

Wolverhampton & Black Country

ISSUE 402 JUNE 2019

What's On

FILM | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS | FOOD

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Your 16-page week
by week listings guide

AVENUE Q

Tony Award-winning musical
returns to the Grand



ARTSFEST

celebrates Wolverhampton's
creative and cultural life



FAMILY FAVOURITE

under-5s fun at Himley Hall
with Peppa Pig and George



I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU

QUEEN I WANNA DANCE WITH SOMEBODY
OF THE NIGHT ONE MOMENT IN TIME
NIGHT I'M EVERY WOMAN
I HAVE NOTHING WHERE DO
RUN TO YOU BROKEN
SO EMOTIONAL HEARTS GO
SAVING ALL MY LOVE

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What's On

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Creativity celebrated at Artsfest event

The University of Wolverhampton is once again staging its Artsfest event throughout the month of June.

A major celebration of the creative and cultural life of the region, the festival takes place at venues across the city and features live performances, workshops, theatre shows, music, poetry and art exhibitions, many of which are free to attend.

Commenting on the event, Miceál Barden, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the university, said: "We've invited an eclectic range of new artists from across the region and further afield to take part this year, allowing them a chance to use Artsfest as a platform to enhance their careers.

"This is something that we're proud to support and will endeavour to do so again in the future, using Artsfest as a vehicle to continue to bring you the very best the region has to offer."

Artsfest runs until Sunday 30 June. For more information, visit wlv.ac.uk

Peaky Blinders escape rooms to launch in Brum



The world's first official Peaky Blinders escape rooms are set to be unveiled after the BBC TV series' production company agreed a deal with a Midlands-based operator. Escape Live will be bringing the first experiences to Birmingham later this year, and have plans to expand across the UK on the back of the deal.

Commenting on the news, Escape Live's Managing Director, Jas Sodhi, said: "This is fantastic news for Peaky Blinders fans everywhere, and we're looking forward to reimagining this international drama phenomenon into a number of escape experiences. Peaky Blinders has been enjoyed by millions of viewers across the world, but it's only right that these experiences are brought to Birmingham first."

Potteries photography project explores migration

An exhibition by a photographer who works in collaboration with individuals and communities to tell their stories of migration, asylum and home, is currently showing at

The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery in Stoke-on-Trent.

Sam Ivin's *Settling: Exploring Human Migration* was created in collaboration with local residents, telling the stories of people who have moved to Stoke from around the world. The exhibition shows at the gallery until Sunday 22 September.

Something for everyone at Lichfield's Fuse festival



Lichfield Arts' community music & arts festival, Fuse, makes a welcome return next month.

Taking place in the city's Beacon Park from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 July, the free-to-enter event features live music, dance, poetry, workshops, art activities, food traders, market stalls and two bars.

"This will be the 18th Fuse, and it continues to evolve each year," says the festival's project manager, Jeff Fowler. "For 2019, new developments include a tie-up with the Lichfield Festival to introduce acts to each other's event, an arrangement with funding partner Lichfield BID to bring Fuse performers into the city centre during the festival, and an expanded festival market, including a gin bar to complement our main bar."

British Ceramics Biennial back in the Potteries

British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) will this autumn celebrate its 10th anniversary with a five-week festival in Stoke-on-Trent.

Taking place at six iconic venues across the city and running from 7 September to 13 October, BCB features the work of more than 300 contemporary artists.

The post-industrial setting of the original Spode factory site will once again be the main hub of the festival, bringing together 13 exhibitions, live workshop areas and an exchange place for buying work and sharing ideas and inspiration.

For the full programme and to find out more about the festival, visit britishceramicsbiennial.com

Disney celebrates 100 years of magic in Brum

A show celebrating a centenary of Mouse House magic is visiting the Midlands this autumn.

Disney On Ice Celebrates 100 Years Of Magic will stop off at Arena Birmingham from 16 to 20 October and features characters from 14 classic and modern stories. The production stars an international team of award-winning figure skaters, and will also boast Disney On Ice's usual impressive sets, colourful costumes and high-energy choreography.



The Greatest Showman in the great outdoors...

Ironbridge Gorge's Blists Hill Victorian Town will next month present an outdoor screening of the hit film, *The Greatest Showman*. The Hugh Jackman movie will be shown on a huge 8mx4m inflatable screen on the evening of Friday 5 July. Audience members can take along their own picnic to the event. Seating isn't provided but some pillows and blankets will be available for hire on the night. For more information about the screening, visit ironbridge.org.uk



New kids festival - designed by kids!

A unique event designed by kids for kids will take place for the first time in Stoke-on-Trent's Central Forest Park next month (Saturday 27 July). Forest Worlds Festival - Colour The Park was created in close collaboration with local children and invites families to explore the park and enjoy a selection of free activities. Commenting on the new event, its organiser, Laurel Gallagher, said: "We met kids in Central Forest Park and asked them how they saw the spaces. They immediately saw a series of worlds that will take families on an adventure around the park. Colour was also a really big deal to them. They named the event to make it sound fun for other kids. We're happy to follow their direction and are looking forward to a bright summer celebration!"



Comic book takeover as new festival arrives in Shropshire

Judge Dredd, The Beano and The Walking Dead are just three of the iconic publications being showcased at a brand new event coming to Shrewsbury this month.

Comics Salopia (Saturday 1 & Sunday 2 June) will celebrate comic art and its associated wider culture with a series of events at numerous venues across the Shropshire town.

The festival has been co-produced by Charlie Adlard, a local artist who's spent the last 15 years working on the hugely successful zombie apocalypse comic book series, *The Walking Dead*.

To coincide with Comics Salopia, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery is presenting an exhibition of Charlie's artwork. *Drawn Of The Dead: The Comic Book Art Of Charlie Adlard* features a selection of the artist's original works from the *Walking Dead* comic book, as well as his illustrations from cult French comic *Vampire State Building* and original books *Code Flesh* and *White Death*.

The exhibition also provides visitors with the chance to take part in a 'zombie life drawing session', during which they can create a zombie sketch to take home.

Drawn Of The Dead shows at the venue from Saturday 1 June to Sunday 3 November.

The Homecoming returns to Stoke



Roll up, roll up in Newcastle-under-Lyme on Saturday 29 June to enjoy a high-energy performance of modern circus skills!

Swinging back into the town for a sixth year, outdoor circus gala *The Homecoming* presents a range of contemporary circus entertainment, including trampolining, aerial storytelling, acrobatic walkabout acts, hands-on workshops and plenty more. For more information, visit appetitestoke.co.uk

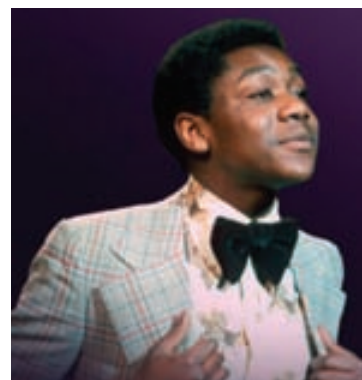
Sir Lenny Henry to kick off new UK tour at Midlands theatre venue

Sir Lenny Henry will kickstart a brand new UK tour at Birmingham Hippodrome later this year.

Following the autumn publication of his memoir, the Dudley-born actor and comedian will present *An Evening With Lenny Henry - Who Am I Again?* at the Hippodrome on Sunday 20 October, followed by dates at Dudley Town Hall (22 November) and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre (27 November).

Commenting on the new tour, Sir Lenny said: "I can't wait to share more stories and fun about growing up in the Midlands, my early days in the clubs, pubs and discotheques, and of course working on *Tiswas*, *Three Of A Kind* and *The Lenny Henry Show*. My touring show promises to be an evening of memories, laughter and fun - I can't wait to get started."

For more information and to book tickets, visit lennyhenryontour.net



Fashion awards...

Organisers of the prestigious Midlands Fashion Awards (MFA) are calling on independent, emerging and creative talent from across the region to enter the event's nine categories.

Now in its 12th year, the MFA is a catwalk, exhibition and networking event which culminates in an awards ceremony and showcases creative fashion talent from across the Midlands.

The awards will be held at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Friday 11 October.

To apply to take part, visit midlandsfashionawards.co.uk. The deadline for entries is Friday 14 June.



Sir Bradley rides into the Midlands

Britain's most decorated Olympian is visiting Birmingham's Symphony Hall this autumn (Friday 20 September) with a brand new show. Bradley Wiggins: An Evening With sees the Olympic Gold medallist and Tour de France winner sharing exclusive stories in a unique and intimate live setting.



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Pocket park in the town

Part of Shrewsbury has been transformed into a 'pocket park' while essential roadworks are carried out.

The park, situated in the town's Shoplatch, features artificial turf and deck chairs, music and activities. The initiative is part of a campaign by Shrewsbury BID (Business Improvement District) to take advantage of the essential gas repair work currently being undertaken in the town's high street.

Black Country music festival offering showcase for local talent

Local bands and artists will be given the chance to shine at this summer's Black Country Musicom Festival.

The huge outdoor extravaganza takes place at Himley Hall & Park on Black Country Day - Sunday 14 July - and features performances by tribute versions of Oasis, Little Mix, Spice Girls and Queen, as well as sets by a number of local acts.

Commenting on the event, Alan Lunt, Strategic Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive, said: "The Black Country Musicom promises to be a fantastic event. With the festival being on Black Country Day, we felt it was important that it had a strong local flavour, so we're delighted to be giving some great Black Country acts the opportunity to perform on the big stage."

To book tickets for the event, visit himleyhallandpark.co.uk/bcmc

Diana Vickers and Sara Crowe join Shane Richie in The Entertainer



Shane Richie is to take the title role in an updated touring revival of John Osborne's classic play, *The Entertainer*.

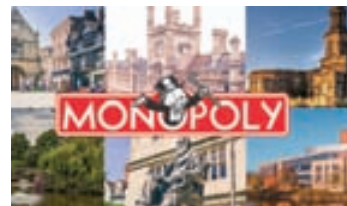
The *EastEnders* favourite will be joined in the show by Sara Crowe and Diana Vickers.

The production visits the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre in the autumn, stopping off at the venue from 7 to 12 October.

Premiering in 1957, *The Entertainer* was written by Osborne for Laurence Olivier - at the actor's request - and was then made into a film, in which Olivier also starred.

This latest version of the story sees the action updated to the early 1980s. For more information, visit grandtheatre.co.uk

Shrewsbury to get its own Monopoly set



A new Shrewsbury version of classic board game Monopoly will go on sale in time for Christmas. The Shropshire market town has beaten off the challenge of 20-plus other towns and cities across the UK to land its very own Monopoly game, with the general public being invited to vote for which local landmarks they would like to see included on the board.

Rattigan classic at Theatre Severn

Tickets are now on sale for Shropshire Drama Company's production of Terence Rattigan's World War Two play, *Flare Path*, which shows at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, from 26 to 29 June. A tribute to the collective spirit of wartime bomber crews and their partners, *Flare Path* draws on Rattigan's own wartime experiences as a gunner and Flight Lieutenant in Coastal Command. For more information and to book tickets, visit theatresevern.co.uk



**QUADROPHENIA
 THE ALBUM - LIVE**
 WED 12 JUNE
 7:30PM
TOWN HALL



**REGINALD D HUNTER:
 FACING THE BEAST**
 WED 26 JUNE
 8PM
TOWN HALL



**BERNADETTE
 PETERS**
 FRI 14 JUNE
 7:30PM
SYMPHONY HALL



**JOHN BARROWMAN
 - FABULOUS**
 SUN 30 JUNE
 7:30PM
SYMPHONY HALL



**WOMAN TO WOMAN
 - JUDIE TZUKE,
 BEVERLEY CRAVEN
 & JULIA FORDHAM**
 SAT 15 JUNE
 7:30PM
TOWN HALL



LEA SALONGA
 THU 11 JULY
 7:30PM
SYMPHONY HALL



**BRING YOUR OWN
 BABY COMEDY**
 THU 20 JUNE
 12PM
SYMPHONY HALL FOYER



**STEVIE WONDER
 - THE HITS
 PERFORMED
 BY 16-PIECE
 ORCHESTRA**
 SAT 27 JULY
 8PM
TOWN HALL



TAN FRANCE
 THU 20 JUNE
 7:30PM
TOWN HALL



TAPE FACE
 THU 19 SEPTEMBER
 7:30PM
TOWN HALL

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Educating Rita

What's On chats to Stephen Tompkinson, who stars as washed-up university lecturer Frank when a new version of Willy Russell's hit comedy, *Educating Rita*, visits Wolverhampton next month...

As the Open University marks its half century, Wolverhampton offers a warm welcome to perhaps its most celebrated fictional graduate. Willy Russell's *Educating Rita* stars Jessica Johnson as the Rita of the title, a working-class hairdresser who enrolls as a part-time English Literature student. Jessica is joined in the play by Stephen Tompkinson as Frank, the disillusioned university professor who's been assigned to tutor her on her journey towards graduation.

Whilst many people will be familiar with Lewis Gilbert's 1983 film version of the play, starring Michael Caine and Julie Walters, Stephen Tompkinson's interest in Russell's text stretches further back: "I'd read the play and I'd seen it on stage before I saw the film, in the very early '80s, and thought, 'One day I'd love to do it'.

"The lovely thing about the stage play over the film is that it's one set, in his office, and it's just the two characters. You follow this year of academia, this journey that they both go on together, and find out how these very disparate characters end up offering a lifeline to each other."

While Stephen had always harboured a wish to play Frank, it was his co-performer who reignited his interest in the role: "I first met Jess nearly two years ago at Live Theatre in Newcastle, when she was performing a play called *Goth Weekend*. I was rehearsing a Patrick Marber play called *The Red Lion*. I saw Jess's performance, and she was absolutely brilliant. She'd done *Educating Rita* at the Gala Theatre in Durham, said she'd love another opportunity for a longer run, and that I would make a brilliant Frank."

When the proposal for a revival of the play was put to Willy Russell, he not only gave his blessing to the pairing of Tompkinson and Johnson, he also agreed to help with the production.

"We've had Willy present every week of rehearsals, so he's led us through by the hand very beautifully and very patiently, and hasn't been at all fussy about the script.

"He knows that audiences have moved on, 40 years after he first wrote it, and that they don't need as much information as they used to be given, so he's been quite happy getting the scissors out to his much-loved play. He's let it be *our* production, and he's been delighted with the results, I'm happy to say. We knew that if we were making him happy, then hopefully that would transfer to the audience."

Since opening in Keswick in April, the play has attracted a wide range of theatregoers: "It's accessible to everyone. Although it's set in a university and the world of academia, with someone who's desperate to enter that world, it doesn't exclude. It's inclusive of everybody, and I think that's always been one of Willy's great strengths - being able to speak to everyone.

"The producers at Keswick said that the most rewarding thing was that 20 percent of the ticket sales were brand new theatregoers, so that was lovely. We met a guy whose only other experience of the theatre was panto with the kids at Christmas, and he said he was engaged within the first five minutes because he could associate with Rita, being working-class himself. He was absolutely lost in it and thought it was fantastic."

So how does Stephen view his character's relationship with Rita?

"Frank's desperate for her not to become just another student, but instead to try and see things his way. But then, by doing that, he's almost having too much of an influence on her, when he should be allowing her to think for herself. He's very aware that he's doing a sort of Frankenstein number on her and can see the changes in her. He's not particularly best pleased with what he sees, and his outlet is through drink, sadly.

"Rita tries to rescue him from himself and ends up finding *herself*, so she's very grateful to Frank. The decisions that she makes from then on will definitely be hers, and Frank has given her choice."

Over the years, the broad appeal of *Educating Rita* has ensured that the story is familiar to many people, but what can the audience expect to take away from this particular production?

"They get to see a great, unrequited love story about second chances and choice, and about the fact that it's never too late for anyone. Friends who've been to see it are dazzled by Willy's original script. They can't believe it's 40 years since it was written, because all the points are still very salient now."

.....

Educating Rita shows at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 8 to Saturday 13 July & Malvern Festival Theatre, from Monday 5 to Saturday 10 August

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MON 3 – SAT 8 JUN

REGENT THEATRE



JONATHAN ANSELL & JAI MCDOWALL IN LES MUSICALS

TUE 11 JUN

REGENT THEATRE



JILL CLEWES ACADEMY FOR THEATRE ARTS MARVELLOUS PARTY

WED 19 JUN – SAT 22 JUN

REGENT THEATRE



AGATHA CHRISTIE'S THE MOUSETRAP

THU 27 JUN – SAT 29 JUN

REGENT THEATRE



JOIN IGGLEPIGGLE AND FRIENDS AT IN THE NIGHT GARDEN LIVE

TUE 2 JUL – WED 3 JUL

REGENT THEATRE



THE CHICAGO BLUES BROTHERS MOTOWN MISSION

FRI 5 JUL

REGENT THEATRE



GORKA, ALJAZ AND GIOVANNI IN HERE COME THE BOYS

TUE 16 JUL

REGENT THEATRE



20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR OF RHYTHM OF THE DANCE

SAT 3 AUG

REGENT THEATRE



THE VERY BEST GIRLS' NIGHT OUT THE DREAMBOYS

SAT 10 AUG

REGENT THEATRE

DR JOHN COOPER CLARKE: THE LUCKIEST GUY ALIVE

THU 23 MAY **VH**

DANNY BAKER: GOOD TIME CHARLIE'S BACK!

TUE 04 JUN **VH**

JANE MCDONALD

FRI 07 JUN **VH**

AL MURRAY: LANDLORD OF HOPE & GLORY

THU 20 JUN **VH**

UB40

SUN 23 JUN **VH**

WANNABE: THE SPICE GIRLS SHOW

FRI 28 JUN **VH**

A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

SUN 30 JUN **VH**

THE DRIFTERS

THU 15 AUG **VH**



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REVIEW: Il Michelangelo

Tasty Italian classics at packed-to-the-rafters Black Country restaurant

Located in Brierley Hill, Il Michelangelo has made it through to the finals of our What's On Readers' Awards in each of the past three years.

The restaurant has been trading for eight years and, alongside its extensive a la carte menu, produces daily menus designed to create a truly seasonal dining experience. The restaurant uses local produce wherever possible, imports the finest seasonal Italian ingredients, and employs chefs who're expert in creating modern takes on classic Italian recipes.

On arrival, my partner and I were politely greeted and taken over to our table, which was situated next to a large painting of Michelangelo himself. With the

restaurant packed to its rafters with smiley and contented-looking diners, we felt confident that our debut Il Michelangelo experience would prove to be a positive one.

We perused the menu over a cold pint of Poretti, a pils-style Italian lager, and a garlic bread pizza, topped with mozzarella, from the bread and nibbles section. The latter (which comes as a full-size pizza) was cooked nicely, boasted a generous helping of mozzarella and was certainly a step up from your bog-standard garlic bread and cheese. We were off to a good start.

The a la carte menu boasted starters including: homemade chicken liver pâté served with toasted bread, small pickled

cucumbers and homemade apple and walnut chutney; deep-fried squid served with tartare sauce; succulent pork spare ribs cooked in a fruity BBQ sauce; and Italian prosciutto crudo and melon dressed with forest fruit coulis.

I opted for a firm favourite of mine: king prawns in white wine, garlic, butter and chilli, served on toasted ciabatta bread. My partner chose the white crab and mango salad from the daily menu. My selection proved to be absolutely delicious. The prawns were succulent, meaty and large in size, the accompanying sauce - which boasted just the right amount of chilli - was incredibly flavoursome.

My partner's dish proved to be another winner. The freshness from the crab, rocket and mango offered a welcome contrast to the strong and salty flavour from the prawns. By this point, we understood absolutely why the restaurant had no empty tables remaining...

The main courses are split into sections - risotto, pasta, classic pizza, new world pizza (without tomato sauce), meat and fish. Choosing what to have, as always, was quite the challenge. We settled on the tagliatelle Michelangelo - tagliatelle with spring onions, cherry tomatoes, chicken, crispy bacon, cream and parmesan - and the filetto stroganoff - sliced 28 days-aged prime British fillet of beef cooked with cream, mushrooms, mixed peppers, mustard, brandy and paprika, served with rice. Forever greedy, we also ordered a side of hand-cut chips and deep-fried courgettes.

I rarely order pasta when dining out, but the tagliatelle was very tasty indeed. The pasta itself was cooked perfectly and a dish I would happily order again. Across the table, my partner was tucking into a stunning mix of (again) perfectly cooked steak, rich, creamy sauce and buttery, fluffy rice. What's not to love

about that? In addition, the chips were cooked nicely and the incredibly moreish deep-fried courgettes were an absolute delight.

You can't visit an Italian restaurant without trying its tiramisu - so although we were suitably full, we ordered both that and the salted caramel budino - creamy pudding on a thin vanilla sponge topped with a rich sea-salted sticky caramel.

Wow! The tiramisu was certainly up there with the nicest I've ever eaten - the amalgamation of creamy, boozy and coffee flavours was truly heavenly. The budino was just as beautiful in both taste and presentation. If you don't have a big appetite, then whatever you do, make sure you save room to sample the desserts - they really are phenomenal.

It's not just the food that makes Il Michelangelo such an enjoyable experience. The friendly and informative staff are a credit to the business and help create a warm atmosphere that perfectly complements the tasty food.

The fabulous manager, Leo, took time out of his busy evening to talk to all his diners - a nice, personal touch and something that is often lacking in restaurants nowadays.

If you enjoy authentic Italian food and drink in relaxed and comfortable surroundings, book a table at Il Michelangelo immediately - you won't be disappointed. *Lauren Foster*

Food:
Service:
Ambience:
Overall value:
OVERALL

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Tel: 01384 74405

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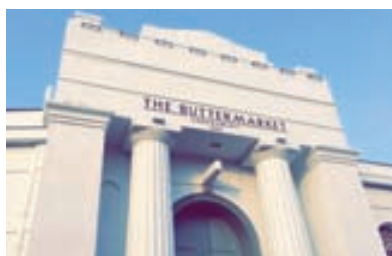
An eatery dedicated to all things cheese has opened in Shrewsbury. Located at the top of Wyle Cop, Say Cheese is serving up a range of cheese toasties and a 'build your own cheesecake in a jar' option, either to eat in or take away.

The toastie menu features options including: Shrews-Brie (three cheese blend, brie, caramelised onion jam and bacon); No Way Jose (two cheese blend, chorizo, blue cheese, garlic mayo & roasted red pepper); and You Must Be Jerkin' (three cheese blend, jerk chicken, spring onion, pineapple and jerk sauce).



Shropshire venue to host vegan fair

Shrewsbury's biggest vegan fair takes place in the town's popular Buttermarket venue this month. The free event, which is being held on Saturday 8 June, will feature over 50 stalls across three floors, an outside hot-food area, a range of kids' activities and a basement-located chill-out zone.



