

Staffordshire

ISSUE 394 OCTOBER 2018

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Everybody say yeah! - hit West End musical Kinky Boots tours to the Midlands... feature on page 8

Blair Dunlop



Award-winning artist on tour with Notes From An Island
page 15

Doreen's Big Top



Tipton's 'lazy cow' fire-eats a Black Country vindaloo!
page 23

Backlash Ballroom



high-energy dance magic at Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn
page 35

the list



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

inside:

4. First Word	11. Food	15. Music	22. Comedy	24. Theatre	37. Film	40. Visual Arts	45. Events
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West End star to make her Blood Brothers debut

A new tour of smash-hit show Blood Brothers gets under way here in the Midlands this month.

Willy Russell's internationally acclaimed 'play with music' runs at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Monday 8 to Saturday 13 October and later in the month as the Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent, where it shows from Monday 22 to Saturday 27 October. Olivier Award-nominated West End veteran Linzi Hateley will make her debut as Mrs Johnstone.

Telling the story of twin boys separated at birth, the show's memorable score includes A Bright New Day, Marilyn Monroe and the emotionally charged Tell Me It's Not True.



Grease is the word as Peter Andre gets angelic

Grease is the word! The hit high-school musical is making a welcome return to Birmingham Hippodrome next summer - with none other than Peter Andre taking on the role of Teen Angel.

The new touring production features choreography from one-time Strictly Come Dancing judge Arlene Phillips and is helmed by Nikolai Foster, Artistic Director at Leicester's Curve theatre, where the show recently enjoyed a sold-out eight-week run.

Commenting on the new production, Nikolai said: "Grease provides a gripping snapshot of a country on the cusp of social change, all set to one of the greatest rock'n'roll scores ever written."

The show runs at the Hippodrome from 13 to 24 August. For more information, visit birminghamhippodrome.com

Booking now open for charity biker event

Online booking for next spring's Bike4Life Ride Out & Festival is now open.

The Midlands Air Ambulance Charity biker event, which takes place on Sunday 28 April, will see 3,500 bikes travel a 23-mile route from Meole Brace in Shrewsbury to RAF Cosford.

To find out more about the event or secure your place in the Ride Out, visit bike4life-fest.com

Simulation enthusiasts set to fly high at RAF Cosford

Aviation fans can this month experience 'the best that virtual flight has to offer' at the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford.

The popular venue is once again hosting Flight Sim, a major one-day event providing flight simulation enthusiasts with the chance to try some of the very latest aircraft and other software. Visitors can view new technology from specialist flight sim PC and cockpit equipment builders, chat with developers, publishers and fellow virtual aviators, and 'maybe even pick up a bargain or two'. Flight Sim 2018 takes place at RAF Cosford on Saturday 6 October.

Exciting times ahead at Walsall's A3 Arena

There's plenty to enjoy this month in Forest Arts Centre's new multi-purpose performance space, the A3 Arena. Included in the Walsall venue's line-up of shows are appearances by comedians Jethro and Omid Djalili, and youth theatre versions of hit shows Avenue Q, Madagascar The Musical Adventure and Rent. Looking further ahead, the venue is presenting

a panto production of Beauty & The Beast as its Christmas show.



Anita Dobson to star as Miss Hannigan in Annie

Anita Dobson will take top billing in hit musical Annie when the show stops off in the Midlands next year.

Best known for having played pub landlady Angie Watts in BBC soap EastEnders, Anita will star as Miss Hannigan at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from 19 to 23 February. Tickets for Annie are now on sale and can be purchased by calling 01902 42 92 12 or online at grandtheatre.co.uk.



New Aspects at Staffs Arboretum

The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire will this month open Aspects, an £8.1million events building. A flexible, modern space offering 'stunning and inspirational views across the Arboretum's landscape', the new centre has room to accommodate conferences of up to 500 delegates and banquets of up to 300 people.



New trail honours Thomas Telford

A new trail commemorating Shropshire engineer Thomas Telford has been opened as part of Telford's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Incorporating key landmarks with which Telford was involved during his time as the county's engineer, the trail is the basis of a travelling exhibition detailing his links with each location. Commenting on the new attraction, Councillor Rae Evans, Cabinet Member for People Services, Visitor Economy & Partnerships, said: "We hope many people will want to use this trail to discover the beautiful landscapes in and around our borough and its rich industrial history - and to understand the influence Thomas Telford had here. I'm sure the trail will soon become an attraction point for both residents and visitors alike."



Oktoberfest returns to Shrewsbury's Quarry Park

Shropshire's biggest beer festival is making a welcome return after enjoying a hugely successful inaugural year in 2017. The three-day Oktoberfest takes place in Shrewsbury's Quarry Park this month - from Friday the 5th to Sunday the 7th - and features around 200 real ales, a lager bar, prosecco parlour, gin den, rum shack and cider area. Live music and a comedy club are also included in the line-up of attractions. For more information and to book tickets, visit shropshirefestivals.digitickets.co.uk

Film festival to mark war anniversary

A new movie by Lord Of The Rings director Peter Jackson is the highlight of a 14-day Shropshire film festival commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One.

Jackson's *They Shall Not Grow Old* will be shown in Shrewsbury on 16 October, at the same time as its world premiere at the London Film Festival.

The festival runs from 10 October to 23 November and comprises 24 screenings of 13 films at 15 venues, 'with more in the pipeline'... The full programme can be viewed at firstworld-warfilmfestival.com

Kevin Clifton and Antony Costa get ready to rock out in smash-hit musical

Hit *West End Rock Of Ages* is heading for the Midlands, with *Strictly Come Dancing* favourite Kevin Clifton and Blue singer Antony Costa taking top billing.

A musical comedy featuring more than 25 classic rock anthems, the show visits Stoke-on-Trent's Regent Theatre from Tuesday 12 to Saturday 16 February. It then returns to the region the following month, showing at the Coventry Belgrade from Monday 11 to Saturday 16 March, and stops off at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday 28 May to Saturday 1 June.





Pop-up theatre returns to Stoke-on-Trent

A unique pop-up theatre is making a return to Stoke-on-Trent this month to present 'four days of extraordinary entertainment'.

Roundabout is the world's first 'pop-up, plug-and-play theatre', stopping off at venues across the country to showcase new writing for the stage. Presented by Paines Plough, the UK's national theatre of new plays, the pop-up attraction is visiting the Potteries as part of local arts organisation Appetite's ongoing programme of events. Roundabout 'pops up' in Longton Park from Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 October.

Movie magic with Janette and Aljaž

Strictly Come Dancing's Janette Manrara and Aljaž Škorjanec will visit the Midlands next spring with a brand new show. Following on from their two Remembering Fred shows, which paid homage to legendary Hollywood dancer Fred Astaire, Remembering The Movies takes a 'star-studded rollercoaster ride through some of the most successful and memorable films of all time'.

The show visits Birmingham Symphony Hall on 23 March and Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn on 17 April.



Shrewsbury theatre aiming to serve up the Mother (Goose) of all pantomimes

Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn is gearing up for an egg-citing Christmas season, with the venue this year presenting a pantomime version of Mother Goose.

The show will star Theatre Severn's favourite panto Dame, Brad Fitt. BBC Radio Shropshire's Eric Smith also features in the cast. Mother Goose shows from Wednesday 28 November to Sunday 6 January. For more information and to book tickets, visit theatresevern.co.uk

An Unmissable trip from the Midlands to Lapland

Midlands families have the chance to visit Father Christmas in his Lapland home this December - thanks to experienced travel specialists Unmissable.

The company has put together a four-day Lapland experience for children and their parents or guardians to enjoy. The trip comes complete with a family snowmobiling adventure and the chance to meet Father & Mrs Christmas, their reindeer, huskies and elves.

Flights depart from Birmingham International Airport. For more information, visit unmissablelapland.com or call 0207 428 1221.



Hit musical ghosts into the Grand

Hit musical Ghost is returning to the Midlands.

Based on the Oscar-winning 1990 movie starring Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore and Whoopi Goldberg, the show stops off at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday 22 to Saturday 26 January. Tickets can be bought online at grandtheatre.co.uk or by calling 01902 42 92 12.



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EVERYBODY SAY YEAH!

Hit Broadway and West End musical tours the Midlands

Kinky Boots tells the inspiring story of a Northampton shoe manufacturer's decision to make ladies' footwear for men. The show's music was written by '80s pop legend Cyndi Lauper. What's On recently caught up with the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun star to find out more...

"There's no book on 'how to be famous for dummies,'" says Cyndi Lauper, who, at 65, retains her New York drawl. "You just do what you can. All of a sudden, you get to the top of the mountain and everybody around is like, 'You can't do that! Don't do this! You'll be ruined!'"

Above all, the 1980s' punkiest pop queen, who was catapulted to stardom with Girls Just Wanna Have Fun and Time After Time, was warned off musical theatre. "I was always being beckoned, 'Come this way', and I was like, 'I can't, because if I do my career is over'. I would lose my credibility in pop. It was really a big divide. After a while, you get to a point where you say, 'Well, I think I've been ruined enough; it doesn't matter now - I can do whatever the hell I want.'"

And what she did was Kinky Boots, the mega-hit musical that conquered Broadway and the West End, and which is now going on a UK tour. The songs were written by Lauper, and in New York they won her a Tony Award for best original composition. In 2016, the show won three Olivier Awards. It also bagged the London Evening Standard BBC Radio Two Audience Award for best musical and three WhatsOnStage Awards.

Cyndi had never written for theatre before, and became the first woman ever to win the Tony in the 'best score' category on her own. "What I was really taken with was that the community accepted me. To have these people, who are literally in my own backyard on Broadway, take me in was what kinda got me."

Aptly enough, acceptance is the take-home message of Kinky Boots. "Accepting yourself, you'll accept others. It's a very important show at this time in the world."

Kinky Boots is loosely inspired by the story of an old family firm of Northampton shoe manufacturers that manages to stay afloat after discovering a niche in the market: ladies' footwear worn by men who like to dress up.

The BBC told the story of the firm's rebirth in the series *Trouble At The Top*. In 2005, the story became a charming independent British movie starring Chiwetel Ejiofor as Lola, a fictional cross-dressing diva demanding sturdy stilettos. But the ultimate destiny for such a fabulous story was always going to be the stage. Kinky Boots The Musical, which explored the unlikely friendship between Lola and straight-laced factory owner Charlie,

opened in Chicago in 2012, moved to Broadway the following year, and made its way to the West End in 2015. It's also gone all around the world to countries including Canada, Australia, Germany and Japan.

But now it's come home: the tour recently opened at the Royal & Derngate in Northampton, the quiet town in Middle England where the story began.

Lauper would have loved to have been there at the opening as she believes "that particular part of it is special." But she counsels against thinking of Kinky Boots as a specifically English show. "It's a story about a really great friendship and two very, very opposite people. And there's a great redemption in the end. I'm a sucker for redemption."

Perhaps there's been some redemption for Lauper, too. She was a huge star in the 1980s, but - as happened to all her contemporaries bar Madonna - she gradually slipped from the top of the chart. She was thinking of creating a musical about her upbringing in Queens when she got a call from her friend, Harvey Fierstein. Fierstein is theatre royalty, the writer of hit play *Torch Song Trilogy*, about a gay drag performer, and the cross-dressing star of the musical *Hairspray*.

"He said, 'I'm doing a show called Kinky Boots. Would you like to write the music for me?' I thought, wow. He told me I had to watch the film. I loved it. I thought, oh I get it. He wants me to write 12 good pop songs with a good hook. I figured I could do that. Then I realised, oh, you have to move the story along."

She set about composing anywhere and everywhere. "I brought my phone along with me and I recorded melodies on it. I belonged to a gym that had a track on an upstairs roof, so I would walk and sing and write. When I woke up in the middle of the night, I picked up my iPhone."

The result of Cyndi's endeavours is a string of catchy numbers, from wig-out dance anthems to heart-stopping ballads, among them *The Most Beautiful Thing In The World*, *The Sex Is In The Heel* and *Not My Father's Son*. Ideas came from surprising sources. She thought of the shoe factory workers as Monty Python's knights of the round table. *The History Of Wrong Guys*, a comic scene-stealer about a woman who has bad luck with men, was inspired by a line from *Kung Fu Panda*. "I gave everybody a different style because everybody has a different jam when they're in the shower

singing."

She didn't really think about writing for specifically English characters. "When England started doing pop music, it sounded like American music. Their translation of Duane Eddy and the Everly Brothers and Chuck Berry was the Mersey Beat. It was different but still based on rhythm & blues. It wasn't like Harvey asked me to write some foreign stuff. You're not going to ask me to write an opera. I don't study opera."

What she did study as a child was her mother's record collection, which was full of soundtracks from musicals such as *My Fair Lady* - another study of the English written by Americans. "I did what kids do: I would play each character. I sang Stanley Holloway's part, Rex Harrison's part and Julie Andrews' part."

At the Tony Awards in 2013, Kinky Boots was up against *Matilda The Musical*, with words by Tim Minchin, which was considered the favourite to win. "I was constantly asking Harvey if Kinky Boots was a hit, and he was saying, 'I don't know yet, Cyn. We have to win best musical'. So when it won best musical, I said, 'Is it a hit now?'"

See it and judge for yourself. You'll never think about shoes in the same way again.

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Kinky Boots shows at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from 16 to 27 October; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent from 28 January to 9 February 2019, and Birmingham Hippodrome from 11 to 23 March 2019.





HALLELUJAH!

The Messiah comes to Birmingham...

Starting its tour at Birmingham Repertory Theatre this month, The Messiah promises to present a nativity show like no other, as two out-of-their-depth actors travel the length and breadth of the country to put on a production of 'biblical proportions'. Taking the role of Maurice is Hugh Dennis, best known from hit TV comedy series Outnumbered. What's On caught up with him to find out more about The Messiah...

"This is the revival of a play from the 1980s," explains Hugh Dennis in talking about The Messiah. "It's really about a two-man theatre group trying to stage the nativity story. It's very funny and moving. We try to play all the characters between the two of us - so as you can imagine, we play lots of different characters each. The premise of it is that it's a bit of a farce because we're way out of our depth with it all. We're terribly well intentioned, but we have no particular idea how we're going to pull it off. It's the first time our characters have actually performed their nativity show, and funnily enough, it will be the same for us - Birmingham is the first stop on our tour.

The Messiah is mainly comic rather than satirical. It's about desire to stage something, longing for a nicer, kinder world - which is probably where some satire would come in, actually - and it's about middle-age angst. But it's all very funny."

The other half of the nativity-performing theatrical duo is played by John Marquez - best known for his role as gullible but loveable PC Joe Penhale in ITV drama series Doc Martin.

Hugh continues: "My character, Maurice, has employed John's, so he's my baby to nurture. I think he's possibly the only person Maurice could have convinced to do this - make of that what you will! I'm in charge, but also not

really because it's all very out of hand. Maurice also employs an opera singer, played by Lesley Garrett, to improve the performance, so she pops up every now and again too."

Having made a name for himself as one half of a comedy double act with Steve Punt in the 1980s, Hugh has since enjoyed a varied career on television, radio and in the theatre.

"I like to mix it up and do a bit of everything, really - I'm greedy like that. The thing I enjoy most is generally not the thing I'm doing at the time. When I'm doing telly, I want to be on stage and vice versa. I'm very lucky, though, because I do like all of it. It's good to have a varied career. If you were doing the same thing on telly year after year, it'd be quite tricky. It's just about exercising all the different brain muscles, really."

Even when a career choice doesn't go according to plan, Hugh always manages to see the positives: "Actually, I've been quite lucky in that respect - there's no job I regret taking. I think it's an attitude-to-life thing, where even if things are terrible, I tend to look back and think it's all been pretty interesting and entertaining.

"In terms of highlights, I've been even luckier. In my acting career, Outnumbered is the highlight because it was such incredible fun.

Then The Now Show is great because being on radio is an incredibly privileged position. On telly you have to go through so many different layers of commissioning, editing, compliance and all the different people who look at it. But on radio, you can say something in a recording on the Thursday night and know that more than likely it'll be broadcast the next day because there are fewer filters to get through. Also, you can just read your script rather than having to learn it - always handy! I've just done a second year of Fleabag for BBC Three, which is another highlight, but I do hope there are even more ahead of me."

Hugh doesn't spend too much time planning his career, preferring to see where life takes him: "Actors just want to carry on doing good stuff and pushing themselves to see where it goes, rather than thinking about a set destination. I just like life to take me on a ride and see what lies ahead. But for now, I'm happy to concentrate on The Messiah. The show was quite a success last time round, so I hope we can do that again."

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The Messiah shows at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Thursday 18 to Saturday 27 October.



The Habit Of Art

**Matthew Kelly talks about Alan Bennett's
'filthily funny' play...**

A witty and compassionate play, Alan Bennett's *The Habit Of Art* next month graces the Coventry Belgrade stage and Malvern Theatres, with Olivier Award-winning actor Matthew Kelly in the lead role. What's On recently caught up with Matthew to find out more...

The Habit Of Art is one of renowned playwright Alan Bennett's more recent offerings. The play explores a fictitious meeting between poet WH Auden and composer Benjamin Britten. It's been described as 'wonderfully and sometimes filthily funny, but also deeply and unexpectedly moving'.

"It's a play within a play," says Matthew Kelly, who plays Auden. "So four of us play actors who are also playing parts in a play called Caliban's Day. There's Auden and Britten, their biographer Humphrey Carpenter, and Auden's rent boy. So really, that's quite tricky because it's hard to know what Auden was actually like. I've seen a few interviews and listened to his accent because I know Richard Griffiths adopted a very high-pitched voice when he played the part originally in London, and that was very, very effective. With acting, you don't have to be exactly the person you're playing if they're a historical figure - but at the same time, you kind of do. It's a weird one."

Matthew is very much looking forward to playing Auden: "It's lovely for me to play this part because it was played by Richard first and he and I were at college together. I mean, honestly, Auden as a man was just a complete mess. At one point in the play, they ask my character if I've got my props to play Auden in the Caliban's Day play. My line in response to that is, 'Yes - I have my cigarettes, my elephantine urine-stained trousers, my disgusting handkerchief and my plastic bag'.

"I think he was a good-hearted man, but Auden's face has been compared to a scrotum, so he was quite an unfortunate man too! The original line reads something like, 'When you see his face, one wonders what his scrotum looks like'. But he had a condition called Touraine-Solente-Gol  Syndrome that made him look that way, so I did wonder what to think when I was approached to do the role!"

So why does Matthew think Alan Bennett

chose to structure *The Habit Of Art* as a play within a play?

"It gives it a neat little framework and allows Bennett to comment on his own creation through the four actor characters. It's cheeky, really, because it means he can comment on things he's written as part of Caliban's Day. So it's very funny because you can deliver information about what's going on in Caliban's Day through hindsight in the wider setting of the entire play.

"Actually, Caliban's Day was inspired by Auden's poem, *The Sea And The Mirror*, which was a commentary on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*; he thought that Caliban hadn't had his say. But the poem is very hard to access. I'm sure Auden understood what he wrote, but for the rest of us mere mortals, we can't quite get it. So if the play Caliban's Day was on its own and just a reflection of that poem, I think the audience would be very confused. To make it a play within a play makes it easier to understand what Auden and Bennett are trying to get at - that the ordinary man is unspoken and unregarded.

Matthew also explains how the play comments on artistic endeavour: "What matters is the artistic work - it's the work that keeps lauded artists like Auden and Britten going. It's our artistic work that identifies us and that we identify with. Auden says, 'If I don't work, then who am I?' He sees poetry as a craft as much as an art. Auden insisted he'd write a poem for anything, so he was a remarkable man in that way. His artistic output became very small towards the end of his life because he became almost too venerated to really truly speak through his work. He was shackled by his own importance in the artistic world, which is really sad, I think."

The Habit Of Art is about plenty more than artistic endeavour, though. "It's also about sex, death, creativity and biography. So ideally, its messages are giving a voice to the un-

regarded as well as the voice behind the great work. Those who are lauded, who are stars like Britten and Auden and so admired for their work, are often misrepresented in biography. A lot of what is passed off as biography is in reality just idle curiosity, general tittle-tattle and impertinence."

Matthew has certainly made a name for himself in the theatre world since the days when he rarely seemed to be off our television screens. Coming to people's attention in TV shows like *Game For A Laugh*, *You Bet!* and *Stars In Their Eyes*, he's more recently earned rave reviews in stage productions of classic plays including *Of Mice And Men*, for which he won an Olivier Award, and *Waiting For Godot*.

"I could never go back to *Stars In Their Eyes* or something like that because I can't do Saturday night big show presenting anymore. But I would if it came up. I mean, I have an insatiable desire to be the centre of attention, so why wouldn't I? I'm just as happy in a sound booth doing a voiceover, though. But I do love theatre. Acting isn't super hard work; it's nothing like working down a mine or digging up a road. I'm just playing with a giant dressing-up box really, but the hours are long. You have to be patient and have stamina. Still, theatre keeps me going - *The Habit Of Art* speaks true after all! - and I always believe that the thing I'm doing at the time is the best thing I've ever done. If I didn't think that, I don't know if I'd be able to carry on with this job. Generally, I just love the company of actors; they're kind, generous, spirited and supportive people, even if they *are* completely bonkers!"

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The Habit Of Art shows at Coventry's Belgrade Theatre from 6 to 10 November then at Malvern Theatres from 27 November to 1 December.

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REVIEW: Lyons' Den

Generous portions and exemplary service at Shrewsbury burger joint

Lyons' Den - Shrewsbury's first dedicated gourmet burger restaurant - is located on Traitors Gate, one of the town's most historic locations. The popular eatery opened in the winter of 2015 and, despite being one of the medieval town's better-hidden gems, quickly built up a reputation as 'the place to go' if you fancied a burger.

Featuring exposed-brick underground arches and dimmed lighting, the restaurant itself is stunning and boasts a warm and cosy laid-back atmosphere.

Located in the town centre and just a couple of minutes' walk from Shrewsbury train station, the eatery is perfectly located for locals and visitors alike.

Perusing the menu over a cold pint of lager - although the monstrous milkshakes did look very appealing - we ordered a portion of frickles and some buffalo chicken strips. My partner and I absolutely adore pickles, so frickles will always be a 'go to' order of ours if they're on the menu.

Comprising pickles deep fried in a homemade beer batter and served with a deliciously creamy mustard mayo, the frickles were tasty little morsels of heaven. Although a simple dish, they were ridiculously good and showcased a perfect batter-to-pickle ratio.

Next up, the chicken. Diners can have their homemade breaded chicken strips - it's worth noting that everything is homemade at Lyons' Den - coated in buffalo, bbq, sweet chilli or chipotle sauce, or they can have them plain if they prefer. Being huge fans of spice, we opted for the buffalo sauce. The chicken was cooked nicely and boasted a succulent texture. The buffalo sauce had a kick but nothing that was too overpowering. Another successful starter indeed.

We were then treated to some incredible homemade mozzarella sticks. These weren't your bog-standard mozzarella sticks; they were about three times the usual size and served with a delicious

homemade sweet chilli sauce. They were cooked to perfection, with the gooey mozzarella oozing out with every bite we took. Lyons' Den mozzarella sticks are by far the nicest I've eaten to date, and I would return to the restaurant for those and the frickles alone!

Our table was booked for 7pm on a Thursday evening. Over the course of our visit, the restaurant filled up nicely. This is always a good sign when visiting somewhere new - and if the starters were anything to go by, we were in for quite an evening.

Although predominately a burger restaurant for meat eaters, Lyons' Den caters for diners with special dietary requirements too. Alongside the substantial burger menu are four veggie burger options, two vegan burger options, a range of salads, sides and lunchtime lighter bites - think buns, wraps and mini burgers.

Burger options include: Fresh Twist - a 6oz beefburger, caramelised red onions, sautéed garlic mushrooms, lettuce, tomato and dijon mustard; Filthy Burger - a 6oz beefburger, Monetary Jack cheese, local dry cured streaky bacon, onion ring, bbq pulled pork, lettuce and tomato; and Gigantor - 2 x 6oz burgers, chicken breast, halloumi burger, local dry cured streaky bacon and creamy cheddar cheese sauce.

We opted for Cordon Bleu chicken and a special - The Strog. The latter comprised a perfectly cooked 6oz ground beef patty, topped with a field mushroom and filled with the most deliciously creamy stroganoff sauce. This needs to be a permanent fixture on the menu because it was truly phenomenal. It was a really unique concoction - I've never seen anything like it on a burger menu before - and boy, was it good!

Our other selection, the Cordon Bleu chicken burger, was an-

other fantastic choice. Featuring a breaded chicken breast stuffed with Serrano ham and cheese, topped with mayo and crispy onions, it was certainly an option I'd be happy to devour again. The flavour combination was spot on - hats off to the chef!

The burgers were served with a generous portion of twice-cooked chips. Lyons' Den certainly doesn't skimp on its portion sizes. This is always a winning factor with us, as to say that we're big eaters is most definitely an understatement.

Despite feeling suitably full, we decided to share a dessert. I'd heard good things, so felt it necessary to try one. We opted for cheesecake of the week, which, to my delight, was dark chocolate and pistachio. Rich, naughty and incredibly filling (it was a huge slab!), it provided a fantastic end to our first Lyons' Den experience.

Alongside the extensive main menu, the restaurant boasts a reasonably priced children's menu featuring such options as chicken strips & chips, bacon cheeseburger & chips and hot dog & chips, making it a perfect dining-out option for families.

The Lyons' Den service is exemplary, the polite and welcoming staff being both knowledgeable and attentive, and I'm certainly looking forward to visiting again in the near future for feast number two. *Lauren Foster*

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

Lyons' Den
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Dine In The Dark in Shrewsbury

Guide Dogs Shrewsbury Fundraising Group are holding a Dine In The Dark event at Shrewsbury College on Wednesday 31 October. Attendees will experience what it's like to dine without sight at the college's Origins Restaurant. Tickets cost £18 - including a complimentary drink - and can be bought via telephone on 01743 342611 or via email at philc@shrewsbury.ac.uk

Wands at the ready in Wolverhampton...

