ex boyfriends, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

BEST OF BROADWAY: THROUGH THE YEARS Celebration of musical theatre through the decades, Sat 29 Sept, MAC, Birmingham

RUDDIGORE Presented by the National Gilbert & Sullivan Company and a full orchestra, Sat 29 Sept, Malvern Theatres

WE'LL LIVE AND DIE IN THESE TOWNS 'Gritty and compelling' new musical-drama, driven by songs from The Enemy's number-one debut album, Sat 29 Sept - Sat 20 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

MINI MUSIC HALL SHOW The Nonentities present an evening of old songs and comedy sketches, Sun 30 Sept, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster



Evita - Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

Kids Shows

GUESS HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU A tale of love and nature, brought to life with puppets, live music and interactive play for children aged three and older, Fri 28 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

PROFESSOR PEPPERPOT - BALLOONTASTIC! MAGIC SHOW Sat 29 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

Dance

TRI & EKA: DOUBLE BILL Classical and contemporary Indian dance intertwine in a dynamic double bill, Mon 24 Sept, MAC, Birmingham

RIP IT UP THE 60S Strictly Come Dancing champions Harry Judd and Louis Smith MBE, and people's champion Aston Merrygold, join forces to become 'the ultimate boy band of dance', Mon 24 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



LA FILLE MAL GARDEE Birmingham Royal Ballet present Frederick Ashton's final full-length ballet, an engaging story which remains a firm favourite for all the family, Wed 26 - Sat 29 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

WELCOME TO D'S Chantry Dance Company present a 'mesmerising' new ballet that reimagines the classic vampire fantasy, Thurs 27 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

BRB FIRST STEPS: A CHILD'S LA FILLE MAL GARDEE An introduction to the world of ballet for children aged three-plus, Fri 28 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

RIP IT UP THE 60S Strictly Come Dancing champions Harry Judd and Louis Smith MBE, and people's champion Aston Merrygold, join forces to become 'the ultimate boy band of dance', Fri 28 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

FAGIN'S TWIST Avant Garde Dance fuse music & hip-hop to recount the story of a notorious and complex villain, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Sept, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Talks

THE HOWARD ROBINSON HISTORY TALKS: WHERE ENGLAND'S SORROW BEGAN (POWICK 1642) AND WHERE THEY HAPPILY ENDED (WORCESTER 1651) A talk exploring Britain's path to democracy, Tues 25 Sept, Henry Sandon Hall, Worcester

AN AUDIENCE WITH SIMON REEVE Journalist Simon recounts tales from more than 15 years of travelling to the most remote and extreme corners of the planet, Tues 25 Sept, Malvern Theatres

KEVIN ALLEN ON HUGH BLAIR - WORCESTER'S FORGOTTEN ORGANIST Kevin offers a long overdue reevaluation of Hugh Blair, the dynamic, colourful and controversial Worcester Cathedral organist, Sat 29 Sept, Malvern Theatres

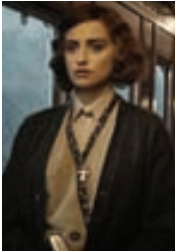
Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

COLD WAR (15) Documentary. Starring Joanna Kulig, Tomasz Kot. Foreign language, subtitles. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Mon 24 - Wed 26 Sept

MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS (12a)

Crime/Drama. Starring Kenneth Branagh, Penélope Cruz. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Tues 25 - Thurs 27 Sept



CITIZEN KANE (U) Drama/Mystery. Starring Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Tues 25 - Thurs 27 Sept

ALPHA (12A) Adventure/Drama. Starring Kodi Smit-McPhee, Natassia Malthe. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Wed 26 - Thurs 27 Sept

THE CHILDREN ACT (12a) Drama. Starring Emma Thompson, Stanley Tucci. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 28 Sept

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 28 Sept, showing at selected cinemas

NIGHT SCHOOL (tbc)

THE WIFE (15)

Events

THE CYCLE SHOW Showcasing the very latest bikes and accessories, Thurs 27 - Sun 30 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

MEDIEVAL BANQUET Immersive evening of medieval entertainment, Sat 29 Sept, Warwick Castle

BACKSTAGE TOUR: GENERAL Journey behind the scenes at one of Britain's premier producing theatres, Sat 29 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

LIVING WITH A CLASSIC Brand new workshop offering classic car owners the opportunity to develop new skills, learn from experts and share stories with fellow owners, Sat 29 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

AN EVENING OF DELECTABLE TERROR

Presented by Weeping Bank Productions, a small, local, independent entertainment company dedicated to the art of scaring people by reading original ghost stories, Sat 29 Sept, Tudor House Museum, Worcester

CBEEBIES' RASTAMOUSE LIVE! Plenty of 'singin', dancin' and jammin' as Da Easy Crew look for a new band member. Could it be you? Sat 29 - Sun 30 Sept, Cadbury World, Birmingham

MALVERN AUTUMN SHOW A weekend of home-grown family fun, Sat 29 - Sun 30 Sept, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

SPOOKY SPECTACULAR Featuring witches, wizards and werewolves, Sat 29 Sept - Sun 4 Nov, West Midland Safari and Leisure Park, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR Sun 30 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

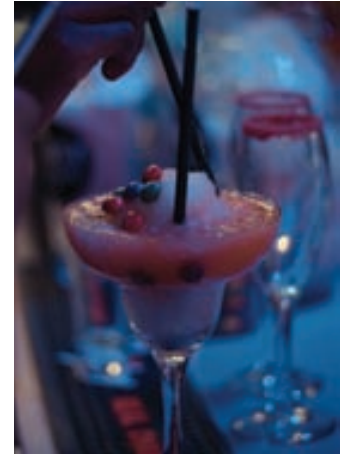
AUTUMNAL ASTON: RUFUS AND THE GOLDEN ACORNS Half a day of activities celebrating 'autumnal Aston', Sun 30 Sept, Aston Hall, Birmingham

HIDDEN HISTORIES RAMBLE Find out about the story behind the Four Stones on this five-mile ramble, Sun 30 Sept, Clent Hills, Worcestershire

GAYDON MILITARY SHOW Sun 30 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

For Foodies

DIRTY VEGAN Loads of delicious vegan drinks, desserts and freak shakes, Fri 28 Sept, MAC, Birmingham



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MUSIC **STEPHEN MONTAGUE**
DESIGNS **KATRINA LINDSAY**
LIGHTING **PETER MUMFORD**

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