New tapas restaurant opens in Shrewsbury

A new tapas restaurant has opened in Shrewsbury.

Located in the Frankwell area of the town centre, AleOli y Tu is the sister restaurant of AleOli, which already resides in Shrewsbury's Market Hall.



Shrewsbury Food Festival set to attract tens of thousands

Up to 30,000 people will this month descend on Shrewsbury for the town's annual food festival (Saturday 29 & Sunday 30 June), the biggest of its kind in the West Midlands.

The popular event, which is now in its seventh year, boasts 200 exhibitors and a line-up of attractions that includes cookery & kitchen knife-using workshops, a BBQ area, a music stage, an on-site animal area and a family stage.

New for this year is a medieval village, showcasing food through the ages, and a 'free from'

area offering meat, gluten, wheat and dairy-free alternatives.

Commenting on the event, Shropshire Festivals founder Beth Heath said: "Shrewsbury Food Festival is a day for everyone - young or old, foodie or just fond of food. And now, for the first time ever, we're introducing a dedicated 'free from' area. We hope this means everybody will feel catered for, and that it encourages visitors to try foods which have been produced in new and exciting ways."

Sweet! Brand new cake shop Scrumbles opens in Leek



A brand new cake shop has opened in Leek. Scrumbles has been set up by friends Sarah Barber and Beth Charles, who bonded over a love of cake whilst working for an insurance business.

Cakes on offer include a range of brownies - gold bar, mint chocolate, triple chocolate, chocolate orange and vegan pecan - and cupcakes - red velvet, milky way and bakewell tart.

Sarah and Beth sell cookies and sponge cakes too, and also make larger cakes - cheesecakes, loaded cakes and more - upon request.

To see the mouthwatering selection of treats on offer, visit facebook.com/pg/uk.scrumbles



MARCO PIERRE WHITE

Acclaimed chef Marco Pierre White chats to What's On about his new menus, experimenting with veganism, impressing potential employers and eating a cow's windpipe...

The youngest ever recipient of three Michelin stars and a man considered by many to be the greatest UK chef of all time, Marco Pierre White has trained a number of high-profile and hugely popular fellow 'kitchen creatives', including Gordon Ramsay, Mario Batali, Curtis Stone and Shannon Bennett.

Owning a staggering 42 restaurants in the UK alone, three of which are in Birmingham, he's recently launched a new menu at his Steakhouse Bar & Grill venue, located at the top of the city's iconic Cube.

Steak sits at the heart of the menu, with cuts including fillet, rib-eye and chateaubriand.

The starters menu features a classic eggs benedict with Woodall's ham and Mr White's Scotch egg with Colonel mustard sauce, which Marco himself singles out as a particular favourite.

His liking for diversity is in evidence throughout the menu. Stand-out plates include

Wheeler's haddock fish cake with poached hen's egg and Connaught's shrimp curry - both perfect for fish lovers - as well as a honey-roasted bacon chop and a classic chicken Kiev. Croustade of eggs Maintenon Maxim's and creamy polenta with wild mushrooms are ideal dishes for vegetarians.

"Everything's seasonal, really," says Marco, in talking about his new menu. "It rotates, but there are certain things that we keep. We'll never take off the French onion soup or, of course, the steaks. But also, you have to take into consideration vegans and vegetarians."

"I was a vegan for nine months because I was curious. I went pure vegan for nine months of my life and stopped absolutely everything - all carbs, alcohol, smoking. The first three weeks, it didn't impact on me at all; the next six weeks, I became very weak, introverted, quite faint, dizzy at times and suffered from headaches. Then I sort of went back to normal after that. I must confess, though, I slept better. I had more energy. Through that nine-month period, I lost five stone in weight; it just dropped off me. My sense of smell became incredibly acute - I could walk down the road and smell coffee 100 metres away. I could smell bread being baked."

Even with so many benefits to following a strict vegan diet, Marco decided it wasn't for him: "I found myself staring at roast chickens and roast beef. Cheese boards were staring at me, almost to the point where I thought they were moving. The brie was walking across the plate. I was never fulfilled. I was never full. I was always hungry. I was never comforted. For me, food has to be comforting. I thought, this is boring, and I missed all those delicious things so much, so I went back to them."

"That's why I prefer something in a pot rather than a pan. I like a great stew, I love dumplings, risotto, a big pan of pasta; I love a big roast. I see these chefs talking about veganism and vegetarianism, but you can't really talk about it unless you've tried it."

Marco has also just launched a new menu at his Bardolino restaurant on Wharfside Street at The Cube.

The menu is focused around his belief that good-quality food should be an experience that's shared and enjoyed with friends and family, whatever the occasion. Featured cuisine includes a number of classic Italian-inspired dishes such as: rigatoni ragu of Scottish beef bolognese with aged Italian cheese; baked Tuscan sausages with cannellini beans and pomodoro sauce; and

crispy butterfly prawns fritto misto.

"This is the way that restaurants are going, because this is how people are living nowadays. They like to eat out once, twice or even three times a week, even if it's just going to somewhere casual like a pizzeria. People want affordable glamour, and they want some fun. I like casual. I like affordable. And I like glamour. We live such fast lives that it's important to have some escapism, so going to your local pizzeria for something to eat or even just a coffee can be an escape."

Despite his love of glamour, Marco admits that if he's cooking a meal for himself, he likes to keep it simple: "Maybe I'll have an omelette for dinner, a cheese omelette - delicious. That's fine for me. Perhaps a ham sandwich with good English mustard. Maybe a Scotch egg if one of my boys has made them and I steal one. I like real simplicity."

So is there anything that Marco won't eat?

"Chicken's feet! I'm not looking for a soul-mate. I don't get sucking feet; it really confuses me. I accept they've had a manicure before they've come to me, but it doesn't do it for me. I'm really into strange food, don't get me wrong - I like eating. Eating is one of my great passions in life. I went to this restaurant in Singapore and she said, 'Marco, I've got something special for you tonight'. They're fascinated that I love tendons - they're so delicious; they're one of the most delicious things I've ever eaten. I asked what the special was and she told me it was a surprise. Cow throat! Not for me. Can you imagine eating windpipe?! I like a pig's trotter, I like pig's ears, I love pig's head, I love all of that, but when it comes to eating windpipe, no. I said, 'Look, it's not for me, please apologise to the chef'. It was horrific! The texture was disgusting and it doesn't taste of anything. Chicken's feet, they take some doing. Windpipe is another question."

From Hell's Kitchen to Masterchef Australia to White's Kitchen Wars, Marco has done a lot of TV work over the years. So does he have anything else in the windpipe - sorry, pipeline?

"How boring! I can't stand it, but, like yourself, I have to make a living. I've just finished filming a series now. I don't like it. It's the most boring thing. In all my contracts now, they're not allowed to tell me what to say. Nothing scripted. I've worked on TV shows when they're scripted. There's no emotion. Can you imagine being told what to write and how to write it? Boring. It's systematic and they've sucked the emotion out of it."

As our thoroughly enjoyable chat draws to a close, the charismatic and ever-so-charming Marco offers some advice to any working-class Brummie who fancies becoming a respected chef: "Well, firstly, the advice I would give is, if you go for a job, keep your fingers crossed and hope that you get it. By not asking 'How many hours?' or 'How much am I getting paid?', your chance of getting the job will increase enormously. There's nothing worse than conducting an interview with someone who's 19 years old and they ask you those questions. So actually, you're not coming in order to learn? How stupid! What I learnt in my life is that knowledge is your passport to freedom; it really is. My father gave me that advice as a young man. He also told me to never call in sick. Turn up for work if you're ill; the chef will see you're not well. The advice I would give is to conduct your interviews correctly. That's not just for chefs, that's for everything. I think what's really important is to always be punctual. Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but that's what I think you should do. I used to go to interviews and sit there with my fingers crossed, praying I got the job. I remember I went for an interview with Pierre Koffmann - we're great friends, Pierre and I, and have a business together and are working on a second deal - and he said to me, 'I have no position in my kitchen'. It was the first and only time I've been turned down. I said - even though I couldn't afford to - that I would work for nothing. I worked for three weeks for zero money, and I was really on the breadline. He called me and said, 'Marco, I want to put you on the payroll'. Prove yourself. We live in such a disposable world now. People go in and out of jobs. When I was a boy, people didn't walk out of jobs, people weren't late. If you started work at 8, you turned up at 8 or earlier. How much do we pay a year for people to stand around on their phone? It's a different generation."

So what does Marco think about Birmingham's ever-growing and truly impressive food scene?

"It's a beautiful jigsaw - a melting pot of all the cultures. Also, because it's the second city, it's got all these businesses which bring money in, and then it allows people to pay for that. Birmingham is one of Britain's great gastronomic cities."

Marco Pierre White Steakhouse, Bar & Grill Birmingham is located at The Cube, 200 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1PR

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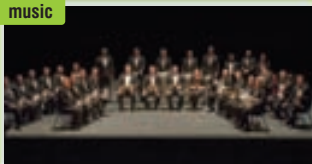


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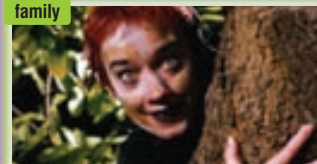
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Ex Cathedra: Summer Music By Candlelight

St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury, Fri 14 June; Birmingham Cathedral, Tues 18 & Wed 19 June

Jeffrey Skidmore once again picks up the baton to conduct Birmingham's highly rated early music ensemble, on this occasion in a concert that Ex Cathedra promise will see people heading for home singing of summertime. The programmes for these annual get-togethers, presented by candlelight as dusk falls, move seamlessly from seasonal favourites to rare, rediscovered, contemporary and lighter repertoire.



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra: The Planets

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 21 June

Gustav Holst's seven-movement orchestral suite, each movement of which is named after a planet in the solar system, is one of the most famous and familiar works of classical music ever written, particularly the Mars and Jupiter movements. Earth is excluded from the work, the concept of the suite being astrological rather than astronomical. The composer was still alive when Pluto was named as the ninth planet in 1930, but he opted out of writing an additional movement, believing that The Planets had already cast too significant a shadow over the rest of his work.



Birmingham Philharmonic Summer Prom Concert

Mitton Manor, Nr Penkridge, Staffordshire, Sat 29 June

One of the region's best known and most admired non-professional orchestras, the Birmingham Phil was voted 'best orchestra in the Midlands' in both the 2018 and 2019 What's On Readers' Awards. Their latest concert sees them getting to grips with a programme of traditional and familiar summer proms music, including William Tell, Finlandia, Pachelbel's Canon, Nimrod, Radetsky March, Barber Adagio, British Sea Songs, Pomp And Circumstance and Jerusalem.

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Organ Recital

St Laurence Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire, Sat 15 June

The continuing relationship between St Laurence Church and the Organ Department of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire is further strengthened by this lunchtime concert featuring two of the latter's most talented students. Callum Alger (pictured) will later this year take up the prestigious position of Organ Scholar at Westminster Cathedral. Josh Roebuck holds a similar post at Worcester Cathedral and Birmingham's Town Hall/Symphony Hall.



Chineke! Orchestra

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sat 15 June



"Chineke! is not only an exciting idea but a profoundly necessary one," says Sir Simon Rattle in talking about Europe's first orchestra to feature a majority of black and minority ethnic musicians. "The kind of idea which is so obvious that you wonder why it's not already in place. The kind of idea which could deepen and enrich classical music in the UK for generations. What a thrilling prospect!" Chineke! here close the Birmingham Classical season with a programme featuring: Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite No 1; Stewart Goodyear's Callaloo, which pianist Stewart himself will perform; and Dvořák's seventh symphony. Wayne Marshall conducts.





The classical quartet talk about their 15 years together ahead of their Birmingham show...

How's the new tour going?

Urs Bühler: We've started the first leg in Canada. It's a really beautiful show. I think it comes over great. We played castles and stately homes in the UK last July with our Timeless tour, which was based on the new album.

We played the whole repertoire, which was actually quite risky, but the album is very beautiful, so it went down really well. This is more back-to-basics - the four of us singing. We still do a few songs from the Timeless album but we do all our greatest hits as well. The audience seem to like it, so I'm very excited to bring it to the UK and play the arenas again.

David Miller: We started in Winnipeg, where it was 20 degrees below zero. We were bundled up that day for sure!

Sebastien Izambard: We decided to tweak the gig because it's our 15-year anniversary. What we realised was that people really want to see just the four of us. We had dancers, but now we're listening to what our audience wants, with some of our best songs ever alongside the Timeless album. In my opinion, it's a really good show. We're having a really good time.

When starting out, did you ever imagine that you'd be together for 15 years?

Seb: Never. It's hard enough to keep up a marriage, so imagine how it feels keeping a whole band together - especially when it was an arranged marriage! I still think sometimes, 'It's not real'. It's striking the amount of counties and cities we've been to. I find it amazing. I know more where a lounge is than where the forks and the cutlery are at home. I lived in England for almost 10 years, so it's always like coming back home.

Why did you decide to strip back the show this time?

Urs: When I go to concerts, I like to see shows with something happening on stage. We get excited and have lots of ideas - we could do this, we could do that. Then you play your show like this for a whole year all around the world. You ask people, 'What did you think about the video and the stage set?' And they go, 'We just came to see you guys sing'. So you know what, let's strip all the fuss away and just make a beautiful concert. We enjoy that the most, and the audience enjoys that.

It can sometimes be a distraction having lots of other things happening on stage...

Urs: It's not necessary, so why bother? The Il Divo music is very beautiful. We have a few things up our sleeves which I'm not going to give away, but it's a fun show.

Narrowing down the Greatest Hits set list must be a challenge...

Urs: It is, definitely. There are certain songs which have to be in there. Obviously Unbreak My Heart and My Way. We've done Greatest Hits shows before, but the repertoire was different. We do have a lot of songs and have done a lot of specials with other artists, like the football World Cup. It's all Greatest Hits. It's difficult. We get help from outside - we talk to management - and always size it down to a show length. I've been listening back to the first albums, and we've got such beautiful, original songs like I Believe In You, Isabel - which we're doing again - and others that we do in the show. I'd be very excited to do a show with only original Il Divo songs. We've done a lot of covers, and people know these songs, but I think we have a stunning original repertoire that would totally be worth building a show around. Maybe something for the future - the original Greatest Hits.



What's it like on your tour bus?

Urs: We're not travelling on a tour bus! I've done two north American tours on a tour bus, but not with the other boys. They don't like that. Sebastian and Carlos get quite easily car-sick. David would be okay. It becomes a financial thing. If you rent a whole tour bus, it's very expensive unless you fill it up - they normally have 10 or 12 bunks or up to 18. If you don't fill it up, it's going to be cheaper to fly the whole party around.

What are your favourite memories of performing in the UK?

Urs: Last year the tour was absolutely spectacular. You might remember the

weather we had in the UK in July. I'm big into medieval times and ancient properties. Playing in front of Edinburgh Castle and these beautiful properties - house keeping would give us a private tour - that was wonderful. I enjoyed last year's tour so much. It was almost like I was going sightseeing in the UK and we only had to perform a show in the evening on the side. The UK is where our career started - where we did the first record and had the first record company. It's where the audience embraced us from the beginning. It's like coming home when we come to the UK. We play the Royal Albert Hall in London again, which I'm very much looking forward to. It's a beautiful venue. It's a

very comfortable, homely, family feeling coming to the UK to play these shows.

David: I love the UK. It's one of my favourite places to spend time in. It's a compact area - we can drive from city to city or take the train. So much of what is challenging about our touring schedule is that we spend almost every day on a plane, as we're in a different city every day, sometimes a different country every day. There's no time to enjoy a boots-on-the-ground experience of a country. By contrast, here in the UK, driving across the countryside means we can take it all in. We now have such a great fan-base here. People show up to our concerts and have a great time. They let their hair

down, they let the music in, and there's no greater compliment to an artist than to feel received. That's what we really get from the UK.

You must recognise a lot of faces in the crowd after 15 years...

David: Not only do we see a lot of the same fans who've followed us around, we see a lot of our international fans in the UK as well, particularly from Japan and San Francisco. If ever we miss areas around Europe, they'll come over to the UK too. There is such a sense of familiarity, with people showing up who we've known for years.

Seb: I love when we come to the UK. We are spoiled. We have so many fans who actually somehow are always showing up for us. It feels like an extended family to me. I was always told when I moved to the UK that UK audiences were not very faithful to their bands. I don't know why people used to say that. I think they're really faithful. We are incredibly lucky that our fans are very loyal to us. We probably could name most of our fans. They've been there 15 years.

Will you put Simon Cowell on the guest list for the tour?

Urs: If he's interested in coming to see a show, he's invited. He's been to a few over the years, but he's a very busy man. Like us, he's travelling a lot, so you never know where to pin him down. It's wonderful to see his face down in the audience. I love having people in the audience who I recognise and know. Simon is always a very welcome guest if he can make it to a show.

Which home comforts do you travel with?

Urs: Nothing really. I'm so used to travelling and spending nights in hotels that I feel comfortable in whatever bed I lay down in, unless it's really bad quality and the pillows are bad. That's really annoying. I take clothes with me - two suitcases for two months. I wish I could take 10 because I like my wardrobe. I've got my wife with me, if that counts for home comforts? She's travelling with me all year. We got married two-and-a-half years ago under the premise that we're going to spend our life together, not that we're going to be married and I'm going to be gone 10 months out of the year. She's always with me, and we go through

these adventures together. Home is where my heart is, and that's right next to me.

Seb: I always travel with my own pillow because I think with hotel pillows you never know what you're going to get. I don't like hard pillows. I have a soft pillow I like travelling with and my own pillow cases. It reminds me of being in my own bed, and I like that a lot. I have photos of my kids that I put on my bedside table.

What do you like to have on your rider?

Urs: I don't even go to catering these days or have dinner before a show. I have still and sparkling water in my dressing room, rolled oats, a couple of protein bars, fruit or berries. That's what I live on for the shows. I have a cup of oatmeal with berries or fruit an hour before the show, and that gives me the energy I need to sing. If I'm hungry afterward, I have a protein bar. That's it.

Don't you feel hungry?

Urs: Our life rhythm is a bit strange. If I don't have to get up for travel or interviews, I very often sleep until 11 or later. Normally after the shows, it takes quite a while for you to go to sleep - to get the body and the mind to rest. Even without hanging out and partying in your hotel room, it can easily be 2am or 3am before you get to sleep. If you're in a nice city, you look for a place that does all-day breakfast and finishes breakfast at 2pm. It's a very different rhythm.

Which British traditions do you love?

David: Even though we can get it in other places, there's no substitute for the British version of fish & chips with mushy peas - I love it. Full English breakfast every morning. I gain a little bit of weight when I come to the UK. I really do relate to the sensibility of how life is conducted. We lived here for two years at the beginning of our career, in a cluster of apartments in south west London. We really got to spend time and absorb the sensibility of the English nature - the reserved way that everyone speaks to each other; the politeness. Whether that politeness is actually heartfelt or undertone-sarky, it's still there.

Seb: I love the countryside in the UK a lot. I've been glamping, when my kids were younger, in Hereford etc. I really like Somerset. I think the UK has the best countryside. I

love the people too. I remember living in Notting Hill, going to the market there and people going, 'Hello love, how you are?' So friendly and very positive. I love the tea and scones. I love your traditions. I think England has amazing traditions, just as much as France does.

Are there any British musicians you're friends with?

Seb: I've met quite a few. I live not far from Chris Martin in Malibu. If I see him, I say hello. I'm such a big fan of his. I love what he does, his music and what he stands for. I think he's an incredible artist. I know the guy from Muse too. I would've loved to have been friends with David Bowie, but he never returned my calls! Alfie Boe, I'm friends with him. I grew up listening to The Beatles as a kid. That was my source of inspiration. I've always been a big fan of English bands like The Verve. I think they're the best songwriters in the world. That comes from the culture. I really believe that. I do a lot of songwriting myself because that's one of my passions.

As a Beatles fan, Seb, you must get excited when you play shows in Liverpool...

Seb: "I love it. I'm like a kid. What an amazing time. I would've loved to have been born around that time and have a band then. The music industry has changed dramatically. Even video. Now it's streaming. Not to sound old-fashioned, but I don't think music is appreciated as much anymore.

What's next for Il Divo after the tour?

Seb: We're working on our next album, which is definitely a repertoire that I didn't imagine we were going to do. It was suggested by our management, Red Light. We're definitely going to work on something that isn't what people would expect from us. That, to me, is really exciting because I don't like to do the same thing. That's why I did a solo record last year. I'm excited. I know what we're recording is going to be challenging on our voices, but I'm excited to bring it to our audience. I think that's very important, otherwise our fans get bored and we get bored.



Il Divo play Arena Birmingham on Saturday 29 June.

A promotional poster for the Sugar Hill Gang. The background is a white brick wall. The band's name 'Sugar Hill GANG' is written in a large, stylized purple font at the top. In the top right corner, the date 'FRIDAY 12TH JULY' is printed in purple. Five members of the gang are shown in the center, dressed in their signature style with leather jackets, hats, and sunglasses. One member on the right wears a jacket with a 'GRANDMASTER FURIOUS' logo. A purple circular badge on the left says 'FEATURING GRANDMASTER MELLE MEL & SCORPIO'. A white rectangular box in the center contains the text 'THE BUTTERMARKET SHREWSBURY'. Below the band, the text 'PLANET OF THE BREAKS' is written in a bold, white, blocky font. At the bottom, the ticket price and website are listed: '£17.50 TICKETS AT WWW.THEBUTTERMARKET.CO.UK'.

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GANG

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A promotional poster for 'The Craig Charles Funk & Soul Club'. The background is dark with a large, stylized image of a man (Craig Charles) wearing headphones and singing into a microphone. The text 'THE CRAIG CHARLES' is in white, 'FUNK & SOUL' is in large yellow and white letters, and 'CLUB' is in yellow. Below this, the date 'FRIDAY 23 AUGUST' is printed in white. A line of text below the date lists the genres: 'FUNK & SOUL - DISCO - HIP HOP - REGGAE - HOUSE - OLD SKOOL'. A white rectangular box in the center contains the text 'THE BUTTERMARKET SHREWSBURY'. To the right of this box, the text 'PLANET OF THE BREAKS' is written in a bold, white, blocky font. At the bottom, the ticket price and website are listed: '£12.00 TICKETS AT WWW.THEBUTTERMARKET.CO.UK'.

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Nell Bryden

Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury, Sun 30 June

In 2012, Brooklyn-born singer-songwriter Nell Bryden released *Sirens* - a song based on her experiences of living in New York in the aftermath of 9/11. The track caught the attention of many an artist - Gary Barlow, Jools Holland and Counting Crows, to name but a few. Nell has since become a Radio Two listeners' favourite, gaining plenty of acclaim for her powerful, soaring vocals and accomplished songwriting.