The Grain Store in Wolverhampton is holding a Harry Potter-themed gin event on Saturday 27 October. Ginistry Of Magic - Second Annual Muggle Ball will feature smoking gin potions, fire & ice cocktails, butterbeer, pumpkin juice, magical entertainment, music and dancing. Definitely a must-attend event for any Harry Potter fan aged 18 or older!

Wholey Moly vegan cookies arrive in Selfridges Birmingham

Premium vegan cookie Wholey Moly is now available exclusively in Selfridges Birmingham.

The cookie comes in three flavours - cacao & orange, cacao & hazelnut, and almond, hemp & chia - and contains no refined sugars or processed ingredients.

"We spent two years trying out different recipes," says founder Meenesh, "baking thousands of cookies in our small London flat until we found the combinations that really hit the spot. They're all vegan, high in fibre, very low in salt and have as little as 5g of sugar, which is 50% less than your average healthy snack bar."



BEAR coffee house set to open in Stone next month

An innovative and independent local coffee house, kitchen and bar is set to breathe new life into Stone High Street when it opens on Thursday 1 November.

Branding itself as #notanothercoffeeshop, BEAR was founded in 2014 by entrepreneurs Craig Bunting and Michael Thorley. The Stone store will be the pair's third venture, with coffee houses already open in Uttoxeter and Derby.

BEAR sources local and fairtrade produce wherever possible and promotes a positive, healthy lifestyle through its menus. Small plates include chickpea & coriander falafel with paprika yoghurt, salami milano with fennel & blood orange salad, and ancho pulled pork tacos.

A range of sourdough pizzas, sharing boards, bagels, sandwiches, salads, breakfast & brunch options, cocktails and coffee is also available.

Brazilian restaurant chain to open in the Midlands

Brazilian restaurant chain Fazenda is set to open on Birmingham's Colmore Row this winter.

Founded in Leeds, Fazenda already has sister restaurants in Manchester, Liverpool (pictured) and Edinburgh.

Guests control the service with a small double-sided card. The green side signals the chefs to bring out skewers of sizzling meats one by one, the red side indicates a resting point.

The lunchtime menu costs £18.50 on weekdays and £20.50 on weekends and bank holidays. The evening menu costs £32.50 from Monday to Sunday.



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Zion Train

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 4 October

Having collaborated with the likes of UB40, Gentleman, Gregory Isaacs, Beenie Man and Tippa Irie, Zion Train are one of the most unique dub acts around. Boasting dynamic mixing and exceptional vocals, they've played Glastonbury 14 times and are this year celebrating their 30th anniversary.



Ferocious Dog

The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton, Sat 27 October

A popular act on the festival scene and well known for their high-octane live performances, Ferocious Dog are a full-on six-piece band that play folk music infused with rock, reggae and Celtic vibrations.

Each gig sees them liaising with local food banks to organise a charity food drop for the homeless. It's an undertaking which their fans have very much bought into, taking along non-perishable food, blankets, toiletries and plenty more to their shows.



Blair Dunlop

The Robin, Bilston, Tues 2 October; Lichfield Festival Of Folk, Sun 21 October; Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury, Sun 28 October

Singer-songwriter and guitarist Blair Dunlop has certainly showcased his talents over the last few years - since 2012 he's released no

fewer than four albums.

For his critically acclaimed and award-winning debut offering, *Blight And Blossom*, Blair was joined by dad Ashley Hutchings - the famed co-founder of Fairport Convention - and has since released *House Of Jacks*, *Gilded* and, earlier this year, *Notes From An Island*.

Goat Girl

The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 20 October

"Simply put, it's an album that comes from growing up in London and the first-hand experience of our city's devolution," explain Goat Girl in talking about their self-titled debut offering. "We wanted to think of it as a place seen not necessarily just through our eyes, but through those of someone who can't get past the abnormalities and strange happenings. We think this creates the freedom lyrically and musically to explore unspoken truths that we all feel as humans."

Stephen Fearing

The Hive, Shrewsbury, Fri 26 October

One of Canada's most respected performers, Stephen Fearing is a hugely talented guitar player with a smooth, intimate and powerful voice. He's back on the solo scene after a busy few years performing and writing with Blackie & The Rodeo Kings and Fearing & White, and is well worth a look when he stops off in the Midlands this month.

The Lichfield Festival Of Folk 2018

Various venues around Lichfield, Fri 19 - Sun 21 October

It's fair to say that this annual event, otherwise known as L2F, absolutely lives up to its mission statement - to provide visitors with the opportunity to appreciate the very best in folk music in a friendly and welcoming environment. The 2018 line-up includes Sam Kelly And The Lost Boys, Megson, The Mighty Doonans, Dark Horses and The Hut People (pictured below).





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St Matthew Passion

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 29 October

One of classical music's most profound experiences and a particular favourite at Easter, Bach's piercingly beautiful work - a moving retelling of the Passion story - is here given an autumn outing by English Touring Opera (ETO). The highly regarded company will present a simple staging of the work, with ETO's soloists being joined for the performance by period instrument orchestra The Old Street Band and a number of local choirs.

Joanna MacGregor plays the Goldberg Variations

St Laurence's Church, South Shropshire, Sat 6 October

St Laurence's new Steinway is here given a full and vigorous workout by the spectacularly talented Joanna MacGregor as she performs Bach's Goldberg Variations.

Joanna is joined for the concert by fellow pianist Eleanor Alberga, who'll be presenting two of her own works. Also featuring is violinist Thomas Bowes, playing Bach's Chaconne, and baritone Thorvald Blough, who opens the concert with a spiritual song.



Ex Cathedra: In 40 Parts

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 21 October



Jeffrey Skidmore once again picks up the baton to conduct Birmingham's highly rated early music ensemble, this time in a concert comprising five 40-part pieces.

Included in the programme is Thomas Tallis' Sing And Glorify and his monumental yet rarely performed Spem in alium. There are also two works written specifically for Ex Cathedra - Gabriel Jackson's Sanctum est verum lumen (2005) and Alec Roth's Earthrise (2010). The latter was inspired by the famous photograph of the same name, taken 50 years ago by the Apollo 8 crew. Striggio's Ecce beatam lucem completes the programme.

London Mozart Players

St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury, Sat 27 October

Britain's longest-established chamber orchestra is here joined by Turkish cellist Jamal Aliyev for a concert that features Haydn's cello concerto, a lost work that was rediscovered in a museum in Prague in 1961.

The evening's programme also includes Tchaikovsky's Souvenir de Florence - a piece inspired by the composer's visit to the Italian city - and Grieg's Holberg Suite - a pastiche suite of 18th century dances.



Symphonic Fantasy

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 19 October

Birmingham's Symphony Hall 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... Toby Purser (pictured) conducts.





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Karla Doorbar as Clara, Edouardo Souto da Silva as The Prince. Photo © Ballo Kebab

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Every October, people in the Midlands and across the UK come together to celebrate iconic individuals and landmark events in the history of the African diaspora. Here's a sample of what's happening in our own region during the course of the month...

BLACK HISTORY FILM FESTIVAL Series of themed films every Wednesday throughout October, Wednesbury Library

UNWRITTEN Inviting poets from the international Caribbean diaspora to tell the story of the Caribbean men who fought alongside the British Army in the First World War, Thurs 4 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST Two Gents Productions present a new take on Oscar Wilde's tale of manners, Thurs 4 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

OLIVA TWEEST Afrobeats musical which follows the ambitions of self-proclaimed gyalis (ladies' man) and club promoter Tobi, as he navigates comedic and sometimes explosive clashes with women, family traditions and his reawakened conscience, Thurs 4 - Sat 6 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

JEAN TOUSSAINT QUINTET Featuring music from Jean's 11th album, Fri 5 Oct, Birmingham Conservatoire

BEING BUILT TOGETHER Photographic exhibition by Vanley Burke celebrating the diversity of Birmingham and the UK, Sat 6 - Sat 20 Oct, St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham

AN OFFICER AND A LADY The story of Elizabeth Barker Johnson, an African American woman who led an army unit of women in Birmingham. There will also be a range of stalls and talks which focus on Birmingham and its connection with Black Heritage, Sun 7 Oct, Soho House, Birmingham

THE OFFICIAL BLACK HISTORY

ACTIVITY BOOKS LAUNCH 'A family day full of fun and edutainment', Sun 7 Oct, The H Suite, Icknield Rd, Birmingham

HARDY CAPRIO ANNOUNCES THE HARDY SEASON TOUR Someone whose career is definitely on the up, Hardy was tipped as an artist to watch out for in 2018 by BBC 1Xtra, the Independent, Music Week, the Sun, Nation of Billions and Clash magazine, Mon 8 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CARIBBEAN CULTURAL DAY Featuring a Windrush display, a Black Heroes display, Caribbean foods, arts & crafts, health & wellbeing products and much more... Sat 13 Oct, All Saints Church, Kings Heath, Birmingham

MOKOOMBA Zimbabwe's most celebrated young band, Tues 16 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

THE ETTA JAMES STORY Vika Bull tells the story of soul legend Etta James' turbulent life while singing some of her best-loved songs, Thurs 18 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall



KRS-ONE - UK TOUR + DJ PREDATOR PRIME The rap icon performs in Birmingham as part of a four-date UK tour, Thurs 18 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION - OUR BLACK ROLE MODELS IN THE COMMUNITY Free conference celebrating current and historical black role models, Thurs 18 Oct, Wolverhampton University

SOUL II SOUL Fri 19 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall
DARIUS RUCKER Darius found fame with the Grammy Award-winning Hootie & the Blowfish. Since reintroducing himself to the world as a country artist, he's released four albums, Sun 21 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham



SONS OF KEMET Hypnotic double drum rhythms frame the colourful interplay of saxophone and tuba as original compositions are brought to life by four fiercely creative musicians, Fri 26 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BLACK STEAM Inspirational talks and performance celebrating black brilliance and living history makers in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics, Sun 28 Oct, Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham

COBO: BACK TO THE OLD SKOOL Featuring Rudi Lickwood, Curtis Walker, Slim & John Simmit, Sun 28 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BLACK HISTORY MONTH COMEDY SPECIAL Featuring Simon Clayton, Aurie Styla, Lateef Lovejoy & Slim, Mon 29 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

BLACK BRITISH ARTS & CULTURE FAMILY WORKSHOP A presentation and creative writing workshop about the Victorian black British actor Ira Aldridge. The workshop is suitable for children aged 10 to 17, Tues 30 Oct, Library of Birmingham

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF REGGAE

The impact, legacy and heritage of 50 years of reggae music is celebrated in BASS2018 festival this month.

Taking place at various Birmingham venues, the event features concerts, films, exhibitions and discussions. Highlights include appearances by Toots And The Maytals and Loversrock pioneer Carrol Thompson (pictured below). The festival also commemorates the 40th anniversary of the release of iconic Steel Pulse album Handsworth Revolution - see more on page 20.



WHAT. WHEN. WHERE.

MUSIC

TOOTS AND THE MAYTALS FEAT. CAPTAIN ACCIDENT

Wed 10 Oct, O2 Institute

CARROLL THOMPSON Wed 17 Oct, The Jam House

TYRONE MELODY PRESENTS: BIRMINGHAM'S NEW WAVE

Mon 22 Oct, Hare & Hounds

FREDDIE MCGREGOR Wed 24 Oct, The Jam House

THE MIGHTY DIAMONDS Fri 26 Oct, O2 Institute2

FILM

ROCKSTEADY: THE ROOTS OF REGGAE FT SPECIAL PERFORMANCE FROM CHRISTOPHER ELLIS Thurs 4 Oct, The Mockingbird Cinema

THE HARDER THEY COME Thurs 11 Oct, The Mockingbird Cinema

HOMELANDS: JAMAICA AND BRUK OUT! A DANCEHALL QUEEN DOCUMENTARY Fri 26 Oct, The Mockingbird Cinema

TALKS/WORKSHOPS

REVOLUTION! Forty years of Steel Pulse's Handsworth Revolution, Fri 13 Oct, Handsworth Wellbeing Centre (2pm unveiling); Handsworth Library (4pm Q&A)

REGGAE 100 Discussing the next 50 years... Tues 30 Oct, ACMC, 339 Dudley Road

WINTA JAMES: A REGGAE PRODUCER MASTERCLASS Wed 31 Oct, Access Creative College, 68 Heath Mill Lane

ART

THE ART OF REGGAE Exhibition showcasing 101 reggae-inspired posters, designed by artists and illustrators from around the world, 2 - 18 Oct, Medicine, 69 New Street



FINGER ON THE PULSE

**Steel Pulse's ex-percussionist and backing vocalist
Mykaell Riley talks about the band's 40-year-old album,
Handsworth Revolution**



This year marks the 40th anniversary of Birmingham band Steel Pulse's debut album, Handsworth Revolution. To celebrate the birthday - and as part of BASS Festival 2018 - a public mural is this month being unveiled at Handsworth Wellbeing Centre. Former band member Mykaell Riley talks to What's On about the critically acclaimed 1978 release, an album which had a major impact on the UK's reggae music scene...

One of the most enduring images of the UK music scene in 1978 was the sight of a reggae band with frontmen clad in white hoods and robes, performing a song about racism entitled Ku Klux Klan.

The group was Steel Pulse. They came from Birmingham and later that year, the band's debut album, Handsworth Revolution, would leave an indelible mark on the face of British reggae music.

The idea to wear Ku Klux Klan regalia on stage came from the band's percussionist and backing vocalist, Mykaell Riley, who was well aware of the impact that the costumes would have at the time.

"We were trying to communicate, in the most succinct way possible, If you don't understand the hoods, then the lyrics are a translation of that," says Riley. "You bring the two together and that's the history there that we're trying to communicate, alive and kicking in Handsworth in Birmingham.

"In one simple act, one simple bit of white material, we were explaining decades of racial tension and racial abuse to our community. The hoods were a shorthand way of bringing all of that into one space.

"You couldn't just rock up to Woolworths and say, 'I've lost my hoods, mate, can you prepare three hoods, I've got a gig tonight'.

"Once you had the hoods on, you couldn't see to play your guitar, so it turned into being myself and Alphonso [Martin], the other vocalist, wearing them. But even then we silenced many an audience just by putting on the hoods."

The back cover of Handsworth Revolution bears the words 'Album dedicated to the people of Handsworth', so it's fitting that the 40th anniversary of the album's iconic artwork will be commemorated in Handsworth by a celebratory public mural, unveiled as part of Birmingham's month-long BASS 2018 Festival.

While the original visual idea for the sleeve emanated from the band, the album lists Andrew Aloof as illustrator, with credit for the design going to Bloomfield/Travis. Riley recalls the creative process that led to the final artwork.

"My vague memory is that it started with, 'What are you trying to say?' So we said, it's about Handsworth. As we were discussing the whole concept, we told them it was about what was happening in Handsworth, and that we had a song called Handsworth Revolution.

"They said, 'How do you depict that revolution? What is it and what does it look like visually?' We discussed this with the marketing department and the album design department, David [Hinds] did some sketches and then it was translated by the art director.

"We were keen to project this dystopia that is Handsworth. It's the idea that, on one hand, this is the reality - it's blocks of flats, it's broken-down buildings, it's burnt-out cars - but you can escape. So there's a guy that's running away somewhere, and also there's a ray of light coming down on the individuals - these faceless but black individuals standing next to the car."

Riley stresses that the band wanted to project a positive message on the cover: "The image is there to offer hope, to say that you can escape this. With the palm trees, based on the conversations we had with the guy who put it together, there was this idea that, back then, you aspired to get home. Home wasn't the UK, home was Jamaica - and so we've got this dichotomy, which is, are we more Jamaican at that point, or are we more British?

"And the truth is, we're both. It's looking at the challenge of identity back then, which was deciding which of these dominated. And if one did, it was the reality on the ground. We have to survive Handsworth, and to do that as a community we need to somehow force a revolution, which means standing up and being counted. And if that means you leave, you leave."

These days, Riley is a principal investigator of the Black Music Research Unit at the University of Westminster, but his involvement with Steel Pulse up to and including that seminal first album remains an important part of his career.

Apart from the release of Handsworth Revolution, 1978 also saw Steel Pulse open for Bob Marley And The Wailers on their European tour and become a powerful voice in the Rock Against Racism (RAR) movement. A recent



article in the Guardian newspaper, calling for the reactivation of RAR, included Riley as one of its signatories.

"That was instigated by the originator of Rock Against Racism, Red Saunders. When Red called me, he said, 'Look, what do you think about all this racism and fascism that's taking off everywhere?'

"If you travel around Europe, it's much, much more in your face than it is here. Looking back at where we were back then, and then jumping back to where we are now, what we're looking for is some level of progress, but we're moving back to that position so fast that it's scary. So of course I have to stand up and support a viable movement that's challenging fascism."

And what about the UK's impending departure from the EU?

"Brexit became a question of identity, and within that, what's British, what's English, what does it mean? I think for many in the community, they were seeking to create an identity that didn't really exist - Britain has always been multicultural."

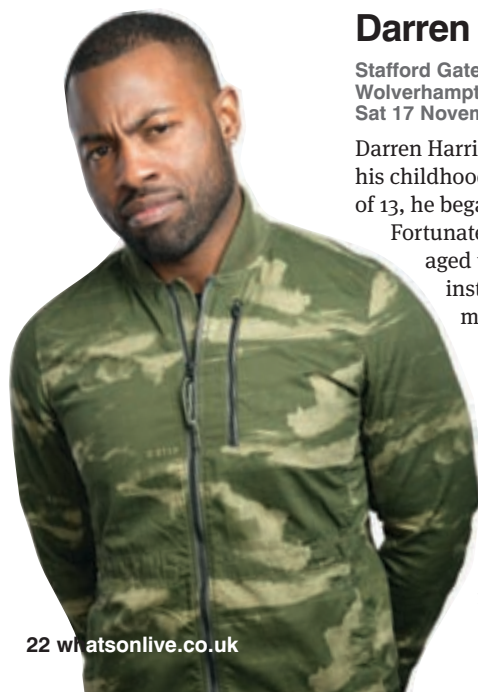
BASS Festival 2018 (1-31 October) features the unveiling of a public mural at Handsworth Wellbeing Centre on Saturday 13 October to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the release of Handsworth Revolution. For more information, visit wearepunch.co.uk/bass-festival



Gina Yashere

The REP, Birmingham, Sun 21 October

Gina's latest show, Funkindemup, finds the London-born comedian on fine form as she contemplates the state of British race relations and Anglo Nigerian manners. Gina's best known from television shows like Mock The Week, but a well-received performance on US TV's Last Comic Standing saw her career heading in another direction, with plenty of work coming her way from across the pond. The 44-year-old comedian is suitably appreciative of her new opportunities in the US, where she last year became a fixture on late-night news satire programme The Daily Show. "There's a glass ceiling for black comedians in America too," she observes, "but by the time you hit it, you're a multi-millionaire."



Darren Harriott

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Sat 27 October; Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton, Thurs 8 November; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 17 November

Darren Harriott's new show, Visceral, takes a look back at his childhood in Oldbury - and to a time when, at the age of 13, he began carrying a knife.

Fortunately for the 29-year-old comedian, he managed to turn away from a potential life of crime, instead finding his salvation in the business of making people laugh.

"I need to get this stuff out," he explained in a recent interview with the Evening Standard. "All I've really got as a stand-up is my honesty. I'm okay if audiences hate me. What I don't want is pity. These stories might sound like tragedy, but I don't compute it as tragedy. I'm enjoying this roller-coaster. I just worry that it could all go. This is the most important time in my career, but my main goal is to have fun."

Jimeoin

Birmingham Town Hall, Fri 12 October

Fancy a straightforward comedy night with a straight-talking - well, actually, a bit of a rambling - comedian? If so, then the sublime Jimeoin is the man for you. A gimmick-free one-man comedy machine, Jimeoin's proved he's got what it takes on all manner of top TV shows, including Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow and Jason Manford's Comedy Rocks. Check him out!



Ali Cook

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 21 October

Escapologist, sleight-of-hand expert, street magician, stage illusionist, thought controller, writer, actor and 'historian of deception' - comedy magician Ali Cook is certainly no one-trick pony. Widely acclaimed for his highly innovative live shows, Ali has received The Magic Circle's highest accolade, joining, among others, HRH The Prince of Wales and David Copperfield as a Member of the Inner Magic Circle with Gold Star. "For me," says Ali, "the real joy is being able to perform so many types and styles of magic. I live by what Paul Daniels said: "A magician can do it all. He is, after all, magic."



Felicity Ward

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Fri 19 October;
Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 3 November

Australian comedian Felicity Ward visits the Midlands with her second nationwide tour, Busting A Nut. Felicity went down a storm with the show at this summer's Edinburgh Festival, where she's a well-established contributor. "Busting A Nut was my eighth stand-up show there, so I've had some practice," says Felicity. "What's different this time is that the show doesn't have a theme - it's just an hour of jokes."



Vikki Stone

MAC, Birmingham, Sat 13 October

Described by The Scotsman as the bastard love child of Victoria Wood and Tim Minchin, Vikki Stone is not only a comedian but a composer and musician. The various hats she wears have ensured she's had a far-from-standard career, with highlights including giving a TED Talk at CERN, playing the typewriter with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and being part of the presenting team at the BBC Proms.



Doreen's Big Top

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Wed 10 - Thurs 11 October; Oakengates Theatre@The Place, Telford, Tues 16 - Wed 17 October; Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, Tues 23 - Wed 24 October; Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 25 - Fri 26 October; The Swan Theatre, Worcester, Mon 29 - Tues 30 October; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Fri 2 November; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Wed 14 November

In February 2012, Doreen's Story - a five-minute mockumentary written by playwright David Tristram - went viral on the internet. The video, which satirised benefit scroungers, starred actress Gill Jordan as the Black Country-born Doreen. Since then, the character has blossomed into one of the 21st century's finest comic creations, regularly

appearing in pantomime and heading out on the road with shows like this one. The new production sees Doreen exploring the history of the circus, complete with 'breathtaking feats of laziness' and a not-to-be-missed attempt at fire-eating with a Black Country vindaloo.

Juliette Burton

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa,
Fri 12 October; Artrix, Bromsgrove,
Sat 10 November

Is being nice outdated, or can small acts of kindness make a big impact?... This is the question being asked by award-winning comedian Juliette Burton as she hits the road on her first ever UK tour.

Entitled Butterfly Effect, Juliette's new show sees her finding out whether kindness holds the power to change lives, cure mental health conditions, make friends, restore hope, dispel despair, end poverty and even defeat death...

It's a weighty subject for a stand-up gig, so you've got to admire her ambition!



Sara Pascoe

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Sun 7 October; Birmingham Town Hall,
Wed 28 November

At a time when the rifts between the haves and have nots, the pro-EU and anti-EU, the tolerant and the prejudiced are becoming ever wider, Sara Pascoe is clear about one thing - there are no off-limit subjects when it comes to comedy.

"People forgive the subject matter when they find something funny," she says, "but that doesn't mean the comedian has no responsibility to question their own material. If they're going to tell a joke about rape, they should first consider how you might feel if you've been a victim of it. If, after that, they still feel it's a joke worth telling, then they'll be doing so with complete faith in their own material, which is great."





War Horse

Birmingham Hippodrome, Wed 10 October - Sat 3 November; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 27 Mar - Sat 6 April

Described as 'the theatrical event of the decade' when it opened in London's West End, War Horse has continued to garner great praise in the ensuing years. Based on Michael Morpurgo's hugely popular 1982

novel, it tells the story of a young man named Albert whose horse, Joey, is sold to the cavalry and shipped to France at the beginning of the First World War. Joey's subsequent adventures lead to him finding himself alone in a no man's land - but Albert is in no mood to give up on his beloved companion, and sets out to find him and take him home to Devon.

The Lovely Bones

The REP, Birmingham, Tues 30 October - Sat 10 November

This poignant human drama, based on Alice Sebold's best-selling novel, concerns a murdered girl who watches from heaven as her family attempts to cope with their devastating loss...

Author Alice Sebold will discuss her wide-ranging career in a special In Conversation event on 1 November, to tie in with the stage adaptation's stay at The REP.



David Edgar: Trying It On

MAC, Birmingham, Fri 12 October; The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon, Thurs 18 - Sat 20 October

David Edgar is used to writing plays; he's not so used to performing in them. But that's all changing with Trying It On.

The Birmingham-born playwright has marked his 70th birthday by taking to the stage in this one-man show, during which he contemplates the ways in which both the world and his own views have changed over the last 50 years.



Dishoom!

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 16 - Sat 20 October

A theatre company that specialises in celebrating and reflecting contemporary British Asian culture and society is bringing this

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



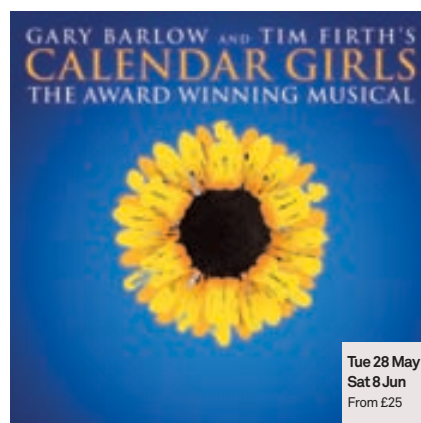
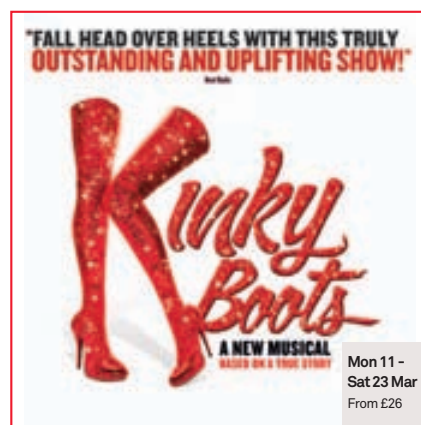
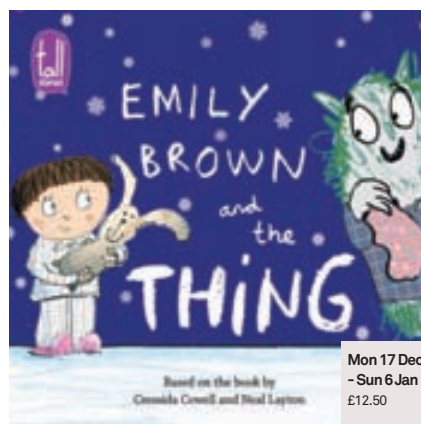


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ARE YOU KIDDING?

new gender-bending musical at the Hippodrome



Making the decision to have children should never be taken lightly by a couple. In a brand new show called No Kids, real-life partners Nir Paldi and George Mann blend physical storytelling with gender-bending musical cabaret and verbatim theatre to explore the issues around that decision-making process. What's On caught up with Nir and George to find out more...

Why do you think that bringing into discussion the topic of parenthood for gay couples is so important now?

Nir: Many people struggle to have kids even though they really want to, while many others do it just because it's something you naturally do as part of your life's journey, without thinking about it seriously. We know now, thanks to science, that choosing not to have a child is the best thing you can do as a human being to help the planet, so I think in that way it may help people decide. Or it may give those who're struggling to have children some positives to take away from not having kids. Now that members of the LGBTQ+ community can become parents if we want to, I think there's something very interesting in taking myself and George as a kind of case study. We're using this huge decision we have to make and magnifying it to form the basis for a piece of theatre, so that people from all sexual orientations can really investigate fully the choices they have available to them.

What prejudices do you think gay parents face?

Nir: It's interesting for us to explore the concept of some still believing that to be gay is to not be 'normal'. Getting married and having children are considered very straight things to do. George and I have been together for many years and monogamy is, sometimes, also perceived as a wholly heterosexual concept. I think there are many interesting things for the LGBTQ+ community to discuss, especially what it means to be gay nowadays. Is it as controversial to be gay and is it controversial for LGBTQ+ couples to have children? Or is it even more controversial for us to be thankful that the law now says we can have children but nevertheless to choose not to?

Do you think similar prejudices would apply to lesbian couples and other couples where one or both are members of the LGBTQ+ community?

George: I imagine the prejudices would be very similar. Obviously it's hard for us to comment on the experiences of other individuals from the LGBTQ+ community, but we have a few lesbian friends, and being any part of the LGBTQ+ community means having to stand up to many societal prejudices. I feel that for gay or lesbian couples, having a child is a bit like coming out over and over again. People often assume people to be straight before they're told or shown otherwise. You can't choose whether to reveal your sexuality or not when you have a child with your same-sex partner because having that child with you and acting as that family unit in public is almost like an outward display of your sexuality. I think there are a lot of fears and challenges for us that come with that. Even though society is in a much better place now than it was a few decades back, I think there are still people out there facing all of those prejudices.

What genres of theatrical performance can audiences expect to see in No Kids?

Nir: Each little scene has its own number with its own theatrical style, using a lot of different aspects of theatre, dance and pop culture to emphasise how insane the world is, and how the process of choosing to have kids comes with so many pros and cons. I always end up performing in drag because I feel that there's something so liberating about that. I don't often perform, I usually direct, but it was funny when I realised that I more often end up on stage dressed as a woman!

No Kids is part of SHOUT Festival. How did you get involved with SHOUT?

George: Birmingham Hippodrome have supported the making of No Kids and have been really wonderful. They had the idea to programme it as part of SHOUT. We were really excited about that because while we want this piece to reach out to many, many different audiences, it's also important to us that the LGBTQIA+ community engage with it. It's useful to them on so many levels. We're really excited to be bringing it to Birmingham and to SHOUT.

How important do you think festivals focusing on just queer arts & culture are to the LGBTQ+ community?

George: It's always super-important to engage with minority voices. The LGBTQ+ community in this country over the last few decades has really progressed because those voices are heard, but I still don't think that journey is over for us. We're living in a time now with right-wing and conservative movements where we're seeing rights and freedoms around the world sliding backwards for many minorities. It's now important more than ever to embrace the rich and diverse culture we have in this country, and that includes queer culture. There are other countries around the world where people don't have these opportunities to express themselves and therefore suffer as a result, so I think it's important to celebrate what we have.

Nir: It's great to have a festival that's dedicated to unashamedly and directly facing the issues within our community. And to do that through our art is even better.

.....
No Kids shows at Birmingham Hippodrome on Saturday 10 November as part of annual queer arts & culture festival SHOUT.



THE UNRETURNING

What's On caught up with playwright Anna Jordan about her latest work...

What inspired you to write *The Unreturning*?

The idea was born out of lots of exciting discussions with Neil and Scott and the team at Frantic. We were interested in exploring how it feels to come home after a transformative experience; particularly through the eyes of a young man - as this project was inspired by Frantic's Ignition scheme which celebrates its 10th birthday this year. (All of the cast of *The Unreturning* are made up of Ignition graduates). We then explored lots of avenues - lots of different situations in which you might spend time away from home as a young man - and eventually after quite a bit of development the idea of returning home after an experience of war started to show itself as the most dramatic. We've looked at how you change when you are away from home, or how your home can change - be that emotionally or physically. It's a way of exploring what home means.

How does working with Frantic Assembly compare with other companies? Are there extra things you need to consider when you know you are writing a piece that will incorporate movement?

Yes, I think it changes the experience completely in a wonderful way. I've been a huge admirer of Frantic's work and the chance to work with them has been a bit of

a dream for me. Although the work they do is very physically challenging and quite technical, it's hugely accessible for audiences which I think is the most exciting thing about it. It does shape how you write - something I've been aware of is that writing long, very naturalistic scenes is not always the best fit for Frantic's work (in my opinion) and lots of *The Unreturning* is quite poetic and rhythmic and full of imagery, which I imagine the company creating physically with great impact. It's about leaving space for the movement to tell the story too. *The Unreturning* moves very quickly, sometimes through short staccato scenes, seamlessly changing time and location in a heartbeat. The idea is that the scene can magically transform in a matter of moments; this idea of magic was important to us from the beginning. It's really allowed me to be daring and that's a gift for any writer.

How do you feel this is relevant to audiences today?

Sadly, it feels incredibly relevant now, especially with the Syrian Conflict and the refugee crisis filling our news feeds every day as well as rising tensions across the world and a growing sense of uncertainty about the future. I suppose for me as a writer, *The Unreturning* was a way of exploring and exorcising some of those uncertainties - as the play looks forward

to what the future of war could be as well as back at what we've known. There is also, of course, the centenary of the First World War.

I'm aware this all sounds heavy - but there is lightness and laughter in the play too - and hope. It's a lot about friendship and camaraderie and it was important for us as a team to find those moments of light. Those will be brought out not just through the writing but through Frantic's movement language.

What do you hope audiences will take away from the play?

Essentially, I want to tell dramatic and invigorating stories about the way young men are affected by war - whether they are fighting or fleeing it. Theatre's greatest gift is that it can generate empathy and that is something we need more than ever in today's world. With suicide being the leading cause of death for men under 45 in this country I jumped at the chance to write a piece that explored themes of masculinity and male mental health, and I hope it will be enlightening and entertaining for an audience. I hope they will feel they have gone on an epic journey with each of the characters.

.....

The Unreturning plays The Old Rep, Birmingham from Tuesday 30 October - Friday 2 November



The Ginger Snapped

She's back! Drag Race favourite Jinkx Monsoon next month returns to the Midlands alongside her musician pal - and therapist - Major Scales. The duo will take to the stage to explore the dark side of drag fame. Midlands Zone recently caught up with Jinkx to find out what audiences can expect. Will the ginger finally snap? You'll have to bag yourself a ticket to find out the answer to that one...

What would you say is your star quality?

To find humour in everything. I've always wanted to be a performer, so when I'm on stage performing in front of people, I feel like I come to life in a way that I don't in any other realm of my life. I'm just very lucky because I do what I want.

What do you think sets you apart from other performers?

The extensive training and research I've done for the style of performance that I give. Being a cabaret performer, being a live stage performer, is very different from a lot of other mediums. Our society is drifting away from live performance and going into internet content,

movies and stuff, so you've gotta find something really special and hideous to put on stage to grab people's attention away from their screens.

Can you tell us a bit about your new album with Major Scales?

Well, the album came out in January and it's called The Ginger Snapped. If anyone's

followed my music, my first album was mostly show tunes, and was really inspired by Bette Middler's bad house days. After we'd accomplished that album, we wanted to explore a different style of music. We both really like those '90s grunge, garage bands, and we worked really hard on the new album. It's mostly all original music by Major Scales and myself. It's got a couple of covers, but it's kinda got a vintage No Doubt sound to it. We took a lot of inspiration from female rock stars of the '90s like Courtney Love, the bands Garbage, Portishead and, of course, early No Doubt. I'm really happy with it because it's edgier than my first album and it's got more pop and rock influences in it, but it's our writing and sound.

Do you have a favourite track from the album?

It has to be Cartoons And Vodka, which is a song about just that. My favourite line is, 'Life is twice as hard when you're living life half on a stage'. It's all about what she wants in a man; it's not someone who's going to dote on her, or who's going to require a lot from her. All she wants to do is come home and relax with cartoons and vodka.

Obviously you're bringing the album to the stage and you say it's based on personal experiences. Do you have any concerns about unveiling your vulnerability on stage?

No. The last two shows I've written were full-exposure, full in-depth looks into my personal life. I find it really rewarding because I'm able to turn some of my more embarrassing moments and some of my more harrowing experiences into entertainment. With The Ginger Snapped tour, the premise is that Jinkx is seeing her psychiatrist live on stage, and the music punctuates the psychotherapy session she's having. It deals heavily with my sex life, and the darker side of being a drag superstar. The goal of the show is to de-stigmatise the idea of talking about your own mental illness and mental affliction - but even with that subject matter, it's very lighthearted and tongue-in-cheek.

Can you provide an example of the dark side of being a superstar drag queen?

We tackle this a lot in our music and in a lot of the shows we do. One of the big

things is living in a Drag Race time of life post-Drag Race phenomenon where the queens are making it big and becoming international superstars. I spend 80% of my year on the road touring, and it's hard finding that balance of having my personal life and staying up to date with my friends and family.

Are there any benefits to doing your own shows as opposed to being in a bigger ensemble - such as Drag World, for instance?

I love doing big ensemble shows and always make time in my schedule to do a couple of tours with my drag sisters, because talking about the dark side of drag is always easier when you're touring with other drag queens who know exactly what you're going through. I'm really passionate about creating my own work, especially with Major Scales, because we pour so much of ourselves into our music and the scripts we write. It's a really rewarding experience to create something from the ground up. Audiences are receptive to it and really enjoy it. I also get to go a little deeper. All my shows are tongue-in-cheek and not too heavy, but I always find a way to incorporate an under-lying message that I care about into the show.

You recently celebrated your 31st birthday. Do you really think your best years are behind you?

The way we tackle it in the show is Jinkx currently wondering if her best years are behind her, and it incites this on-stage mental breakdown which puts the whole show into motion - but I don't actually feel that way. At one point in my life, I thought Drag Race was my big break, but now my idea is very different. Breaks come in waves. You get multiple big breaks in life, and it's all about moving from one big break to the next as positively, efficiently and confidently as possible.

How do audience reactions in the UK differ to those in the States?

Because I watched so much British comedy, the British sense of humour has been infused in me from a very young age. I learned so much about comedy from Absolutely Fabulous, Harry Enfield and Keeping Up Appearances. I think that had a strong influence on the way I write and perform, and my UK audiences get my

jokes immediately.

I don't have to over-explain anything, which leaves me free to do more non-sequitur stuff and off-the-wall dry humour.

Looking back, is there anything you wished you'd done differently?

No, I've never dwelt on how I could've done things differently. If you had the ability to change the past, you don't know in what ways you might affect the present. I always say in terms of Drag Race, even though I won and had a great experience with it, I wish I'd known things back then that I know now. But I wouldn't tamper with anything; tampering may change the outcome and I'm really happy with the outcome.

Have you set yourself any goals for the next 10 years?

I'm currently auditioning for roles in Broadway shows. As a live performer, Broadway seems like the prize at the end of the rainbow, so I'm constantly striving for that and looking for opportunities. I'd also like to do more TV. Television is a brilliant way to reach a lot of people all at once. I'm also passionate about being an advocate for the LGBTQIA+ community and creating positive changes in the world.

You recently moved from Seattle to San Francisco. How's life there treating you?

I completely love it. I lived in downtown Seattle in a quaint two-bedroom apartment for about 11 years and absolutely loved the culture and community there, but I was ready to move out of the city and enjoy my downtime more.

Like I said, I spend so much of my time on the road that when I'm home, the last thing I want to do is go out and party. Not only did I move into the suburbs of San Francisco, where we have a beautiful garden and a house that feels like a mansion compared to my tiny apartment, but I also moved in with my best friend and chosen family members.

So when I'm home, I'm with the people who I like spending my time with, the people who've made such a positive impact on my life.

Jinkx Monsoon And Major Scales: The Ginger Snapped shows at Stafford Gatehouse Theatre on Wednesday 7 November and then at Birmingham Hippodrome on Saturday 17 November.



Troilus And Cressida

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Fri 12 October - Sat 17 November

There's no shortage of drama and intrigue in Shakespeare's rarely performed play, which finds the Greeks and Trojans still at war a full seven years after the Trojan prince Paris's abduction of Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world, from her Greek husband Menelaus. With the Greeks quarrelling amongst themselves, and their champion Achilles in no mood to fight, it falls to rival warrior Ajax to meet the Trojan champion Hector in one-to-one combat.

Meanwhile, Troilus is much distracted by his love for Cressida, the daughter of Calchas, a Trojan who's defected to the Greek camp whilst leaving his daughter in Troy...

Virtuoso percussionist Evelyn Glennie has here collaborated with RSC Artistic Director Gregory Doran to create 'a satirical futuristic vision of a world resounding in battle'.

This new RSC version of Troilus And Cressida will be broadcast live from Stratford-upon-Avon to cinemas on 14 November.

My Mother Said I Never Should

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Tues 2 - Sat 6 October

Chosen by the Royal National Theatre as one of the 100 most significant plays of the 20th century, My Mother Said I Never Should moves back and forth through the lives of four women, in the process setting the enormous social changes of the last century against the desire to love and be loved. Written in 1985 and first staged at Manchester's Contact Theatre, Charlotte Keatley's award-winning play is the most commonly performed work by a female playwright in the world.

Dracula

The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 11 - Sat 20 October

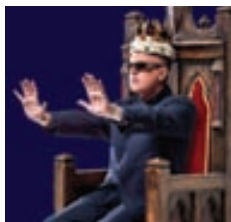
Dracula is best known from its many and varied cinematic incarnations - but as stage productions like The Woman In Black have ably illustrated, a well-presented work of theatre can be every bit as spine-tingling as anything the big screen has to offer.

Better make sure you pack some bulbs of garlic and a wooden stake, just to be on the safe side...

Suggs: What A King Cnut

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 15 October; Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Tues 16 October

After selling out his previous touring production, Madness frontman Suggs here takes a lighthearted look at a career that's featured plenty of memorable moments - from experiencing vertigo on the roof of Buckingham Palace, to nearly blowing the closing ceremony of the London Olympics. Oh, and watching his underpants fall to earth on David Bowie's driveway...



Duet For One

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Thurs 4 - Sat 6 October

Belinda Lang and Jonathan Coy star in Tom Kempinski's critically acclaimed two-hander, first performed in 1980. While the play focuses on the fictitious character of Stephanie Abrahams, it's actually based on the story of Jacqueline du Pré, the legendary cellist whose life and career were tragically cut short by multiple sclerosis.

"It's very sad and even brutal at times," says Belinda Lang of Duet For One, "but the flip side of it is very funny. Stephanie has a sarcastic wit which I personally find funny - and fortunately the audience find it funny too!"

The War Of The Worlds

The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 24 - Sat 27 October

HG Wells' classic tale of Martian invasion is here reimagined for a post-truth world. Blending 'powerful' storytelling and an interactive soundscape, the new adaptation is being presented by the critically acclaimed Tin Robot Theatre. The company has previously visited the Old Joint Stock with sell-out productions of The Tell Tale Heart and A Clockwork Orange.





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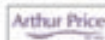
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Nativity! The Musical

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Tues 23 - Sun 28 October

The Belgrade gets into the Christmas spirit a few weeks early with this hit stage musical based on the popular film franchise. The show is written and directed by Debbie Isitt, who also created the movies. "I've always believed that Nativity! would make a fantastic stage musical," says Debbie. "It's so full of joy, the children are so sweet and funny and the songs so catchy that it lends itself to being the perfect Christmas musical. The songs really do change the dynamic. It gives you much more insight into the characters and their backstories. And the emotions are more intense, like with the love story between Mr Maddens and Jennifer - it feels even bigger now because they're singing duets."

Not Yet Suffragette

Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Fri 12 October

The tampon tax, public breast-feeding, marriage, child birth and the gender pay gap are among the subjects given a thorough airing by Natalie Cutler in her one-woman show, an hour's-worth of performance that brings together comedy, music, dance and political incorrectness.

"It's a show about how far we've not come and the reasons why," explains Natalie. "Women are still being asked the same questions and told the same things - 'How come you're not married? How come you don't have a baby? You should dress like this, don't dress like this'. They're all the same issues that were there 100 years ago. But there are plenty of people in the world trying to address inequality - my show doesn't pretend to have any answers; it simply takes a look at where we've travelled over the last century."



The Case Of The Frightened Lady

Lichfield Garrick, Mon 15 - Sat 20 October



After enjoying a hit with their adaptation of Ruth Rendell's *A Judgement In Stone*, the Classic Thriller Company now turn their attention to a 1931 play from the prolific pen of Edgar Wallace.

When Inspector Tanner investigates a gruesome murder at an ancestral home, it isn't long before he realises that nothing is quite as it seems... John Partridge (pictured) stars.

Shackleton's Carpenter

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Mon 22 October

Gail Louw's one-man play focuses on the character of Harry McNish - explorer Ernest Shackleton's carpenter on the ill-fated polar expedition ship, *Endurance*. Destitute in Wellington, Harry recalls his adventures in

the icy wastes and also his volatile relationship with Shackleton - a key reason, many feel, why he never received the coveted Polar Medal.

Private Peaceful

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Fri 12 - Sat 13 October

Private Peaceful is a short play that packs a real punch. Based on the book by War Horse author Michael Morpurgo and perfectly pitched for the young audience at which it's aimed, the stage production has been hailed for being "as moving as the poetry of Wilfred Owen and as painfully memorable as white-hot shrapnel".

First World War soldier Private Tommo Peaceful is awaiting the firing squad at dawn. With his young life about to be cut tragically short, he recalls his joyful past growing up in rural Devon, his schooldays, his father, and the love of his life - a girl named Molly...



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STRIPPED BARE

The Full Monty returns to the Midlands

Critically acclaimed movie The Full Monty sees six unemployed Sheffield men, four of whom are former steel workers, form a male striptease act to earn some much-needed cash. Gaz and his best mate Dave begin to recruit men to their act, claiming they're better than anything anyone has seen before because they're willing to go 'the full monty'.

The hit 1997 comedy touches on many social issues still relevant today, including sexuality, body image and mental health. The latest tour of the film's stage version features a cast that includes James Redmond and Joe Gill, who both play gay characters. What's On caught up with the duo to find out more about what audiences can expect...

Who do each of you play in The Full Monty and why do they get involved in Gaz's striptease plan?

James: All the characters are quite funny, and I've got a couple of funny lines. But it's how I look that's more the funny thing because of my ridiculous penis. That's the reason my character, Guy, gets chosen to be a part of the group. But there's a reason to love and relate to all six of the main characters. Each of them has their own challenge to meet, and they're challenges that I think are still relevant today. Joe and I have this really lovely scene with our characters Guy and Lomper; Lomper comes out, and I, as the slightly older guy who's already gone through that, take him under my wing. It's nice because the audience always knows exactly how to respond. We can go from lots of laughs one minute to complete silence for the really moving moments.

Joe: I play Lomper, who's the first guy Gaz and Dave recruit to be part of their strip group. It's quite a dark way in which they meet. I won't give too much away, but my character attempts to take his own life, which they save him from doing in the

nick of time. I join in from there because I think I'm a bit lonely, really. Plus, Lomper's other personal struggle within himself is with his sexuality... I worked on Emmerdale for such a long time, and they were really good at finding relevant stories that aimed to help people who were watching. I don't think this play is any different to that. I think that if a show like The Full Monty can encourage even one person to talk about their body issues, their sexuality or their mental health, then it's a privilege to be part of something as powerful as that.

You've both appeared on TV. What are the main ways in which performing on stage is different to acting on telly?

James: This is my first theatre performance, and I'm kinda bricking it a bit because you know that, for each shot on telly, you get five or six takes to get it right and you can really perfect it. Every member of the team - lighting, sound director etc - helps you figure out how to nail it. But here, you get just the one take, and you do it all in one go over the performance - no breaks and no second chances. So yes, it's very daunting, but I

love it! It's a great feeling in the theatre because you really get to feel the arc of the performance properly, and you get swept along by it. The live, instant feedback is amazing too. When I've done comedy stuff for the telly, nobody laughs, whereas in theatre you get that laugh straight away.

Joe: The instant gratification with theatre is amazing, so you get laughs and tears. I think the comparison between telly and theatre is kind of like the difference for a music artist between being in a recording studio and performing live. I think most of them would say they prefer performing live. For me as an actor, it's no different. The buzz you get in the theatre is the best feeling I've had as an actor. I've done a lot of filmed stuff and not a lot of theatre, and they're very different techniques, so theatre is exciting new territory at the moment. It's definitely something I'd like to pursue more in the future. I think all actors should do it. Young actors, for some reason, don't seem to appreciate theatre or even consider it as a preferred option, and that's a real shame. I'm loving it - what a great play to be a part of! It's really funny and will have you in stitches, but it's also so heartwarming.

“

If you're on the front few rows,
you might get more than you
bargained for...

”

Did either of you have experience with stripping before joining the cast?

James: I've actually done nudity on telly before, so I'm not worried about that. I'm more focused on it being my first time on stage. Of course, for the actual strip, nerves really kick in and you start to second-guess yourself, however many times you rehearse. I have no stripping background, although I did do a strip in Casualty once, but there was very little choreography and I was just kind of copying the guys next to me. But that was a New Year's episode, so a lot of people tuned in and saw it.

Joe: Have I? None that I can tell you about! Professionally, no, but who knows whether I've done it after a night out to someone very, very unlucky?

The burning question is, do you actually go 'the full monty' on stage?

James: We do - every single time. It's not like the film, where you get the view from just the back in the final shot - it's totally full frontal. The work with the lighting makes it slightly less in your face, but we're right at the front of the stage and it all comes off. If you're on the front few rows, you might get more than you

bargained for, but for everyone else it's slightly more obscured. But I've got a very large penis, so I'm hard to miss! It's all real, you know!

Joe: Oh yes, you'll see James' big penis - you won't miss that. But trust me, it's his character's penis, not his. I can confirm it's definitely not his.

Do you think Gaz and the rest of the characters took the right path to get cash quick?

James: I've got my stand-up as my talent to get rich quick like these guys from Sheffield try to do. But yes, in their situation I think I'd do something similar. Maggie Thatcher encouraged them to buy their own council houses and then closed most of the steel industry, so they had no work. They were trapped because the house they'd just bought had dropped significantly in value because no one wanted to live in an area with no work, so they couldn't move away to use their skills elsewhere. Many had families they couldn't leave. They were desperately broke, so I think what these characters do is incredible. For me, though, I'd have my comedy act - although gay porn is always an option!

Joe: You meet all the characters in their sense of desperation, and that's one of the best things about the play - they're all doing this full monty strip for a reason. They're not just thinking about having a laugh and getting their kit off; they're all trying to get out of a tricky situation.

What are your plans for the future?

James: After this, I really hope I can do some more theatre. Being on stage, getting that immediate feedback from audiences and getting to know the rest of the cast has been a real privilege. They're a really great bunch of people. You can't really do a job like this without being both easy-going and professional, and all these guys are good for that. My background is in telly, but now I've experienced theatre, I'd like to do some more and add even more strings to my bow.

Joe: That's the thing about acting. Most people don't have a set plan. I've got this for 10 months and then I'll see what opportunities come along. You never know, maybe I'll end up in Magic Mike or something! I know so many talented people in our business who're out of work. I'm very fortunate in that I've managed to pretty much be constantly employed in the acting world since I was 18. Touch wood that continues, so as long as I'm still enjoying it and I'm making enough to live on and have a decent time, life's good.

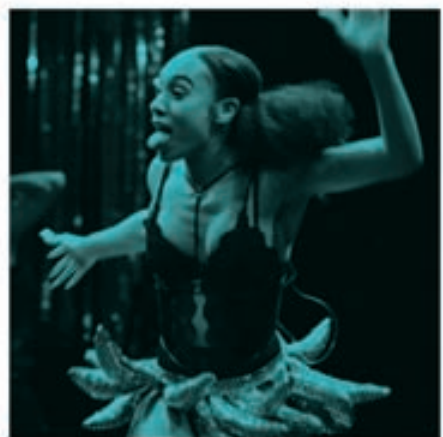
The Full Monty shows at: Birmingham Hippodrome from 5 to 10 November; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, 19 to 24 November; Nottingham Theatre Royal, 4 to 9 February; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, 25 February to 2 March; and Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, 4 to 9 March.



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Maison Foo: A Thing Mislaid

MAC, Birmingham, Wed 10 October; Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Wed 17 October; Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent, Thurs 18 October

An unlikely friendship between two lonely travellers and a mysterious bird lies at the heart of this 90-minute show for children aged 10 and older. Presented by the well-regarded Maison Foo and exploring the themes of migration and journey, the production blends the company's trademark style of visual storytelling, clowning and humour with new experiments in miniature puppetry and live camera.



Dinosaur World Live

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 30 October - Thurs 1 November

Dinosaurs are once again roaming the earth this autumn, thanks to this interactive show for all the family to enjoy.