Following her sell-out debut at Henry Tudor House in 2017, Nell returns to the venue by popular demand and is this time going back to her roots, following the traditional sonic footsteps of her idols, Dusty Springfield, Aretha Franklin and Carole King.



Dan Owen

The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury, Sat 1 June

"I like to think of it as a collection of personal stories and experiences," says Shropshire lad Dan Owen in talking about his debut album, *Stay Awake With Me*. "I feel like it's what I've been working for since I first picked up a guitar at the age of eight. A

lot has happened since then, and the songs on my album cover some of the high and low points, both for me and for some of those closest to me."

Dan is performing at The Buttermarket as part of Comics Salopia - Shrewsbury's new comic book festival - and is raising money for Share Shrewsbury, a charity that supports local people in recovery.

Henge

Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury, Fri 21 June

"Attention Earth! This is Henge. We come in the name of rave. We bring you the gift of cosmic dross - a kind of music new to your world. We have news. Planet Earth is an experiment. Your species was sent codes from space, to help you love and dance. But your leaders grew scared. They hid the codes from you. Now your consciousness shrinks and they destroy your world with weapons of war. Ravelings of Earth, rebel! Absorb the mutated frequencies of cosmic dross. There are no Earth words to describe these sounds, but you will learn how to love and dance again!"



Honeyblood

The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 14 June

Originally comprising Stina Marie Claire Tweeddale on vocals and guitar, and Cat Myers on vocals and drums, Honeyblood have shared stages with everyone from Belle And Sebastian and Foo Fighters to Courtney Barnett and Wolf Alice.

Now a Tweeddale solo venture, Honeyblood's third album, *In Plain Sight*, sees the singer-guitarist finding her most ambitious form and steely focus yet.

Strawbs

The Robin, Bilston, Sun 9 June

Strawbs are Britain's most successful international progressive folk-rock band. They have achieved sales of more than three million albums, with seven consecutive albums having featured in the US Billboard Top 200. Featuring longtime members Dave Cousins, Dave Lambert & Chas Cronk, they're here bringing their 50th Anniversary Acoustic Show to the Midlands.

Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 23 June

Having formed Cockney Rebel in 1972, legendary rock icon Steve Harley has a back-catalogue that includes *Judy Teen*, *Mr Raffles*, *Here Comes The Sun*, *Mr Soft and Sebastian*. He's best known for worldwide hit and UK number one *Make Me Smile (Come Up And See Me)* - which, to the best of Steve's knowledge, has been covered at least 130 times.

Recognised as one of Britain's greatest and most charismatic live performers, he's here joined by the original Cockney Rebel to perform his classic hits.



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Download Festival Donington Park, Derby, Fri 14 - Sun 16 June

With top billing consistently taken by some of the biggest names in rock and metal, it's not hard to see why Download is one of the most popular and well-attended festivals in the UK.

Conceived as a follow-up to Donington Park's previous Monsters Of Rock Festival, Download partly owes its name to its pioneering

use of technology to connect with audiences and build a community around the event.

Line-up includes: Slipknot (pictured), Def Leppard, Tool, Slash featuring Myles Kennedy and The Conspirators, Die Antwoord, Smashing Pumpkins, Whitesnake, Trivium, Lamb Of God and Slayer.

Upton Jazz Festival

Upton-upon-Severn, Thurs 27 - Sun 30 June

Now in its 34th year, the Upton Jazz Festival boasts a star-studded international line-up - including bands from the US - and annually attracts thousands of jazz fans from across the country.

The festival has moved back into the city centre and takes place at various venues, including Upton Memorial Hall, the King's Head, The Swan, The Star Hotel, The Parish Church, The Boathouse, Under The Bridge and more.

The event has its own camping and caravan site, with free river mooring also available.

Line-up includes: Alan Barnes, Danzon, Fret and Fiddle, Hot Club 42, Jazz Connection, Livia King, Martin Wheatley, Rob Fowler, Something New And Exciting In September, Tad Newton's Jazz Friends, Vitality 5, Savannah Jazz Band, Sliphorn Summit and Dan Cassidy Swing Quartet.

Beardy Folk Festival

Hopton Court, Nr. Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire, Fri 21 - Sun 23 June

Returning for a second year, Beardy Folk Festival is a beautifully crafted, midsummer weekend boasting a line-up of folk, roots and acoustic music as well as a small trade village, yoga classes, workshops in singing, morris dancing and spoken word, heaps of free children's entertainment and plenty more besides. Under-13s go free, and four camping zones are on offer with the purchase of a day or weekend ticket.

Line-up includes: Skerryvore, Martyn Joseph, 3 Daft Monkeys, Merry Hell, Holy Moly & The Crackers, Chris Helme, Mark Radcliff, Russell & Lee, Gregg Russell & Ciaran Algar, O'Hooley & Tidow, Blair Dunlop and Urban Folk Quartet (pictured).



Acoustic Festival of Great Britain

Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire, Fri 31 May - Sun 2 June

Standing out from the summertime crowd of ever-louder electronic get-togethers, the Acoustic Festival of Great Britain marks a welcome return to the basics of good-quality music.

Stripped back, unplugged performances are the focus of this relaxed, friendly event. Beyond that, it's open to music of all genres. With five-star-rated camping infrastructure, glamping options, seated food tents and kids' play areas, it's the perfect way to spend a lazy weekend with the family.

Line-up includes: Big Country, Eagle-Eye Cherry, Ian Prowse and Amsterdam (pictured), Chris Difford, 3 Daft Monkeys, Izzy and The Hot Heads, Gaz Brookfield, The Willows, Joshua Burnell Band, Fleetwood Bac, Candy Mountain and Gordon Haskell.

Tenbury Music Festival

The Burgage Recreation Ground, Tenbury Wells, Sat 15 June

Now in its fifth year, the one-day Tenbury Music Festival is a family-friendly event featuring multiple stages, renowned food & drink stalls, camping opportunities and (of course) plenty of live music. New for 2019 is The Thomas Telford Stage and The James Cranston Stage. Salty Dog, Pizza Heaven and Wye Valley Catering are amongst the food traders serving up some tasty cuisine.

Line-up includes: Rainbreakers, The Phonics (pictured), Arcadia Roots, Kings Of The Quarter Mile, Tom C Walker, Joncan Kavlakoglu, Sunset Service, Steve Ajao Band, Jack Brett, The Paul Garner Band, Blue Moon and Red Hot Riot.



MOSELEY MAGIC

What's On talks to Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival Manager John Fell ahead of the event celebrating its 10th anniversary in July...



Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul is a popular annual event which attracts visitors from all over the world and plays host to a weekend of blistering live music, both from contemporary breakthrough artists and international legends. And speaking of legends, this year's festival is headlined by The Jacksons, The Brand New Heavies and the incomparable Burt Bacharach.

Lauren Foster caught up with Festival Manager John Fell to discuss the 2019 edition of Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul and its sister event, Moseley Folk Festival.

How did it all start, John?

We began with Moseley Folk Festival, which is now in its 14th year. It was initially a gathering of a few hundred people, and has just grown and grown. As the folk festival got

more popular, we decided to bring our other musical interests into play and launch another festival. It started out as Mostly Jazz Festival, but everybody assumed it was just pure jazz, so we changed the name to Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul about eight years ago. People really bought into the new name because it sounds so much more like a party. It's amazing how it's grown.

Why Moseley Park?

It's just a beautiful location. I think even some people who live locally have never been there - you need a key to get access. Anyone can get the key, though; they can go over to the travel shop across the road and get the key for the day. We'd never move from Moseley now - we're so blessed to have that site. At times, when we have a big line-up, it's frustratingly small because we can't get more people in, but equally I think it's a blessing. We're very happy and proud to be able to put our festivals on there.

How did you get involved?

I used to run the office for a medical company, and whilst I was doing that, I was also playing music. I was in a band called Goodnight Lenin, and we got booked to play Moseley Festival - we headlined the second stage one of the nights. Carl from the festival got involved with the band and just asked me whether I knew anyone who wanted to be a festival assistant. I told him that I was bored of business life so I'd come and do it. Now I'm Festival Manager, so it's worked out really well. I've been here eight years.

What's been the highlight during your time with the festivals?

I think the one that everybody talks about is Chic. We all knew the Chic back-catalogue - all the tracks and artists that Nile Rodgers has been involved with - that's why we booked them. Between booking them and playing the festival, they released Get Lucky with Daft Punk, and it was the most in-sync thing that could've happened. A year after that, their fee was 10 times higher. We wouldn't be able to afford them now. Due to capacity, there's only so much that we can spend...

Public Enemy were brilliant. They stepped in a month before because Sugarhill Gang pulled out. No disrespect to Sugarhill, but it was definitely a case of burying bad news with some really good news, and it proved to be a really great atmosphere...

For the folk festival, I'd say Johnny Marr - I'm a massive Smiths fan. Generally speaking, I say hello and thank you for coming etc to the artists, but I try not to pester them. I leave them alone to do their thing, but I had to go and chat to Johnny. He was one of the nicest men ever. Billy Duffy came from The Cult, and they played I Fought The Law, which was really cool. Johnny came out and we sat by the lake and spoke for about half an hour. I had to keep reminding myself that it was him!

Is there an artist who you've continually tried to bring to the festival without so far been successful?

Erykah Badu. I haven't managed that one yet. Earth Wind And Fire. For the folk festival,

Seasick Steve I've tried a few times. Any of Crosby Stills & Nash would be mega. Our directors have definitely put in a few offers for Neil Young to play solo, but understandably he's not decided to come and play to a 3,000-capped festival in Moseley. We'll keep trying, though...

Of the three festivals that you produce - Moseley Folk, Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul and Lunar, which has the greatest appeal to you personally?

It's really difficult because when I started, I was an out-and-out folky/Americana kind of person - I love Simon & Garfunkel etc. But as I got involved with the jazz festival, it kind of changed. I think the folk this year is one of our more well-rounded line-ups. Lunar, for example, we've had Television on, but I could never put them on at the folk festival. Because we had two festivals, we tried to keep the line-ups quite separate - more folk and Americana for the folk, then more indie and psychedelic for Lunar, but now that that's not happening this year, we've kind of pulled that back into the folk. Last year, I feel that it lost a bit of its oomph and bands that punch it out a bit, so we've kind of combined them this year. Obviously it's Moseley Folk & Arts this year, for the first time, so we'll have loads of comedians and stuff. It just feels like the line-up is much more rounded.

What do you dread most in the lead-up to the festival?

Bands turning up is an obvious one, and missing things, I suppose. Going back a while, we were sent a tech spec from a band who were coming over from Canada, and I was double-checking everything and sending everything out to the artists to make sure that everything was correct. But no one got back to me until the night before the festival, and there was a keyboard missing. There were only three in the country, as it was a very specific keyboard, and they were all hired out. We managed to contact another festival that had hired the keyboard for that band on the Saturday, and we got my friend to drive down to the festival and pick up the keyboard for the Friday evening. A lot of it is about troubleshooting; things do go wrong constantly, and you get used to that. I suppose you're nervous anyway because you're responsible for more than 3,000 people - and not just in terms of safety; you're trying to make sure everyone's having a good time, too.

What piece of advice would you give to someone who was thinking about hosting a first-time festival?

Start small and don't do it for money. If you're doing it for money, it comes across. Have an identity and grow it organically. That's the only way to do it unless you've got billions of

pounds in the bank and you can afford to lose money for three years, because that's what happens unless you're very lucky.

You like to champion local talent, so which band/artist should be on our radar this year?

Someone who's underrated is Sam Redmore - he's a DJ from Birmingham. He does a lot of club nights and has started to play across the country now. He does a lot on Craig Charles' show, and his Soundcloud has 700,000 followers; he's really growing. I've never had a bad time at any night I've been to where he's been playing. I hope he gets the credit he deserves because he's a hardworking guy, too... Also, Young Pilgrims are really cool. A brass band, all former Conservatoire kids, they're really good. Boat To Row are in the middle of planning their album release, and they're headlining at the folk festival on the Sunday night. A new band I like is Saint Alto, who're playing the Friday of the folk festival.

Who are you most looking forward to seeing at this year's festivals?

Definitely Burt Bacharach. The Jacksons are going to be a lot of fun. At Moseley Folk, you've got The Zutons. Hearing Valerie at Moseley Park is going to be incredible. I guess Don McLean. We've tried to book him for a few years and have actually managed to get him this year. Vincent, American Pie, Castles In The Air are all massive songs to me, so I think that's a really nice way to end the festival season - on a high.

How do you see the festivals progressing in the next 10 years?

This year we've brought an arts element into Moseley Folk, so that's our first stepping stone. We're going to have a stage for comedy, talks, and eventually podcasts and film. Obviously it's a very small site, so we've got to see how that all flows. We'll look to do a similar thing with the jazz. The jazz is very music-focused, but there's also loads of great food to enjoy - Original Patty Men and all these really cool independent food traders will be there - so that's a step up this year. I'd like to see comedians and cabaret and film brought into the jazz, to give it another dimension. I think next year that's definitely what we'll be looking to do. I'm already looking forward to that!

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Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul takes place at Moseley Park from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 July.

Moseley Folk & Arts Festival takes place at Moseley Park from Friday 30 August to Sunday 1 September.



Reginald D Hunter

Oakengates Theatre, at The Place, Telford, Thurs 6 June; Birmingham Town Hall, Wed 26 June

"Start calling things what they are," says American funnyman Reginald D Hunter. "There's so much euphemistic language - things like 'war on terrorism' or 'perception management' - that's just a fancy way of saying lies. I think when we collectively in Western culture don't call things what they are, added to all the drugs - prescription and otherwise - and all the propaganda nonsense in the system, it's no wonder people are going f***ing crazy! If you

eliminate the euphemisms, I think you'll find that a lot of the mental health issues people are suffering will begin to clear up a bit, I really do."

One of the most popular comedians currently working the UK comedy circuit, Reginald's no-nonsense style and hugely amusing perspectives on the differences between the US and the UK have struck a real chord with his audiences.

The Muslims Are Coming

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Sun 9 June; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 10 June



Shazia Mirza, who headlines this latest edition of The Muslims Are Coming, is not averse to treading a delicate line when it comes to her material. Examples of this include: "My name is Shazia Mirza - at least, that's what it says on my pilot's licence", and "My parents really want me to get married. But Muslim men don't want to marry me because... I speak." Shazia is joined for the show by different comedians on each night.

Hilarity Charity Gala

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 5 June

This returning Central Youth Theatre (CYT) fundraiser is once again compered by Daniel Kitson. Comedians plying their trade at the 2019 edition of the event include David O'Doherty, Rose Matafeo, John Robins, Darren Harriot, Tom Parry and Bake Off star Tom Allen (pictured). This is the fifth edition of Hilarity Charity to be organised by CYT, Wolverhampton's leading youth theatre since 1983.



Jimmy Carr

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 22 June; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 27 June; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sat 20 July; Dudley Town Hall, Sat 14 September

Jimmy Carr's comedy is all about quickfire, deadpan one-liners - and so many of them, in fact, that he's not sure their content matters all that much: "People don't really remember the individual jokes I tell because I tell such a lot of them; what they *do* remember is how those jokes make them feel."

Jimmy is a comedian for whom no subject is off limits: "I'll talk about anything as long as I feel the joke justifies it. It may cause controversy, but my thing on that is that controversy's an easy story on a slow-news day. And I never apologise for jokes. After all, I'm not making a serious political statement, I'm just trying to make somebody laugh."



Sean McLoughlin

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Fri 28 June

Referred to by Time Out as 'the best comedian you haven't heard of yet', Sean McLoughlin is a man whose potential is well known on the comedy circuit. Witness the fact that he was recently handpicked to open for Bill Burr at the Royal Albert Hall and for the legendary Doug Stanhope. And not only that, he's also provided tour support for Ricky Gervais, and even bagged himself a part in Gervais's recent Netflix comedy series, *After Life*. This latest show sees Sean undertaking the task of attempting to plot a course into the future for not only himself but also mankind...

Al Murray

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Thurs 20 June

Pub philosopher extraordinaire Al Murray certainly knows how to serve a pint or two of high-quality satire, and makes for a thoroughly nice drinking companion into the bargain. The much-loved Pub Landlord is using his new show to embark on a common-sense crusade to 're-Great' Britain, along the way looking at issues including the NHS, Europe, the Middle East and the gathering storm of fortnightly bin collections...



Harriet Dyer

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Tues 18 June

Fascinating facts about Harriet Dyer include the revelation that she once asked her flatmate to use a mallet to try to break her arm for her - on account of the fact that she didn't fancy going into work that day... At the time, Harriet thought such behaviour was simply representative of an eccentric personality. It was only years later that she was diagnosed as bipolar, with anxiety and depression thrown in for good measure... Away from the issue of her mental health, Harriet names her favourite heckle as the sound generated by an electric wheelchair as its unhappy owner headed for the exit after deciding she'd had enough of the comedian's show.



Adam Kay

Dudley Town Hall, Fri 21 June; Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Sat 29 June

After watching an Adam Kay performance, Stephen Fry declared, "This made me very, very happy." Numerous sell-out years at the Edinburgh Fringe and tens of millions of YouTube hits later, former obstetrician and gynaecologist Adam is this month visiting the Midlands with his latest tour, This Is

Going To Hurt: Secret Diaries Of A Junior Doctor. The show features one hour and one minute's-worth of humorous material based on his bestselling book of the same name. Expect splendidly silly spoof songs and some seriously shocking stories from the NHS frontline...



Ashley Blaker & Imran Yusef: Prophet Sharing

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Thursday 20 June

"As an overtly Jewish comedian," says Ashley Blaker, "I know my audience has an expectation that I'll cover certain topics in my show: Jeremy Corbyn, Labour, Israel, that dog that does the Nazi salute et al. And I do of course cover them all."

Ashley is here teaming up with Imran Yusef, who markets his own style of comedy as being for people who like to 'think and laugh'. "I once heard a joke by Sean Lock

that was so good, so clever, that I couldn't breathe because I was laughing so much," Imran recalls. "It was such a good gag that I studied it to try and understand what made it so brilliant. Making people laugh is a great way to earn respect, but only if it's done as a natural consequence of who you are. You can't just run around telling people jokes like some kind of weirdo!"



This is going to hurt...

Comedian and former obstetrician & gynaecologist Adam Kay is this month visiting the Midlands with his latest touring show, *This Is Going To Hurt: Secret Diaries Of A Junior Doctor*...

Adam, you've been interested in standup for a long time, performing whilst in medical school - but when you quit being a doctor, did you intend to work full-time in comedy and writing?

There's a long tradition of medical students putting on generally pretty terrible end-of-year shows, making fun of the consultants and professors, and I got involved with that sort of show a lot when I was at med school. I guess encouraging medical students to enjoy a bit of gallows humour is the closest thing we have to teaching them some kind of coping mechanism for the bad days at work. When I had my own extremely bad day at work and left medicine in 2010 - sorry, I've ruined the ending of the show - I realised that writing jokes and getting up on stage was the closest thing I had to any kind of skill set beyond working on the wards, so I thought I'd give it a go. I fully expected it would end up being a failed six-month experiment, but to my ongoing surprise it's still how I pay the gas bill.

Your book and tour describes the ups and downs of being a junior doctor. Was there ever such a thing as a mundane day at work?

I worked on the labour ward, and as anyone who's ever been on a labour ward in any capacity knows, the days there are never mundane. You end up with twice the number of patients you started with, which is unusual for any medical specialty. I guess on a mundane day you manage to leave within two hours of when you're meant to, no one threatens to kill you, and you only throw away one pair of boxers following a tsumani of blood

soaking through your scrubs.

Aside from the anecdotes, is there much about being a doctor that helps in being a standup comedian? Dealing with the pressure? Late nights?

I'm certainly very good at the late nights. I can stay up 48 hours writing a script that I've failed to do in time. My body is now just trained to get on with it. I don't get stressed or nervous these days either - my barometer for stress has been totally ruined by working on the wards. Obviously, the big difference on stage is that the stakes are zero.

You're not the only ex-medical comedian, with Harry Hill and Paul Sinha also former medical practitioners. Is there any particular reason why a number of you have made that journey, or is it the result of a secret comedy cabal?

Rather than recruiting people who are psychologically fit for the job, which you might think would be a sensible approach, medical schools choose people who have lots of extra-curricular activities. For example, I had a couple of grade VIIIs in music and worked on the school newspaper. If you look at the Wikipedia entry for any famous doctor, it's always been the case: 'He proved himself an accomplished rugby player in youth leagues. He excelled as a distance runner and in his final year at school was vice-captain of the athletics team'. And that's Harold Shipman, so it's potentially not a totally rock-solid system. As well as medics leaving for the stage, there are also huge numbers who've had incredibly successful careers in sport, such as Roger Bannister. If you recruit people with

outside interests, I guess some of them will pursue those interests after their degree.

Most of your material so far has been based around your medical experiences. Are you planning any shows in the future based on other experiences or ideas that you've had - possibly non-medical?

I spent quite a few years writing on various TV shows with no medical aspect to them at all. I guess when people get bored of hearing my diaries, I'll go back to that!

By the time this interview is published online, Brexit may or may not have happened. Who knows? How equipped is the NHS to deal with, well, any number of potential outcomes?

Make no mistake, Brexit is a disaster for the NHS. The NHS simply couldn't function without the staff who've come here from every country of the world, each one going far beyond the call of duty on a daily basis. The NHS is short of 100,000 members of staff across the UK, so making a single member of staff feel unwelcome would be an act of madness. Making tens of thousands of them feel unwelcome is an act of utter self-destruction. The fact that Brexit was sold on the basis of extra money for the NHS was utterly disingenuous - and you'll struggle to find a member of the NHS staff who thinks that Brexit is going to be anything other than a nightmare for them at work.

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Adam Kay - *This is Going To Hurt: Secret Diaries Of A Junior Doctor* visits Dudley Town Hall on Friday 21 June.



The Bodyguard

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 25 June - Sat 6 July;
Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Tues 21 January - Sat 1 February 2020

This blockbusting West End musical is of course based on the similarly blockbusting 1990s Hollywood movie starring Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston.

When ex-secret service agent Frank Farmer is hired to protect superstar Rachel Marron from an unknown stalker, sparks soon begin to fly

between the pair. Each expects to hold the whip-hand in the relationship; neither expects to fall in love...

Featuring classic numbers One Moment In Time, I Wanna Dance With Somebody and the legendary I Will Always Love You, the show received mixed reviews from the critics when it opened in 2012, but has since proved to be a real hit with its audiences.