Youngsters get to meet a host of impressive prehistoric creatures - including, of course, every child's favourite flesh-eating giant, the Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Promising to be an absolute monster of an experience, the show may well leave a T-Rex-size imprint on your child's memory for many a year to come.



Doctor Dolittle

Old Rep, Birmingham, Sat 27 October; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Sun 28 October; Oakengates Theatre, @ The Place, Telford, Tues 30 October



Hugh Lofting's delightful character is a friend to all manner of furry four-legged creatures - and he certainly knows how to have an adventure or two!... Featuring original music, lots of audience participation and some 'amazing' puppets, this brand new show is suitable for youngsters aged seven and older.

The Tiger Who Came To Tea

Palace Theatre, Redditch, Mon 29 - Tues 30 October; Birmingham Town Hall, Wed 26 December - Sun 13 January



The tea-guzzling tiger is back in town, dropping in on Sophie and her mum just as they're settling down for an afternoon cuppa...

Adapted by David Wood OBE from Judith Kerr's 1968 book, this 55-minute show features singalong songs and boasts plenty of magic - not to mention a big, stripey tiger, of course! Suitable for youngsters aged three and older.

Tabby McTat

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Friday 12 October; Lichfield Garrick, Sun 28 October

A life providing shelter and plenty of home comforts would suit most cats, but it doesn't suit Tabby McTat. Tabby's problem is that he remembers his old life with his now-missing friend, Fred the guitar player. So Tabby forsakes the good life and hits the streets in search of his long-lost buddy...

A heartwarming tale of friendship and loyalty from the winning team of Julia Donaldson and Alex Scheffler, Tabby McTat is brought to the stage by Freckle Productions, the team behind Tiddler And Other Terrific Tales.



Milkshake! Live

Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 27 October; Stafford Gatehouse, Mon 29 October

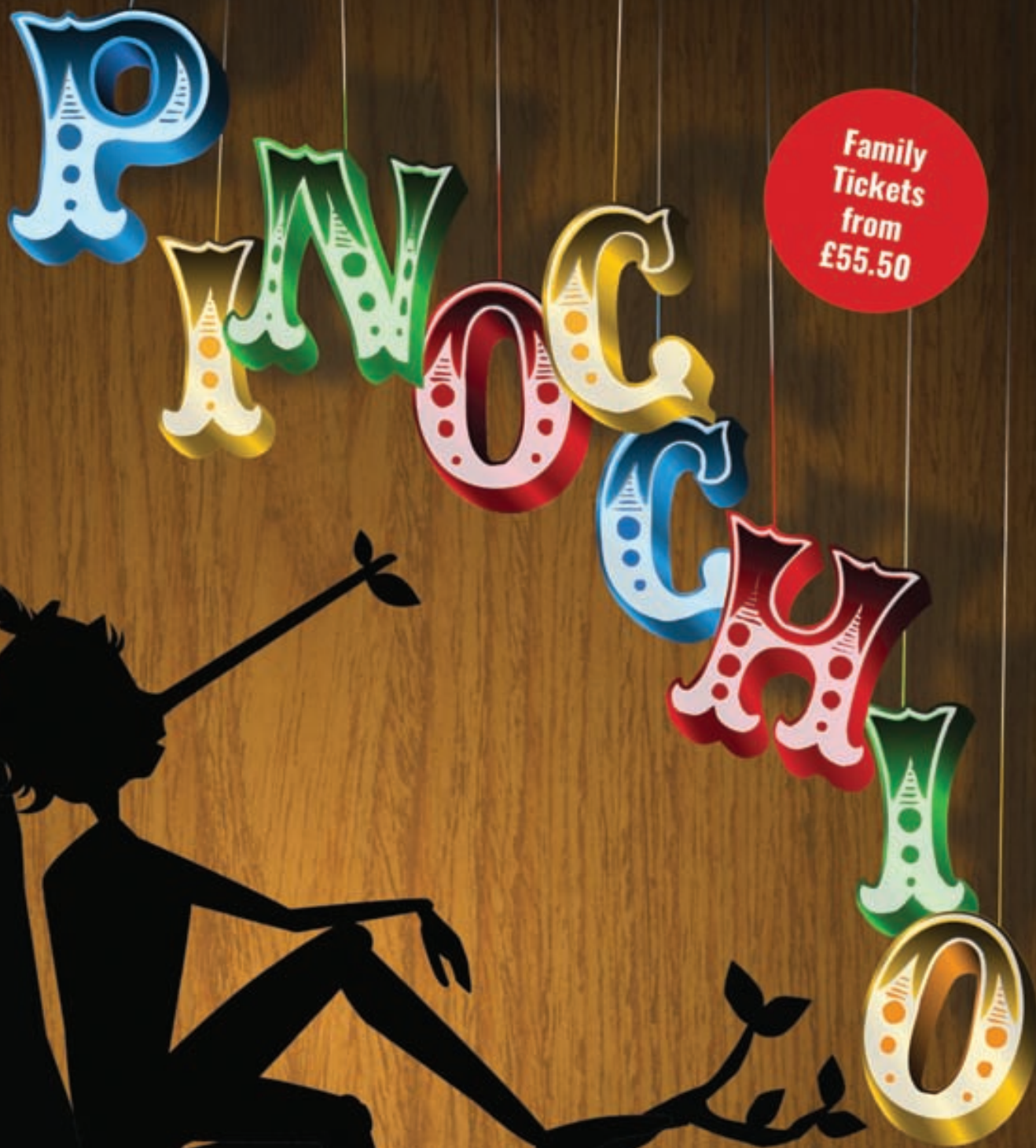
Here taking youngsters on a journey through the world's favourite fairytales are, among others, Bob the Builder, Little Princess, Noddy, Fireman Sam and Shimmer & Shine. If you've watched the TV series and/or been to a previous live production, you'll already know what to expect. If not, get ready for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

Mother Goose

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 30 October


Most familiar, of course, as a pantomime, the story of Mother Goose offers its performers plenty of opportunity to make all manner of eggstravagantly funny and eggcruciatingly unfunny egg-related jokes. Wolverhampton's favourite pantomime Dame, Ian Adams (pictured), stars alongside another big panto favourite, Julie Paton, in a family-friendly show that's sure to be sizzling with plenty of yolks, sorry! we mean jokes.






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LET'S GET IT ON...

Motown The Musical arrives in the Midlands...

Motown Records and its artists certainly made their mark on the world and its music, producing some of the greatest chart-topping songs from the 1950s through to the 1980s. A West End musical telling the story of the legendary label is coming to Birmingham this month. What's On caught up with the show's producer, Adam Spiegel, to find out more...

Think Motown and heaven knows how many famous songs spring readily to mind. From Marvin Gaye's *I Heard It Through The Grapevine* to The Supreme's *Stop! In The Name Of Love*, the Detroit-based record label scored hit after massive hit, year after year, decade after decade. Along the way, it routinely took top spot as the highest-earning African American business in the United States.

This month sees the arrival in Birmingham of a show dedicated to the magic of the now-legendary label. *Motown The Musical* celebrates the sensational Motown sound by telling the story of its founder, Berry Gordy; from his humble beginnings on a car production line to a career spent signing some of the greatest artists of the 20th century and beyond.

Starting with just an \$800 loan from his family, Gordy's passion for music and desire for success catapulted Motown into the limelight and helped to unite a racially divided nation.

"The thing about Motown," reflects producer Adam Spiegel, "was that it made a considerable contribution to the changes that took place in the '60s and '70s in America, in terms of racial integration and some kind of equality. Suddenly, 'black' music was being listened to by everyone in the country, rather than just on 'black' radio stations, and that was a huge change. I think the stars of Motown became the icons of the whole country, so those same stars became the face of America all across the world."

Adam agrees with the man himself, Berry Gordy, when he said that Motown was made to be on the stage.

"I think any music that makes people automatically want to sing and dance deserves to be on stage. Also, with this show, we're in a situation where we're telling the story of an iconic record label that changed the world - it couldn't be more deserving of the stage spotlight."

And *Motown The Musical* is absolutely the real deal: it's being produced in collaboration with Berry Gordy himself, to ensure the story is as authentic as possible.

"I feel very lucky. We've worked very hard at it, and yet being associated with something like this remains a huge privilege. Being able to spend time with Berry himself is extraordinary, and it's something that I'm enormously grateful to be able to do. But also, the whole team of designers, directors, writers, musicians, actors for the show have really been of the very highest quality, and it's been lovely to be a part of putting *Motown The Musical* together."

The cast and crew behind the production have plenty of fun making the show, but Adam is sure its Midlands audience will enjoy it even more.

"The more fun you have making something, the more fun it is to watch - those do go hand-in-hand. Working with the music of Motown is a constant pleasure. You walk into the rehearsal room and someone is going to

be singing *My Girl* or something by the Jackson 5, Stevie Wonder or Smokey Robinson. It's an intensely vibrant and exciting environment. We have a great time doing it, but I hope people who come to see the show enjoy it even more."

Picking just one stand-out track from Motown's repertoire is a real task, but Adam does have a favourite: "There are over 50 songs in the show and it's extremely hard to select just one, but I would have to say *Dancing In The Streets* by Martha And The Vandellas. It makes everybody just want to jump up and down."

"I honestly think *Motown The Musical* is the best time you'll have in the theatre, not least because it's a fantastic opportunity to enjoy the best music ever written!"



Motown The Musical shows at Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, from Thursday 11 October to Saturday 3 November.

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Seeta Patel: Not Today's Yesterday

Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome,
Tues 23 October

Described as a poetic narrative with the beauty and disquiet of a Brothers Grimm fairytale, *Not Today's Yesterday* sees award-winning artist Seeta Patel blend techniques from the classical dance form of Bharatanatyam with contemporary dance and theatre.

Although a champion and exceptional exponent of Bharatanatyam, Seeta is uncomfortable about referring to the dance form as 'traditional' in the typical sense of the word. "If you attribute that word to Bharatanatyam, you automatically give it cultural baggage," she says. "The sense in which I think you *can* apply the word is in terms of the communication of Bharatanatyam through the generations, and in terms of the teaching of it. In that sense, its tradition is beautiful."

Vienna Festival Ballet: The Nutcracker

Oakengates Theatre, @ The Place, Telford,
Tues 2 October; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sun 14
October; Bedworth Civic Hall,
Wed 24 October

One of the great ballet staples, Tchaikovsky's enchanting tale of Clara and her nutcracker doll has been delighting audiences for generations. The fantasy of soldiers, giant rats, snow fairies, magic and mystery this month visits the region courtesy of Vienna Festival Ballet. Featuring a talented array of young dancers, the company was founded in 1980 and typically spends eight months a year performing works from its extensive repertoire in smaller venues across the UK.



Motionhouse: Charge

MAC, Birmingham, Fri 19 - Sat 20 October

Leamington-based Motionhouse's multimedia show about energy is the third element of Artistic Director Kevin Finnan's Earth Trilogy, developing on themes explored in *Scattered* (2009) and *Broken* (2013) about man's relationship with water and the earth.

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

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



Backlash Ballroom

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 28 October

The producers of this new touring show reckon that if you love *Strictly*, you'll *really* love *Backlash Ballroom* - and the show certainly seems to have all the necessary components to provide an evening of high-energy dance magic. Featuring six professional ballroom and Latin dancers, including world, European and national champions, the production pays homage to the movies and includes, among other dance styles, the waltz, the quick step, the Argentine tango and the charleston.

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Venom CERT tbc

Starring **Tom Hardy, Michelle Williams, Riz Ahmed, Scott Haze, Reid Scott, Jenny Slate, Woody Harrelson**

Directed by **Ruben Fleischer (USA)**

There's always excitement surrounding the launch of a new Marvel superhero. Eddie Brock - aka Venom - is an investigative journalist who investigates a survivalist group too closely and is infected by an alien 'symbiote.' So he and the extraterrestrial occupy the same body, two individual entities with superhuman powers and a nasty temper. Tom Hardy takes on the role of the hybrid, and he's a class act - as is Michelle Williams, who plays Eddie's girlfriend, Anne Weying, a district attorney (aka She-Venom). Director Ruben Fleischer previously brought us the critically acclaimed *Zombieland* (2009) and the terrific, all-star (and underrated) crime thriller *Gangster Squad* (2013). In 3D.

Released Wed 3 Oct

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Film highlights released in October...

Blindspotting CERT 15 (95 mins)

Starring **Daveed Diggs, Rafael Casal, Janina Gavankar, Jasmine Cephas Jones, Ethan Embry, Wayne Knight**

Directed by **Carlos López Estrada (USA)**

Collin has just three days left of his probation. But if he is to turn his life around, he may have to re-think his relationship with the psychotic Miles, the friend he has known all his life... Daveed Diggs, who plays Collin, co-produced and wrote the screenplay with his real life-long friend, Rafael Casal, who plays Miles. Interesting.

Released Fri 5 Oct



Columbus

CERT 12a (104 mins)

Starring **John Cho, Haley Lu Richardson, Parker Posey, Rory Culkin, Michelle Forbes**

Directed by **Kogonada (USA)**



That's Columbus, Indiana, and is not to be confused with the other 18 towns in the US with the same name. Anyway, it's here that Jin (John Cho), a Korean-born translator, finds himself stranded, alongside his father, who is in a coma. Jin then meets Casey (Richardson), who's stuck in the same town with her mother, a recovering drug addict. Together, they discover a love of the town's modern architecture, for which Columbus is famous.

Released Fri 5 Oct

Johnny English Strikes Again CERT PG (88 mins)

Starring **Rowan Atkinson, Ben Miller, Olga Kurylenko, Jake Lacy, Emma Thompson, Adam James** Directed by **David Kerr (UK/France)**

At last, another spy spoof. Actually, it's been seven years since Johnny was reborn as a martial artist and that sequel did have a smidgen of old-fashioned charm. Here, JE pops out of retirement to track down a ruthless hacker who has exposed the identity of all of the active undercover agents in Britain. So, while we're waiting for Mr Craig...

Released Fri 5 Oct



Film highlights released in October...

Strangeways Here We Come

CERT 15 (86 mins)

Starring Elaine Cassidy, Michelle Keegan, Lauren Socha, Chanel Cresswell, Oliver Cooper-Smith, Stephen Lord Directed by Chris Green (UK)

Not to be confused with Ben Wheatley's dystopian drama High-Rise (2015), this is a comedy set in a multi-storeyed building in which the tenants gang together to overthrow a ruthless loan shark. Filmed in Salford, Manchester. And be prepared for some sexual violence.

Released Fri 7 Oct

First Man

CERT tbc (135 mins)

Starring Ryan Gosling, Jason Clarke, Claire Foy, Kyle Chandler, Corey Stoll, Ciarán Hinds Directed by Damien Chazelle (USA)

Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon, and that's quite a 'first' for any guy. This biog, based on the book by James R Hansen, follows Armstrong up to the historical mission of Apollo 11 in 1969. From the Oscar-winning director of Whiplash and La-La Land.

Released Fri 12 Oct



Bad Times At The El Royale

CERT tbc

Starring Jeff Bridges, Cynthia Erivo, Dakota Johnson, Jon Hamm, Cailee Spaeny, Lewis Pullman, Chris Hemsworth Directed by Lewis Pullman (USA)

Jeff Bridges plays Daniel Flynn, an aging criminal masquerading as a priest who pitches up at the rundown hotel of the title. There, he encounter six strangers, each with a mysterious past that has a fateful impact on a hellish night... Drew Goddard previously directed Chris Hemsworth in the thrilling, ingenious Cabin In The Woods (2012).

Released Fri 12 Oct



Sink

CERT 15 (85 mins)

Starring Martin Herdman, Ian Hogg, Marlene Sidaway, Tracey Wilkinson, Joshua Herdmann Directed by Mark Gillis (UK)

Working on a zero hour contract, Micky Mason (Herdman) is finding it hard to make ends meet, to support both his ailing father and his offspring. Then he makes a rash decision, something that he knows is not right, but just right under the circumstances...

Released Fri 12 Oct



Mandy

CERT 18 (121 mins)

Starring Nicolas Cage, Andrea Riseborough, Linus Roache, Bill Duke, Richard Brake, Ned Dennehy Directed by Panos Cosmatos (USA/Belgium)

Nicolas Cage is on the rampage again, this time meting out punishment to those who have kidnapped his girlfriend, Mandy Bloom (Riseborough). Expect some pretty strong violence, gore and horror. Filmed in Belgium.

Released Fri 12 Oct

Smallfoot

CERT PG (96 mins)

With the voices of Channing Tatum, James Corden, Zendaya, Common, LeBron James, Danny DeVito, Gina Rodriguez Directed by Karey Kirkpatrick and Jason Reisig (USA)

It's just a theory, but a Yeti called Migo (Channing Tatum) thinks humans really do exist. But how can he convince his tribe of this preposterous notion? From the Warner Animation Group. In 3D.

Released Fri 12 Oct



Dogman

CERT 15 (103 mins)

Starring Marcello Fonte, Edoardo Gero, Alida Baldari Calabria, Nunzia Schiano Directed by Matteo Garrone (Italy)

The director of Gomorrah and Tale Of Tales now brings us a crime thriller in which a mild-mannered dog groomer (Fonte) finds himself at loggerheads with a local gangster. Fonte won the best actor award at Cannes for his role.

Released Fri 19 Oct



Goosebumps 2: Haunted Halloween

CERT tbc

Starring Wendi McLendon-Covey, Madison Iseman, Jeremy Ray Taylor, Caleel Harris, Chris Parnell, Ken Jeong Directed by Ari Sandel (USA/Australia)

When two lads open a book that once belonged to the author RL Stine, they inadvertently unleash 'Slappy' and his Halloween Apocalypse. Expect lashings of CGI.

Released Fri 19 Oct

Halloween

CERT tbc (109 mins)

Starring **Jamie Lee Curtis, Judy Greer, Nick Castle, Andi Matichak, Will Patton**
Directed by **David Gordon Green (USA)**

The death of Jamie Lee Curtis in *Halloween: Resurrection* (2002) was greatly exaggerated. This reboot-cum-sequel throws out previous plot points to reintroduce Laurie Strode's tortured relationship with the serial killer Michael Myers (aka The Shape). Green, who's directed such highly acclaimed films as *George Washington* (2000) and *Stronger* (2017), should give the franchise a leg up.

Released Fri 19 Oct

Hunter Killer

CERT 15 (121 mins)

Starring **Gerard Butler, Gary Oldman, Common, Linda Cardellini, Michael Nyqvist, Caroline Goodall, Toby Stephens** Directed by **Donovan Marsh (USA)**

The Russian president has been kidnapped by his own defence minister and it's up to the tyro US submarine commander Joe Glass (Butler) to save him - in Russian waters. Nyqvist, who plays the commander of a Russian sub, passed away last year.

Released Fri 19 Oct

Bohemian Rhapsody

CERT tbc

Starring **Rami Malek, Lucy Boynton, Gwilym Lee, Ben Hardy, Mike Myers** Directed by **Bryan Singer and Dexter Fletcher (UK/USA)**

Leading up to Queen's Live Aid performance at Wembley in 1985, this biopic focuses on the band's flamboyant lead singer Freddie Mercury (played by Malek, from TV's *Mr Robot*). Due to bouts of absenteeism, the film's original director Bryan Singer was replaced in the later stages by the London-born Dexter Fletcher.

Released Wed 24 Oct



CRITIC'S CHOICE

A Star Is Born

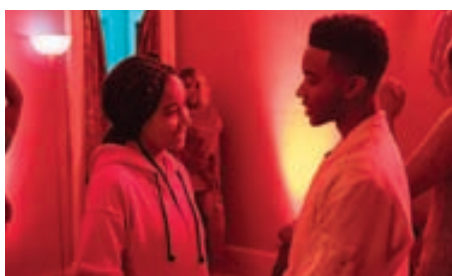
CERT 15 (135 mins)

Starring **Bradley Cooper, Lady Gaga, Andrew Dice Clay, Dave Chappelle, Sam Elliott, Anthony Ramos and Alec Baldwin**
Directed by **Bradley Cooper (USA)**

For his directorial debut, Bradley Cooper has certainly chosen some tried-and-tested material. The original film starred Janet Gaynor and was released in 1937, followed by two re-makes, with Judy Garland (1954) and Barbra Streisand (1976). Here, Lady Gaga takes on the mantle of the wannabe singer with stars in her eyes and is said to be sensational.

The film premiered to ecstatic reviews at the Venice film festival, and the erstwhile Stefani Germanotta is generating phenomenal Oscar buzz, as is the movie and Cooper as both director and actor. Here, Cooper plays Lady Gaga's mentor as a Country musician with alcohol issues and follows in the footsteps of Fredric March, James Mason and Kris Kristoferson. The music, too, has been praised for being 'electrifying.'

Released Fri 5 Oct



The Hate U Give

CERT tbc

Starring **Amandla Stenberg, Regina Hall, Russell Hornsby, KJ Apa, Common, Anthony Mackie** Directed by **George Tillman Jr (USA)**

A 16-year-old girl (Amandla Stenberg) sees her childhood friend shot dead by police and at great personal risk turns activist. Based on the Young Adult novel by Angie Thomas.

Released Fri 26 Oct

Slaughterhouse Rulez

CERT tbc

Starring **Asa Butterfield, Finn Cole, Hermione Corfield, Michael Sheen, Nick Frost, Simon Pegg** Directed by **Crispian Mills (UK)**

When a fracking operation opens up a sink-hole near an exclusive English boarding school, an unspeakable evil is unleashed. Co-scripted by the film critic Henry Fitzherbert and singer-songwriter Crispian Mills (son of Hayley Mills), the horror comedy unites Simon Pegg and Nick Frost on the big screen for the fifth time.

Released Wed 31 Oct



TOM CLARKE

Inspired by and named after local band The Enemy's debut album, made-in-Coventry musical We'll Live And Die In These Towns is showing at the city's Belgrade Theatre this month. What's On found out more from The Enemy's frontman - and the show's musical director - Tom Clarke...



In 2007, British indie rock band The Enemy released their debut album, *We'll Live And Die In These Towns*. The record went to number one in the British album charts in its first week of release and was given platinum certification the following year.

Eleven years on and the album that stole the hearts of the nation with its adrenaline-rush energy and working-class poetry has inspired a gritty and compelling new musical drama.

Based on an ancient Hindu tale - *The Bagavad Gita* - the new musical, named after the album, comes from the pen of acclaimed Coventry writer Geoff Thompson. It's being helmed by the Belgrade Theatre's Artistic Director, Hamish Glen.

"If you came into this with an ego, you'd leave with a deflated one because Geoff and Hamish are both so supremely talented," says Tom Clarke, The Enemy's frontman, who's acting as the show's musical director.

"To watch Hamish work is addictive, and Geoff's script is genius. Geoff makes the seamless transition from script into lyrical content and back out again. Hamish is just an absolute powerhouse of a director. He'll say four words that completely change the dynamic and enrich the acting. It's amazing to watch."

The musical tells the story of a young rock musician named Argy, who sits on the cusp of the big time, only to suffer a crisis of confi-

dence hours before the biggest performance of his life in a huge homecoming concert. His manager, unable to convince him to sing, sends him away to revisit his past and decide his future. So Argy walks the streets of his home town, visiting family and friends in a bid to make sense of his feelings and find a way forward.

"It's a really heartfelt story," says Tom. "I cried in auditions the first time I saw it being acted. I don't think I've cried in front of adults who are total strangers, ever. I was literally sat next to Geoff in auditions sobbing in some of the scenes. I was sat there thinking, 'This is absolutely brilliant, they couldn't act this out any differently or any better'."

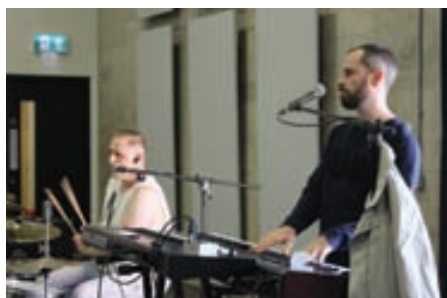
“When Geoff first approached me and said, ‘We’re doing this and I’d like you to be involved as musical director’, I read the script and it could’ve gone either way, I was so scared. I could’ve quite easily passed it off and said, ‘No, get someone who’s done this before’. I agreed to do it on the proviso that if I was rubbish at it, they would sack me in week one. I got through week one without being sacked, so I can’t be that bad at it!”

Although Argy isn’t based on Tom, the character is certainly one to whom The Enemy’s frontman can relate: “The fact that Argy suffers with anxiety and panic attacks is something I completely relate to. I’ve always suffered with huge anxiety, and I used to deal with it by drinking. Last year I finally spoke to a professional about how to exist in the world without being absolutely terrified of life. The journey that Argy goes on, I’ve been there and I really get it. It’s quite cathartic seeing it acted out in front of you.

“I can’t think of anywhere better to do this show than the Belgrade. Geoff is a Coventry writer, and our debut album was made in Coventry. The Belgrade is such an amazing place. I played a gig there years ago with the band that I was playing in before The Enemy. The theatre was a staple of Coventry for decades before I even existed. Hamish is an absolute Coventry legend, and I think with the three of us together, it wouldn’t have been right for the production to be shown anywhere else.”

Following The Enemy’s split in 2016, Tom opened Coventry’s newest music venue, The Empire.

“It’s nice to have a music venue back in the city, and it’s nice to be the driving force behind it. It’s established now and is running itself. A lot of what we do is student and club night-orientated, and that effectively funds keeping a music venue in the city. Phil and



Dave, the main directors, do a superb job, and I don’t need to be down there every night anymore. I was mopping up sick and blood at one point, though - it was an interesting experience!

Tom has also been working hard on his debut solo album.

“I got probably about a third of the way through recording the solo album, all acoustic with no drums, and then had a conversation with my bandmate. We’ve decided that we’re going to do it full band, so it’s back to the drawing board on that. We’re going to record the album over the next year. It’s really exciting!”

So could we ever see an Enemy reunion?

“We’re all on okay terms, we don’t hate each other’s guts. We’d done it for a decade, and like with any creative endeavour, music should be challenging - but it had stopped being challenging and it had stopped being fun. The industry was finding it increasingly hard to find a place for us - there wasn’t a place for us on radio. When you’re up against all that, you kind of think, ‘Well, you know what, maybe the universe is trying to tell me something here and maybe we should go and try different things’. I wouldn’t rule out a reunion one day, but I doubt you’ll see it in the immediate or near future.

“If ever the opportunity presents itself again to be part of another musical, I’ve already said to Hamish that if it’s something I would be right for, I’m in! It’s a yes before he’s even told me what it is!



We’ll Live And Die In These Towns shows at Coventry’s Belgrade Theatre on selected dates until Saturday 20 October.



Whistler And Nature

Compton Verney, Warwickshire,
Sat 20 October - Sun 16 December

The style of art produced by American artist James McNeill Whistler was shaped by numerous influences. Among them - and the focal point of this new exhibition - were his family's involvement in early 19th century industry and his own pursuit of a career in the US military. Featuring a collection of paintings, sketches and prints, Whistler And Nature also looks at the artist's work in the context of attitudes to landscape in British art and design; attitudes which were shaped not only by classical revivalism but also by a desire for landscape improvement and productivity.

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Maman

The Barber Institute, Birmingham,
Fri 19 October - Sun 20 January

Marking the 150th anniversary of French artist Édouard Vuillard's birth and focusing on the first decade of his career, this brand new exhibition features a selection of paintings, pastels, prints and photographs lent by collections both in Britain

and across Europe.

Vuillard produced small-scale work featuring domestic subject matter during those initial 10 years as an artist, painting his mother on numerous occasions. Indeed, during the course of his career, Vuillard painted her in excess of 500 times, and it's with this use of his mother as model that the exhibition primarily concerns itself.

For The Fallen

The Potteries Museum & Gallery,
Stoke-on-Trent, until Sun 18 November

A 22-metre-long painted wall hanging, depicting a panorama of the battlefields fought over by the 5th Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment during the First

World War, is the centrepiece of this exhibition.

Presented in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the Armistice that brought the four-year conflict to an end, the display also includes archives and objects relating to the end of the war.

Creating The Spectacle! Immersed In 360

MAC, Birmingham, until Sun 25 November

Multimedia, performance and installation artist Sue Austin is a woman on a mission - to represent her experience as a wheelchair user in a brighter light, while at the same time "challenging the idea of disabled as 'other'".

Sue's MAC presentation was created in 2012 for the Cultural Olympiad In Britain - the celebration of the arts that led up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games - and comprises a groundbreaking series of live

art and video works of an underwater wheelchair.

The artwork has received plenty of international attention during the past six years, and is estimated to have been viewed by 400 million-plus people.



BP Portrait Award

Wolverhampton Art Gallery,
Fri 12 October - Fri 30 November

The prestigious BP Portrait Award makes a welcome return to Wolverhampton this month. Now in its 39th year, the free-to-view exhibition showcases outstanding and innovative new portraits from around the world.

In total, the 2018 competition attracted 2,667 entries from 88 countries. First prize went to Barcelona-born artist Miriam Escofet, whose portrait of her mother drinking tea was described by the judges as 'a very sensitive depiction of an elderly sitter'.



Polly Apfelbaum: Waiting For The UFOs

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, until Sun 18 November

This major exhibition of new and recent work by internationally renowned artist Polly Apfelbaum features large-scale colourful installations of textiles, ceramics and drawings.

Taking a political and feminist position, the New York-based Apfelbaum produces artworks designed to challenge notions of entitlement and to promote social equality.

The exhibition's unusual title is taken from British singer-songwriter Graham Parker's 1979 song, Waiting For The UFOs, recalling, as the exhibition's publicity describes it, 'the vast empty spaces of the American landscape, and the characters who anxiously anticipate extra-terrestrial visits'.



IMAGE: Tom Dale Company: I Infinite - see festival highlights section for details

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS...

RETRO GAMING NIGHT FOR BIG GEEKS

Sat 27 Oct

Have you been missing all those video games you used to play as a kid? Well this is your chance to revel in being a *big* kid and rediscover some of those retro classics with Dead Pixels, including Street Fighter 2, Mortal Kombat, Doom, Sonic The Hedgehog and Mario Kart. Plus, now you're a big geek instead of a little geek, you can play your favourite video games whilst enjoying a delicious pint of craft beer!

SMART PLAY ZONE

Sat 27 - Tues 30 Oct

The main event for little (and big) geeks is the supercool Smart Play Zone. MAC's Little Geeks HQ will be jam-packed full of the very best retro games. The tech hub will also feature drone demos, and you can even help build a Raspberry Pi weather station.

MARSHMALLOW LASER FEAST: IN THE EYES OF THE ANIMALS

Sat 27 - Sun 28 Oct

Discover what it's like to be a creature of the forest. Once you're immersed in a whole new

world thanks to the virtual reality headset, a combination of animal-like sight, a 360° film and an accompanying soundtrack will provide you with an artistic interpretation of what it's like to be one of four British species.



LITTLE GEEKS

a brand new digital festival lands in Birmingham for October half term...

Created by Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) Birmingham, Little Geeks is an innovative new festival exploring the digital world.

The inaugural programme has something for everyone but is particularly geared towards families with children, as MAC Chief Executive & Artistic Director Debbie Kermode explains: "Little Geeks came out of recognition that technology is such a huge part of every generation's lives today. We love intergenerational activities here at MAC, and we're very aware that there is this extraordinary approach to learning that's called reverse mentoring. This is where children, even very little ones, are teaching mums, dads, grandparents and other older people how to do little digital tricks. We've seen this process in some of our other activities at MAC, and we thought it'd be a wonderful festival idea to bring families together.

"For mums and dads, digital can be a negative thing in children's lives when they're poring over iPads and other technology instead of playing with other things. So what we wanted to do is show the creative side of technology. For example, we've also tried to bring nature into technology here, because technology really can be a useful tool to understand wildlife. I

guess we just wanted to prove that the digital world doesn't just exist indoors in a darkened room when staring blankly at a screen.

Artists have imaginative ways of bringing out new experiences for people."

Little Geeks' activities come with a family-friendly price tag.

"A lot of our activities are free because we were very generously supported by the players of People's Postcode Lottery. There are a few paid events, but they're very reasonably priced thanks to our support. The free events allow people to pop by with their families and have a go at what Little Geeks is all about without even buying a ticket."

Little Geeks will also see MAC working closely with local communities and schools, particularly with regard to the Girls That Geek conference day which takes place prior to the festival.

"There should be a concern within the education and jobs sectors that more boys are going into technology careers than girls. It's a massive issue because technology is for everybody; it's a very creative output and is really the future for us all. I think it's important that girls get the opportunity to explore that career possibility. Although the day is open to all, what we really want to

ensure is that girls gain more confidence and become inspired by the digital world.

"We have this day which is going to be 'girls only', and we're inviting schools to bring pupils along to the event. Hopefully we can make young women realise that they can contribute to this extremely exciting but often male-dominated area. The progression of technology is moving so fast and girls can't be left behind."

Debbie has high hopes for the future of Little Geeks.

"I think what we'll do is learn from our audience - we're an organisation that listens to people. From there, we'll begin to progress and make Little Geeks a brand. We'll see, but there's been such an exciting response already that we're really keen to continue it. We hope in the future some of the universities will come on board because it could be a great opportunity for them to showcase their work. I think Birmingham needs festivals like Little Geeks because there's so much terrific work being done across the city. It's nice to bring it all together in one place."

Little Geeks runs at Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham from Saturday 27 October to Friday 2 November.

MESHWORK ORCHESTRA

Wed 31 Oct - Fri 2 Nov

Make music by weaving textiles with conductive materials and become part of the Meshwork Orchestra. You'll be able to create textile sensors as part of an electronic musical instrument which you can play. This is a commissioned installation by acclaimed artist-educator Becca Rose Glowacki.

TOM DALE COMPANY: I INFINITE

Thurs 1 - Fri 2 Nov

A digitally animated live dance show inspired by the digital world's quest to recreate life.

Set in a white, digitally animated environment, I Infinite combines dance, music, art and design to explore the boundaries between the digital and organic world.

VISUAL POKE: SPOOKY DIGITAL PROJECTION MAPPING

Fri 2 Nov

You may think you know MAC well - but do you? Keep your eyes peeled because it's about to be temporarily transformed - on the outside, at least - with digital projection mapping from Visual Poke that has a

decidedly haunted feel to it. Get ready for spooky goings-on as the building gets an instant digital makeover with some eye-catching visuals that simply have to be seen to be believed...



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Horse Of The Year Show

NEC, Birmingham, Wed 3 - Sun 7 October

Celebrating its 70th anniversary, the Horse Of The Year Show gallops back into Birmingham this month.

The five-day event includes a range of national

and international showjumping classes, with competitors battling to be crowned champion. This year's show also features more displays than ever before, including contributions from the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment Musical Ride and Alizée Froment, who will be making a UK debut.

China Revealed

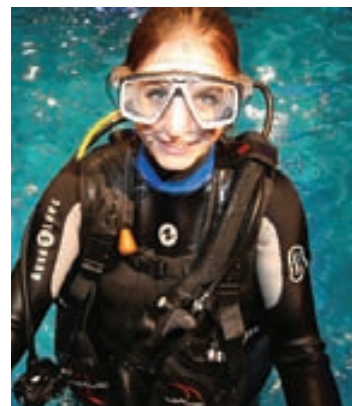
Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Wed 3, Fri 5 and Sun 7 October



Compton Verney's annual festival exploring Chinese art and culture makes a welcome return. A celebration of ancient China and its continuing cultural traditions, the event features, among other attractions, a hands-on tour of the gallery's ancient Chinese bronze collection, a lecture on the Terracotta Army and a family fun day full of dance, music and song.

Dive 2018

NEC, Birmingham, Sat 27 & Sun 28 October



Boasting hundreds of exhibitors - including manufacturers and retailers of diving equipment, and travel agents offering a wide range of dive holiday destinations - Dive 2018 also features an unrivalled programme of guest speakers. Other elements of the show include two large in-hall presentation stages, pools, mini-theatres, TekDeck and prominent dive-travel, training and underwater photography areas.



Motorhome And Caravan Show 2018

NEC, Birmingham, Tues 16 - Sun 21 October

Returning to Birmingham's NEC for another year, the Motorhome And Caravan Show is the industry's one and only new-season launch event in the UK.

With over 370 exhibitors to discover, visitors have the opportunity to chat to manufacturers about a wide range of product launches, from caravans and lodges to holiday homes and accessories.

The show also features talks by industry experts, enthusiasts and celebrity speakers, and free expert-led tuition covering a range of essential skills to help you prepare for your next big adventure.

Wartime Hangar Dance

RAF Museum, Cosford, Shropshire Sat 13 October

Back by popular demand, RAF Cosford's 1940s Hangar Dance takes place inside Hangar One, the home of the museum's collection of World War Two aircraft and artefacts.

Participants are encouraged to don their finest wartime costumes for the event.

Music is provided by Paul Drakeley and his All Stars Band & Singers.



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Disney On Ice: Dream Big

Arena Birmingham, Fri 19 - Sun 28 October

Moana, one of the latest additions to the Disney franchise, makes her European debut in this brand new Disney On Ice production. Audiences can expect an action-packed perfor-

mance filled with 'high-flying jumps and breathtaking skating' from much-loved characters including Frozen's Anna, Elsa and Olaf and Disney princesses both past and present. Those who arrive early to the show will be treated to a special 90th birthday celebration in honour of Walt Disney's 'true original', Mickey Mouse.

Grand Designs Live

NEC, Birmingham, Wed 10 - Sun 14 October

Based on the popular Channel Four series and packed with inspirational ideas, Grand Designs Live comprises six project zones and features new product launches and specialist exhibitors. The TV show's presenter, Kevin McCloud, will be on stage across the weekend, taking part in educational seminars and debates with a host of industry experts.



Flame And Thunder

Santa Pod Raceway, Northants, Sat 27 October

A regular on the Santa Pod calendar, the family-focused Flame And Thunder show brings together monster trucks, jet cars and drag cars for plenty of spectacular main-track action. Other highlights include numerous sideshows, a range of funfair rides, and sure-to-be-breathtaking displays from Rodrigo the human cannonball and a pyrotechnic aerobatics display team. The event is brought to a close with a 'spectacular' firework display.

Destination Star Trek

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 19 - Sun 21 October

With 2018 marking the 25th anniversary of TV show Deep Space Nine, Europe's official Star Trek convention is this month bringing the celebrations to the NEC. As well as featuring interactive exhibits with genuine props and costumes from Star Trek's 50-plus years, the three-day event also provides fans with the chance to come face to face with stars from the franchise, including original-series favourites William Shatner and Nichelle Nichols.



The 25th Carole Nash Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show

Staffordshire County Showground, Sat 13 & Sun 14 October

Club stands, live action, autumn sales, classic off-road machines and special guest stars from iconic eras of motorcycling are all featured in a show which regularly welcomes more than 30,000 enthusiasts through its doors. Celebrating the growing popularity of emerging and modern classics from the 1960s, '70s and '80s, the event features hundreds of traders and dealers, as well as numerous autojumble stands offering a wealth of parts and spares for every project.





Halloween Nights

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley,
Fri 26 - Sat 27 October

Expect a frightfully good evening of spine-tingling entertainment as the Black Country Living Museum transforms into a spooktacular world

of family-focused fun.

Attractions include fire breathers, stilt walkers, live music and tales told by eerie candlelight. There's also a haunted mine experience to sample and an opportunity for youngsters to trick-or-treat their way around the museum's houses and shops.

Screamfest

National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffordshire,
Thurs 11 October - Sat 3 November

If you're looking to get your heart rate up this Halloween, Screamfest will surely do the trick. With five 'scares' available to explore - including a Mexican Day Of The Dead-inspired maze and a circus-themed funhouse full of freaks and creeps - visitors are promised 'the fright of their lives'. Away from the scares, there's also live entertainment throughout the night, with DJs, extreme performers and street theatre all featuring.



Spooky Science Week

Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham,
Sat 27 October - Sun 4 November

Little monsters are invited to try their hand at some spooky science at Thinktank this half-term. Interactive drop-in sessions in the museum's slime labs take place throughout the week, while budding 'mad scientists' get the chance to create their very own monster, screeching ghost or fizzing slime.

Halloween Family Boat Trips

Dudley Canal & Tunnel Trust,
Fri 26 - Weds 31 October



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

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

More Treat Than Trick

Drayton Manor Theme Park,
Staffordshire, Sat 20 October -
Fri 2 November

Drayton Manor Park is inviting families to dust off their broomsticks and batwings and treat themselves to some ghoulish Halloween fun this month. Creepy capers to enjoy include the chance to see the ever-popular Thomas Land attraction transformed into the 'spooktacular' Island of Sodor. More-courageous youngsters can face their fear of the unknown by taking part in the 'five mystery boxes' challenge. The theme park's fabulous white-knuckle rides, meanwhile, provide the perfect opportunity to add a churning stomach to that Halloween-induced tingling spine!





Candy And Cobwebs

Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge,
Fri 26 October

Blists Hill Victorian Town is this month hosting a brand new Halloween event created especially for youngsters. Suitable for under-eights, Candy And Cobwebs invites children to come dressed in their

best Halloween attire for an evening spent exploring the historic streets of the Victorian town. With lanterns, cobwebs and carved pumpkins much in evidence, event highlights include autumnal candle dipping, spine-tingling ghost stories and the chance to trick-or-treat the ever-so-spooky townsfolk.

Dr Nerium's Garden Of Ghouls

Birmingham Botanical Gardens,
Fri 26 October - Sun 4 November

A brand new attraction for 2018, this live-action scaremaze takes visitors through Birmingham Botanical Gardens via a fully immersive experience. The challenge for participants is a straightforward one: to do what many before them have failed to manage and make it through the maze - despite the attentions of the weird, wonderful and terrifying creatures that have escaped Dr Nerium's world famous laboratory. For those who make it to safety, there's a special entertainment zone to enjoy, complete with street food traders, bars, music and circus-themed attractions.



Ghost Search

Tamworth Castle, Staffordshire,
Wed 31 October

Take an after-hours walk around Tamworth Castle in search of ghouls and ghosts. There'll be vigils in some of the castle's reputedly haunted rooms too, where visitors might snatch a glimpse of the Black Lady or the White Lady, two of the venue's notorious ghostly residents.



Scarefest

Alton Towers, Staffordshire, Sat 6 - Sun 7, Sat
13 - Sun 14, Fri 19 October - Fri 2 November

Filled with spooks, frights and thrills for everyone, Alton Tower's popular Halloween season returns for another year.

An extension of opening hours means that guests can enjoy their favourite rides after dark, as well as checking out loads of extra entertainment.

Younger visitors can take part in spooktacular family fun and shows, including the brand new CBeebies Monster Ball.

For older thrill-seekers, the park's award-winning scare mazes make a welcome return, complete with the newly added Project 42.



Fright Street

Tudor World, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 27 October
- Sat 3 November

Taking place in Stratford-upon-Avon's most haunted building, Tudor World will be celebrating Halloween with lots of activities for both young and old. Daytime activities include a children's Halloween trail and the chance to have your fortune read by the resident fortune teller. After dark, spooky tours will be available for the adults through the building's labyrinth of shadowy hallways, all by the lantern light.

Dr Phil Hammond



NHS doctor and BBC broadcaster Dr Phil Hammond talks about the importance of the National Health Service...

The NHS is 70 years old in 2018. Is it worth celebrating?

Absolutely. We invented universal health-care and, as Nye Bevan observed, we removed the shadow of fear from millions of homes where people had suffered great harm because they couldn't afford to call the doctor, nurse or midwife. A bit like America today. Within a decade of the NHS, child mortality had plummeted and life expectancy had increased dramatically. However, the National Health Service was largely a National Illness Service. We still spend a fortune diving deeper and deeper into the river of illness, heroically dragging patients back to the bank and trying to put them back together again, with neither the time nor energy to wander upstream and stop them falling in. As technology advances, we can be tricked into treating the untreatable, prolonging life when a gentle death would be a much wiser and kinder option.

And how will your new comedy show help improve the NHS?

I'm going around the UK telling the story of the NHS and asking audiences for their suggestions on improving health and social care. We debate them, I add my own thoughts and then the audience votes on them. At the end of the tour, I'll have a People's Plan for the NHS that I guarantee will make far more sense than anything that comes out of any government. And it'll be a lot funnier. Trust me.

Will you be using it in your stand against Jacob Rees-Mogg at the next election?

Definitely. We have to move the debate beyond Brexit to the parlous state of our public services. But if we take the Rees-Mogg/Boris/Trump superhighway, we will be stuffed on so many levels.

Do you and Rees-Mogg disagree on Physician Assisted Suicide (PAS)?

I'm sure we do. I'm a patron of My Death, My Decision. We certainly need to debate PAS. Personally, if I don't go suddenly I'd like to be able to see myself out before I lose all dignity, or choose to be despatched like George V, whose physician, Lord Dawson, eased his passage in 1936 with a lethal injection of morphine and cocaine directly into the imperial jugular vein. Dawson, who was made a viscount for his

regicide, admitted his actions in a House of Lords debate, arguing there was no need to legalise euthanasia in the UK because 'good doctors already helped their patients to die'. Today, we all too often use our power and paternalism for the opposite effect. As the joke goes; 'Why do they put rivets on coffin lids? To stop oncologists trying one last dose of chemotherapy'.

Doesn't the BMA oppose assisted dying as well?

Yes, but remember the BMA also opposed the NHS. Seventy years on, with thousands of doctors marching in the streets to 'save our NHS', it's easy to forget that 85% of them opposed its introduction in a BMA plebiscite less than six months before launch day. The unspoken reason was that both consultants and GPs feared their private income might take a substantial hit if they were forced to be full-time state employees. More reasonably they worried what might become of them, and the NHS, if it was starved of cash and had a health secretary who was a power-hungry control-freak with a scant grasp of statistics.

So how did Nye Bevan get past the doctors?

Bevan had the confidence of overwhelming public support, and cleverly played medical establishment top trumps by paying a Harley Street visit to Lord Moran, president of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP). Bevan, an uncompromising socialist in opposition, was far more pragmatic in office and forged an unlikely alliance with Moran, nicknamed Corkscrew Charlie because of his cunning. Together they hatched a plan to allow consultants to practise privately on NHS premises using pay beds, and for GPs to be self-employed rather than salaried civil servants at the whim of the state.

Moran, who was Churchill's personal physician, faced fierce competition at the RCP from Lord Horder, a brilliant diagnostician, George VI's personal physician and outspoken opponent of the NHS. The future of the NHS may well have hinged on their 1948 battle for president, which was decided by members each placing a silver coin in a silver bucket as it was passed around the room. Moran won by just a few votes and his, and Bevan's, plan was hatched. Bevan later regretted supporting the growth of private practice within the NHS, declaring that he had 'stuffed consul-

tants mouths with gold'. At the time, it seemed a small price to pay for nationalising an entire health service overnight, to allow everyone access to care regardless of wealth.

But can we afford the NHS?

Of course we can. The economic argument for investing in health, education, housing, food and transport is as strong now as when Attlee's government delivered extraordinary regeneration and investment at a time of such austerity. We now know that the dice for human health are cast in the womb, or even before, and that if a child has four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (placental poisoning, poverty, abuse, neglect etc), their future health and attainment are irreparably blighted. The challenge now for health and social care is how to prioritise whatever spending our politicians see fit to hand us, and I'd make a strong case for sorting out the bookends of life. We all deserve a wise and gentle death when the time comes, so let's at least get the conversation going. After all, we are all going to die not matter how much we put into the NHS. I'd also argue that if the welfare of children is paramount, as enshrined in the Children's Act, then so should the funding be. Any lifestyle and life-circumstance changes we can make to nudge-up the life trajectory of endangered children will have lifelong benefits for them and us.

Is the NHS still a National Illness Service?

Yes, and it's likely to remain so for some while yet. The real National Health Service belongs to homes, communities, schools, higher education, workplaces, food manufacturers, libraries, recreation facilities, water companies, sustainable transport etc, etc - and to all of us. Healthcare and selfcare are a delicate balance of both collective and individual responsibility for ourselves and our planet. We must all do what we can to help ourselves, and others less fortunate, from falling into that river of illness well before our time. Nye Bevan lost four siblings in childhood and died at 62. His legacy is that most of us no longer suffer such devastating loss.

Dr Phil Hammond: Happy Birthday NHS? will be at Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, on Friday 26 October.