The part of Rachel will be shared by Alexandra Burke and Jennie Shallow at both venues.

Visit the theatres' respective websites for more details about this.

The Strange Undoing Of Prudencia Hart

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme,
Fri 28 June - Sat 13 July

Prudencia Hart is an uptight academic attending a conference in the Scottish Borders. As she heads back through the snow from a pub lock-in to her B&B, she suddenly finds herself not only in the company of a stranger, but also, rather more profoundly, standing on the threshold of reality...

David Greig's widely admired play has bagged numerous awards since debuting eight years ago, including the coveted Herald Angel gong at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Pamela's Palace

The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham,
Sat 15 June

Hairstylist Pamela Jones is the brash and strutting owner of a beauty salon that's seen better days. But Pam is convinced that her fortunes are about to change.

Love-sick Tiffany and bashful Bronwyn work at the salon too, and soon find themselves embroiled in a plan which involves a Greek-themed catwalk event that comes complete with pillars, ivy and grapes...

An interactive evening awash with great choreography, belly-laugh opportunities aplenty and no little amount of hairspray, Pamela's Palace scored a big hit at the Edinburgh Fringe last summer.

Boulder

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Wed 19 & Thurs 20 June

The Greek myth of Sisyphus is here reimagined by the ever-resourceful Half A String theatre company. Harmoniously fusing live action and digital, Boulder follows the ongoing struggles of an intricate puppet as he strains to move a giant boulder up a hill, only to find himself then watching it roll back down to the bottom each and every day...

Atmospheric voices, live cello, and fluid transformations of set and scale ensure an evening of theatre that keeps the senses well and truly stimulated.



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Tue 2 -
Sat 13 Jul



Sat 13 &
Sun 14 Jul



Tue 16 -
Sat 20 Jul



Tue 23 Jul -
Sun 11 Aug



Tue 13 -
Sat 24 Aug



Thu 29 -
Sat 31 Aug



Tue 3 -
Sat 7 Sep



Tue 10 -
Sat 14 Sep



Thu 12 Sep

BE FESTIVAL

The splendidly quirky BE Festival is taking place in Birmingham for a 10th time. What's On spoke to co-director Miguel Oyarzun about the ever-evolving performing arts event.



members who return to mainland Europe, talk positively about Birmingham, the UK and BE Festival; they're our best ambassadors. We've also grown in terms of rooting ourselves to Birmingham itself. We are now very much a continuing part of the annual calendar of events for the city, so we're part of a bigger network within the cultural sector here. Then, every year, we have more audiences, so have expanded into a touring model. We started by just doing the festival here in Birmingham. Now we take the format of the festival - in which we present three or four short pieces each night - and the companies who best represent us, out on tour. We tour for four weeks in the UK and four weeks in Spain. The work presented by the artists in Birmingham now reaches many more people.

“We’ve also grown in our work with visual artists. Now we’re involved in a lot of bigger projects within the visual arts that run alongside the performing-arts side of the festival. Plus, this year is the first time we will have pieces on the main stage of The REP. Normally we have smaller-scale pieces in Centenary Square or in The Studio at The REP. This year, for the first time, we have a large show on The REP’s main stage. It’s a fantastic show called Deadtown, which has been created by the sons of the Oscar-winning director of One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest, Miloš Forman. The Forman brothers have created a spectacular piece with dancers, singers and acrobats that mixes circus with a homage to silent movies. It’s a show with no words, so it’s accessible to anyone from any age. It’s really great for families, as well as for adults who want to look back at the history of silent movies.

“We also have musicians from many different genres performing in the evenings - so there really is something for everyone to enjoy.”

Birmingham will surely have its say in where BE Festival goes over the next decade...

"As always, we like to get feedback about the festival from the audiences, stakeholders and artists. The festival isn't ours, it's Birmingham's. So we will take it wherever Birmingham sees fit, as we feel we have to honour the way it was created and supported by the city itself. We have some ideas of where we want to go after these first 10 festivals, but first of all we need to figure out whether that's what everybody else wants too."

BE Festival takes place at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Thursday 27 June to Saturday 6 July. See the full programme online at befestival.org

The relationship between the festival, Birmingham and the rest of Europe is one of BE's defining qualities.

So how much has BE Festival changed since its first year?

“The festival has grown massively over 10 events. We’ve grown in reputation across Europe and are perhaps even better known abroad than we are in the UK. Birmingham is now very much on the map of Europe. The artists who come from abroad, and audience



Deadtown

The REP, Birmingham, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 June

The Forman Brothers, widely considered to be one of the most innovative theatre companies in Europe, are the creatives behind this critically acclaimed Wild West tale. The production cleverly uses a mixture of film, live action and magic to shift from illusion to reality, in the process making full use of a cast of 20 acrobats, dancers, singers and musicians.

"The performance takes place sometime around 1900, in an era of great discoveries such as phonographs, cameras and first films," says one of the brothers, Petr, the son of the late, great Oscar-winning movie director Milos Forman. "They are discoveries which fascinate us even in modern times. And all these things, these little details, they are an honour to the great men who laid the basis of the world we are living in today."

Hormonal Housewives

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 6 June; Oakengates Theatre@The Place, Telford, Thurs 13 June; Lichfield Garrick, Sat 15 June; Malvern Theatres, Sun 16 June; Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Fri 21 June



This Julie Coombe play offers a humorous contemplation on what it means to be a 21st century girl at a challenging time of life. So if you can relate to subjects such as weight gain, weight loss, mood swings, wine, PMS, men, going to the gym, waxing, stretch marks, chocolate and upper-lip hair, this is the show for you!

Helena's sitting on the shelf, Titania and Oberon are up to no good, and Puck's got his finger in more pies than Mr Kipling. Add in a group of rude mechanicals and the recipe for success is guaranteed...



to demonstrate his allegiance by handing over his wife, Belvidera. One of the other conspirators threatens Belvidera, so she and Jaffier go on the run. They then have to work out whether to reveal the conspiracy to the senate, or to carry on with it, knowing how bloody the outcome will be..."

Velvet

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 12 & Thurs 13 June

"Just as I was starting to write Velvet, the #MeToo movement happened, and made my writing seem even more urgent."

So says Tom Ratcliffe, whose critically acclaimed play tells the story of a young gay actor experiencing sexual harassment. "Due to the fact that men are usually perpetrators, and because there's this perception that gay men are inherently linked to sex, it's almost assumed that they want it. I hope Velvet goes some way towards putting sexual harassment against a gay man in the same context as sexual harassment against a woman."



Venice Preserved

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 7 September



"Thomas Otway's Venice Preserved follows disaffected Venetian nobles," the show's director, Prasanna Puwanarajah, explains. "Out of the two main male characters, one is the son-in-law of a senator and the other is a war veteran. Both of them join a conspiracy against the senate of Venice, as they believe it to be oppressive and in need of change. In order to join the plot, one of them, Jaffier, has

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 18 - Thurs 20 June; Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Fri 5 & Sat 6 July; Oakengates Theatre@The Place, Telford, Wed 17 July

Zany funsters Oddsocks celebrate their 30th anniversary with a high-energy production of one of Shakespeare's best-loved comedies. Lysander and Demetrius both fancy Hermia,

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WAKE UP

Renowned beatboxer Testament comes to the Midlands this month with his new show, Woke. What's On spoke to the hip-hop star about the production and its relationship to feminism...



World Record-holding beatboxer Testament uses his new show, *Woke*, to explore what happens when his hip-hop world collides with his newer role as the father to a young girl. Employing a mixture of comedy, spoken word, hip-hop and beatboxing, Testament unpicks the conflict between feminism and hip-hop in an attempt to understand how we can all become better feminists.

The word *Woke* is slang, defined as 'to be aware of and actively attentive to important facts and issues - especially those connected to racial and social justice'.

"*Woke* was born out of a bit of frustration with myself," Testament explains. "I suddenly realised that there were things about my own life and attitudes that just weren't sitting right with me. I was almost afraid to examine these. The more I dug into them, the more I realised that even though my music and theatre really talks about the world and its current issues, there were still things within my own self that needed work. I realised that, as a man, I needed to be a better feminist, and that it could take some work to understand what that would mean. That's a journey I'm still on now, but that's essentially what catalysed *Woke*. People were asking me what my next show was going to be about after *Blake Remixed*, and I'd already decided that I wanted it to be about equality and sexism."

Testament's ideas provoked many different reactions within the communities that play an important role in his career and private life.

"I received a slight backlash from certain men in all parts of my life about this. In particular some from the hip-hop scene were telling me about how feminism is evil and a conspiracy to undermine men. A lot of the people in my Christian community were supportive, and agreed that feminism is part of loving your neighbour, but some others were also pretty scathing about it. Even some friends from school told me how feminism is undermining Western civilisation. So I got mixed reactions, and a lot of people weren't happy about me exploring feminism through hip-hop. But at the same time, it was their reactions that affirmed to me how much of an issue it was, and how important it was for me to open up a conversation about this."

The global sociopolitical climate was also an influence on the creation of *Woke*: "That guy Donald Trump got elected; someone with obvious problems with how to relate to and respect women. Seeing how some people I knew were really big fans of Donald Trump made me even more determined to get this

show on the road. We might not necessarily have laws in the UK that discriminate against women, but in everyday domestic, social and career settings there's definitely still sexism towards women in particular. For example, hip-hop is my art form, and yet misogyny is almost written into it. So there's a movement in *Woke* to try and unpick that and examine what's going on. This is something that's real and affects people's lives on both small and bigger levels. I was angry at the state of the world and also at myself. So *Woke* is something I felt I really needed to get out now, and luckily there were a few theatres across the country that wanted to help me create the piece."

Woke is not a show that seeks to preach. In his self-reflection, Testament extends the hand of community empowerment to the audience: "Mostly it's a really funny show. It's called *Woke*, which is kind of in inverted-commas, because when someone says they're woke, that automatically implies that they think someone else isn't. That's a bit of a pretentious thing to say. So I think there's a feeling of looking at myself and critiquing my own hip-hop work. Part of that is laughing at it. Singing and beatboxing about these sexism issues within the genre of hip-hop will hopefully put a new perspective out there. So I guess my biggest aim is for people to really have their preconceptions challenged. The show ends with a kind of figurative hug, so I really hope that people leave the theatre feeling empowered to look at and tackle these issues."

So why did Testament decide to take his music into theatres across the country?

"One of the big turning points for me was when I was working with SK Shlomo at his shows on the Southbank. I was one of the beatboxers in his show. I saw how he turned that into a theatre show, and I loved how his vision was to unite the world through music. I thought about how combining theatre and hip-hop was actually really fantastic, but not done that often. It's quite hard to convey a complex message at places like clubs and festivals, where people are there to have a good time rather than to listen to the story. With theatre, it's more of a community, where you sit down and have a conversation between audience and performer."

Storytelling has been a passion of Testament's for many years and links directly to both his music career and his theatre shows.

"Well, I'm called Testament, which I guess links to stories. In every tradition, culture and religion in the world, stories are how we view

the world. Whether it's an allegory, a parable or even a headline on a tabloid newspaper, narratives help us to order our souls and to think about things. So I've always been very keen on storytelling. My raps were always full of storytelling, and I really try to take care with my bars and rhymes because the lines are always there to serve a narrative, rather than just to sound cool. I mean, I hope they sound cool also, but the story is the most important thing. Theatres just seemed like the natural space to put my music into."

Five years ago, Testament founded a workshop scheme called *The Hip-Hop Clinic*, where he uses hip-hop as an educational tool.

"I was working freelance as a hip-hop educator, which I still do now. So I use hip-hop as a tool to educate in schools, prisons and community centres. I use the word 'clinic' in there because I really hope it's something that helps and heals. Hip-hop doesn't always do that, but the founding principles of the clinic are to change that. I'm lucky enough to have got the blessing of DJ Kool Herc, one of the first progenitors of hip-hop back in the day in the Bronx, and he's all about using music to heal, which is a legacy I want to carry on."

Testament is clearly a man with many strings to his bow.

"I'm currently the writer-in-residence at the Royal Exchange Manchester, so I'm working on a play now, which is very exciting. I'm also working on an album. Life sometimes goes by different seasons, and I love being able to just be creative and go with it. I plan on taking whatever opportunities come my way and making sure I still pursue all my lines of work."

He's also positive that Midlands theatre-goers will enjoy *Woke*: "The feedback I've had from audiences so far has been really, really positive. Some people just find it really hilarious, others enjoy seeing a live beatboxer. I've heard men say they've been really challenged by the content of *Woke*. I've had women come to me and say that, for them, it was really healing. I think that's been great for a random rapper guy to achieve with a spoken-word, beatboxing show where I spit some lyrics and jump around a bit. I'm glad that people leave having been entertained and feeling uplifted."

.....

Testament brings his new show *Woke* to the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry on Saturday 15 June



The Mousetrap

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Thurs 27 - Sat 29 June;
Malvern Theatre, Mon 15 - Sat 20 July

Not only has everybody *heard* of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*, they've *seen* the show as well - haven't they?

Okay, maybe not, but as the production is fast approaching its 70th consecutive year in the West End, it's fair to say its capacity to put bums on seats is absolutely beyond question.

Not surprisingly it's the world's longest-running show, and has been performed well in excess of a staggering 25,000 times. Its touring version here makes a welcome return to the Midlands.

Avenue Q

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
Tues 11 - Sat 15 June

This Tony Award-winning musical focuses on subjects including dating, racism, being gay and finding your purpose in life. At the centre of the story is Princeton, a bright-eyed college graduate with a tiny bank balance who, as he sets out on a voyage of self-discovery, finds himself being easily distracted by a busty blonde and a plethora of weird and wonderful friends.



We've Got Each Other: The Almost Entirely Imagined Bon Jovi Musical

Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Sat 8 June

With Bon Jovi visiting the Midlands this very month, what better time to stage this modern jukebox musical? "It's the kind of show," says its performer, Paul O'Donnel, "that traditionally comes with a multi-talented cast, a live band - or orchestra, if you're lucky - opulent sets & decadent costumes, extravagant dance routines, dramatic key changes and the odd hydraulic lift or two. We've Got Each Other has got none of these

things because they cost a lot of money. But I will nonetheless attempt to create an all-singing all-dancing spectacle using the power of the audience's imagination!"

Roman Romp

Swan Theatre, Worcester, Thurs 6 June; Prince of Wales Centre, Cannock, Fri 7 June; Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Thurs 20 June; Crewe Lyceum, Wed 26 June

Described by its producers as 'an evening of farcical confusion and outrageous innuendo which may also contain mild audience participation', *Roman Romp* is presented by the company who annually perform an adult panto at the Prince of Wales Centre.

And just as one might therefore expect - judging by the show's title, description and the past record of the ensemble performing it - it's a wee bit on the rude side!

So brace yourself for an encounter with reluctant virgin Frigella the Fulfiller as she searches for a 'shagamus' - aided and abetted in her sadly-far-from-foolproof plans by her nice-but-dim pal, Bimbis...

Not surprisingly, the show has been deemed inappropriate for audience members younger than the age of 16.

The Lady Vanishes

Lichfield Garrick, Mon 17 - Sat 22 June

Taking a nap while travelling on a transcontinental train to London, Iris awakes to find the elderly governess who'd been sitting next to her is nowhere to be seen. On questioning her fellow passengers and the train's crew about the sweet old lady, she's dismayed to find that nobody recalls seeing her at all. But

how can somebody disappear from a moving train? Or is Iris suddenly losing her mind?...

The *Lady Vanishes* is best remembered in its Alfred Hitchcock-directed movie version, but packs a powerful punch on stage as well. This latest adaptation is presented by The Classic Thriller Theatre Company.



WNO: Don Pasquale

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham,
Sat 8 June; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
Sun 16 June

A small Welsh National Opera cast bring to life Daisy Evans' new production of this Donizetti masterpiece.

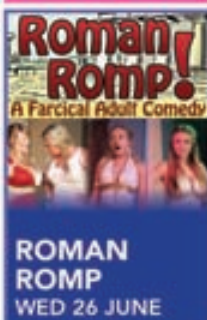
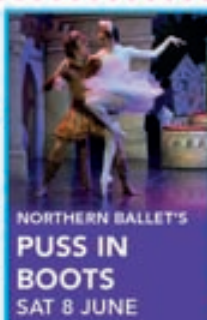
A classic comic opera - here updated to modern times and taking place in and around Pasquale's doner kebab van - the show tells the much-loved story of an old bachelor's romantic delusions and the young lovers who outwit him... The production follows on from Welsh National Opera's 2018 success with Elena Langer's *Rhonddda Rips It Up!*.



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ADAPTED BY ANTONY LAMPARD
DIRECTED BY ROY MARSDEN

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The Gruffalo

Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 25 & Wed 26 June; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 11 - Tues 12 November

Summer's not summer in Birmingham without one of Julia Donaldson's delightful tales being vividly brought to life. And on this occasion, it's an adaptation of 1999 bestseller *The Gruffalo* which is taking to the stage. The production is presented by award-winning theatre company Tall Stories, who've garnered an excellent reputation in terms of performing Donaldson's work. Their imaginative retelling of the much-loved book comes complete with talented cast, catchy songs and magical characters.

Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 25 & Wed 26 June; Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 10 & Thurs 11 July



The team behind *Peppa Pig* here present a stage version of another of their splendid creations. Originally a BAFTA award-winning television animation, it focuses on the adventures of fairy princess Holly and her best pal, Ben, a wingless elf who flies on the back of Gaston the Ladybird. The two chums live in the tiny land of the Little Kingdom. In this particular show, they help Gaston clean up his messy cave, go on a trip into The Big World with tooth-fairy Nanny Plum, and plan a surprise birthday party for King Thistle... Expect plenty of games, songs and laughter.

If All The World Were Paper

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 2 June

The fact that Big Window Theatre's latest show is a 'little homage' to Laurel & Hardy will, of course, be lost on its very young audience. But maybe the accompanying parents and guardians will enjoy the experience all

the more for understanding the source of its inspiration.

The production revolves around the friendship between two grandads, Fred and Ted, who've been best pals for a very long time. When they find themselves faced with a painting job, it soon becomes apparent that the two old chums have vastly different ways of going about things...

Ministry Of Science

Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, Wed 19 June; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Thurs 20 June

From the creative team behind *Brainiac Live* comes an anarchic show that takes a look at the inventors and engineers who've shaped and inspired the modern world. Expect plenty of demonstrations - and a few loud bangs along the way...

Dinosaur World Live

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Thurs 13 - Sat 15 June

Dinosaurs are once again roaming the earth this summer, thanks to this critically acclaimed 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.

In short, the show promises to be an absolute monster of an experience, leaving a T-Rex-size imprint on your child's memory for many a week to come.



Honk!

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 4 - Sat 8 June

Stiles & Drewe's hit musical has been performed in excess of 8,000 times at venues across the world. It's based on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Ugly Duckling* and tells the story of an odd-looking baby duck and his attempts to find his mother. While doing so, he encounters a beautiful swan, tangled in a fishing line, and subsequently falls in love... This quacker of a well-hatched tale is here presented by Dot By Dot Productions.



Milkshake Live!

Palace Theatre, Redditch, Sat 22 June

Milkshake Monkey's desire to put on a new musical has hit the skids due to a nasty bout of rampant stage fright - so thank heaven that Fireman Sam, Noddy, Shimmer & Shine and all their friends are on hand to help out...

If you've watched the TV series and/or been to a previous live production, you'll already know what to expect from this latest Milkshake! show. 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.


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Swan Theatre, Worcester (worcesterlive.co.uk) - 6th June
 Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock (princeofwales.live) - 7th June
 Brierley Hill Civic Hall (bhillicivic.co.uk) - 20th June
 Crewe Lyceum (crewelyceum.co.uk) - 26th June

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traditions of TWS &
The Foot Report"
Musical Theatre Reviewer

★★★★★
"Very, truly, impressive
and very funny!"
Reviews Hub

★★★★★
"A hilarious evening
from a very talented cast!"
Sheffield Star

★★★★★
"Boris and his Johnson
as full stars"
New Theatre Magazine

★★★★★
"Therapy for those sick
and tired of politics!"
North West End

"Better as it should be"
Cultured

"Genuinely funny"
Some random on theatre



Boris

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Shakespeare at the castle

Stafford Festival Shakespeare returns to Stafford Castle at the end of this month with a production of *The Merchant Of Venice*. What's On recently caught up with this year's director, Oliver O'Shea, to talk about the show and his decision to set the action in 1950s New York...



Shakespeare's *The Merchant Of Venice* centres on a loan given to Bassanio and Antonio to subsidise the former's pursuit of wealthy heiress Portia. It's a tale of money, anti-Semitism and deception.

"Merchant is an incredible piece of writing," says Oliver O'Shea, who's directing the Stafford Festival Shakespeare (SFS) production of the play at Stafford Castle.

"Shakespeare's plays are so rich, and this particular one is complicated and challenging as well as being at times moving and funny. But it feels particularly timely in our country to be doing *The Merchant Of Venice* because it is, in part, about divisions within a community in terms of wealth and religion. It feels like a play that is really perfect to stage now, as well as being a classic that hasn't yet been produced at Stafford Festival Shakespeare. In recent years SFS has done, for want of a better phrase, the 'blockbusters'. I think the producers were looking for something that took a different turn to those of recent years."

Oliver has set his version of the play in 1950s New York City.

"This is a fresh take on *The Merchant Of Venice* in lots of ways. We were looking for a 20th century parallel to how Shakespeare's contemporaries would have perceived Venice in their time. Shakespeare would have known about Venice as this major, global port, and it had a reputation for being somewhat liberal. Venice was also relatively multicultural and had this almost legendary status, even though Britons didn't necessarily know much about it in reality. In 1950s New York there were lots of different communities and a large number of Jewish people, as well as lots of different ethnicities and immigrants. So it seemed like an interesting parallel. We were interested in that idea of a place helping the audience to understand the Venice that Shakespeare was imagining when he wrote *Merchant*. So that's a distinctive element of our production.

"Another way this production is different is because of my work as a dramaturge, which means I help develop new plays with writers and provide support to people creating adaptations of novels. As such, I've lightly edited this production to shift the perspective on certain scenes. I think seeing Shakespeare outdoors always changes the play, too. Seeing it performed in natural daylight, like it would have been at *The Globe* originally, is a very different experience. Unlike many outdoor productions of Shakespeare, we're bringing

all the elements of modern theatrical production into the outdoor space. So rather than being like a museum piece or a replica, this is very much an original. We have a cast of 12 actors with gender parity and a really brilliant creative team. I think this production will be a really thrilling and exciting one that's full of playful moments. That's part of my approach as a director: I look for the most dramatic version of the dramatic art, but I also like to highlight the moments of levity and playfulness."