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October 2018

the list



Halloween Nights at Black Country Living Museum 26-27 and 30-31 October

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

What's On

Mon 1 to Sun 7 October



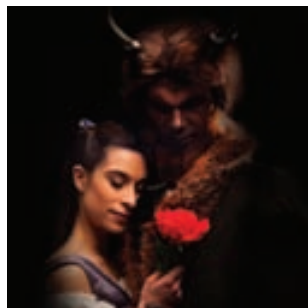
My Mother Said I Never Should
at New Vic Theatre,
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Tues 2 - Sat 6 October

Mon 8 to Sun 14 October



Tim Vine at Oakengates
Theatre @ The Place, Telford
Wed 10 October

Mon 15 to Sun 21 October



Beauty & The Beast at Prince
of Wales Centre, Cannock
Thurs 18 October

Mon 22 to Wed 31 October



Karine Polwart at
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury
Wed 31 October

THROUGHOUT OCTOBER

Visual Arts

New Art Gallery - Walsall

NEW ELIZABETH MAGILL - HEADLAND
Exhibition of new work, Wed 17 Oct - Sun 20 Jan

Newcastle Borough Museum & Art Gallery

BACK IN TIME WITH TEXTILES Fashion and textiles collection from the early 1800s to the 1980s, until Tues 13 Nov

Potteries Museum & Art Gallery - Stoke-On-Trent

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD: STAFFORDSHIRE LUSTREWARE Explore over 200 years of lustreware production in The Potteries; from early 19th century Wedgwood to 21st century Emma Bridgewater, until Sun 4 Nov

REVEALING VOICES Celebration of the 50th anniversary of Radio Stoke, featuring a selection of photographs, archival material and film, until Sun 23 Dec

THIS PATH, ONE TIME, LONG TIME AGO Series of sculptures and interventions reflecting on our relationship with the environment, until Wed 2 Jan

Qube Gallery, Oswestry

QUBE OPEN 2018 Annual competition inviting artists from all over the country to submit work on a particular theme. This exhibition features the shortlisted entries, until Tues 30 Oct

Weston Park, Shifnal

100 HEARTS WAR STORIES A thoughtful exhibition to commemorate all those who took part in World War One. Textile artists interpret the stories using cloth and thread as both a medium and metaphor, Sat 29 Sept - Tues 30 Oct

The Willow Art Gallery, Oswestry

AUTUMN OPEN EXHIBITION 2018 Showcasing work by Outline Art, a group of professional artists who live on the borders of Cheshire East and Staffordshire, until Sat 27 Oct

WAR & CONFLICT, POETRY & PEACE AS PART OF WILFRED OWEN FESTIVAL Exhibition of remembrance and commemoration to mark the centenary of Wilfred Owen's death and armistice day, until Sun 11 Nov

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

NEW SITES OF MEMORY II Chris Harrison is a photographic artist who spe-

cialises in producing large-format documentary-style photographs. His work is included in the collections of the V&A, the Imperial War Museum and the National Media Museum, Sat 6 Oct - Sun 2 Dec

Other VISUAL ARTS

SHROPSHIRE ART SOCIETY EXHIBITION

Showcase of work by Maggie Humphry and Bob Charlesworth, until Fri 5 Oct, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

ROOM CURATED BY PETER SALTER Exhibition of works by architects and photographers in conjunction with artists, ceramicists and textile makers, until Sat 6 Oct, Twenty Twenty Gallery, Ludlow

EXPERIENCECOLOUR Hands-on exhibition inviting visitors of all ages and abilities to explore the fascinating science and art of colour through large-scale installations, displays and experiments, until Sun 14 Oct, Ruskin Glass Centre, Stourbridge

SCHOOLING GOOD TASTE Exhibition celebrating Coalbrookdale School of Art and the artists and artwork that came out of the school, until Fri 21 Dec, Coalbrookdale Gallery, Ironbridge

SECRET SEVERN ART TRAIL Showcase for both new and established artists in and around the Ironbridge Gorge, Fri 28 Sept - Sun 7 Oct, Ironbridge, Telford

NEW SHROPSHIRE ART SOCIETY AUTUMN EXHIBITION Featuring original framed and unframed pictures for sale, Mon 1 - Sat 13 Oct, The Bear Steps Gallery, Shrewsbury

NEW MAN UP EXHIBITION Exhibition about masculinity and mental health, curated and designed by artist-evaluator Nicola Winstanley working alongside artist Rob Pointon and photographer Jenny Harper, Thurs 4 - Tues 30 Oct, Keele University, Staffordshire

NEW BRINDLEY VILLAGE - A LEGACY OF THE GREAT WAR Exhibition capturing the essence and spirit of the villagers as they developed a close-knit community in the aftermath of war, Mon 8 - Fri 12 Oct, Museum of Cannock Chase, Staffordshire

NEW CENTRALA POP-UP GALLERY AT FUNNY THINGS FESTIVAL Pop-up gallery presenting a group exhibition of graphic design and illustration by young and established artists, Tues 9 Oct, Wulfrun Shopping Centre, Wolverhampton

NEW WINTER LANDSCAPES Mixed-media show of painters, printmakers and potters, featuring Zoë Taylor, Carol Sanderson and Gary Groucutt, Sat 20 Oct - Sat 24 Nov, Twenty Twenty Gallery, Much Wenlock

Gigs

KOJO FUNDS Mon 1 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

WARWICK/JOHNSON Mon 1 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

LARRY CARLTON Tues 2 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

CAROUSEL Tues 2 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE NIGHTINGALES, NEAR JAZZ EXPERIENCE & STEWART LEE Tues 2 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE AMITY AFFLICTION Tues 2 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE CHRIS BEVINGTON ORGANISATION Wed 3 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

KOVIC Wed 3 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

CHRIS SHERBURN & DENNY BARTLEY Wed 3 Oct, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

THE GUY TORTORA BAND Wed 3 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

ACRES Wed 3 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

HOPE & SOCIAL Wed 3 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

THE BEATLES UN-PLUGGED Wed 3 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

LUKE COMBS Wed 3 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

DANIEL O'DONNELL Wed 3 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

CHRIS BEVINGTON ORGANISATION Wed 3 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

PAUL YOUNG Wed 3 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

LUCA STRICAGNOLI Thurs 4 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE THREE DEGREES Thurs 4 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham

ZION TRAIN Thurs 4 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

RAYMOND FROGGATT Thurs 4 Oct, Prince of Wales, Cannock

BIG JIM AND BLACK CAT BONES Thurs 4 Oct,

Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

VIRGINIA WING Thurs 4 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LET'S HANG ON Thurs 4 Oct, Oakengates Theatre @ The Place, Telford, Shropshire

THE BARRON KNIGHTS Thurs 4 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

ANNA CALVI Thurs 4 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

CHINA CRISIS Thurs 4 Oct, Pizza Express, Brindley Place, B'ham

THREE DAYS GRACE Thurs 4 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BARRY STEELE & FRIENDS AS THE ROY ORBISON STORY Fri 5 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CATAPULT CLUB Fri 5 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE SNUTS Fri 5 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

BEE GEES FEVER Fri 5 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

NUCLEAR WEASELS Fri 5 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

SLADE SHOWCASE Fri 5 Oct, The Slade Rooms, W'hampton

THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE Fri 5 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

MAINLY MADNESS Fri 5 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

RAMMLIED Fri 5 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE CORAL Fri 5 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

ANNA MEREDITH & SOUTHBANK SINFONIA Fri 5 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

NAMIWA JAZZ Fri 5 Oct, Pizza Express, Brindley Place, Birmingham

KRYSTHLA Fri 5 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

STEVE HACKETT GENESIS REVISITED Fri 5 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

INTO THE SHADOWS Fri 5 - Sat 6 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

BOTH SIDES NOW PRE-

SENTS THE JONI MITCHELL SONGBOOK Sat 6 Oct, The Hive, Shrewsbury

BEN - THE ULTIMATE MICHAEL JACKSON TRIBUTE Sat 6 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

MIKE CHRISTIE Sat 6 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ONE NIGHT OF QUEEN Sat 6 Oct, Oakengates Theatre @ The Place, Telford

SPICE GIRLS TRIBUTE Sat 6 Oct, Havana Republic, Shrewsbury

DIAMOND HEAD Sat 6 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

RHYTHM OF THE 90S Sat 6 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

WHOLE LOTTA DC Sat 6 Oct, The Slade Rooms, W'hampton

THE RIFLES Sat 6 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

COL3TRANE Sat 6 Oct, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

REBEL REBEL Sat 6 Oct, Route 44, Birmingham

HUNTER AND THE BEAR Sat 6 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TOM SPEIGHT Sat 6 Oct, Ort, Birmingham

THE JONI MITCHELL SONGBOOK Sat 6 Oct, The Hive, Shrewsbury

ROXY MAGIC Sat 6 Oct, Lichfield Guildhall

BACKSTREET THUNDER Sat 6 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SUBTERRANEANS Sat 6 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

BETHEL MUSIC Sun 7 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MY DARLING CLEMENTINE Sun 7 Oct, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

THE STORY SO FAR Sun 7 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FXLW AMERICANA Sun 7 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR Sun 7 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

WANNABE: THE SPICE GIRLS SHOW Sun 7 Oct, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by Widor, J.S Bach, Ginastera, Best, Gounod & Rossini, Mon 1 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

CBSO: TCHAIKOVSKY AND BEETHOVEN Featuring Constantinos Carydis (conductor) and Yulianna Avdeeva (piano). Programme includes works by Skalkottas, Tchaikovsky, Koukos and Beethoven, Thurs 4 - Sun 7 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BENYOUNES QUARTET Featuring Zara Benyounes & Emily Holland (violin), Sara Roberts (viola) & Kim Vaughan (cello). Programme includes works by Purcell, John Woolrich & Haydn, Fri 5 Oct, The Barber Institute, B'ham

SOLO, SPIRITUAL, BACH (ARCADIA 2018) Featuring Tim Gill (cello), Karen Jones (flute), Thomas Bowes (violin) & Thorvald Blough (baritone). Programme includes works by J.S Bach, Fri 5 Oct, St Mary Magdalene Church, Leintwardine, Shropshire

JOANNA MACGREGOR PLAYS THE GOLDBERG VARIATIONS Also featuring Eleanor Alberga (piano), Thomas Bowes (violin) & Thorvald Blough (baritone), Sat 6 Oct, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA Featuring Michael Lloyd (conductor) & Natasha Day (soprano). Programme includes works by Holst, Berg & Vaughan Williams, Sun 7 Oct, The Bramall, Birmingham

A MUSICAL OFFERING (ARCADIA 2018) Featuring Thorvald Blough (baritone), Shaun Ward (harpichord & organ), Jane Marshall (oboe), Karen Jones (flute), Thomas Bowes (violins), Clifton Harrison (viola) & Tim Gill (cello), Sun 7 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

Comedy

HARRY & CHRIS: SAVE THE WORLD Tues 2 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

JASON MANFORD Wed 3 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

HARRY & CHRIS: SAVE THE WORLD Wed 3 Oct, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

ROBIN INCE Thurs 4 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

THE IMPROLECTUALS Thurs 4 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

GARETH RICHARDS, COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON PLUS COMIC TBC Thurs 4 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

KUM-N-AVALOFF COMEDY NIGHT Thurs 4 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

MANDY MUDEN, MICKY P KERR, GRAEME

COLLARD & JAMES COOK Thurs 4 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Staffordshire

ANDREW LAWRENCE, ALFIE MOORE, LINDSEY SANTORO & TOM HOUGHTON Thurs 4 Oct, The George Hotel, Lichfield

BREAKING TALENT AWARD 2018 Fri 5 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TONY WRIGHT, ROB MULHOLLAND, STEPHANIE LANG & COMIC TBC Fri 5 Oct, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

JETHRO Fri 5 Oct, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

DANNY O'BRIEN, GARETH RICHARDS, ANDREW RYAN & COMIC TBC Fri 5 - Sat 6 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CHRISTIAN REILLY, SARAH CALLAGHAN, JARLATH REGAN & CRAIG MURRAY Sat 6 Oct, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

DEANO MAC, JASON PATTERSON, JUDIE LOVE & SMASH Sat 6 Oct, MAC, B'ham

JUNIOR JESTERS Sun 7 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

IAN D MONTFORT, LEE KYLE, IVAN BRACKENBURY & DAN NIGHTINGALE Sun 7 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

GARY POWNDLAND & FRIENDS Sun 7 Oct, the Glee Club, Birmingham

THE LAUGHING SOLE COMEDY FOR KIDS Sun 7 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

Theatre

REBUS: LONG SHADOWS Brand new play based on Ian Rankin's fictional detective, John Rebus, until Sat 6 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

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

TARTUFFE New version of Moliere's provocative French classic, until Sat 23 Feb, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ONE MAN STRANGER THINGS - A PARODY Canadian actor Charles Ross single-handedly recreates season one of the Netflix sensation, Mon 1 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BEYOND THE BARRICADE The UK's longest-running musical theatre concert tour, Tues 2 - Wed 3 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

SUMMER HOLIDAY Ray Quinn stars in a new musical based on the iconic 1960s film of the same name, Tues 2 - Sat 6 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

MY MOTHER SAID I NEVER SHOULD London Classic Theatre present a story of love, jealousy and the price of freedom, Tues 2 - Sat 6 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

SUMMIT In a blend of languages, including fully integrated BSL, three



My Mother Said I Never Should - New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

performers tell a story from three perspectives, Wed 3 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

DR KING THE AFTERMATH Tonia Daley-Campbell explores the legacy left by Dr Martin Luther King, Wed 3 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

PRISCILLA QUEEN OF THE DESERT Presented by Shrewsbury Amateur Operatic Society, Wed 3 - Sat 6 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE IMPROLECTUALS An evening of comedy improv games featuring the best of Birmingham's improv talent, Thurs 4 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

ATLANTIC LADIES Musical play about the true adventures of Shropshire's 'Atlantic Ladies' as they attempt to become the oldest female team to row right across the Atlantic Ocean, Thurs 4 Oct, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

CONFESSIONS OF A REDHEADED COFFEESHOP GIRL One-woman show for anyone who's ever had a job they didn't like, Thurs 4 Oct, Wern Town Hall, Wern, North Shropshire

HALFWAY TO PARADISE - THE BILLY FURY STORY Set against a backdrop of the 1960s and including personal movie footage of Billy, Thurs 4 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

FINDING JOY Vamos Theatre present their acclaimed show about dementia, Thurs 4 - Fri 5 Oct, MAC, B'ham

BISMILLAH A story of disenfranchisement, social alienation, prejudice, radicalisation and the rock band Queen, Thurs 4 - Sat 6 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

DUET FOR ONE Belinda Lang & Oliver Cotton star in a new staging of Tom Kempinski's award-winning play, Thurs 4 - Sat 6 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ALL YOU NEED IS LSD Darkly humorous new play illuminating the drugs debate and examining the freedom we have to make our own choices, Thurs 4 - Sat 13 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

THE THINKING DRINKERS PUB CRAWL Enjoy five free drinks as the award-winning experts take you from the symposiums of Ancient Greece to the classic British boozers via Wild West saloons, Victorian gin palaces and the secret Speakeasy, Fri 5 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

LITE One-woman multimedia show exploring the issues of identity, self-image and skin lightening through the eyes of a young black woman, Fri 5 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

WE ARE BRONTË Morecambe & Wise meet David Lynch in Publick Transport's madcap reimagining of the Bronte myth, Fri 5 Oct, Edgton Village Hall, Craven Arms, South Shropshire

ATLANTIC LADIES Musical play about the true adventures of Shropshire's 'Atlantic Ladies' as they attempt to become the oldest female team to row right across the Atlantic Ocean, Fri 5 Oct, Sir John Bayley Club, Wellington, Shropshire

PRIVATE PARTS LIVE TV stars Jamie Laing and Francis Boule tread the boards with their live 'laugh-a-minute extravaganza', developed from their hit podcast, Sat 6 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

JUST LIKE THAT! THE TOMMY COOPER SHOW Highly acclaimed tribute to a comic genius, Sat 6 Oct, Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

BREAKING THE CODE The Crescent Theatre Company present Hugh Whitmore's 'compassionate, amusing and ultimately tragic play', Sat 6 - Sat 13 Oct, Crescent Theatre, B'ham

BUFO BUFO The Awkward Silence re-

SAM RABONE KATRINA BRYAN BEN THORNTON
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**FORTHCOMING EVENTS
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WANNABE: THE SPICE GIRLS SHOW
THE ULTIMATE GIRL POWER NIGHT OUT!
Sunday 7 October, 8.00pm
Tickets: £24.00

BLACK MAGIC: THE LITTLE MIX SHOW
Thursday 1 November, 7.00pm
Tickets: £15.00

BOOTLEG ABBA
THE LEGEND CONTINUES...
Saturday 3 November, 7.30pm
Tickets: £17.00

FAITH: THE GEORGE MICHAEL LEGACY
Saturday 24 November, 7.30pm
Tickets: £23.50

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: FAMILY PANTOMIME
Tuesday 11 - Monday 31 December
Tickets: £10.00 - £22.00



turn with another multi-character comedy set in a strange and captivating world, Sun 7 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

Kids Show

THE SELFISH GIANT Sealegs Puppet Theatre presents its version of Oscar Wilde's tale for younger audiences, Sat 6 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BING LIVE! The first ever Bing stage show, Sat 6 - Sun 7 Oct, Lichfield Garrick



THERE WAS AN OLD LADY WHO SWALLOWED A FLY Singalong songs, colourful animal characters and heart-warming family fun, Sun 7 - Mon 8 Oct, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

Dance

THE NUTCRACKER Vienna Festival Ballet presents its staging of the much-loved ballet, Tues 2 Oct, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

SHOW Shechter II present a 'wild and wicked' three-act production, Tues 2 - Wed 3 Oct, DanceXchange, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

FIRE & FURY Birmingham Royal Ballet present a double bill featuring David Bintley's The King Dances and Juango Arqués' Ignite, Wed 3 - Sat 6 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

AKAAR Sonia Sabri Company showcase some of the region's emerging talent alongside guest artists, Sun 7 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

Talks

COLIN STAFFORD-JOHNSON: LIVING A WILD LIFE Evening with 'one of the world's most acclaimed filmmakers', Mon 1 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

CAFÉ SCIENTIFIQUE: MATHEMATICS -

THE NEW ANTIBIOTIC? Dr Sara Jabbari from the University of Birmingham talks about her work using mathematics to help accelerate the journey towards new treatments for bacterial infections, Tues 2 Oct, Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham

NEIL OLIVER - THE STORY OF THE BRITISH ISLES IN 100 PLACES Join Neil as he talks about his 20 years travelling to every corner of Great Britain, Thurs 4 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

RAF STORIES TALKS - CANDIDA ADKINS Daughter of famous female Spitfire pilot Jackie Moggridge, Candida Adkins shares stories about her mother, Thurs 4 Oct, RAF Cosford, Shifnal

JAMES MARTIN ON THE ROAD AGAIN Join James as he reflects on his love of hearty food and various other passions, Fri 5 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

HIT THE ODE Unique performance-poetry night which sees one regional, one national and one international poet perform alongside open mics, Fri 5 Oct, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

NEIL OLIVER - THE STORY OF THE BRITISH ISLES IN 100 PLACES Join Neil as he talks about his 20 years travelling to every corner of Great Britain, Fri 5 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

LOVE THE ARCHERS? Get the low-down on Ambridge with Archers scriptwriter Keri Davies and performers Charlotte Martin (Susan Carter) & Emerald O'Hanrahan (Emma Grundy), Sun 7 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

THE LITTLE STRANGER (12a) Drama/Horror. Starring Domhnall Gleeson, Ruth Wilson. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, Fri 28 Sept - Thurs 4 Oct

KING OF THIEVES (15) Crime/Drama. Starring Michael Caine, Michael Gambon. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, Fri 28 Sept - Thurs 4 Oct

SUFFRAGETTE (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Carey Mulligan, Anne-Marie Duff. The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire, Mon 1 Oct

THE BIG LEBOWSKI (18) Comedy/Crime. Starring Jeff Bridges, John Goodman. With 90s Movie Quiz. Cineworld Telford, Mon 1 Oct

AN AMERICAN IN PARIS (U) Musical/Romance. Starring Gene Kelly, Leslie Caron. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Mon 1 Oct

CUSTODY (15) Drama. Starring Léa

Drucker, Denis Ménochet. Foreign language, subtitled. Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Tues 2 Oct

HURRICANE (15) Drama/War. Starring Iwan Rheon, Milo Gibson. Subtitled. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Tues 2 Oct

UNDER THE TREE (15) Comedy/Drama. Starring Steinþór Hróar Steinþórsson, Edda Björgvinsdóttir. Foreign language, subtitled. Stoke Film Theatre, Thurs 4 Oct

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (PG) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Hayley Atwell, Ewan McGregor. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Fri 5 Oct

PROFESSOR MARSTON & THE WONDER WOMEN (15) Drama/Biography. Starring Luke Evans, Rebecca Hall. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 5 Oct

SUMMER 1993 (12a) Drama/Family. Starring Laia Artigas, Paula Robles. Foreign language, subtitled. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Shropshire, Fri 5 Oct

BLACKKKLANSMAN (15) Biography/Comedy. Starring John David Washington, Adam Driver. Stoke Film Theatre, Fri 5 - Sat 6 Oct

A MOMENT IN THE REEDS (18) Drama/Romance. Starring Janne Puustinen, Boodi Kabbani. Foreign language, subtitled. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Sat 6 Oct

SNAPSHOTS Drama. Starring Piper Laurie, Brooke Adams. Screening followed by a discussion & short film - Marguerite. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Sat 6 Oct

ALASKA IS A DRAG Drama. Starring Martin L. Washington Jr., Maya Washington. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Sat 6 Oct

PADDINGTON 2 (PG) Animation/Adventure. Starring Ben Whishaw, Hugh Grant. Belmont Hall, Wellington, Shropshire, Sat 6 Oct

IN BETWEEN (15) Drama. Starring Mouna Hawa, Sana Jammeli. Foreign language, subtitled. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Sun 7 Oct

A FANTASTIC WOMAN (15) Drama. Starring Daniela Vega, Francisco Reyes. Foreign language, subtitled. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Sun 7 Oct

MARIO (18) Drama. Starring Max Hubacher, Aaron Altaras. Foreign language, subtitled. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Sun 7 Oct

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 5 Oct, showing at selected cinemas

VENOM (tbc)

A STAR IS BORN (15)

BLIND SPOTTING (15)

STRANGWAYS HERE WE COME (15)

COLUMBUS (tbc)

JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (tbc)

Events

THE PLANETS 2018 Written out of a fascination with astrology, Holst's The Planets was first performed 100 years ago. But what would it sound like if created by today's composers? Tues 2 Oct, Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham

BEATBOX WORKSHOP Wed 3 Oct, Brew-house Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

HORSE OF THE YEAR SHOW This year the show celebrates its 70th anniversary, Wed 3 - Sun 7 Oct, NEC, B'ham

CLASS 50 GOLDEN JUBILEE Celebrating 50 years of the Class 50 diesel-electric locomotive, Thurs 4 - Sat 6 Oct, Severn Valley Country Park, Nr Bridgnorth, Shropshire

TRAM DRIVING EXPERIENCE DAY Join the expert team to learn all about the history and workings of the trams in the collection, Fri 5 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

IRONBRIDGE LATES: SILENT DISCO Fri 5 Oct, Enginuity Museum, Ironbridge

SHROPSHIRE OKTOBERFEST Featuring over 150 real ales, Fri 5 - Sun 7 Oct, The Quarry Park, Shrewsbury

TUNNEL TEDS Take your furry friend along for a 'ted-tastic day of bear-themed fun on and around the canal', Sat 6 Oct, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

MARSTONS BEER FESTIVAL Featuring Madness tribute band One Step Behind, Sat 6 Oct, Wolverhampton Racecourse

SCAREFEST Enjoy your favourite rides in the dark, plus loads of extra entertainment, Sat 6 - Sun 7 Oct, Alton Towers, Staffordshire

HARVEST IN THE HOME Experience the harvest season from the Edwardian era to the 1940s and transform home-grown fruit and vegetables into thrifty dishes, Sat 6 - Sun 7 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

DINING CRUISE - HIGH TEA Enjoy a high tea out on the canal - with a Black Country twist, Sun 7 Oct, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

APPLE & CIDER DAY Find out about the history of the apple and how it was used in Tudor times, Sun 7 Oct, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

OKTOBERFEST RACEDAY Enjoy a taste of Germany with an ice-cold beer and a traditional bratwurst, while a strolling oompah band entertains you throughout the day, Sun 7 Oct, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffs

ANTIQUES FAIR Sun 7 Oct, Bantock House, Wolverhampton

THE BUTTERMARKET PRESENTS
DAY ^{OF} THE DEAD



FRIDAY 2 NOVEMBER • 10PM–4AM

CONFETTI • CANDY SKULLS • FACE PAINTING
STAGE FLAMES & FIRE BREATHERS • DJs

THE BUTTERMARKET
SHREWSBURY

Gigs

GREG RUSSELL & JACK RUTTER Mon 8 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

HARDY CAPRIO Mon 8 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TONY HADLEY Mon 8 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ANNA PANCALDI Mon 8 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

GOLDEN CAVES Mon 8 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

CHILDCARE & LAZY DAY Tues 9 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

TOOTS AND THE MAY-TALS Wed 10 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MNEK Wed 10 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE JOHNNY CASH ROADSHOW Wed 10 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

JEFF LYNNE'S ELO Wed 10 Oct, Arena B'ham

OMYO Wed 10 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JO HARMAN & ERNIE HALTER Wed 10 Oct, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

DIAMOND HEAD Wed 10 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

STRANGE BONES Wed 10 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

CRYWANK, KERMES, YR POETRY & A BULL Wed 10 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TOM ROBINSON Wed 10 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

THE DANIEL WAKEFORD EXPERIENCE Thurs 11 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JACKSON LIVE IN CONCERT Thurs 11 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

A VISION OF ELVIS Thurs 11 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

KEE MARCELLO Thurs 11 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

MOBIUS LOOP Thurs 11 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SAINT AGNES Thurs 11 Oct, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

ROSS FROM FRIENDS Thurs 11 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DARWIN DEEZ Thurs 11 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE ALTER EAGLES Thurs 11 Oct, Oakengates Theatre @ The Place, Telford, Shropshire

ROSS THE BOSS + HOLLOWPOINT Thurs 11 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE JAM'D Thurs 11 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KEE MARCELLO 'SCALING UP' TOUR Thurs 11 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

ROBIN NOLAN TRIO Fri 12 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ENSLAVED + HIGH ON FIRE Fri 12 Oct, The Mill, Digbeth, B'ham

U2 2 Fri 12 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

JILTED JOHN Fri 12 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

ERADIKATOR Fri 12 Oct, Route 44, Birmingham

YOU WIN AGAIN Fri 12 Oct, Oakengates Theatre @ The Place, Telford, Shropshire

JEFF LYNNE'S ELO Fri 12 - Sat 13 Oct, Arena Birmingham

HEAVY BEAT HOUSE PARTY Fri 12 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

CLIFF RICHARD LIVE: 60TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR Fri 12 Oct, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, Shropshire

IMPERIAL LEISURE Fri 12 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BECKY HILL Fri 12 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

JILTED JOHN Fri 12 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

LOSKI Fri 12 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PUNKY MEADOWS AND FRANK DIMINO Fri 12 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

RED RUM CLUB Fri 12 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

OUR GIRL Fri 12 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

PURE MCCARTNEY FEAT. TONY COBURN Fri 12 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

MADE FOR THE WEEK-END Fri 12 - Sat 13 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN Sat 13 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CHINA CRISIS ACOUSTIC Sat 13 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE RONALDOS Sat 13 Oct, Havana Republic, Shrewsbury

THE JAM'D Sat 13 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

LIVE/WIRE Sat 13 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

ULTRA 90S Sat 13 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

QUADROPHENIA NIGHT Sat 13 Oct, Oakengates Theatre @ The Place, Telford

ONE TREE CANYON Sat 13 Oct, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

UK BLONDIE Sat 13 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

LE CLUB FONDUE PRESENTS MOSELEY DANCE CENTRE Sat 13 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DEFINITELY MIGHTBE Sat 13 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JORJA SMITH Sat 13 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE PARROTS Sun 14 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GET CAPE WEAR CAPE FLY Sun 14 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KEE MARCELLO Sun 14 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

DURAN Sun 14 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

PUNKY MEADOWS & FRANK DIMINO OF ANGEL Sun 14 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

Classical Music

CBSO: YAMADA CONDUCTS BERNSTEIN Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Baiba Skride (violin). Programme includes works by Ravel, Korngold & Bernstein, Wed 10 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MAIA PERSSON (SOPRANO) & JOSEPH MIDDLETON (PIANO) Programme includes works by Clara Schumann, Robert Schumann, Duparc, Nystroem & Sibelius, Wed 10 Oct, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

CBSO: THE MUSIC OF HARRY POTTER Featuring Michael Seal (conductor) and the CBSO Youth Chorus. Programme includes music from The Philosopher's Stone, Chamber of Secrets, Prisoner of Azkaban, Goblet of Fire, Order of the Phoenix, Half-Blood Prince and Deathly Hallows, Fri 12 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

ZOE BEYERS: BACH BY CANDLELIGHT Programme comprises Bach's Sonata No.2 in A minor (BWV 1003), Partita's No.1 in B minor (BWV 1002) & Sonata No.3 in C major (BWV 10045), Fri 12 Oct, Cound Church, Nr Shrewsbury

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: SHOSTAKOVICH'S FIFTH Featuring Xian Zhang (conductor) and Fatma Said (soprano). Programme includes Shostakovich's Symphony No 5, 44' and works by Rachmaninoff and Strauss, Sat 13 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PERSHORE TOWN CHOIR Also featuring Kidderminster Male Choir, Sat 13 Oct, Kidderminster Town Hall