Oliver is a passionate advocate for diversity in British theatre: "I think Shakespeare is definitely one of our greatest playwrights, but because I'm also interested in new work and plays, I think it's important that we have a diverse offering on the theatre scene. What I would say is that Shakespeare being staged regionally is quite rare, outside of such places as the Royal Shakespeare Company. There are outdoor stagings of Shakespeare, but on a much smaller scale than Stafford Festival Shakespeare. The problem with classical plays in the staging of regional theatre is the cast sizes, which makes them expensive to put on. Obviously it's brilliant and important that people are finding the resources to stage Shakespeare. It's so important that theatre is for everyone and in every part of the country. I've chosen to be based outside London, which is relatively unusual for a theatre director, because I believe that everyone should be able to access great theatre performances in their local community. It's also really important that we do present our classics, but not just for the sake of it. We need to think about why we want to stage that classic play now: they need to still be relevant and to resonate with audiences."

Oliver believes making plays accessible is essential for directors of Shakespeare: "Schools' presentation of Shakespeare plays is part of the reason for some people seeing his work as inaccessible and not relatable. If you're still learning how to read contemporary English, and perhaps you're struggling because people all learn at different speeds, and then all of a sudden you encounter a text that seems a bit different in language and poetic form, it can put you off for life - especially when it's taught in such a dry way. I think that's part of the reason we've edited it the way we have and changed its setting. Also, with the way television and film work now, people expect their entertainment to be more streamlined and delivered quickly. There's also, perhaps, too much reverence surrounding Shakespeare as a figure.

Obviously he was an incredible writer, but I think if he could look back on his own plays from now, he would revise and modernise them too. I think actors and directors who stage Shakespeare today have to bring their own modern theatre-making principles to bear on the text.

"On a much simpler level, it's just about making the play really come alive. If there's a really obscure cultural reference that really doesn't exist at all today, then it should just be cut out. That's the approach we've taken - getting rid of the stuff where you really need an in-depth knowledge of the social workings and history of Shakespeare's period. Some people might see that as disrespectful, but we need to make Shakespeare interesting, exciting and understandable: that's the most important thing we can do to keep Shakespeare alive in the modern theatre world."

Oliver loves the variation that comes with directing theatre: "I'm directing *A Christmas Carol* at Derby Theatre, and it's a brilliant version because it has an ensemble approach with eight actor-musicians. The version we're doing intersperses carols throughout the production, which makes it a really lovely family show. The strange thing about being a director is that your head is often in more than two different stories at once, and you have to be able to put a play aside for one day and then come back to it the next. It can be difficult, but I like it because it makes my life so varied."

Returning to the subject of *The Merchant Of Venice*, why does Oliver think Midlands theatregoers should make the trip to Stafford Castle to see the show?

"I think if you live in the area and you've never been to Stafford Festival Shakespeare at the castle before, you should definitely give it a try. It's an extremely unique setting, and it's quite surprising that a fully resourced, big-scale Shakespeare production happens every single year on a hill in Stafford. To those who've been before, I'd say that the festival is reinventing itself year upon year. So don't miss our approach to *Merchant*, as it gives a different flavour to the very well-received production of *Macbeth* last year."

The Stafford Festival Shakespeare production of *The Merchant Of Venice* runs at Stafford Castle from Thursday 27 June to Saturday 13 July.

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Birmingham Royal Ballet: (Un)leashed

Birmingham Hippodrome, Wed 12 - Sat 15 June

Three ballets by three female choreographers are here presented by BRB, including the world premiere of the third Ballet Now commission by Didy Veldman (complete with a score by Sergei Prokofiev's grandson, Gabriel). The piece rounds off an evening of dance which also features the welcome return of Jessica Lang's Lyric Pieces - created for BRB as part of International Dance Festival Birmingham 2012 - and the first main-stage performance of Ruth Brill's contemporary version of Peter And The Wolf. "One of the main slants is that Peter is going to be played by a girl," explains Ruth. "It feels very current to have a strong heroine at the heart of the story. This production has dance, narration and music all rolled into one, which makes it very accessible because the story is explained. People don't expect spoken word as a major element when they go to a ballet. It breaks down the barriers, so no-one should feel apprehensive that they won't understand the story or know what's going on."

CANDY

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Fri 21 June

Contemporary dance company Chrysalis London takes audiences on an energetic journey through a diverse wealth of genres, along the way presenting a soundtrack that segues from dubstep to classical.

The company draws its inspiration from the city, using urban culture to stimulate the production of raw, explosive and refreshingly edgy choreography.

This latest production includes a highly anticipated collaboration with world-renowned choreographer Kenrick 'H2O' Sandy MBE, and also features a specially created curtain-raiser from Birmingham's Timmins Academy of Dance.



Jazz Dance Company

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 12 June

Dancers from prestigious professional training school London Studio Centre here showcase a wide range of dance styles, from hip-hop, commercial and contemporary to music theatre, tap, technical and lyrical jazz. Described as serious, satirical and sassy, the ensemble's latest show is an exploration of current & historical movements, moments and figures, celebrating idols from Elvis to Michael Jackson, Dali to Da Vinci and Ginger Rogers to Gene Kelly.



Rhythm Of The Dance

Lichfield Garrick, Sat 8 & Sun 9 June; Swan Theatre, Worcester, Sat 13 July; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 3 August

This well-established production has been dancing its way across the globe for 20-plus years, stopping off in more than 50 countries and entertaining in excess of seven million people. A flamboyant festival of flailing feet and fiddles, the show presents dance, music, songs and culture from across the ages, from pre-Celtic times through to modern-day sounds. It also features a cast of world and Irish champion dancers and a host of strikingly talented traditional musicians.



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Movies that Pack a Punch

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21 June
Opening Film - Article 15
19:00 | Cineworld Broad Street
(Red Carpet from 18:30)

1 July
Closing Film - Photograph
19:00 | MAC Birmingham

22 June
Satyajit Ray Short Film Award
14:00 | The Mockingbird

Urojahaj (The Flight)
16:30 | MAC Birmingham

Widow of Silence
18:00 | Cineworld Broad Street

23 June
Vivek (Reason)
16:30 | MAC Birmingham

Arishadvarga
19:00 | Cineworld Broad Street

24 June
Sir
18:30 | MAC Birmingham

25 June
My Home, India
18:30 | Centrala

#Gadhvi
20:30 | MAC Birmingham

26 June
Anurag Kashyap
in Conversation
19:00 | The Mockingbird

27 June
Bulbul Can Sing
18:00 | MAC Birmingham

28 June
Saturday Afternoon
18:15 | MAC Birmingham

29 June
Kattumaram (Catamaran)
13:30 | MAC Birmingham

Chuskit
16:00 | The Mockingbird

Ardaas Karaan
19:00 | Cineworld Broad Street



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Toy Story 4 CERT tbc (89 mins)

With the voices of **Tom Hanks, Tim Allen, Annie Potts, Joan Cusack, Wallace Shawn, Michael Keaton, Timothy Dalton, Tony Hale, Keanu Reeves, Christina Hendricks, Madeleine McGraw**
Directed by **Josh Cooley (USA)**

Children everywhere will learn what a 'spork' is when this film hits cinemas, the word describing a cross between a spoon and a fork. The sequel's new character is Forky, a spork that has been fashioned into a toy with the addition of pipe cleaner arms - but he really doesn't like being a plaything. Even so, he ends up on a road trip with Woody, Buzz Lightyear and the toys' new owner, Bonnie Anderson (Madeleine McGraw), who made Forky herself in an arts & crafts class. Then Forky escapes in the middle of nowhere and Woody heads off to rescue him.

Keanu Reeves makes his debut as a voice actor, playing a character called Duke Caboom, a stunt rider unable to live up to his maker's publicity. Available in IMAX and 3D.

Released Fri 21 June



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Film highlights released in June...

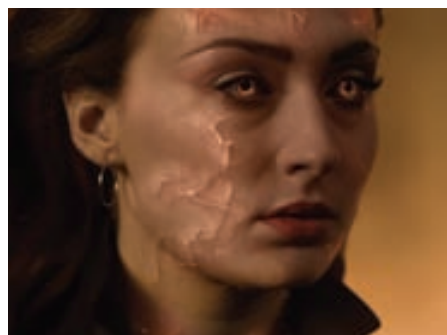
Dark Phoenix CERT 12a

Starring **James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender, Jennifer Lawrence, Nicholas Hoult, Sophie Turner, Tye Sheridan, Jessica Chastain**
Directed by **Simon Kinberg (USA)**

The 12th instalment in the X-Men series sees our mutant heroes facing up to the all-powerful Dark Phoenix, an X-girl gone rogue. It's a tricky one, but they have to decide between the fate of the human race and one of their own, even if she is a bad egg.

We will see...

Released Wed 5 June



Gloria Bell CERT 15 (102 mins)

Starring **Julianne Moore, John Turturro, Michael Cera, Caren Pistorius, Brad Garrett, Jeanne Tripplehorn**
Directed by **Sebastián Lelio (USA/Chile)**



She may be in her 50s, but divorcee Gloria Bell (Julianne Moore) finds new life on the dance floors of Los Angeles.

Sebastián Lelio, the Chilean director of *A Fantastic Woman* and *Disobedience*, here re-imagines his own 2013 drama *Gloria*, which he shot in Santiago.

Released Thurs 6 June

Liam: As It Was CERT 15 (85 mins)

Directed by **Gavin Fitzgerald and Charlie Lightening (UK)**

That's Liam as in Liam Gallagher and this British documentary follows the singer as he attempts to forge a solo career post-Oasis. Expect some very naughty words.

Released Thurs 6 June



Eating Animals CERT PG (94 mins)

Directed by **Christopher Dillon Quinn**
(UK/India/Germany/China/USA)

The food on your plate may be cheaper than it's ever been, but what, pray, are the global consequences? This eye-opening documentary on industrialised farming and animal welfare is based on the bestselling book by Jonathan Safran Foer and is narrated by Natalie Portman and Foer himself.

Released Fri 7 June



Diego Maradona

CERT **tbc** (130 mins)
Directed by **Asif Kapadia** (UK)

Following his award-winning documentaries on Ayrton Senna and Amy Winehouse, the London-born Asif Kapadia now focuses his

attention on the Argentine footballer Maradona.

Released Fri 14 June

The Hummingbird Project

CERT **15** (111 mins)

Starring **Jesse Eisenberg, Alexander Skarsgård, Salma Hayek, Michael Mando**
Directed by **Kim Nguyen** (Canada/Belgium)

In this very modern thriller, two high-frequency salesmen operate in the world of ultra-low latency direct market access. Um, no doubt all will be explained in what looks likely to be a goofy, ultra high-tech ride.

Released Fri 14 June



Men In Black: International

CERT **tbc**

Starring **Chris Hemsworth, Tessa Thompson, Liam Neeson, Rebecca Ferguson, Kumail Nanjiani, Rafe Spall, Emma Thompson**
Directed by **F. Gary Gray** (USA)



For geeks, call it MIB: International, a spin-off of the MIB franchise that starred Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith. This edition kicks off in London and then follows Agent H (Hemsworth) and Agent M (Tessa Thompson) as they track alien imposters around the globe. Filmed in London, New York, Italy and Africa.

Released Fri 14 June

A Season In France CERT tbc

Starring **Eriq Ebouaney, Sandrine Bonnaire, Aalayna Lys, Ibrahim Burama Darboe**
Directed by **Mahamat Saleh Haroun** (France)

Sandrine Bonnaire plays a woman who finds herself involved with a high school teacher who has fled his war-torn home in Africa. The writer-director Haroun is himself from Chad.

Released Fri 14 June



Sometimes Always Never

CERT **12** (91 mins)

Starring **Bill Nighy, Sam Riley, Jenny Agutter, Tim McInnerny, Alice Lowe**
Directed by **Carl Hunter** (UK)

For Alan (Bill Nighy), it all went wrong when he lost his son over a game of Scrabble. Now, as he strives to complete a game online, he suspects the player may well be his prodigal offspring. There are no words for it.

Released Fri 14 June



Late Night CERT 15 (102 mins)

Starring **Emma Thompson, Mindy Kaling, Hugh Dancy, Reid Scott, John Lithgow, Amy Ryan** Directed by **Nisha Ganatra** (USA)

In spite of a luminous career, late-night talk-show host Katherine Newbury (Emma Thompson) is in danger of losing her slot

because it is accused of being male-centric. So she hires Molly Patel, played by Mindy Kaling, to add some feminine zest. Kaling also wrote the screenplay to this comedy-drama.

Released Fri 7 June

Yesterday CERT 12a (112 mins)

Starring **Himesh Patel, Lily James, Kate McKinnon, Ed Sheeran, Ana de Armas, Lamorne Morris, James Corden, Sanjeev Bhaskar**
Directed by **Danny Boyle (UK)**

What if The Beatles had never existed? Well, after a global blackout, struggling singer-songwriter Jack Malik (Himesh Patel) discovers that nobody has ever come across John, Paul, George and Ringo, and his covers of their songs launches him into the commercial stratosphere.

However, his new-found fame could endanger the trust invested in him by his life-long sweetheart, Ellie (Lily James).

As potty as this premise sounds, it's no odder than the themes explored by its director in *Millions*, *Slumdog Millionaire* and *127 Hours*. And with our very own Danny Boyle working from a script by Richard Curtis, this comedy has every prospect of being a mammoth hit. Ed Sheeran plays Ed Sheeran, who really does exist.

Released Fri 28 June



CRITIC'S CHOICE

Brightburn CERT 15 (90 mins)

Starring **Elizabeth Banks, David Denman, Jackson A. Dunn, Matt Jones, Meredith Hagner**
Directed by **David Yarovesky (USA)**

A couple adopts a child from outer space which they try to raise to serve humanity. But the kid has other plans...

**Released
Fri 21 June**



Annabelle Comes Home

CERT tbc

Starring **Mckenna Grace, Madison Iseman, Katie Sarife, Patrick Wilson, Vera Farmiga**
Directed by **Gary Dauberman (USA)**

That wretched doll - last seen in *Annabelle: Creation* (2017) - is now back in the safekeeping of the demonologists Ed and Lorraine Warren and is locked behind sacred glass. But we all know that Annabelle is no dummy... For those who really care, this is the seventh instalment in the *Conjuring Universe* franchise.

Released Fri 28 June



In Fabric CERT 15 (120 mins)

Starring **Marianne Jean-Baptiste, Hayley Squires, Leo Bill, Gwendoline Christie, Julian Barratt, Steve Oram**
Directed by **Peter Strickland (UK)**

The cinema has dished up many a cursed thing, but never before a dress. Here, as a dress passes from one buyer to the next during a winter sale at a department store, mayhem ensues. From the critically acclaimed director of *Berberian Sound Studio* and *The Duke Of Burgundy*.

Released Fri 28 June

Child's Play CERT 15 (120 mins)

Starring **Aubrey Plaza, Gabriel Bateman, Brian Tyree Henry, Tim Matheson** and the voice of **Mark Hamill**
Directed by **Lars Klevberg (USA)**

Believe it or not, Chucky is back. This remake of the cult 1988 slasher pic introduces the very evil doll to a whole new generation.

The first film produced six sequels and a TV series, long before *Annabelle* (cf.) wreaked her own reign of destruction.

Released Fri 21 June



HOME OF METAL
PRESENTS



Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery this month welcomes a major exhibition exploring the legacy of Black Sabbath and their global fanbase...





Pictured (left to right): Black Sabbath fan Chris Hopkin; Morag Myerscough and Luke Morgan, the exhibition designers for Black Sabbath-50 Years at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery; and superfan Stephen Knowles.

From humble beginnings in 1960s Aston, Geezer Butler, Tony Iommi, Ozzy Osbourne and Bill Ward formed a band that would change the course of music history. Black Sabbath created a new sound, a new aesthetic and a new musical culture - Heavy Metal.

During a career spanning 50 years, the band enjoyed phenomenal global success, selling more than 75 million albums worldwide.

Their final tour, appropriately titled The End, saw them play 81 concerts in 25 different countries. They also recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Grammys.

This month sees the opening of the Black Sabbath - 50 Years exhibition at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. Presented by Home of Metal, a project devoted to the Heavy Metal music that was born in and around Birmingham, the exhibition seeks to dissect the key ingredients that came together to create Black Sabbath. Along the way, it explores the music that turned up the volume, down-tuned the guitars and introduced a whole new meaning to the word 'heavy'.

Focusing on more than just the band and their Birmingham roots, Home of Metal has also captured more than 3,000 portraits of

“
It’s an honour to
be a part of the
Home of Metal.
I’m just a guy from
Birmingham who’s
been blessed to have
had such dedicated
fans throughout my
career. Like I’ve always
said, I am nothing
without them...”

Ozzy Osbourne

”

Black Sabbath fans across the world, in the process brilliantly illustrating the diversity of their fanbase. The photo collection includes portraits of people in Botswana, Brazil, Indonesia, Japan, Egypt, Lebanon, Netherlands, Spain, US and from across the UK.

The exhibition also includes a recreation of superfan Stephen Knowles’ living room, a space that he’s turned into his own mini Sabbath museum.

Also featured are a number of key costumes loaned by the band, including an outfit worn by Geezer Butler at their Birmingham Town Hall concert and featured in the gatefold of the 1972 Vol 4 album. Other on-display items include Ozzy’s glasses, Tony Iommi’s home studio and a part of Bill Ward’s drum kit, used in the 1974 Cal Jam, where Black Sabbath performed in front of 250,000 people.

.....
Home of Metal’s Black Sabbath - 50 Years exhibition shows at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery from Wednesday 26 June to Sunday 29 September.

Visitors must pre-book their tickets at homeofmetal.com



Black Sabbath’s fanbase is global. Pictured are fans Yurika and Akihiro from Japan and Ben and Liz from Birmingham. Photo credits: Home of Metal Fans Portrait Collection 2017/18 © Home of Metal



The Paper Museum

Barber Institute, Birmingham,
Fri 14 June - Sun 1 September

Cassiano dal Pozzo's 17th century paper museum was a magnificent attempt to document and record all human knowledge. Consisting of 10,000-plus watercolours, drawings and prints, the 'museum' features subjects as diverse as antiquities, architecture, zoology, botany & geology, social customs & ceremonies, costumes, portraits, topography and military maps. Most of the dal Pozzo collection was acquired by George III and remains in the Royal Collection.

The Barber exhibition forms part of an ongoing collaboration between the venue and Royal Collection Trust.

"It's very exciting to stage the first exhibition in over 20 years to focus exclusively on Cassiano's remarkable contribution to art and science," says Robert Wenley, Barber Deputy Director & Head of Collection. "The Paper Museum considers his wide-ranging academic and personal interests in the subjects of natural and antiquarian history. It also investigates his fascination with creating visual 'documents', which will resonate with today's media-savvy and connected generation that enjoys documenting almost every fascinate of everyday life."



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Ben Venom: All This Mayhem

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Sat 22 June - Sun 8 September

Presented as part of Home Of Metal - a May to September celebration of Birmingham's history of metal music - All This Mayhem is an exploration of the San Francisco-based artist Ben Venom's interest in the DIY aspect of punk culture combined with the tradition of quilting. Ben's art sees him using reclaimed fabrics to create expansive patchwork designs which frequently incorporate skulls, tigers and heavy metal lyrics. Large-scale textile pieces, customised jean jackets and clothing all feature in the exhibition of new and recent work. Ben will be in residence at the gallery during the first week of the show.

Wonder

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, Wed 25 June - Sun 15 September

A light pavilion, urban landscapes, reimagined cartoon characters and creatures brought to life by augmented reality all feature in a show designed to take the visitor 'beyond gallery walls' to experience some 'unexpected and unimaginable wonders'. The exhibition brings together work by seven artists, all of whom are here focusing on producing pieces in which reality and the imaginary collide.



Comics: Explore And Create Comic Art

Enginuity, Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, Shropshire, until Sun 1 September

This free exhibition showcasing an eclectic mix of original and iconic comic book art, as well as work by current children's comic creators, has been originated by Seven Stories - the National Centre for Children's Books. Featuring interactive activities, playful props and original material, the show's highlights include images of Captain America, Wonder Woman, Superman and the Hulk as drawn by British artist Ian Churchill, who works for both Marvel and DC Comics.

Monster Chetwynd: Hell Mouth 3

Eastside Projects, Birmingham, until Sat 27 July

As with All This Mayhem (see left), Hell Mouth 3 is being presented as part of Birmingham's summertime Home Of Metal project.

The woman behind the show is Monster Chetwynd, a Glasgow-based artist previously known as Spartacus Chetwynd and Marvin Gaye Chetwynd, whose reputation is mainly based around her reworkings, via elaborate and evocative performances, of iconic moments from cultural history.

Explaining her exhibition, she says: "Hell Mouth 3 channels the decline of western civilisation and legacies of heavy metal through the mouth to hell of a 16th century engraving of a human-devouring monster."

The show takes inspiration from Penelope Spheeris' film series, The Decline Of Western Civilisation, a trilogy of movies which depicts life in Los Angeles at various points in time, along the way featuring some of the music industry's most influential and innovative performers.

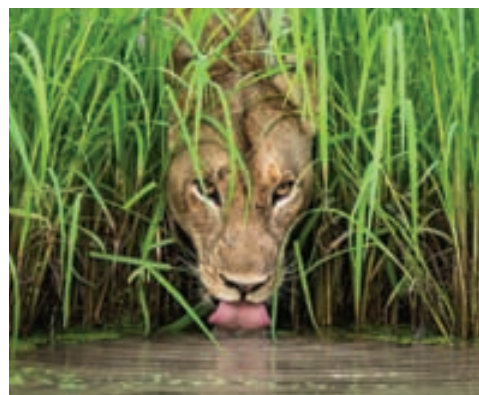
Wildlife Photographer Of The Year

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, until Sun 2 June & Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Sun 29 June - Sun 1 September

Wolverhampton Art Gallery this month welcomes back the prestigious Wildlife Photographer Of The Year show for a fourth time.

Now in its 54th year, the competition annually receives tens of thousands of submissions from amateur and professional photographers in around 100 countries.

Featuring awe-inspiring images capturing fascinating animal behaviour and breathtaking landscapes, the exhibition is visiting the Midlands after premiering in London.



1940S WEEKEND

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WARTIME VEHICLES

RETRO HAIR SALON

RE-ENACTMENTS

RAF FLYPAST

VINTAGE CLOTHES

BARS & FOOD

13-14 JULY

10AM - 5PM

**BLACK COUNTRY
LIVING
MUSEUM**



BBC Good Food Show and Gardeners' World Live

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 June

Boasting seasonal produce, ideas for al-fresco dining, and hundreds of producers and brands, the BBC Good Food Show returns this month to provide four days of summertime dining inspiration.