Comedy

TIM VINE Wed 10 Oct, Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford, Shropshire

SEANN WALSH Wed 10 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DOREEN'S BIG TOP Wed 10 - Thurs 11 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

DALISO CHAPONDA Thurs 11 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

ROBERT WHITE, TOM HOUGHTON & RAHUL KOHLI Thurs 11 Oct, The Br-mall, Birmingham

DANA ALEXANDER, CAREY MARX & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 11 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PAUL SINHA Thurs 11 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

ROBIN INCE Fri 12 Oct, Station Pub, Sutton Coldfield

JILTED JOHN Fri 12 Oct, The Slade

Rooms, Wolverhampton

DANA ALEXANDER, CAREY MARX, BOBBY MAIR & MAFF BROWN Fri 12 - Sat 13 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

THOMAS GREEN, DOUG SEGAL & COMICS TBC Fri 12 Oct, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

JEREMY HARDY Fri 12 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Staffordshire

TOM BINNS Fri 12 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

STEWART FRANCIS Sat 13 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

BARBARA NICE'S RAFFLE Sat 13 Oct, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

RICH WILSON, TOM HOUGHTON, DAVE LONGLEY & LEO KEARSE Sat 13 Oct, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

VIKKI STONE Sat 13 Oct, MAC, B'ham

OMID DJALILI Sat 13 Oct, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

FAT PENGUIN IMPROV Sun 14 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

TOM BINNS Sun 14 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Staffordshire

Theatre

UNSPOKEN Bravo 22 Company's new drama of love, loss, loneliness and hope, performed by ex-service personnel, Mon 8 - Tues 9 Oct, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Russell's award-winning show about twins separated at birth who grow up on opposite sides of the track, only to meet again with fateful consequences, Mon 8 - Sat 13 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ROLLING BACK THE YEARS Music, dance and laughter as Timeless Productions take audiences on a roller-coaster ride through the 1950s, '60s, '70s and more... Tues 9 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

TOP HAT Amateur staging presented by South Staffs Musical Theatre Company, Tues 9 - Sat 13 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

JOKING APART Alan Ayckbourn's 'painfully funny' comedy - part of an Ayckbourn double-bill, Tues 9 - Sat 27 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

BREAKING THE CODE Ambient Night Productions present a biographical drama about eccentric genius Alan Turing, Wed 10 - Thurs 11 Oct, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock

WAR HORSE Acclaimed West End drama based on the novel by Michael Morpurgo, Wed 10 - Sat 3 Nov, Birmingham Hippodrome

A3 Arena, Walsall



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Walsall WS3 1AG



BULLISH New play with songs, negotiating ancient and new territories in trans-masculine gender and identity, Thurs 11 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT Featuring Dandy, The Empty Can, Ollie Spencer, Joe Thomas & Wayne Beese, Thurs 11 Oct, Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

ISLAND TOWN Paines Plough present a bitter-sweet story about friendship, hope and dreams of an escape, Thurs 11 Oct, Longton Park (Queen's Park), Longton, Stoke-on-Trent

PARLOUR GAMES A 'right royal romp' through British history, exploring politics, passion and parlour games, Thurs 11 - Sat 13 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

DRACULA New staging of Bram Stoker's gothic novel, Thurs 11 - Sat 20 Oct, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

BETTER OFF DEAD Alan Ayckbourn's comedy of confusion about a grumpy old man who might not be so grumpy after all... Part of an Ayckbourn double-bill, Thurs 11- Sat 27 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

MOTOWN THE MUSICAL Hit West End show about Motown founder Berry Gordy, Thurs 11 Oct - Sat 3 Nov, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT Featuring Dandy, The Empty Can, Ollie Spencer, Joe Thomas & Wayne Beese, Fri 12 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

NOT YET SUFFRAGETTE Natalie Cutler's one-woman show fusing feminist theatre with stand-up comedy to explore how far women's rights haven't come since winning the vote, Fri 12 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

DAVID EDGAR: TRYING IT ON The Birmingham-born playwright takes to the stage in a one-man show and contemplates the ways in which both the world and his own views have changed over the past 50 years, Fri 12 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

THE ROOM AT THE TOP OF THE HOUSE Standby Theatre present a show about fear and the impact our decisions have on those we care about, Fri 12 Oct, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

BISMILLAH A story of disenfranchisement, social alienation, prejudice, radicalisation and the rock band Queen, Fri 12 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

STANDING IN LINE Story about the Great War, Fri 12 Oct, Harley Village Hall, Harley, Nr Shrewsbury

PRIVATE PEACEFUL Staging of Michael Morpurgo's book, reliving the life of Private Tommo Peaceful, a young First World War soldier awaiting the firing squad at dawn, Fri 12 - Sat 13 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

SCHOOL FOR LOVERS, A MUSICAL SEX-TET-A-TETE Opera Novella present a modern version of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, complete with dialogue and a small orchestra, Fri 12 - Sun 14 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA Virtuoso percussionist Evelyn Glennie collaborates with Artistic Director Gregory Doran to create a satirical futuristic vision of a world resounding with the rhythm of battle, Fri 12 Oct - Sat 17 Nov, Royal Shakespeare Theatre Stratford-upon-Avon

CROSSINGS Pentabus Theatre present a new play by Deirdre Kinahan to mark the centenary of the end of World War One, Sat 13 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Ludlow, South Shropshire

STICKS AND STONES Paines Plough present 'a razor-sharp satire about the search for a sure footing in an uncertain world', Sat 13 & Sun 14 Oct, Longton Park (Queen's Park), Longton, Stoke-on-Trent

ISLAND TOWN Paines Plough present a bitter-sweet story about friendship, hope and dreams of an escape, Sat 13 & Sun 14 Oct, Longton Park (Queen's Park), Longton, Stoke-on-Trent

Kids Show

A THING MISLAID Maison Foo present a tale 'full of footsteps, hope and an unlikely friendship between two lonely travellers and a mysterious bird', Wed 10 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

HOW TO HIDE A LION Helen Stephen's magical book for young children is brought to life with humour, puppets and jazz, Thurs 11 Oct, Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

HOW TO SPOT AN ALIEN Join Jelly and Jonjo on their quest to discover the truth, in a rip-roaring adventure through space full of friendship, fun and flying saucers, Fri 12 & Sat 13 Oct, Longton Park (Queen's Park), Longton, Stoke-on-Trent

GUESS HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU 'Enchanting' tale of love and nature, vibrantly brought to life with puppets, live music and interactive play, Sun 14 Oct, Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

Talks

AN EVENING WITH STACEY DOOLEY Rare live appearance during which Stacey discusses everything from gender equality and domestic violence to sex trafficking and sexual identity, Tues 9 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

JAMES MARTIN ON THE ROAD AGAIN Join James as he reflects on his love of hearty food and various other passions, Sun 14 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Dance

UNKNOWN PLACES Contact Dance Company present a new multi-layered ensemble piece choreographed by Joanna Young, Wed 10 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

THE LEISURE SEEKER (15) Comedy/Drama. Starring Helen Mirren, Donald Sutherland. Stourbridge Town Hall, Mon 8 Oct

2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (U) Adventure/Sci-Fi. Starring Keir Dullea, Gary Lockwood. Cineworld Telford, Shropshire, Mon 8 Oct

MCQUEEN (15) Documentary/Biography. Starring Bernard Arnault, Joseph Bennett. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Mon 8 - Tues 9 Oct

THE SOUND OF MUSIC (U) Biography/Musical. Starring Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer. Introduced by comedian Barbara Nice. Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford, Shropshire, Tues 9 Oct

AVENGERS: INFINITY WAR (12a) Action/Adventure. Starring Robert Downey Jr., Chris Hemsworth. Lichfield Garrick, Tues 9 Oct

THE THIRD MURDER (15) Drama/Mystery. Starring Masaharu Fukuyama, Kōji Yakusho. Foreign language, subtitled. Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Tues 9 Oct

THE GLENN MILLER STORY (U) Drama/Biography. Starring James Stewart, June Allyson. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Shropshire, Tues 9 Oct

HUMAN FLOW (12a) Documentary. Directed by Ai Weiwei. Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs, Wed 10 Oct

THE ESCAPE (15) Drama. Starring Gemma Arterton, Dominic Cooper. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Wed 10 - Thurs 11 Oct

THE RAPE OF RECY TAYLOR (15) Documentary. Starring Tommy Bernardi, Robert Corbitt. Malvern Theatres, Thurs 11 Oct

AMERICAN ANIMALS (15) Crime/Drama. Starring Spencer Reinhard, Warren Lipka. Stoke Film Theatre, Thurs 11 Oct

BATTLE OF ALGIERS (15) Drama/War. Starring Brahim Hadjadj, Jean Martin. Foreign language, subtitled. The

Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent, Thurs 11 Oct

UNDER THE TREE (15) Comedy/Drama. Starring Steinþór Hróar Steinþórsson, Edda Björgvinsdóttir. Foreign language, subtitled. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 12 Oct

THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST (15) Drama. Starring Chloë Grace Moretz, Steven Hauck. Stoke Film Theatre, Fri 12 October

THE SEAGULL (12a) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Elisabeth Moss, Saoirse Ronan. Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, Fri 12 - Thurs 18 Oct; Stoke Film Theatre, Sat 13 Oct

FINDING YOUR FEET (12a) Comedy/Drama. Starring Imelda Staunton, Celia Imrie. Belmont Hall, Wellington, South Shropshire, Sat 13 Oct

Events

ILLUSTRATING THE TALES OF BEEDLE THE BARD WITH CHRIS RIDDELL Join the bestselling author/artist and former Children's Laureate as he talks about the inspiration behind the art for his book, and what it was like to illustrate JK Rowling's words, Mon 8 Oct, Prestfelde School, Shrewsbury

GRAND DESIGNS LIVE Expert advice, new product launches and specialist exhibitors, Wed 10 - Sun 14 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

QUIZ & GIN FUNDRAISER Evening of quiz fun to raise money for The Hive. Organised by INC Shropshire, Fri 12 Oct, The Hive, Shrewsbury

OKTOBERFEST Beer, live music, a DJ and plenty of cheesy tunes, Fri 12 - Sat 13 Oct, The National Brewery Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

WARTIME HANGAR DANCE 1940s-style event with the Aerospace Museum Society, Sat 13 Oct, RAF Cosford, Shifnal

THE SPICE TRAIN A chance to marvel at the massive locomotives on display before heading into the restaurant to try a variety of curries from around the world, Sat 13 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

SCAREFEST Sat 13 - Sun 14 Oct, Alton Towers, Staffordshire

SPOOKLEY PUMPKIN FESTIVAL Ride the pumpkin express, hear the spookley story, pick your own pumpkin from the pumpkin patch and carve it in the carving cavern, Sat 13 - Sun 14 Oct, Apley Farm Shop, Norton, Shifnal, Shropshire

THE 25TH CAROLE NASH CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE MECHANICS SHOW Sat 13 - Sun 14 Oct, Stafford Country Showground

Gigs

CORKY LAING Mon 15 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

MICHAEL BOLTON Mon 15 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BLACK HONEY Mon 15 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GUUNA B Tues 16 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE HOT SPROCKETS Tues 16 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

THE BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE Tues 16 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JACK WHITE Wed 17 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TUNNG Wed 17 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GUS G Wed 17 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

LEVEL 42 Wed 17 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

STEPHEN JAMES SMITH FT ENDA REILLY Wed 17 Oct, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

TOM WALKER Thurs 18 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TRIPLE J Thurs 18 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

SARABETH TRIO Thurs 18 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BLACK PEAKS Thurs 18 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

AVELINO Thurs 18 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

DAUGHTRY Thurs 18 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KRS-ONE Thurs 18 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

CULTURE ABUSE + GOUGE AWAY Thurs 18 Oct, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Thurs 18 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

AT LAST: THE ETTA JAMES STORY Thurs 18 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

THE SENSATIONAL 60S EXPERIENCE Fri 19 Oct,

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

EDITORS Fri 19 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE CLONE ROSES Fri 19 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

BLACK CELEBRATION Fri 19 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

DERANGE Fri 19 Oct, Scruffy Murphy's, Birmingham

THE MANOR Fri 19 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE CHATS Fri 19 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE SPACEHOPPERS Fri 19 Oct, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

SOUL II SOUL Fri 19 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

RAINBREAKERS Fri 19 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

MAET LOAF Fri 19 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ROXY MAGIC Fri 19 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

THE ULTIMATE EAGLES Fri 19 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

HICKMAN AND CASSIDY Fri 19 Oct, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

SIGALA Fri 19 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ANNABEL ALLUM Fri 19 Oct, The Cuban Embassy, Birmingham

GLASS CEILINGS Fri 19 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

RICHARD THOMPSON - THE 13 RIVERS TOUR Sat 20 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

EASTWOOD Sat 20 Oct, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

KATE RUSBY Sat 20 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ANTARCTIC MONKEYS Sat 20 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ASH Sat 20 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

RAINBOW RAISING Sat 20 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ALL YEARS LEAVING Sat 20 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GOAT GIRL Sat 20 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

THE MARLEY EXPERIENCE Sat 20 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

UPFRONT Sat 20 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

SHOW OF HANDS Sat 20 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

NOTHING, NOWHERE Sat 20 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ROCK OF AGES EXPERIENCE Sun 21 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Stafford

GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA Sun 21 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

TOM ODELL Sun 21 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TOM BAXTER Sun 21 Oct, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

ERIC MARTIN Sun 21 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

EMMA BLACKERY Sun 21 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ALL YEARS LEAVING Sun 21 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WHY DON'T WE Sun 21 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

LUNA ROSSA Sun 21 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

DARIUS RUCKER Sun 21 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



Kate Rusby - Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

YEVGENY SUDBIN IN RECITAL Featuring Yevgeny Sudbin (piano). Programme includes works by Scarlatti, Tchaikovsky, Scriabin and Prokofiev, Mon 15 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme comprises Wagner's (trans. Edwin Lemare) Overture from Rienzi, Mon 15 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring François Leleux (director / oboe / Cor Anglais). Programme includes works by Brahms, Haydn, Debussy (arr. Silvestrini) & Bizet, Wed 17 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

NIGEL KENNEDY The multi-million selling virtuoso violinist will perform pieces by Bach, Gershwin, as well as his own self-penned pieces, Thurs 18 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LONDON CONCERT ORCHESTRA: SYMPHONIC FANTASY Also featuring Toby Purser (conductor) & the Canzonetta Choir. Programme includes film scores from Harry Potter, The Hobbit, Pirates Of The Caribbean, Twilight, Dragonheart and more... Fri 19 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE PHONENIX SINGERS AUTUMN CONCERT Programme comprises JS Bach's Mass in B minor, BWV 232, Sat 20 Oct, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

GALIN GANCHEV (PIANO) Programme includes works by Sibelius, Schubert, Rachmaninoff & Prokofiev, Sat 20 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

MUSIC AT THE EDGE ANNIVERSARY CONCERT FEAT. MUCH WENLOCK MALE VOICE CHOIR & RHOS MALE VOICE CHOIR Sat 20 Oct, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

EX CATHEDRA: IN 40 PARTS Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Programme includes works by Tallis, Striggio, Jackson, Roth and Tallis, Sun 21 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

DOREEN'S BIG TOP Tues 16 - Wed 17 Oct, Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford

ABANDOMAN, Wed 17 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JAMALI MADDIX Thurs 18 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

SARAH KEYWORTH, STEVE GRIBBIN &

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBISON Thurs 18 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PAUL FOOT Fri 19 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

SARAH KEYWORTH, STEVE GRIBBIN, JOHN LYNN & STEVE BUGEJA Fri 19 - Sat 20 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

KAI SAMRA Sat 20 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

LIVE AT THE CIVIC Sat 20 Oct, Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Dudley

LOL COMEDY CLUB Sat 20 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

STEVE ROYLE, WOUTER MEIJS, PAUL PIRIE & DAMION LARKIN Sat 20 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

ALI COOK Sun 21 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JAMALI MADDIX Sun 21 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MAT RICARDO Sun 21 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

GINA YASHERE, MAUREEN YOUNGER & PRINCE ABDI Sun 21 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

Theatre

SUGGS: WHAT A KING CNU Madness frontman Suggs takes a lighthearted look back at his career, Mon 15 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MACBETH: DIRECTORS CUT Untraditional Shakespeare featuring 'striking design and sensory surprises', Mon 15 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

SALT Play exploring colonial history's existence in the everyday and the politics of grief, Mon 15 - Tues 16 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

THE ADDAMS FAMILY Presented by Stourbridge Amateur Operatic Society, Mon 15 - Sat 20 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

ALL SHOOK UP Carpet Trades Musical Theatre Company present an amateur staging of the musical comedy that's built around Elvis Presley hits, Mon 15 - Sat 20 Oct, Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

THE CASE OF THE FRIGHTENED LADY John Partridge stars in a new staging of Edgar Wallace's classic thriller, Mon 15 - Sat 20 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

DIRTY DANCING Much-acclaimed musical featuring a host of hit songs, including the iconic The Time Of My Life, Mon 15 - Sat 20 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

BEYOND THE BARRICADE The UK's longest-running musical theatre concert tour, Tues 16 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

NOT ABOUT HEROES Stephen Macdon-

ald's Fringe First-winning play about the unique friendship between celebrated World War One poets Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, Tues 16 Oct, The Roses, Kidderminster

THIS MIGHT HURT Reform Theatre present John Godber's play about the NHS, Tues 16 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

ART WITH HEART: DECLARATION A 'vibrant and daring adventure' of school day survival tactics, superhero alter-egos and the stumbling blocks to self-acceptance, Tues 16 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

AVENUE Q Walsall Youth Theatre present an amateur staging of the Tony Award-winning musical, Tues 16 - Thurs 18 Oct, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

BEN HUR Amateur staging presented by Stoke Rep Players, Tues 16 - Sat 20 Oct, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

KINKY BOOTS Acclaimed musical which takes its audience on a journey from a factory floor in Northampton to the glamorous catwalks of Milan. Songs come courtesy of pop icon Cyndi Lauper, Tues 16 - Sat 27 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MISSION ABORT A one-woman play which offers a 'frank and funny' glimpse into the mental and physical trauma of abortion, Wed 17 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT Featuring Dandy, The Empty Can, Ollie Spencer, Joe Thomas & Wayne Beese, Wed 17 Oct, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock

STUFF Janice Connolly & Michael Crouch shine light on the subject of hoarding, Wed 17 - Sat 20 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

BLITHE SPIRIT Noel Coward's popular play, presented by Mad Cow Productions, Wed 17 - Sat 20 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KUKUNOR/KALAHARI Production presented with spoken and sign language on an equal footing and dealing with a person's physical, spiritual, real and imaginary limitations, Thurs 18 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

HYMN FOR ROBOTS Performance fusing Noctium Theatre's unique heightened performance style with analogue and digital music to explore 'an extraordinary life that was almost forgotten', Thurs 18 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

LIGHT THE LIGHTS Musical Theatre Stafford present a tongue-in-cheek look at 'the wonderful world of musicals', Thurs 18 - Sat 20 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CURTAIN UP ON MURDER Presented by Market Drayton Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society, Thurs 18 - Sat 20

Oct, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, Shropshire

THE MESSIAH Hugh Dennis, John Marquez & Lesley Garrett star in a Christmas comedy that promises to conjure up the sublime, the ridiculous and the angelic, Thurs 18 - Sat 27 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

DRACULA: THE BLOODY TRUTH Comedy revealing the true story of the famous count, Fri 19 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

LIBRARY OF SCREAMS Featuring classic spine-tinglers from the golden age of horror, Fri 19 Oct, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

A SQUARE WORLD Quirky story about three friends and what happens when an unexpected change leaves one of them out in the cold, Fri 19 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

RUSH FEATURING THE J A REGGAE BAND Rush Theatre Company celebrate Reggae music, Fri 19 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

SUSIE SELF: QUILT SONG Upbeat musical opera emulating hit West End Hamilton and featuring rising stars from Birmingham's Ormiston Academy, Fri 19 - Sat 20 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

FRED AND GINGER Comedy drama paying homage to 'those halcyon days at school', Sat 20 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

WE APOLOGISE FOR THE INCONVENIENCE A tale of deadlines, distractions... and a talking duck, Sat 20 - Sun 21 Oct, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

ALI COOK - PRINCIPLES OF DECEPTION An evening of 'awe-inspiring' magic and off-beat comedy, Sun 21 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MAT RICARDO VS THE WORLD One-man variety show featuring 'world-class juggling, magic & illusion, escapology, sleight of hand, knife throwing, stand-up comedy, feats of strength and demonstrations of dexterity', Sun 21 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

Kids Show

A THING MISLAID Maison Foo present a tale 'full of footsteps, hope and an unlikely friendship between two lonely travellers and a mysterious bird', Thurs 18 Oct, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

MADAGASCAR A MUSICAL ADVENTURE Amateur staging of the much-loved musical adventure, Fri 19 - Sat 20 Oct, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

FIRST STAGES: HANSEL AND GRETEL Interactive theatre experience which brings to life the famous Brothers Grimm story, Sat 20 Oct, The REP,

Birmingham

YOUR TOYS Slot Machine Theatre present a heartwarming tale about friends pulling together, Sun 21 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

GOLDOLOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS Hiccup Theatre present a new version of the classic tale for children, Sun 21 Oct, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

Talks

AN EVENING WITH KATE MACRAE Spend the evening with the Springwatch, Autumnwatch and Countryfile star as she talks all things wildlife, Wed 17 Oct, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

AN EVENING WITH SIMON REEVE Join journalist Simon as he recounts tales from over 15 years of travelling to the most remote corners of the world, Thurs 18 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

PLAY READING: JOHN DRINKWATER'S ABRAHAM LINCOLN Reading of John Drinkwater's Abraham Lincoln, to mark the centenary of the play's premiere on the very same stage, Sat 20 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, B'ham

Dance

PUZZLE CREATURE Neon Dance present Adrienne Hart's brand new work, which unscrambles attitudes to both age and the body, Wed 17 - Thurs 18 Oct, DanceXchange, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

BEAUTY & THE BEAST Presented by Ballet Theatre UK, Thurs 18 Oct, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock



MOTIONHOUSE: CHARGE Six dancers fuse dance and acrobatics in a performance inspired by the role of electricity in the human body, Fri 19 - Sat 20 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

Events

THE MOTORHOME AND CARAVAN SHOW Featuring new and exclusive leisure vehicle launches by major manufacturers, Tues 16 - Sun 21 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

LICHFIELD OKTOBERFEST All the fun of the most famous beer festival in the world... right in the middle of Lichfield, Fri 19 - Sat 20 Oct, Beacon Park, Lichfield

DESTINATION STAR TREK BIRMINGHAM The only official Star Trek event in Europe, Fri 19 - Sun 21 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

DISNEY ON ICE PRESENTS DREAM BIG Disney's most adventurous dreamers, including Moana, Anna, Elsa, Olaf and more... Fri 19 - Sun 28 Oct, Arena Birmingham, Birmingham

SCAREFEST Enjoy your favourite rides in the dark, plus loads of extra entertainment, Fri 19 Oct - Fri 2 Nov, Alton Towers, Staffordshire

FORGE EXPERIENCE DAY Hands-on experience of blacksmithing, Sat 20 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

DIWALI Hindu festival of light featuring stage programme, stalls & firework display, Sat 20 Oct, Wolverhampton Parks

SHREWSBURY MODEL RAILWAY SHOW Sat 20 Oct, United Reformed Church, Shrewsbury

FANTASTICAL CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL Featuring artisan chocolate traders, free themed photo booths, themed characters & story corners, chocolate sculpting, craft stations and more... Sat 20 Oct, The H Suite, Edgbaston, Birmingham

PAW PATROL VISIT Ride out into the countryside on one of the trains and see PAW Patrol's Marshall & Rubble, Sat 20 - Sun 21 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

ROCK SCHOOL MUSIC WORKSHOP Sat 20 - Wed 24 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

SPOOKLEY PUMPKIN FESTIVAL Ride the pumpkin express, hear the spookley story, pick your own pumpkin from the pumpkin patch and carve it in the carving cavern, Sat 20 - Sun 28 Oct, Apley Farm Shop, Norton, Shifnal

MORE TREAT THAN TRICK Family Halloween activities and eerie entertainment, Sat 20 Oct - Fri 2 Nov, Drayton Manor Theme Park, Tamworth, Staffs

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR Join Dermot O'Scary for a 'spooktacular show', Sat 20 Oct - Sun 4 Nov, Cadbury World, Birmingham

SAREHOLE MILL AUTUMN CRAFT FAIR Featuring a variety of craft and gift stalls, Sun 21 Oct, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

What's on...