Visitors can soak up expert masterclasses and enjoy live demos on the seasonal stages,

presented by a host of celebrity chefs including Mary Berry, Tom Kerridge, Michel Roux Jr, Nadiya Hussain and Raymond Blanc...

For green-fingered visitors, BBC Gardeners' World Live is running alongside the Good Food event. The show features a selection of stunning gardens, floral marquees, a plant village, hundreds of gardening exhibitors, and not-to-be-missed demonstrations by TV presenters Monty Don, Carol Klein, Adam Frost, Joe Swift and Alan Titchmarsh.

Under-5's Day

Himley Hall & Park, Dudley, Fri 28 June

One of the region's largest pre-school events, Himley Hall's Under-5's Day features a wide variety of activities and entertainment. This year's line-up includes an appearance by Peppa Pig and her brother, George, as well as a funfair, baby ballet, donkey rides and the return of the popular Himley Beach, complete with giant sandpit, buckets & spades and Punch & Judy shows.



Inspired Family Day

Birmingham City University, Sat 8 June



This year's Inspired Family Day celebrates World Oceans Day, providing an action-packed few hours of 'free and fun-filled' events and activities for visitors of all ages to enjoy. From under-the-sea virtual reality and eco-friendly jewellery-making, to sustainable fashion and junk modelling, there'll be plenty for families to do, experience and learn.

Under-5's Day Picnic Party

Dudley Zoo,
Wed 26 & Thurs 27 June



A day (or two) of fun and games is in prospect for young visitors to Dudley Zoo late this month. Not only can they enjoy the zoo itself, there's also a selection of activities and entertainment taking place in the grounds of Dudley Castle, including puppet shows, face painting and a sure-to-be-colourful fancy dress parade.

Step Back To The 1940s

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster, Sat 29 & Sun 30 June



The clock is turned back to wartime Britain this month as the Severn Valley Railway celebrates the 1940s.

Costumed reenactors will ensure that Winston Churchill, Field Marshal Bernard 'Monty' Montgomery and King George VI are all in attendance at the event, with highlights of the weekend including big band shows, vintage vehicle displays and vintage stalls.

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'The Town That Never Was' Steampunk Festival

Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge,
Sat 22 & Sun 23 June

The Ministry of Steampunk (MoS) is this month transforming Blists Hill into 'a magical, mysterious world of Martian invasion', complete with accompanying Steampunk sights and sounds.

The invaders-from-Mars storyline will be played out by MoS enthusiasts, with visitors at liberty to dip in and out as much or as little as they like.

Other attractions across the weekend include Cthulhu's Witnesses, Women's Suffrage, the Steam Wizards, traders throughout the town and a main stage in the ironworks hosting talks and entertainment.

Monster Jam

Ricoh Arena, Coventry, Sat 8 June

Hailed as one of the world's biggest live motorsport events, Monster Jam roars its way into Coventry this month.

Expert drivers will compete both in championship racing and gravity-defying freestyle competitions during the course of the evening. Standing at 12 feet-tall and weighing up to four-and-a-half tonnes, the participating trucks possess super-charged engines that generate more than 1,500 horsepower. The mammoth vehicles perform wheelies, donuts and big air stunts, with some having been known to reach an impressive height of 35 feet.



Fantabulosa!

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Sat 1 June

Open to anyone of whatever age who wants to experience the joys and freedom of self-expression, Fantabulosa! sees some of the UK's leading drag artists bringing to the museum 'a fantastical pop-up world of imagination and interactive storytelling, lipsync, performance, dress-up, games, songs and a lot of glitter'...

International Model Air Show

Weston Park, Shropshire,
Fri 14 - Sun 16 June



Model aircraft enthusiasts from all over the UK and Europe take to the skies to demonstrate their flying skills at this always-popular event.

Show highlights include a model boat regatta, slot car racing, a fun-fair for children, a Battle of Britain pyrotechnic display and the Swift Glider display team performing mid-air acrobatics.

Dating Show Live

NEC, Birmingham,
Sat 29 & Sun 30 June

Calling all singletons... If you're looking for love, it's time to check out the UK's first ever dating expo! Making its debut at the NEC, The Dating Show Live features a whole host of activities across five exploration zones.

Visitors can take part in speed-dating, try out a new look with a makeover from the experts, learn some moves in a dance class, or enjoy a drink or two at the prosecco bar.

TV stars Joey Essex, Melinda Messenger and Calum Best will all be in attendance.



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Pride and Prejudice
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A Midsummer Night's Dream
24 July

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25 July

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Shropshire Pub In The Park

QEII Arena, Telford Town Park, Fri 7 & Sat 8 June

This brand new event from the team behind the popular Shrewsbury Food Festival and Shropshire Oktoberfest brings all the best bits of going to the pub into the great outdoors. Event highlights include 150 real ales served up

by local brewers, a lager bar, cocktails, an extensive gin den, a wine bar, a Pimm's tent and 'some of the best street food the region has to offer'. And not only will visitors be well fed and watered, they'll be well entertained too, with live bands and comedians (including Tom Glover and Junior Simpson) also contributing to proceedings.

Kenilworth Show

Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Sat 8 June

Coventry & Warwickshire's biggest one-day agricultural show is celebrating its 76th year this month.

The 2019 edition of the event sees the return of the traditional country show livestock and homecraft competitions, as well as the countryside area, featuring challenges including archery and gundog scurry. The equine area also returns, with other attractions including displays of agricultural machinery, a vast array of trade stands and a programme of main-ring entertainment.



RAF Cosford Air Show

RAF Cosford, Sun 9 June

The Royal Air Force's only official air show is one of the largest events in the West Midlands. The annual show includes a packed flying schedule along with numerous static exhibits, stalls, trade stands, military demonstrations and a host of children's entertainments. The RAF Red Arrows will also be performing at the event, in what will be one of only a handful of opportunities to see them this summer.

Festival of Creativity & Wellbeing

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, Sat 15 June

As part of Creativity & Wellbeing Week, the Herbert is hosting a day of free workshops, performances and activities to encourage visitors to experience and connect with their inner creativity. Local artists, creatives and cultural organisations will also be in attendance, to demonstrate how creativity can be used to support wellbeing.

Royal Three Counties Show

Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire, Fri 14 - Sun 16 June



A hearty celebration of regional food and farming, allied to plenty of family entertainment, is the tried-and-trusted recipe for success at this year's Royal Three Counties Show.

With a firm focus on 2019's host county of Herefordshire, the event provides visitors with plenty to keep them occupied, from sampling strawberries and sipping cider to discovering the region's rich cultural heritage. Some of the country's finest livestock will also be in attendance, competing for the title of Best In Show, while family entertainment includes dog agility, duck herding and a spectacular display from the ever-brilliant Red Devils.

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Your week-
by-week
listings guide
June 2019

the list



The Strange Undoing Of Prudencia Hart at New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-Under-Lyme - Fri 28 June - Sat 13 July

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

What's On

Sat 1 to Sun 9 June



Peaky Blinders Nights at
Black Country Living Museum
Fri 7 - Sat 8 June

Mon 10 to Sun 16 June



Dinosaur World Live at
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre
Thurs 13 - Sat 15 June

Mon 17 to Sun 23 June



Lou Sanders at Ludlow
Brewery, South Shropshire
Sat 22 June

Mon 24 to Sun 30 June



Nell Bryden at Henry Tudor
House, Shrewsbury
Sun 30 June

THROUGHOUT JUNE

Visual Arts

New Art Gallery - Walsall

NEW 4 BED DETACHED HOME OF METAL Contemporary art collides with metal culture in this unique exhibition created by artist Alan Kane and commissioned as part of Home Of Metal, Sat 22 June - Sun 1 Sept

Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

RECLAIM PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL 2019: WINDOWS INTO INDUSTRIAL WORLDS Group exhibition by five regional photographers focusing on the people, places and industries of the Black Country, until Sun 30 June

HIMLEY HALL & DUDLEY CASTLE EXHIBITION New exhibition about Dudley Castle & Himley Hall from 1066 to the present day, until Sun 6 Oct

Newcastle Borough Museum & Art Gallery

CRIMINAL QUILTS An art & heritage project inspired by photographs and documents relating to women held in Stafford Prison during the period between 1877 & 1916, until Sun 7 July

Potteries Museum & Art Gallery - Stoke-On-Trent

NEW SUGAR, SPICE AND ALL THINGS NICE.... Exhibition featuring a display of toffee, sweets and chocolate packaging from the last century, Sat 29 June - Sun 8 Sept

Qube Gallery, Oswestry

NEW MILLICENT KAYE CHILDREN'S ART EXHIBITION Annual competition inviting school children in and around Oswestry to submit a piece of art on a particular theme, Mon 17 - Sun 30 June

The Willow Art Gallery, Oswestry

BORDERLAND VISUAL ARTS 2019 As part of Open Studios, the Willow Gallery presents a rich variety of work by emerging and established artists. All the artists are members of Borderland Visual Arts (BVA), until Sat 29 June, **Open Studio Weekends:** 8th & 9th June and 15th & 16th June. Maps available at the gallery.

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

PAINTED LADIES: AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS Display of 20th century paintings depicting women painted by both female and male artists, until Sun 1 Sept

PICK OF THE POPS New exhibition in-

cludes works by famous Pop artists such as Pauline Boty and Andy Warhol, alongside a selection of rarely-seen pieces, until Sun 1 Sept, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

Other VISUAL ARTS

PICTURES OF RURAL HEALTH FROM THE PHILIPPINES Community-based exhibition co-created by local artists and rural communities from the Philippines, until Tues 4 June, Keele University, Staffordshire

PAINTING WITH FABRIC EXHIBITION Artist Kate Findlay has been working exclusively in textiles for the past 12 years and is currently focusing on depicting the beauty of the British countryside and its wildlife, until Sun 23 June, Museum of Cannock Chase, Staffordshire

NEW THE WAY WE SEE IT Exhibition by Friends, Associates & Members of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists (RBSA), Birmingham Water-colour Society and Birmingham Art Circle, Shape Shifters Sculpture Group, MAFA, amongst others, Fri 31 May - Thurs 27 June, Weston Park, Nr Shifnal

NEW DRAWN OF THE DEAD Selection of Charlie Adlard's original works from the Walking Dead comic series, presented alongside immersive, set piece installations created by sculptor Andrew Bryden, Sat 1 June - Sun 3 Nov, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

NEW BRIDGNORTH OPEN HOUSE ARTS TRAIL Thirty-plus Bridgnorth homes and businesses open their doors, with more than 40 artists in residence, Sat 8 - Sun 9 June, Bridgnorth

NEW JAMES CAMPBELL CURATES Renowned potter James Campbell exhibits new work alongside his own curated selection of artists and makers, Fri 14 June - Sat 13 July, Twenty Twenty Gallery, Ludlow

NEW INSIDE EDGE Collaborative exhibition by three Shropshire artists - Julie Price (painter), Judith Woods (sculptor) and Georgina Shepherd (painter) - focusing on aspects of abstract landscape and forms, Sun 23 June - Sat 6 July, The Bear Steps Gallery, Shrewsbury

NEW WALSALL TO WESTON SOCIETY OF ARTISTS Walsall Society of Artists exhibit in the Granary Art Gallery to mark their 70th-anniversary year, Fri 28 June - Tues 30 July, Weston Park, Nr Shifnal

NEW THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD Exhibition exploring the lives of children past and present, Sat 29 June - Sun 18 Aug, Museum of Cannock Chase, Staffordshire

Gigs

THE SIMON & GARFUNKEL STORY Sat 1 June, Lichfield Garrick

HICKMAN AND CASSIDY Sat 1 June, Birchmeadow Centre, Broseley, Telford

LEO SAYER Sat 1 June, Birmingham Town Hall

CAPTAIN STINGRAY'S GROOVE MACHINE Sat 1 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

ANDY GOWER + CAMP STAG + ALL THE BEST TAPES Sat 1 June, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

ACOUSTIC SHOWCASE WITH JESS SILK Sat 1 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

SOUL & MOTOWN PARTY NIGHT WITH THE RUMBLE BAND Sat 1 June, Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford

FAIRPORT CONVENTION Sat 1 June, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

TWIN LIZZY Sat 1 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

DAN OWEN Sat 1 June, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

SPECIAL KINDA MADNESS Sat 1 June, The Robin, Bilston

BRASS AGAINST Sat 1 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

NICK LOWE & LOS STRAITJACKETS Sun 2 June, Birmingham Town Hall

SICKY Sun 2 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

MOSTLY AUTUMN Sun 2 June, The Robin, Bilston

RAHSAAN PATTERSON Sun 2 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SANGRE DE MUERDAGO Sun 2 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SAARA AALTO Mon 3 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JULIA HOLTER Tues 4 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PIP BLOM Tues 4 June, Hare & Hounds, Birm-

ingham

THE RUTLES Tues 4 June, The Robin, Bilston

BILLIE MARTEN Wed 5 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE FRANKIE VALLI STORY Wed 5 June, The Robin, Bilston

BAYSTON HILLBILLIES, JOSIE FIELD AND NEIL SAUNDERS Wed 5 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

JANE MCDONALD Thurs 6 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MIDNITE CITY + ATLAS UK + DEVILFIRE Thurs 6 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

1DELANEY Thurs 6 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MERCURY - THE ULTIMATE QUEEN TRIBUTE Thurs 6 June, Lichfield Garrick

DAVE ONIONS Thurs 6 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

MOTORHEADACHE Thurs 6 June, The Robin, Bilston

METHYL ETHEL Thurs 6 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

YONAKA Thurs 6 June, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

JANE MCDONALD Fri 7 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

GUNS OR ROSES Fri 7 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

GREG RUSSELL, BELLA HARDY AND FINDLAY NAPIER Fri 7 June, The Hive, Shrewsbury

DAVE MALONE AND JAKE MARTIN Fri 7 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

LIVE, LOUD & LOCAL: CARBON COPY, GLORY FADES, THE BORGAS & JOE THOMAS Fri 7 June, The Slade Rooms, W'hampton

JACK & TIM Fri 7 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

STONE JETS Fri 7 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

SIMPLY RERED Fri 7 June, The Place@Oak-

engates Theatre, Telford

THE MIGHTY WAH! Fri 7 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MARTHA REEVES & THE VANDELLAS Fri 7 June, O2 Institute, B'ham

ANDREW BROWNING AS GEORGE MICHAEL Fri 7 June, The Robin, Bilston

PASADENA ROOF ORCHESTRA Fri 7 June, Lichfield Garrick

DUETS FOR DJANGO Fri 7 June, Lichfield Garrick

SOPHIE ELLIS-BEXTOR Sat 8 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WINGWALKERS Sat 8 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

GORDON HENDRICKS: UNPLUGGED Sat 8 June, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

THE SOLID GOLD ROCK 'N' ROLL SHOW Sat 8 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE BOB DYLAN STORY Sat 8 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HOTROX Sat 8 June, The Brewery, Ludlow, South Shropshire

STEVE AJAO AND THE BLUES GIANTS Sat 8 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

FALLEN Sat 8 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

MAETLIVE & THE NEVER NEVERLAND EXPRESS Sat 8 June, The Robin, Bilston

FEMI KUTI Sat 8 June, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE STRAWBS Sun 9 June, The Robin, Bilston

DANGEROUS DAVE REA Sun 9 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

GORDIE MACKEEMAN & HIS RHYTHM BOYS Sun 9 June, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

THE QUIREBOYS UNPLUGGED Sun 9 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

VILLAGERS Sun 9 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Classical Music

STOURBRIDGE CHOIR & ORCHESTRA: THE ARMED MAN Programme also includes Walton's Spitfire Prelude & Fugue alongside classics including The White Cliffs of Dover, We'll Meet Again, As Time Goes By & There'll Always Be An England, Sat 1 June, Stourbridge Town Hall

ROMAN KOSYAKOV PIANO CONCERT Programme includes works by Rachmaninov & Barber, Sat 1 June, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

THE SALVATION ARMY: SYMPHONY SOUNDS Sat 1 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO: TRAVELS THROUGH TIME Featuring Michael Seal (conductor), Catherine Arlidge (presenter) & the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Programme includes works by Grainer, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rameau, Anderson, Mozart, Shostakovich, Williams & Stravinsky, Sun 2 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT Featuring Thomas Trotter & Sally Stocks, Mon 3 June, Birmingham Town Hall

AURORA ORCHESTRA - MUSIC OF THE SPHERES Also featuring Nicholas Colton (conductor), Pekka Kuusisto (violin) & Samuel West (audio narration), Tues 4 June, Birmingham Town Hall

ENGLISH HAYDN FESTIVAL GRAND OPENING CONCERT Featuring Steven Devine (conductor) & Mark Baigent (oboe). Programme includes works by Haydn, CPE Bach & Dittersdorf, Wed 5 June, St Mary's Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

CBSO: A SPRING SYMPHONY Featuring the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Cédric Tiberghien (piano). Programme includes works by Mozart, Liszt & Schumann, Thurs 6 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE DENNER ENSEMBLE LUNCHTIME CONCERT Featuring Mark Baigent (oboe), Sophie Barber (violin), Oliver Wilson (viola) & Sarah Butcher (violin), Thurs 6 June, St Mary's Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

THE CONSONE QUARTET Featuring Agata Daraskaite & Magdalena Lother-Hill (violins), Elitsa Bogdanova (viola) & George Ross (violin). Programme includes works by Haydn & Beethoven, Thurs 6 June, St Mary's Church, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

CBSO: SONGS FROM THE 60s Featuring Richard Balcombe (conductor), Graham Bickley, Oliver Tompsett, Katie Birtill & Abbie Osmon (vocalists), Fri 7 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

DVORAK'S PIANO QUINTET Featuring Robert Markham (piano), Philip Brett & Kate Oswin (violins), Catherine

Bower (viola) & Kate Setterfield (cello). Programme includes works by Pärt & Dvorak, Fri 7 June, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

THE ENGLISH HAYDN PIANO TRIO Featuring Steven Devine (fortepiano), Simon Standage (violin) & Pavel Serbin (violin). Programme includes works by Haydn, Pleyel & Woelfl, Fri 7 June (1pm), St Mary's Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

THE ENGLISH HAYDN ORCHESTRA: HAYDN IN OXFORD Featuring Steven Devine (conductor) & Simon Standage (violin). Programme includes works by Haydn, Pleyel & Cramer, Fri 7 June (7.30pm), St Mary's Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

ORGAN PROM WITH THE SCOTT BROTHERS DUO Sat 8 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THE ENGLISH HAYDN ORCHESTRA: GRAND FESTIVAL FINALE Featuring Steven Devine (conductor), Simon Standage & Ada Witczyk (violins, Eva Cabellero (flute), Mark Baigent (oboe) & Robert Percival (bassoon). Programme includes works by Haydn, Viotti & J.C Bach, Sat 8 June, St Mary's Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

THE SALOMON QUARTET Featuring Simon Standage & Catherine Martin (violins), John Crockatt (viola) & Andrew Skidmore (violin). Programme includes works by Haydn & Boccherini, Sat 8 June, Morville Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

COMMUNITY SPIRIT Evening of choral music from some of the best choirs & homegrown talent in the West Midlands, Sun 9 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

CARL DONNELLY, DANNY MCLOUGHLIN, THE RAYMOND & MR TIMPKINS REVUE & THOMAS GREEN Sat 1 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ANDREW LAWRENCE, PETER BRUSH, NOEL JAMES & PETE OTWAY Sat 1 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

TOM STADE Sun 2 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE HILARITY CHARITY GALA Wed 5 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MAISIE ADAM & GEINS FAMILY GIFTSHOP Wed 5 June, Midlands Art Centre, Birmingham

REGINALD D HUNTER Thurs 6 June, Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford, Shropshire

ROBERT WHITE, ZOE LYONS, ADAM RILEY & HOWARD REED Thurs 6 June, The George Hotel, Lichfield

DALISO CHAPONDA, ROGER MONKHOUSE



Ruby Wax: How To Be Human - Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

PLUS COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 6 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KUM-N-AVALOFF COMEDY NIGHT Thurs 6 June, Stourbridge Town Hall

DALISO CHAPONDA, ROGER MONKHOUSE, MAISE ADAM & GEORGE RIGDEN Fri 7 - Sat 8 Jun, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JOSH HOWIE, HAYLEY ELLIS, STEVE HARRIS & MATT REES Sat 8 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

SHAPPI KHORSANDI Sun 9 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ALL KILLA NO FILLA Sun 9 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TEZ ILYAS, SHAZIA MIRZA, PRINCE ABDI & ESHAAN AKBAR Sun 9 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

MOTOWN THE MUSICAL Based on Motown founder Berry Gordy's best-selling book and presenting a potted history of the famous record label, until Sat 1 June, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

AS YOU LIKE IT Riotous version of Shakespeare's romantic comedy, until Sat 31 Aug, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW Shakespeare's comedy of gender and materialism is turned on its head to offer a fresh perspective on its portrayal of hierarchy and power, until Sat 31 Aug, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE PROVOKED WIFE Outspoken Restoration romp, until Sat 7 Sept, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

VENICE PRESERVED Fast-paced version of Thomas Otway's restoration tragedy, until Sat 7 Sept, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN Adapted from

Paula Hawkins' bestselling novel and starring Samantha Womack, Mon 27 May - Sat 1 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ROCK OF AGES Smash-hit musical featuring over 25 classic rock anthems. Casting includes Zoe Birkett, Kevin Kennedy and Antony Costa, Tues 28 May - Sat 1 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

CALENDAR GIRLS THE MUSICALS Tim Firth & Gary Barlow's award-winning production, Tues 28 May - Sat 8 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

CAPTAIN CORELLI'S MANDOLIN Based on the bestselling novel by Louis de Bernières, Wed 29 May - Sat 15 June, The REP, Birmingham

BLUE REMEMBERED HILLS Starcross Youth Theatre present Dennis Potter's acclaimed classic, Fri 31 May - Sat 1 June, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

THE WORST LITTLE WAREHOUSE IN LONDON A 'mind-bogglingly funny story of companionship, shared accommodation, and how to grin your teeth and bare it', Fri 31 May - Sat 1 June, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

RUBY WAX: HOW TO BE HUMAN Ruby is joined by monk Gelong Thubten & neuroscientist Ash Ranpura in a show that's said to 'help you upgrade your mind as much as you've upgraded your iPhone', Sat 1 June, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE CHEF SHOW Part comedy play, part cookery demonstration, the show takes its audience behind the scenes on a busy Saturday night in the local curry house, where two actors play a cast of thousands... Sat 1 June, Quatt Village Hall, Quatt, Nr Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES Illyria present an outdoor performance of the much-loved story, Sat 1 June, Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, Birmingham