Saturday 13 October, 7.30pm
**QUADROPHENIA NIGHT :
FEATURING THE ATLANTICS**



Tuesday 16 &
Wednesday 17 October, 7.30pm
DOREEN'S BIG TOP



Friday 19 October, 7.30pm
ALL STAR SUPERSLAM WRESTLING



Tuesday 30 October, 2.30pm
DOCTOR DOLITTLE



Wednesday 31 October, 7.30pm
THE LADYBOYS OF BANGKOK



Thursday 1 November, 7.30pm
ROY CHUBBY BROWN



Friday 2 November, 7.30pm
GENESIS CONNECTED



Saturday 3 November, 7.30pm
THE UPBEAT BEATLES



Wednesday 7 November, 7.30pm
TONY STOCKWELL

01952 382382
www.theplacetelford.com



BANKS'S Robin 2

www.therobin.co.uk

MON 1 OCT OF BLACK STAR RIDERS
WARWICK JOHNSON

TUE 2 OCT ALL SEATED EVENT
BLAIR DUNLOP
+ JACK CARTY + R. JAMES SWADKINS

WED 3 OCT + EMMA JOHNSON
CHRIS BEVINGTON ORGANISATION

FRI 5 OCT
SKA45'S

SAT 6 OCT N.W.O.B.L.M. LEGENDS
DIAMOND HEAD
+ FIRMS THAT DIVIDE + DEAD AGENTS

SUN 7 OCT
JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR

MON 8 OCT WITL PROG. FROM HOLLAND
GOLDEN CAVES
+ SKY ARCHITECT (HOLLAND) + EDEN SONG (USA)

TUE 11 OCT + ICONIC EYE
EX EUROPE GUITARIST KEE MARCELLO

FRI 12 OCT
BLACK COUNTRY BEATLES

SAT 13 OCT
BOSTIIN FESTIVAL

SUN 14 OCT FULL ANGEL SET
PUNKY MEADOWS & FRANK DIMINO

MON 15 OCT 70th BIRTHDAY TOUR
CORKY LAING MOUNTAIN

TUE 16 OCT COUNTRY, BLUES, ROCK
THE HOT SPROCKETS

WED 17 OCT + INVERNESS + INVER CITY BUBBLE
GUS G
+ KX DEEZ DEEVINGS + BOSS, OFFY, BROWNS, NICHOLSON, ROSE, BRAD, DEAN, ERIK

THU 18 OCT
ULTIMATE COLDPLAY

FRI 19 OCT
ULTIMATE EAGLES

SAT 20 OCT
THE MARLEY EXPERIENCE

SUN 21 OCT 11.00am - 3.00pm
RECORD AND CD FAIR

SUN 21 OCT EVE DOORS 7.30pm
LUNA ROSSA FEAT ANNE-MARIE HELDER

MON 22 OCT BORN HEALER
SOUTHERN ROCK LEGENDS SKINNY MOLLY
FEATURING: MIKE SMITH (FRODO BAGGINS)

TUE 23 OCT AN EVENING OF
CLAIRVOYANCE WITH PHILIP SOLOMON

WED 24 OCT ALL SEATED EVENT
YUSUF - CAT STEVENS TRIBUTE BY KEITH JAMES

THU 25 OCT + CORVUS
MARTIN TURNER EX WISHBONE ASH

FRI 26 OCT LEGENDARY UK ROCK BAND
+ HAND OF DAMES + WOODOO VEGAS
FM

SAT 27 OCT + ROSIE O'SULLIVAN
THE STARS FROM THE COMMITMENTS

SUN 28 OCT + TOM WALKER TRIO
LEGENDARY BRITISH SOUL PIONEERS KOKOMO

TUE 30 OCT ALL SEATED EVENT
MATTHEW'S SOUTHERN COMFORT + MAGNA CARTA

WED 31 OCT FROM CANADA, BLUES/FOLK
HARRY MANX

BOX OFFICE 01902 401211
MOUNT PLEASANT - BILSTON
WOLVERHAMPTON - WV14 7LJ

LICHFIELD GARRICK Theatre & Studio

OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

6 & 7 OCT
BING! LIVE - BING GOES TO THE THEATRE

10 OCT
THE JOHNNY CASH ROADSHOW

12 OCT
LEE NELSON - SERIOUS JOKER

12 OCT
BISMILLAH!

15 - 20 OCT
THE CASE OF THE FRIGHTENED LADY

26 OCT
I USED TO HEAR FOOTSTEPS

BOX OFFICE: 01543 412 121
www.lichfieldgarrick.com
LICHFIELD GARRICK, CASTLE DYKE,
LICHFIELD, STAFFS, WS13 6HR

Gigs

MAGGIE BELL & DAVE KELLY Mon 22 Oct, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

THE SPACE LADY Mon 22 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

RUDIMENTAL Mon 22 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DRAKE WHITE AND THE BIG FIRE Mon 22 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE FEELING Mon 22 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

THE BLINDERS Mon 22 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

SKINNY MOLLY Mon 22 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

TOM GRENNAN Tues 23 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BC CAMPLIGHT Tues 23 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LUCY SPRAGGAN Tues 23 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE LOVELY EGGS Tues 23 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MELVINS Tues 23 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

MAX & HARVEY Wed 24 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

YUSUF - CAT STEVENS TRIBUTE BY KEITH JAMES Wed 24 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

JACK MAYNARD Wed 24 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MILES HUNT (THE WONDER STUFF) Thurs 25 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

RODDY FRAME Thurs 25 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

EVIL SCARECROW Thurs 25 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

MARTIN TURNER EX WISHBONE ASH Thurs 25 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

FICKLE FRIENDS Fri 26 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DAVID LIVE Fri 26 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

RICHARD THOMPSON Fri 26 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

BROKEN MINDS - HAL-LOWEEN JUNGLE Fri 26 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE MIGHTY DIAMONDS Fri 26 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JIVE TALKIN' PERFORM THE BEE GEES Fri 26 Oct, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

STEPHEN FEARING Fri 26 Oct, The Hive, Shrewsbury

DAVID BYRNE Fri 26 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

IDLES Fri 26 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TRACKSUIT & TRANCE: THE 90S RAVE FT. UL-TRABEAT Fri 26 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SONS OF KEMET Fri 26 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BUGZY MALONE Fri 26 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

EVIL SCARECROW Fri 26 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

FM Fri 26 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

MAET LOAF Fri 26 - Sat 27 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

ENRIQUE IGLESIAS Sat 27 Oct, Genting Arena, Birmingham

COASTS Sat 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ARE YOU EXPERIENCED? Sat 27 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

BARRON KNIGHTS Sat 27 Oct, Theatre Sev-

ern, Shrewsbury

JUST FLOYD Sat 27 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

NATALIE HOLMES Sat 27 Oct, The Cuban Embassy, Birmingham

FEROCIOUS DOG Sat 27 Oct, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

CHASE RICE Sat 27 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

TWISTED WHEEL Sat 27 Oct, The Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

COAST TO COAST Sat 27 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

THE VOIDZ Sat 27 Oct, The Mill, Digbeth, Birmingham

THE JACKS Sat 27 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

CORROSION OF CONFORMITY & ORANGE GOBLIN Sat 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE STARS FROM THE COMMITMENTS Sat 27 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

THE UNIT AMA Sun 28 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

KUNG FU RINTINTIN Sun 28 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

KACEY MUSGRAVES Sun 28 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE WHITNEY HOUSTON SHOW Sun 28 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

KOKOMO Sun 28 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

THE LIONEL RICHIE SONGBOOK Sun 28 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BLAIR DUNLOP Sun 28 Oct, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury



Blair Dunlop - Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR: MOZART Also featuring Vassily Sinaisky (conductor), Benjamin Grosvenor (piano) and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Programme includes works by Wagner, Mozart and Sibelius, Thurs 25 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JOANNA GUTOWSKA (CELLO) Programme includes works by Cas-sadó, David Matthews, Manos Charalabopoulos & JS Bach, Fri 26 Oct, The Barber Institute, B'ham

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR (PICTURED) PLAYS MOZART Featuring the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Vassily Sinaisky. Programme includes works by Wagner, Mozart & Sibelius, Fri 26 Oct, Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent



STOURBRIDGE CHOIR & ORCHESTRA ARMISTICE CONCERT Sat 27 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

NOSFERATU With live wurlitzer organ, Sat 27 Oct, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

LONDON MOZART PLAYERS Featuring Jamal Aliyev (cello). Programme includes works by Grieg, Haydn & Tchaikovsky, Sat 27 Oct, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBSO: SOUNDS OF THE SEA Featuring Timothy Redmond (conductor) & Tom Redmond (presenter). Programme includes works by Menken, Zimmer, Vaughan Williams & Debussy, Sun 28 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

DOREEN'S BIG TOP Tues 23 - Wed 24 Oct, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock

ROB DEERING, NIGEL NG, SADIA AZMAT & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 25 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DOREEN'S BIG TOP Thurs 25 - Fri 26 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

ROB KEMP Fri 26 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BRENNAN REECE, TIM RENKOW, ROB

DEERING & NIGEL NG Fri 26 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JAMES ACASTER, IVO GRAHAM, LINDEY SANTORO, DANNY CLIVES & ANDY ROBINSON Fri 26 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

SEANN WALSH Fri 26 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Staffordshire

ZOE LYONS Sat 27 Oct, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

SIMON LOMAS, RUSSELL HICKS, ROB DERRING & NIGEL NG Sat 27 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JIM DAVIDSON Sat 27 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

KNOCK KNOCK COMEDY Sun 28 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

GLEE FAMILY COMEDY SHOW Sun 28 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RUDI LICKWOOD, CURTIS WALKER, SLIM & JOHN SIMMIT Sun 28 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

SHACKLETON'S CARPENTER Gail Louw's one-man play about Harry McNish - explorer Ernest Shackleton's carpenter on ill-fated polar expedition ship Endurance. Mon 22 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Russell's award-winning show about twins separated at birth who grow up on opposite sides of the track, only to meet again with fateful consequences. Mon 22 - Sat 27 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE RAGGED TROUSERED PHILANTHROPISTS Based on the book of the same name, Tues 23 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

AN EVENING OF CLAIRVOYANCE WITH PHILIP SOLOMON Tues 23 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

STILL NO IDEA Mischievous exposé of good intentions gone bad. Part verbatim theatre, part improv, part comedy sketch show, Tues 23 - Sat 27 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

RENT Musical about friends and artists struggling with addiction, poverty, disease & love, presented by Lichfield Musical Youth Theatre, Tues 23 - Sat 27 Oct, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

9 TO 5 THE MUSICAL Amateur staging of the Dolly Parton musical, presented by CLOC Musical Theatre Company, Tues 23 - Sat 27 Oct, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall, B'ham

TITANIC THE MUSICAL Amateur staging presented by Newcastle Operatic Society, Tues 23 - Sat 27 Oct, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

ELEPHANT & CASTLE Gig theatre show about how honest it's possible to be and have your relationship survive, Wed 24 Oct, MAC, Birmingham

THE CAPITAL Stan's Cafe explore themes of financial inequality and strained human relationships in a story told without words, Wed 24 - Sat 27 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

MY FAIR LADY Presented by TADLOP, Wed 24 - Sat 27 Oct, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

THE WAR OF THE WORLDS HG Wells' masterpiece, vividly reimagined for the post-truth era, Wed 24 - Sat 27 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

AUSTENTATIOUS - THE IMPROVISED JANE AUSTEN NOVEL Improvised comedy play based on a title suggested by the audience, Thurs 25 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE TOWN THE GREAT WAR BUILT Local story performed by Stafford Gatehouse Youth Theatre, Thurs 25 - Fri 26 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

MOP THE HOUSE - A SHORT GUIDE TO VOGUE 'Intimate extravaganza for two actors, one DJ, an audience and a runway that could go anywhere', Thurs 25 - Fri 26 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

SWING WITH LAUGHTER - WITH BOBBY DAVRO Also featuring Kenny Lynch, Anita Harris, Jessica Martin & The Rat Pack, Fri 26 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

TAIKO MEANTIME: RESONANCE TOUR Featuring a new repertoire ranging from delicate composition to explosive crowd-pleasing barnstormers, Fri 26 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, B'ham

SWINGING AT THE COTTON CLUB Featuring The Lindy Hop Dance Company & The Harry Strutters Hot Rhythm Orchestra, Fri 26 Oct, The Roses, Kidderminster

I USED TO HEAR FOOTSTEPS Haunted by curiosity, a young man attempts to piece together the ghost story of his childhood home, Fri 26 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

ONE MAN STRANGER THINGS - A PARODY Canadian actor Charles Ross single-handedly recreates season one of the Netflix sensation, Sat 27 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

LANDS Antler Theatre Company present a 'playful, intimate dissection' of a relationship teetering on the edge of collapse, Sat 27 Oct, MAC, B'ham

SHAKUNTALA Subrang Arts present Kalidas' epic tale of love, loss and redemption, Sat 27 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

FINDING JOY Vamos Theatre's acclaimed show about dementia, Sat 27 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

INSTANT WIT! THE QUICK FIRE IMPROVISATION SHOW An evening of sketches, songs and general silliness, Sat 27

Oct, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

Kids Show

KNOCK KNOCK Hot Coals return with a fairytale of love and longing, Wed 24 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

PETER PAN THE MUSICAL Amateur production presented by Get Your Wiggle On, Wed 24 - Sat 27 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MILKSHAKE LIVE! Sat 27 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

TABBY MCTAT Heartwarming tale of friendship and loyalty based on Julia Donaldson's book of the same name, Sun 28 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

Talks

STEVE PEAT: BIKES & BEERS Mountain-biking superstar Steve Peat tells the story of his illustrious racing career, Mon 22 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CRIMINAL QUILT TALKS: CRIMINAL HERSTORIES Join artist and researcher Ruth Singer to find out more about the women convicted of crimes and imprisoned in Stafford Gaol between 1877 and 1916, Tues 23 Oct, Brew-house Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

AN EVENING WITH GEOFF HURST & GORDON BANKS Thurs 25 Oct, Molineux Stadium, Wolverhampton

MICHAEL BRANDON STAND UP STORY An evening of 'eye-widening Hollywood truths' from the Dempsey And Makepeace heartthrob, Fri 26 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ERIC CANTONA The legendary Manchester Utd player talks about his life, Fri 26 Oct, Regency Banqueting Suite, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH BRIAN BLESSED Join the larger-than-life actor as he talks about his career on stage and screen, Sat 27 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

Dance

SEETA PATEL - NOT TODAY'S YESTERDAY International collaboration between award-winning Bharatanatyam artist Seeta Patel and choreographer Lina Limosani, Tues 23 Oct, The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome

INFUSION EMPORIUM 8 Showcasing innovative contemporary choreographers and dancers... Sat 27 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

SWAN LAKE Presented by Russian

State Ballet and Opera House, Sun 28 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Events

OCTOBER HALF TERM Autumn family fun, Mon 22 - Fri 26 Oct, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

PUMPKIN CARVING Wed 24 - Wed 31 Oct, Chirk Castle, Wrexham

CANDY AND COBWEBS A Halloween trick or treat event for under-eights, Fri 26 Oct, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire

HALLOWEEN CHILDREN'S SPOOKTACULAR Spooky activities for all the family, including apple bobbing and the FEAR challenge, Fri 26 Oct, The British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

HALLOWEEN NIGHTS A 'frightfully good' evening of entertainment, Fri 26 - Sat 27 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

FRIGHT NIGHTS: ASTON ALIVE! Visit the Museum of Curiosities in 'spooktacular circumstances', Fri 26 - Sat 27 Oct, Aston Hall, Birmingham

FAMILY HALLOWEEN BOAT TRIPS Fri 26 - Wed 31 Oct, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

HALLOWEEN FUN Fri 26 - Sun 4 Nov, Park Hall Farm, Shropshire

FESTIVAL OF THE DEAD Carnival-esque pageantry, giant skull processions, acrobats, dancers, decorative art & costumes, Sat 27 Oct, Starworks Warehouse, Wolverhampton

GCCF SUPREME CAT SHOW The UK's premier cat show, Sat 27 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

BACKSTAGE TOUR Sat 27 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

ROYAL RUMBLE ALL-STAR SUPERSLAM WRESTLING Sat 27 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

GINISTRY OF MAGIC MUGGLE BALL Prepare your finest robes and ready your wands for a night of magical drinks, Sat 27 Oct, The Grain Store, Wolverhampton

GHOST TRAINS Are you brave enough to climb aboard the Ghost Train? Sat 27 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

FESTIVAL OF THE DEAD Featuring a 15ft-tall vulture roaming the crowd, giant skulls and carnival processions, Sat 27 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN EVENING Get dressed up in your spookiest costume to enjoy the ghostly goings-on around the castle, Sat 27 Oct, Tamworth Castle

SPOOKY SCIENCE NIGHT Spooky party for mad scientists, witches and wizards, Sat 27 Oct, Thinktank Science

Museum, Birmingham

GHOSTLY GASLIGHT Dress up in your most frightening Halloween costume and join the ghosts, ghouls and monsters, Sat 27 Oct, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire



A NIGHTMARE ON DUDLEY STREET Expect spooks, ghouls, witches and a whole host of unsavoury characters, Sat 27 Oct, Dudley Town Centre

DIVE 2018 Sat 27 - Sun 28 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

MUSEUMS ARE MAGIC Celebrate Museums At Night with wand whittling, potion making, spell writing, face painting, balloon animals and a magic show by Rob Chapman, Sat 27 - Sun 28 Oct, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

SPOOKY SCIENCE WEEK Family activities throughout the school holiday, Sat 27 Oct - Sun 4 Nov, Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham

TERRIFYING TALES Discover spooky Black Country legends and separate folklore from fact, Sat 27 Oct - Sun 4 Nov, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SPOOKY SCIENCE WEEK: OCTOBER HALF TERM Family activities, Sat 27 Oct - Sun 4 Nov, Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham

SPOOKY STOKESAY Craft activities, Sat 27 Oct - Sun 4 Nov, Stokesay Castle, Nr Craven Arms, South Shropshire

NIMROD TOURS Learn about the Nimrod's intelligence-gathering role in the Royal Air Force, Sat 27 Oct - Sun 4 Nov, RAF Cosford, Shifnal

ASTON HALL LATE: GHOSTLY ENCOUNTERS Theatrical ghost tour, Sun 28 Oct, Aston Hall, Birmingham

MAGIC & MYSTERY Featuring ghoulish ghost stories, a spooky pumpkin walk and themed events for all the family, Sun 28 Oct, Fordhall Organic Farm, Nr Market Drayton, North Shropshire

HALLOWEEN LIGHTS OUT TOUR Do you dare to walk the museum at night? Adults-only tour, Sun 28 - Wed 31 Oct, The National Brewery Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

HAUNTED CASTLE A week of ghostly goings-on, Sun 28 Oct - Fri 2 Nov, Tamworth Castle



Karine Polwart - Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Gigs

BLOXX Mon 29 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham
THE BLACK EYED PEAS Mon 29 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
THE KVB Mon 29 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
FREYA RIDINGS Mon 29 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
THE PROCLAIMERS Mon 29 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham
CARO EMERALD Tues 30 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ANTI FLAG + CANCER BATS Tues 30 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham
VIDEO GAMES LIVE Tues 30 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
ERIC MARTIN Tues 30 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent
MATTHEWS SOUTHERN COMFORT & MAGNA CARTA Tues 30 Oct, The Robin, Bilston
THE STYLISTICS Wed 31 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre
SNACK FAMILY Wed 31 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
SHE MAKES WAR Wed 31 Oct, Hare &

Hounds, Birmingham
HARRY MANX Wed 31 Oct, The Robin, Bilston
STATE CHAMPS Wed 31 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
GABIDDON Wed 31 Oct, The Jam House, Birmingham
INSECURE MEN Wed 31 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham
FIL CAMPBELL & TOM MCFARLANE Wed 31 Oct, Red Lion Folk Club, Kings Heath, Birmingham
KARINE POLWART Wed 31 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



Caro Emerald - Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Classical Music

ST. MATTHEW PASSION English Touring Opera present a new version of Bach's masterpiece, Mon 29 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by Ireland, Distler, Franck, J. Francaix & L. Boellmann, Mon 29 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

HALLOWEEN SILENT MOVIE SPECIAL Featuring Nigel Ogden on organ. Programme comprises Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Wed 31 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

DYLAN MORAN Tues 30 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ELIS JAMES & JOHN ROBINS Tues 30 - Wed 31 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

Theatre

THE WALPURGISNACHT HAUNTINGS Three chilling tales by popular fantasy fiction writer AG Smith, Mon 29 - Tues 30 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

FRANTIC ASSEMBLY: THE UNRETURNING New play by Anna Jordan exploring the profound effect that war has on young lives, Tues 30 Oct - Fri 2 Nov, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

CROSSINGS Pentabus Theatre present a new play to mark the centenary of the end of World War One, Tues 30 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BEAUTIFUL THING Razor-sharp depiction of life and love on a post-war council estate... Tues 30 Oct - Sat 3 Nov, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

THE LOVELY BONES Stage premiere of Alice Sebold's coming-of-age tale, Tues 30 Oct - Sat 10 Nov, The REP, Birmingham

DRACULA - THE BLOODY TRUTH A new telling of Bram Stoker's classic, Wed 31 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE GREAT BRITISH TAKE-OFF Starring comedian & impressionist Jon Culshaw & comedy producer Bill Dare, Wed 31 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE LADYBOYS OF BANGKOK: WONDER WOMAN 20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR 'Cabaret show with a difference', Wed 31 Oct, The Place, Oakengates

Theatre, Telford

BAD GIRLS Brownhills Musical Theatre Company present an amateur staging of the hit musical based on the award-winning television series, Wed 31 Oct - Sat 3 Nov, Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock

Kids Show

MILKSHAKE! LIVE 'THE MAGIC STORY BOOK' Mon 29 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CRAFTY'S HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR Song-filled action-packed performance for younger audiences, Mon 29 Oct, Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

HANUMAN MOVES A MOUNTAIN & ATTEMPTS TO EAT THE SUN A Diwali children's theatre special provides a comic take on the earliest Hanuman stories, Tues 30 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

DOCTOR DOLITTLE Brand new show for youngsters, complete with original music, puppetry and audience participation, Tues 30 Oct, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

MOTHER GOOSE Wolverhampton's favourite Dame, Ian Adams, teams up with Julie Paton to present the ever-popular story, Tues 30 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Talks

NEIL OLIVER - THE STORY OF THE BRITISH ISLES IN 100 PLACES Join Neil as he talks about his 20 years travelling to every corner of Great Britain, Mon 29 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

BENEDICT ALLEN: ULTIMATE EXPLORER Join Benedict as he talks about his most recent adventure - a solo expedition to Papua New Guinea, Mon 29 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



ALAN JOHNSON: IN MY LIFE Alan tells his personal story with the help of some of the music that has soundtracked his life... Wed 31 Oct, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

Dance

ROBIN WINDSOR - THE FAREWELL TOUR Strictly's Robin Windsor heads out on tour for the very last time, Mon 29 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

Events

HALLOWEEN HOCUS POCUS Trick-or-treat trail around the castle, Mon 29 - Wed 31 Oct, Dudley Zoological Gardens

HALLOWEEN HORRORS Including

spooky craft activities and pumpkin carving, Mon 29 Oct - Sun 4 Nov, Weston Park, Staffordshire

GHOSTLY TALES: FAMILY-FRIENDLY GHOST TOUR Daytime tour of one of Birmingham's most haunted buildings, Tues 30 Oct, Aston Hall, B'ham

HALLOWEEN NIGHTS Tues 30 - Wed 31 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

THE GHOST WALK Let the tour guide lead you through the ghostly avenues and alleyways of ancient Bridgnorth, where 10 ghosts lurk in the shadows, Tues 30 - Wed 31 Oct, Bridgnorth Town Hall, Shropshire

GHOST TRAINS Are you brave enough to climb aboard the Ghost Train? Tues 30 - Wed 31 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley

HALLOWEEN HALF TERM & CRAFT DAYS See the venue dressed for Halloween, take part in Halloween-themed craft days and try the haunted house and gruesome garden trails, Tues 30 Oct - Fri 2 Nov, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

ASTON HALLOWEEN See the venue transformed into a haunted mansion, Wed 31 Oct, Aston Hall, Birmingham

PUMPKIN FLOTILLA Wed 31 Oct, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

HALLOWEEN FAMILY FUN Eleven-mile return journey through Staffordshire's 'spooky valley', Wed 31 Oct, Churnet Valley Railway, Staffordshire

GHOST SEARCH Ghost walk around the castle, with vigils conducted in reputedly haunted rooms, Wed 31 Oct, Tamworth Castle

FAMILY PUMPKIN CARVING WORKSHOP Wed 31 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

TRICK OR TREAT: SPOOKY STORIES & CHILLING TALES With Jonny McClean, Wed 31 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

BLEEDING HEARTS & DRY BONES - AN EVENING WITH DRACULA Enter into the twilight world of the vampire... Costumed guests welcome, Wed 31 Oct, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

GET GEOCACHING Wed 31 Oct, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

HUBBLE BUBBLE TRICK OR TREAT Do you dare to explore the spooky cellars at Soho House? Wed 31 Oct - Thurs 1 Nov, Soho House, B'ham



Halloween at Black Country Living Museum, Dudley



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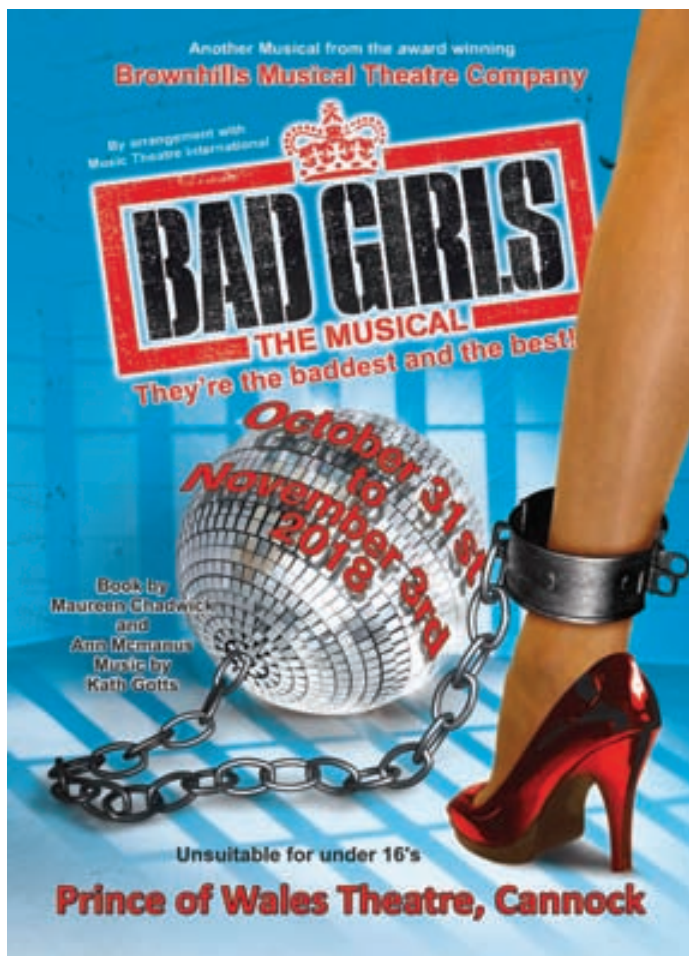
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