THE LAST DAYS OF JUDAS ISCARIOT A

story about choices and consequences and a journey through time and place, Sat 1 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE Gill Jordan - best known as Black Country legend Doreen - stars opposite Emmerdale & Doctors actor Tom Roberts in David Tristram's award-winning comedy, which centres on a married couple with apparently only a pet goldfish in common, Sat 1 June, The Prince Of Wales Theatre, Cannock

THE WEST END BHANGRA MUSICAL Indian musical fusing live music, stage production and dancing, Sat 1 June, The Alexandra, Birmingham

SPAMALOT The Crescent Theatre Company presents its version of the Monty Python musical, Sat 1 - Sat 8 June, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

BRASSED OFF Heartwarming story about community spirit and triumph in the face of adversity, Sat 1 - Sat 22 June, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

56 EAST AVENUE Brand new comedy featuring Oliver Samuels, Volier 'Mafy' Johnson, Audrey Reid, Dennis Titus & Lakeisha Ellison, Sun 2 June, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE CHEF SHOW Part comedy play, part cookery demonstration, the show takes its audience behind the scenes on a busy Saturday night in the local curry house, where two actors play a cast of thousands... Sun 2 June, Clungunford Parish Hall, Nr Craven Arms, South Shropshire

JANE EYRE Hotbuckle Theatre bring their inventiveness, humour and unique magic to Charlotte Bronte's classic tale, Mon 3 - Tues 4 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MENOPAUSE THE MUSICAL Musical parody featuring a host of one-liners about hot flushes, memory loss and pop classics. Cheryl Ferguson, Maureen Nolan, Rebecca Wheatley & Katherine Lynch star, Mon 3 - Tues 4 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THRILLER LIVE Michael Jackson tribute show, Mon 3 - Sat 8 June, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW Richard O'Brien's timeless masterpiece returns, Mon 3 - Sat 8 June, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

PSYCHIC SALLY Tenth anniversary tour of Sally Morgan's interactive show, Tues 4 June, The Prince Of Wales Theatre, Cannock

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN Presented by Quarry Bank Musical Theatre Society, Tues 4 June, Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Dudley

THE SOUND OF MUSIC Get Your Wiggle On present an amateur staging of Rodgers & Hammerstein's much-loved musical, Tues 4 - Sat 8 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MAD ABOUT THE MUSICALS Featuring some of musical theatre's most iconic numbers, Wed 5 June, Lichfield Garrick

ONCE UPON A WEDNESDAY: URSULA HOLDEN GILL Join the award-winning storyteller as she picks apart the themes of A Midsummer Night's Dream to present an insightful version of the Shakespeare classic, Wed 5 June, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

DANGEROUS CORNER Royal Birmingham Conservatoire presents its version of JB Priestley's tale of intrigue, Wed 5 - Sat 8 June, The Old Rep, Birmingham

HORMONAL HOUSEWIVES 'Allo 'Allo actress Vicki Michelle stars in a no-holds-barred romp about the joys of being a 'fabulous 21st century woman, Thurs 6 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

RUBY & CEDAR Fishhouse Theatre present a 'darkly funny drama for anyone who has loved or hated or lost someone', Thurs 6 - Fri 7 June, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE Gill Jordan - best known as Black Country legend Doreen - stars opposite Emmerdale & Doctors actor Tom Roberts in David Tristram's award-winning comedy, which centres on a married couple with apparently only a pet goldfish in common, Thurs 6 & Fri 7 June, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

RIOT ACT Hard-hitting and heartwarming exploration of the history of the LGBTQ rights movement, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

ROMAN ROMP Adult comedy brimming with farcical confusion and outrageous innuendo, Fri 7 June, The Prince Of Wales Theatre, Cannock

REP FOUNDRY NIGHT Featuring excerpts from Rep Foundry artists Omar Khan, Sam Cole, Ashlee Elizabeth Lolo & Sophia Griffin, Fri 7 June, The REP, Birmingham

JANE EYRE Hotbuckle Theatre bring their inventiveness, humour and unique magic to Charlotte Bronte's compelling tale, Fri 7 June, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

WE'VE GOT EACH OTHER: THE ALMOST ENTIRELY IMAGINED BON JOVI MUSICAL Paul O'Donnel attempts to create an all-singing all-dancing spectacle where all you need is your imagination, Sat 8 June, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

WNO: DON PASQUALE Welsh National Opera present Daisy Evans' 'riotous' new version of Donizetti's classic comic opera, Sat 8 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

FRED JEFFS: THE SWEETSHOP MURDER Graeme Rose examines the 62-year-old unsolved murder of his great

uncle, Quinton sweetshop owner Fred Jeffs, Sat 8 June, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

WORK IN PROGRESS Light-hearted solo show about being scouse, dancing to Britney Spears and sharing stories of hope, Sat 8 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM The Crescent Theatre Company present a modern-dress production of one of Shakespeare's most enduring comedies, Sat 8 - Sat 15 June, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

STILL FREEZIN' Join the Fizzogs as they present a Black Country version of Disney blockbuster Frozen, Sun 9 June, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

Dance

PUSS IN BOOTS Northern Ballet present a choreographed version of the much-loved fairytale, Fri 7 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

RHYTHM OF THE DANCE Live show celebrating Irish culture through music & dance and featuring world champion dancers, a traditional Irish band and singers, Sat 8 - Sun 9 June, Lichfield Garrick

Cabaret

LA VOIX: LIVE, LOUD AND FABULOUS Evening of frills, frocks & fun as the Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist impersonates female icons Cher, Tina Turner, Shirley Bassey and Liza Minnelli included, Sat 1 June, The Old Rep, Birmingham

CERI DUPREE IN THE LADIES I LOVE Wed 5 - Thurs 6 June, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

LA VOIX: LIVE, LOUD AND FABULOUS Evening of frills, frocks & fun as the Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist impersonates female icons Cher, Tina Turner, Shirley Bassey and Liza Minnelli included, Fri 7 June, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire



Talks

SPOKEN WORD: BEN NORRIS Ben Norris is a writer, actor and two-time national poetry slam champion who's per-

formed everywhere from Latitude Festival to the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, Tues 4 June, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

DANNY BAKER! GOOD TIME CHARLIE'S BACK Evening of anecdotes from the comedy writer and journalist recently sacked by BBC Radio 5Live, Tues 4 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

LUCY WORSLEY - QUEEN VICTORIA: DAUGHTER, WIFE, MOTHER AND WIDOW Join Lucy for an illustrated talk about the life, the palaces and the rich colourful age of Queen Victoria, Wed 5 June, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

AN EVENING WITH SIR GEOFF HURST An evening with England's World Cup 1966 hattrick hero, Wed 5 June, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

AN EVENING WITH SIR GEOFF HURST An evening with England's World Cup 1966 hattrick hero, Thurs 6 June, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

AN AUDIENCE WITH ALAN JOHNSON One of the most popular politicians of recent times, Alan here tells his personal story with the help of some of the music that has soundtracked his life, Thurs 6 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HIT THE ODE Performance poetry night featuring Dani Piper, Remi Graves & Kofi Stone, Fri 7 June, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

WAR & PEACE Intimate evening of storytelling and song, inspired by tales from the archives and those collected from Doncaster people during the Great War, Fri 7 June, The Hive, Shrewsbury

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

PAW PATROL: MIGHTY PUPS (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Devan Cohen, Drew Davis. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, until Sat 1 June

ROCKETMAN (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Taron Egerton, Bryce Dallas Howard. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, until Thurs 6 June

FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS (U) Comedy/Drama. Starring Tuppence Middleton, James Purefoy. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, Fri 31 May - Thurs 6 June

HEAD FULL OF HONEY (12a) Comedy/Drama. Starring Nick Nolte, Emily Mortimer. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, Fri 31 May - Thurs 6 June

SHOPLIFTERS (15) Drama/Crime. Starring Lily Franky, Sakura Andô. Foreign language, subtitled. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Sat 1 June

CRUCIBLE OF THE VAMPIRE (15) Fantasy/Horror. Starring Babette Barat, Florence Cady. The Hive, Shrewsbury, Sat 1 June

BUMBLEBEE (12a) Adventure/Sci-Fi. Starring Hailee Steinfeld, Jorge Lendeborg Jr. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Sun 2 June

THE FABULOUS WORLD OF JULES VERNE (U) Animation/Adventure. Starring Lubor Tokos, Arnost Navrátil. The Hive, Shrewsbury, Sun 2 June

ALIEN (15) Horror/Sci-Fi. Starring Sigourney Weaver, Tom Skerritt. Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Mon 3 June

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Rami Malek, Lucy Boynton. Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire, Mon 3 June

RED JOAN (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Judie Dench, Sophie Cookson. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Mon 3 June

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (15) Biography/History. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Margot Robbie. Stourbridge Town Hall, Mon 3 June

ALIEN (15) Horror/Sci-Fi. Starring Sigourney Weaver, Tom Skerritt. Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Mon 3 June

THE KEEPER (15) Biography, Drama. Starring David Kross, Freya Mavor. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 4 & Thurs 6 June

COLETTE (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Keira Knightley, Fiona Shaw. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 7 - Sat 8 June

MARY POPPINS RETURNS (12a) Comedy/Family. Starring Emily Blunt, Lin-Manuel Miranda. Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms, South Shropshire, Sat 8 June

SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Shameik Moore, Jake Johnson. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Sat 8 - Sun 9 June

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Wed 5 June, showing at selected cinemas

X-MEN: DARK PHOENIX (tbc)

GLORIA BELL (15)

LATE NIGHT (15)

Events

LEGO SEA EXPLORERS Help the team unlock underwater secrets and draw, colour and create your new discoveries, until Sun 2 June, National Sea Life Centre, Birmingham

NIMROD TOURS Step on board the

Nimrod XV249 and learn about its intelligence-gathering role in the Royal Air Force, until Sun 2 June, RAF Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

FREDDO'S TREASURE TROVE Ahoy, me hearties! Cadbury's Freddo has donned his captain's hat to show little ones what it takes to become a pirate on the seven seas, until Sun 2 June, Cadbury World, Birmingham

CASTLE QUEST A must-attend event for anybody who loves solving riddles and having a go at challenges, until Sun 2 June, Tamworth Castle

ESL ONE BIRMINGHAM Three days of intense Dota 2 action, as participants battle it out for a share of the \$300,000 prize pool, until Sun 2 June, Arena Birmingham

UK GAMES EXPO Three-day gaming extravaganza, open to anyone of any age wanting to play, learn to play, buy, experience or know more about table-top games, until Sun 2 June, NEC, Birmingham

ATTINGHAM UNCOVERED Check out the daily progress and discoveries in this week-long live archaeological dig, until Thurs 6 June, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

LEGO CITY Enjoy character appearances and new building activities, until Sun 1 Sep, Legoland Discovery Centre, Birmingham

WHODUNNIT? A FAMILY-FRIENDLY MURDER-MYSTERY TRAIL Time-travelling murder-mystery trail, Sat 1 June, Aston Hall, Birmingham

FANTABULOSA! Pop-up world of imagination and storytelling, Sat 1 June, Birmingham Museum And Art Gallery

WE SHALL GO TO THE MOON! See replica spacesuits and learn about the history of space travel to the moon, Sat 1 June, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

WE'LL MEET AGAIN Night of nostalgia featuring the D-Day Darlings, big band sounds and a fireworks finale, Sat 1 June, Trentham Estate, Stoke-on-Trent

REACH FOR THE STARS 3D tour of the solar system, with clips from Tim Peake's recent visit to the International Space Station, Sat 1 June, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

COMICS SALOPIA Free-entry festival celebrating the medium of comic art in all of its forms, with some of the biggest names in the industry in attendance, Sat 1 - Sun 2 June, various locations around Shrewsbury

COLLECTORMANIA 26 Featuring well-known faces from the worlds of television, film and sport, Sat 1 - Sun 2 June, NEC, Birmingham

HAVE-A-GO ARCHAEOLOGY FAMILY SESSIONS Introduction to archaeology, complete with a chance to do some



Peaky Blinders - Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

digging yourself, Sat 1 - Sun 2 June, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

WATT 2019: WHAT'S WATT TALK AND TOUR WITH CHRIS RICE Exploration of the life of James Watt Jnr, who lived at Aston Hall from 1819 until his death in 1848, Sun 2 June, Aston Hall, Birmingham

VINTAGE TRANSPORT & COUNTRY FAIR Vintage vehicle display, bringing exhibitors from across the country, Sun 2 June, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

THERE AND BACK AGAIN: JRR TOLKIEN AND SAREHOLE GUIDED WALK Guided introduction to Tolkien, the area of Sarehole and its influence on The Hobbit and The Lord Of The Rings, Sun 2 June, Sarehole Mill, Hall Green, Birmingham

WATT 2019: JAMES WATT TOURS Tours dedicated to the lives and works of James Watt and his longstanding friend and business partner, Matthew Boulton, Sun 2 - Thurs 27 June, Soho House, Birmingham

A DAY AS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST Join an exclusive group and experience the life of an archaeologist, Mon 3 June, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

THE OLD GOLD CLUB LIVE Mikey Burrows and former Wolves star Chris Iwelumo induct three new Wolves legends into the Old Gold Club, Fri 7 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

PEAKY BLINDERS NIGHT Step back in time to the Roaring 20s and discover the murky underground world of the Peaky Blinders, Fri 7 - Sat 8 June, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

THE GENEALOGY SHOW Great opportunity to network, learn and have fun, Fri 7 - Sat 8 June, NEC, Birmingham

PUB IN THE PARK All the best bits about going to the pub are brought into the sunshine and made festival-sized, Fri 7 - Sat 8 June, QEII Arena, Telford

TUNNEL TEDS Take along your furry friends for a ted-tastic day of bear-themed fun on and around the canal,

Sat 8 June, Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

RAINBOW SWING A 1940s night of dancing, with live music from the Rhythm Remedies and performances from the Suzy Qs, Sat 8 June, Birmingham Museum And Art Gallery

PROMS IN THE PARK Evening of music and fireworks to launch the 50th anniversary concert season of the Wrexham Symphony Orchestra, Sat 8 June, The British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

CLASSIC CAR WEEKEND View a selection of classic cars on display around the railway, Sat 8 - Sun 9 June, Churnet Valley Railway, Froghall, Staffs

TRAMPOLINE, TUMBLING AND DOUBLE-MINI TRAMPOLINE REGIONAL TEAM FINALS AND NDP SEMI-FINALS High-flying somersaults aplenty as some of the country's top gymnasts vie for glory, Sat 8 - Sun 9 June, Arena, B'ham

FOLLIES FUN DOG SHOW The popular family show returns, Sun 9 June, Hawkstone Park & Follies, Weston-under-Redcastle, Nr Shrewsbury

RAF COSFORD AIR SHOW 2019 Featuring a packed flying schedule, static exhibits, stalls, trade stands military demonstrations and children's entertainment, Sun 9 June, RAF Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

For Foodies

THE SECRET GIN FESTIVAL 2019 Returning for their biggest festival to date, Sat 1 June, The Grain Store, Wolverhampton

FOOD & DRINK FAYRE Celebration of the Severn Valley's finest produce, Sat 1 - Sun 2 June, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

BIRMINGHAM COFFEE FESTIVAL 3 days of celebrations honouring the UK's vibrant coffee culture, Fri 7 - Sun 9 June, The Custard Factory, Digbeth

LICHFIELD GARRICK
Thrills & Style

COMING SOON



SAT 8 - SUN 9 JUNE

RHYTHM OF THE DANCE



THURS 13 JUNE

JOE LONGTHORNE



FRI 14 JUNE

THE NAT KING COLE SONGBOOK



MON 17 - SAT 22 JUNE

THE LADY VANISHES



SUN 7 JULY

EDDIE THE EAGLE



FRI 12 JULY

OFFSTAGE

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ENTERTAINMENT CANNOCK CHASE at the PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE

JUNE

LIONEL RICHIE SONGBOOK

Sunday 2 June
7.30pm • £21

ROMAN ROMP

Friday 7 June
7.30pm • £17

BOB DYLAN STORY

Friday 14 June
7.30pm • £20

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE

Wednesday 19 June
1.00pm schools show only
6.30pm public show
£15.50 • Conc £13.50
Schools £11

JORDAN ADAMS THE GREATEST SHOW

Thursday 20 June
7.30pm • £22

SIMPLY RERED

Friday 21 June
7.30pm • £20 • Conc. £18

THE DREAMBOYS

Thursday 27 June
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Friday 28 June
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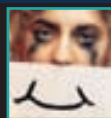
tickets.princeofwales.live



5th June, 7.30pm

Once Upon A Wednesday:
Ursula Holden Gil

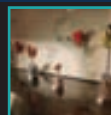
Tickets: £7, £8.50 otd



12th June, 7pm

A Super Happy Story
(About Feeling Super Sad)

Tickets: £10 & £8



15th June - 27 July

Brewhouse Open
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FREE Exhibition Showcase



25th-29th June, 7.30pm

LTC: Stepping Out

Tickets: £12, £11 conc.



3rd July, 7.30pm

Once Upon A Wednesday:
Liz Weir MBE

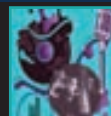
Tickets: £7 adv, £8 otd



12th & 13th July, 7pm

Performing Stars Academy:
The Addams Family
Musical

Tickets: £14, £11 conc.



26th July, 7.30pm

Made In Motor City

Tickets: £16

NOW BOOKING...



30th August, 7.30pm. 14+

Justin Moorhouse:
Northern Joker

Tickets: £14/£5 unwaged



18th October, 7.30pm

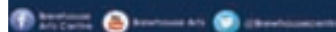
Derek Acorah
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Gigs

TINA - SIMPLY THE BEST
Mon 10 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

WALLOWS Mon 10 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE LAST INTERNATIONAL Tues 11 June, O2 Academy, B'ham

CANDLEBOX Wed 12 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

QUADROPHENIA - THE ALBUM LIVE Wed 12 June, Birmingham Town Hall

NINE DART FINISH, SPEAKEASY & THE COMMON Wed 12 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

KATIE MAC & ASH BATES WITH SUPPORT FROM NIKKI ROUS Wed 12 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

MIGHTY MIGHTY Wed 12 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JOE LONGTHORNE Thurs 13 June, Lichfield Garrick

THE BLUES BAND Thurs 13 June, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

TAKING BACK SUNDAY - 20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR Thurs 13 June, O2 Institute, B'ham

ALLISON ADAMS TUCKER Thurs 13 June, The Wightman Theatre, Shrewsbury

IOTA Thurs 13 June, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffordshire

PHIL HILBORNE BAND
Thurs 13 June, The Robin, Bilston

BULSARA AND HIS QUEENIES Thurs 13 June, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE BEACH BOYS TRIBUTE SHOW Fri 14 June, Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford

HONEYBLOOD + LUCIA Fri 14 June, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

TOM BAXTER Fri 14 June, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

IAIN BALLAMY Fri 14 June, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

BERNADETTE PETERS Fri 14 June, Birmingham Town Hall

THE NAT KING COLE SONGBOOK WITH ANDY ABRAHAM Fri 14 June, Lichfield Garrick

SKA SPECIAL FT. KIOKO DJS Fri 14 June, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

BC ALISKAS Fri 14 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE FOO FIGHTERS TRIBUTE Fri 14 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE KINGS OF LEON Fri 14 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

NAVI AS MICHAEL JACKSON Fri 14 June, The Robin, Bilston

FELIX SHEPHERD + TORI CROSS + RHIANNA KEANE Sat 15 June, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

CITYLIGHTZ Sat 15

June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MAZ MITRENKO BAND
Sat 15 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

BACKSTREET BOYS Sat 15 June, Arena B'ham

WHO ARE YOU UK Sat 15 June, The Slade Rooms, W'hampton

PIGDAZE Sat 15 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

BROKEN MINDS PRESENTS: LTJ BUKEM Sat 15 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TOO MANY MEN Sat 15 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SNOWY'S MNDA ROCK N ROLL BASH Sat 15 June, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

FOALS Sat 15 - Sun 16 June, Digbeth Arena, Birmingham

ROXY MAGIC Sat 15 June, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

BLONDED Sat 15 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

WHALEBONE Sat 15 June, Astley Village Hall, Shrewsbury

WOMAN TO WOMAN: JUDIE TZUKE, BEVERLEY CRAVEN & JULIA FORDHAM Sat 15 June, Birmingham Town Hall

DIRTY DC - THE TRIBUTE TO AC/DC Sat 15 June, The Robin, Bilston

RAYMOND FROGGATT ACOUSTIC Sun 16 June, The Robin, Bilston

STEREOLAB Sun 16 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CANAAN COX Sun 16 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GYPSYFINGERS Sun 16 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JAGGED LITTLE PILL
Sun 16 June, The Robin, Bilston

KARNIVAL KNOWLEDGE
Sun 16 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

GRANDMASTER FLASH
Sun 16 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

AIDA Opera North present a new concert staging of Verdi's four act opera. Sir Richard Armstrong conducts, Tues 11 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO: MIRGA CONDUCTS MAHLER'S SECOND Featuring Mirga Gražinyte-Tyler (conductor), Lucy Crowe (soprano), Karen Cargill (mezzo soprano) & the CBSO Chorus, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE STAFFORDSHIRE BAND Season finale concert, Fri 14 June, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

EX CATHEDRA: SUMMER MUSIC BY CAN-DLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Fri 14 June, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

DVORÁK PIANO QUINTET Featuring György Boglárka & Tomohiko Kimura (violins), Nicholas Fidler (viola), Flora McNicoll (cello) & Elizabeth Haughan (piano). Programme comprises Dvorak's Piano Quintet in A, Op.81, Fri 14 June, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CHINEKE! ORCHESTRA Featuring Wayne Marshall & Stewart Goodyear (piano). Programme includes works by Grieg, Stewart Goodyear & Dvorak, Sat 15 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE PEOPLE'S ORCHESTRA Sat 15 June, Halesowen Church, Halesowen B63

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE ORGAN RECITAL Featuring Callum Alger & Josh Roebuck, Sat 15 June, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

BIRMINGHAM GAY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SUMMER FIESTA Featuring Jack Lovell (conductor), Sat 15 June, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: MAHLER'S FIFTH Featuring Michael Lloyd (conductor) & Ida Ränzlow (mezzo-soprano). Programme comprises Mahler's Fifth Symphony & Rückert-Lieder, Sun 16 June, Elgar Concert Hall, The Brumall, University of Birmingham

Comedy

MILTON JONES Mon 10 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOM STADE Wed 12 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SCOTT GIBSON, JIMMY MCGHIE

FEATURING COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 13 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

AHIR SHAH & SOOZ KEMPNER Thurs 13 June, Midlands Arts Centre, B'ham

ANDY ASKINS, SALLY-ANNE HAYWARD & JASON NEALE Fri 14 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

BOBBY MAIR, HUGE DAVIES, DANNY CLIVES & CHELSEA BIRKBY Fri 14 June, Cherry Reds Cafe-Bar, Birmingham

SCOTT GIBSON, JIMMY MCGHIE, SEAN MCLOUGHLIN (PICTURED) & MAUREEN YOUNGER Fri 14 - Sat 15 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham



DANNY MCLOUGHLIN, LEO KEARSE, JASON JOHN WHITEHEAD & DAMION LARKIN Sat 15 June, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

SCOTT BENNETT, HAYLEY ELLIS, EM-MANUEL SONUBI & CHRIS BETTS Sat 15 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

Theatre

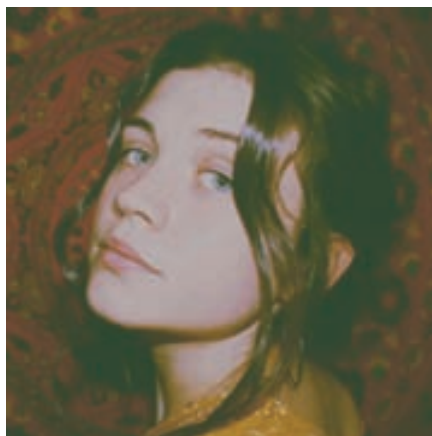
THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE
Gill Jordan - best known as Black Country legend Doreen - stars opposite Emmerdale & Doctors actor Tom Roberts in David Tristram's award-winning comedy, which centres on a married couple with apparently only a pet goldfish in common, Tues 11 June, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

LES MUSICALS G4 frontman Jonathan Ansell and Britain's Got Talent winner Jai McDowell perform an evening of musical theatre classics, Tues 11 June, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent



AVENUE Q Tony Award-winning musical that centres on a group of loveable yet hopeless characters on a downtown New York street, Tues 11 - Sat 15 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

A BUNCH OF AMATEURS Stoke Rep



Katie Mac - Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

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Directed by Conrad Nelson

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in the face of adversity**

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Players present Ian Hislop & Nick Newman's am-dram comedy, Tues 11 - Sat 15 June, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

HALF A SIXPENCE BMOS Musical Theatre Company present an amateur staging of the classic family musical, Tues 11 - Sat 15 June, The Alexandra, Birmingham

VELVET Tom Ratcliffe's drama explores the complex realities of harassment within the acting industry, and how far a person is prepared to go to achieve their dreams, Wed 12 - Thurs 13 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

JESUS CHRIST SUPER STAR Amateur staging presented by award-winning musical theatre group Shrewsbury Amateur Operatic Society, Wed 12 - Sat 15 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

CANVAS Royal Birmingham Conservatoire presents its version of Michael Wynne's 'razor-sharp' comedy, Wed 12 - Sat 15 June, The Old Rep, Birmingham

THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE Gill Jordan - best known as Black Country legend Doreen - stars opposite Emmerdale & Doctors actor Tom Roberts in David Tristram's award-winning comedy, which centres on a married couple with apparently only a pet goldfish in common, Thurs 13 June, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

HORMONAL HOUSEWIVES 'Allo 'Allo actress Vicki Michelle stars in a no-holds-barred romp about the joys of being a 'fabulous 21st century woman, Thurs 13 June, The Place @ Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Shropshire

DAVID BLAINE The master of modern magic presents an interactive one-man show that promises to 'shock and amaze', Fri 14 June, Arena Birmingham

REP FOUNDRY NIGHT Featuring excerpts from Rep Foundry artists Grace Barrington, Siana Bangura, Rachael Mainwaring & Shane Shambhu, Fri 14 June, The REP, Birmingham

HORMONAL HOUSEWIVES 'Allo 'Allo actress Vicki Michelle stars in a no-holds-barred romp about the joys of being a 'fabulous 21st century woman, Sat 15 June, Lichfield Garrick

OLD HERBACEOUS An 'acute and sometimes hilarious' observation of relationships between the classes... Sat 15 June, Lichfield Garrick

PAMELA'S PALACE Original music & dance routines combine as Pamela and her girls take audiences through a whirlwind of female insecurities & shameless gossip... Sat 15 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE CHEF SHOW Part comedy play, part cookery demonstration, the

show takes its audience behind the scenes on a busy Saturday night in the local curry house, where two actors play a cast of thousands... Sat 15 June, Thimblemill Library, Smethwick

STILL FREEZIN' Join the Fizzogs as they present a Black Country version of Disney blockbuster Frozen, Sat 15 June, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

WUTHERING HEIGHTS Chapterhouse Theatre Company present an outdoor staging of Emily Bronte's tempestuous love story, Sat 15 June, Erdigg Hall, Wrexham

WNO: DON PASQUALE Welsh National Opera present Daisy Evans's 'riotous' new version of Donizetti's classic comic opera, Sun 16 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Quantum Theatre present an outdoor staging of Kenneth Grahame's riverside tale, Sun 16 June, Dotshill Park, Tamworth

THE CHEF SHOW Part comedy play, part cookery demonstration, the show takes its audience behind the scenes on a busy Saturday night in the local curry house, where two actors play a cast of thousands... Sun 16 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

Kids Shows

DINOSAUR WORLD LIVE Interactive show for all the family, Thurs 13 - Sat 15 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



GANGSTA GRANNY Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of David Williams' bestselling tale, Fri 14 June, Walsall Arboretum

Dance

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: UN-LEASHED Triple bill of ballets by female choreographers, including the world premiere of the third Ballet Now commission by Didy Veldman, Wed 12 - Sat 15 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

ICONIC Jazz Dance Company present a celebration of current and historical movements, moments & figures, exploring a world of idols from Elvis Presley to Michael Jackson, Dali to Da Vinci, Ginger Rogers to Gene Kelly and many more, Wed 12 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



BBC Gardeners' World Live - NEC, Birmingham

SAMARPAN MAHOTSAV: A CELEBRATION OF INDIAN CLASSICAL DANCE Jaivant Patel Dance present a celebration of classical Indian dance showcasing established UK-based female performers, Fri 14 - Sat 15 June, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (15) Biography/History. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Margot Robbie. Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Mon 10 June

THE UPSIDE (12A) Comedy/Drama. Starring Kevin Hart, Bryan Cranston. Festival Drayton Centre, North Shropshire, Mon 10 June

WILD ROSE (15) Drama/Music. Starring Julie Walters, Jessie Buckley. Festival Drayton Centre, North Shropshire, Mon 10 June; Wern Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 11 & Thurs 13 June

PETERLOO (12a) Drama/History. Starring Rory Kinnear, Maxine Peake. Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire, Mon 10 June

SEARCHING FOR SUGARMAN (12) Documentary. The Hive, Shrewsbury, Tues 11 June

MIRIAM MIENTE (12) Drama. Starring Frank Perozo, Margaux Da Silva. Foreign language, subtitled. The Hive, Shrewsbury, Wed 12 June

TOLKIEN (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Nicholas Hoult, Lily Collins. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Fri 14 June

COLETTE (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Keira Knightley, Fiona Shaw. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 14 June

RED JOAN (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Jude Dench, Sophie Cookson. Wern Town Hall, North Shropshire, Fri 14 June

Events

STORE STORIES: A BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR Check out the hidden treasures in the collection stores and meet the team carrying out some of the conservation work, Mon 10 June, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

BBC GARDENERS' WORLD LIVE Featuring stunning show gardens and beautiful borders packed with ideas to recreate in your own garden, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 June, NEC, Birmingham

BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW SUMMER Featuring seasonal produce, ideas for al-fresco dining and hundreds of producers and brands, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 June, NEC, Birmingham

INTERNATIONAL MODEL AIR SHOW Model aircraft enthusiasts take to the skies to demonstrate their flying skills, Fri 14 - Sun 16 June, Weston Park, Staffordshire

BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR Sat 15 June, Aston Hall, Birmingham

LIVE YOUR LEGACY INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS The cheer & dance championships are back, Sat 15 June, Resorts World Arena, B'ham

VINTAGE FESTIVAL Celebration of lifestyles, fashion, music and classic cars from the post-war years, Sat 15 - Sun 16 June, National Brewery Centre, Burton upon Trent

PIRATES AND MERMAIDS Check out 'the ultimate underwater adventure', Sat 15 June - Sun 8 Sep, National Sea Life Centre, Birmingham

'MORRIS GANG' DANCING The Blists Hill Morris Gang entertain the crowds with traditional dances, Sun 16 June, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire

FESTIVAL OF BLACK COUNTRY VEHICLES Event commemorating the region's historical reputation as a major centre for vehicle manufacturing, Sun 16 June, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

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WED 5 JUN
JERSEY BOY FEAT: STEPHEN JAMES + "IT'S ALL ABOUT BUDDY" FT PAUL BIRCH

MOTORHEADACHE
THU 6 JUN
TRIBUTE TO LEMMY AND MOTORHEAD + SUPPORT CHAOSAROMA + TEA

ANDREW BROWNING AS GEORGE MICHAEL
FRI 7 JUN
+ SUPPORT BARRI BROWN AND THE RIVER DEEP BAND

MAET LIVE
SAT 8 JUN
+ THE NEVER NEVERLAND EXPRESS
THE UK'S PREMIERE TRIBUTE TO MEAT LOAF

THE STRAWBS
SUN 9 JUN
50th ANNIVERSARY ACOUSTIC SHOW + SUPPORT | ALL SEATED SHOW

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THU 13 JUN
LEGENDARY UK GUITARIST + SUPPORT

NAVI AS MICHAEL JACKSON
FRI 14 JUN
THE KING OF POP - THE LEGEND CONTINUES

DIRTY DC
SAT 15 JUN
THE TRIBUTE TO AC/DC + SUPPORT BLACK TREE VULTURES

WOLVESFEST 2019 FESTIVAL
SAT 15 JUN
@ W'TON RUGBY CLUB

RAYMOND FROGGATT & HIS BAND IN CONCERT
SUN 16 JUN
DOORS: 12.00 NOON | ALL SEATED SHOW

JAGGED LITTLE PILL
SUN 16 JUN
A TRIBUTE TO ALANIS MORISSETTE'S ICONIC ALBUM + SUPPORT DAN HAYNES

JEN NORTH
TUE 18 JUN
ALL PROCEEDS TO CHARITY
TICKETS WILL BE SOLD ON THE DOOR ONLY

THE SHARPEEZ + DANNY GILES BAND
WED 19 JUN
+ SUPPORT

FROM THE JAM
THU 20 JUN
+ SUPPORT THE SOUND AKA

U2-2
FRI 21 JUN
TRIBUTE TO U2 + SUPPORT BIG UP THE 90'S

BLACK COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS
FRI 21 JUN
ICB W'TON

MARTIN KEMP + SPECIAL GUESTS
SAT 22 JUN
THE ULTIMATE BACK TO THE 80s DJ SET

A BENEFIT SHOW FOR TREVOR BURTON
SUN 23 JUN
FT ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW ROY WOOD, RAYMOND FROGGATT

JOHN OTWAY & WILD WILLIE BARRET
THU 27 JUN
THE NEARLY FREE TOUR

LIMEHOUSE LIZZY
FRI 28 JUN
TRIBUTE TO THIN LIZZY + SUPPORT PURPLE STEREO

KICK UP THE 80'S
SAT 29 JUN
THE ULTIMATE 80'S PARTY BAND! 20th ANNIVERSARY | + SUPPORT

ROCK BOTTOM
SUN 30 JUN
THE UK'S TRIBUTE TO UFO AND MICHAEL SCHENKER GROUP + SUPPORT DEVILS DICE

f therobin2 i therobin2 t Robin2Music

Gigs

ODD SOUL Mon 17 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE COUNTERFEIT SIXTIES Tues 18 June, Dudley Town Hall

CAGE THE ELEPHANT Tues 18 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE LAFONTAINES Tues 18 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

GLENN TILBROOK - ACOUSTIC Tues 18 June, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

CONFIDENCE MAN Wed 19 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DECLAN WELSH AND THE DECADENT WEST + PRETTY FEELS + 2 HOUR OVERKILL + SPECIAL GUESTS Wed 19 June, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

ONE NIGHT OF ELVIS Thurs 20 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HALFWAY TO PARADISE: THE BILLY FURY STORY Thurs 20 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH & THE REVOLUTIONARY MINDS Thurs 20 June, The Mill Digbeth, Birmingham

FROM THE JAM Thurs 20 June, The Robin, Bilston

ENTER THE DRAGON Fri 21 June, Hare &

Hounds, Birmingham

THE MECHANICAL HEARTS Fri 21 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

HENGE - SOLSTICE SPECIAL Fri 21 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

SKAM, BUILDING GIANTS, MOUTH IN THE SOUTH Fri 21 June, Route 44, Birmingham

PAPAGENA: NUNS AND ROSES II Fri 21 June, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

THANK ABBA FOR THE MUSIC Fri 21 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ELECTROLYTE Fri 21 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BOWIE BY MOONLIGHT Fri 21 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

FEEDBACK + ROUND IN CIRCLES + MARMA + SPECIAL GUESTS Fri 21 June, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

THE MAVERICKS Fri 21 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

U2 2 Fri 21 June, The Robin, Bilston

WESTLIFE Fri 21 - Sun 23 June, Arena B'ham

WANNABE - THE SPICE GIRLS SHOW Sat 22 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

PASSION AND THE VEINS + SPECIAL GUESTS Sat 22 June, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

TAKE THAT - SHINE Sat 22 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

L'ORCHESTRE AFRICA INTERNATIONAL Sat 22 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

BARRY STEELE & FRIENDS Sat 22 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

TROPICAL SOUNDCLASH Sat 22 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GIANTS OF ROCK USA 2019 TOUR Sat 22 June, The Slade Rooms, W'hampton

THE KILKENNYS Sat 22 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HELLBENT FOREVER Sat 22 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

MARTIN KEMP Sat 22 June, The Robin, Bilston

STEVE HARLEY & COCKNEY REBEL Sun 23 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

UB40 Sun 23 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

JEFFREY LEWIS & LOS BOLTS Sun 23 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

STRAY CATS Sun 23 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BON JOVI PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS MANIC STREET PREACHERS Sun 23 June, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

Classical Music

EX CATHEDRA: SUMMER MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Tues 18 & Wed 19 June, Birmingham Cathedral

WIND BAND & SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Benedict Goodall & Sabrina Ko (wind band conductors) & Daniele Rosina (Symphony Orchestra conductor). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Sparke, Holst, Coates & Hess, Wed 19 June, The Bramall, University of Birmingham

SHREWSBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA; OPERA GALA EVENING Wed 19 June, Shrewsbury Abbey

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: A CELEBRATION OF NEW TALENT Featuring Andrew Griffiths (conductor) & Luke Jones (piano). Programme includes works by Beethoven & Thea Musgrave, Wed 19 June, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CBSO: STEPHEN HOUGH PLAYS BEETHOVEN Featuring Edward Gardner (conductor - pictured) & Stephen Hough (piano). Programme includes works by Tippett, Beethoven & Schubert, Wed 19 - Thurs 20 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: THE PLANETS An HD Odyssey with NASA footage, Fri 21 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Jamie Phillips (conductor), Jacob Perry (clarinet), Tzu-Jo Huang (marimba) & Jacob Smith (trumpet). Programme includes works by George West, Weber, Pius Cheung, Arutiunian & Gershwin, Fri 21 June, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

SHREWSBURY LIGHT ORCHESTRA: PROMS IN THE GARDEN Raising funds for The Lingen Davies Cancer Fund, Sat 22 June, Mytton Cottage, Montford Bridge, Shrewsbury

LONDON CONCERT ORCHESTRA: SPACE SPECTACULAR Featuring Pete Harrison (conductor), Sat 22 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM CHORAL UNION Featuring Colin Baines (conductor), Darren

Hogg & Phil Ypres Smith (Pianists). Programme comprises Brahms' Requiem, Sat 22 June, St. Francis Church, Bournville, Birmingham

Comedy

HARRIETT DYER AND LOU CONRAN Tues 18 June, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

AL MURRAY Wed 19 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

AL MURRAY Thurs 20 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ASHLEY BLAKER & IMRAN YUSUF Thurs 20 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

KIRI PRICHARD-MCLEAN PLUS COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY RICHARDSON & COMIC TBC Thurs 20 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ADAM KAY Fri 21 June, Dudley Town Hall

TOM LUCY Fri 21 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

GAVIN WEBSTER, NIGEL NG, GLENN MOORE & COMIC TBC Fri 21 - Sat 22 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TIFF STEVENSON & JOHN KEARNS Fri 21 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

JIMMY CARR Sat 22 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ROB ROUSE, JOSH PUGH, STEVE WILLIAMS & FREDDY QUINNE Sat 22 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

COMEDY IN THE MET Sat 22 June, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

LOU SANDERS (PICTURED) & ALEX KEALEY Sat 22 June, Ludlow Brewery, South Shropshire

Theatre

THE LADY VANISHES Juliet Mills & Maxwell Caulfield star in a stage adaptation of the Hitchcock classic, Mon 17 - Sat 22 June, Lichfield Garrick

OPEN DOOR - BRICK LANE '78 Murad Khan's exploration of the defining moment when the British-Bangladeshi community stood up against far-right parties' propaganda and activities, Tues 18 June, The REP, Birmingham

ANYTHING FOR LOVE - THE MEAT LOAF STORY Brand new production featuring Meat Loaf's greatest hits, Tues 18 - Wed 19 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HELLO, DOLLY! Amateur staging presented by Walsall Operatic Society, Tues 18 - Sat 22 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

EVITA Five Towns Theatre present an amateur staging of Tim Rice & An-



Martin Kemp - The Robin, Bilston

BRITISH GT

AND BRDC BRITISH F3 CHAMPIONSHIPS

22/23 JUNE 2019

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drew Lloyd Webber's iconic musical, Tues 18 - Sat 22 June, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

SIRENS Zoo Co's award-winning show sticks two fingers up at gender expectations and asks, when your voice is silenced, how do you stand up and shout out?, Wed 19 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM The Lord Chamberlain's Men perform this Shakespearean classic, Wed 19 June, Dudmaston Hall, Quatt, Nr Bridgnorth, Shropshire

ROBIN HOOD AND THE TIMESTONE Side By Side Theatre Company - a group of talented learning disabled actors & dancers - fuse music & dance in an adventure story for all ages, Wed 19 - Sat 22 June, Stourbridge Town Hall

MUCH ADD ABOUT NOTHING Outdoor staging of Shakespeare's comedy, Wed 19 - Sat 22 June, Maple Hayes School, Lichfield

THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE Gill Jordan - best known as Black Country legend Doreen - stars opposite Emmerdale & Doctors actor Tom Roberts in David Tristram's award-winning comedy, which centres on a married couple with apparently only a pet goldfish in common, Thurs 20 June, Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

MANSFIELD PARK The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire presents its version of Johnathan Dove's 19th century romantic opera, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 June, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

GUYS AND DOLLS Birmingham Youth Theatre present an amateur staging of Frank Loesser's celebrated musical comedy, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 June, The Old Rep, Birmingham

HORMONAL HOUSEWIVES 'Allo 'Allo actress Vicki Michelle stars in a no-holds-barred romp about the joys of being a 'fabulous 21st century woman, Fri 21 June, The Alexandra, Theatre, Birmingham

I WISH I WAS A MOUNTAIN Glastonbury Poetry Slam Champion Toby Thompson fuses rhyme, live music and a smattering of metaphysical philosophy to boldly reimagine Herman Hesse's classic fairytale, Fri 21 June, Glasshouse Arts Centre, Stourbridge

OLD HERBACEOUS An 'acute and sometimes hilarious observation' of relationships between the classes... Fri 21 June, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

MRS BROWN'S BOYS D'MUSICAL The promise of an 'exhilarating, side-splitting and musical adventure', Fri 21 - Sun 23 June, Resorts World Arena, B'ham

THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE Gill Jordan - best known as Black Country legend Doreen - stars opposite Emmerdale & Doctors actor Tom Roberts in David Tristram's award-

winning comedy, which centres on a married couple with apparently only a pet goldfish in common, Sat 22 June, Red Rose Theatre, Rugeley, Staffs

Kids Theatre

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE LIVE An educational, fun & anarchic approach to science communication and the inventors & engineers who've shaped the modern world... Wed 19 June, The Prince Of Wales Theatre, Can-nock



THE FLYING BATH Little Angel Theatre bring Julia Donaldson & David Roberts' playful and adventurous story to life using catchy songs, quirky bath toys & everyday heroes, Sun 23 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

Dance

ROMEO A JULIET Ballet Cymru present an adaptation of Shakespeare's masterpiece, Mon 17 June, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

BEATS ON POINTE An 'electric fusion' of street dance & ballet featuring a cast of 16 dance athletes, Mon 17 June, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

HOBSON'S CHOICE Birmingham Royal Ballet present David Bintley's much-acclaimed comedy, which is based on Harold Brighouse's play of the same name, Wed 19 - Sat 22 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

CANDY Chrysalis London present a mixed bill of choreographed performances, Fri 21 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

LIÉ PAR L'HISTOIRE Flexus Dance Collective present a dark & eccentric visualisation of tales & folklore from 19th century Brittany, Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

Cabaret

TINA T'URNER TEA LADY'S STEAMY BINGO Join musical comedy domestic diva Tina for an evening celebrating bingo, music, tea and laughter, Thurs 20 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

Talks

TAN FRANCE Join the Queer Eye star as he discusses his memoir, Naturally Tan, Thurs 20 June, Birmingham Town Hall

IAN MCKELLEN ON STAGE Join the legendary actor & activist as he celebrates his 80th year with a new solo show about his life in theatre, Fri 21 - Sat 22 June, The REP, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH HELEN SHARMAN Special event in which Britain's first astronaut speaks publicly about space and the wonders of science, Sat 22 June, Birmingham Town Hall

DEEDS NOT WORDS WITH HELEN PANKHURST Join the great granddaughter of suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst as she talks about how women's lives have changed during the past 100 years... Sun 23 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

WIDOWS (15) Crime/Drama. Starring Viola Davis, Michelle Rodriguez. Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Mon 17 June

DISOBEDIENCE (15) Drama. Starring Rachel Weisz, Rachel McAdams. Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire, Mon 17 June

RED JOAN (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Judie Dench, Sophie Cookson. Wern Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 18 & Thurs 20 June

COLUMBUS (12) Drama. Starring John Cho, Haley Lu Richardson. The Hive, Shrewsbury, Wed 12 June

CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME? (15) Biography/Comedy. Starring Melissa McCarthy, Richard E. Grant. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 21 - Sat 22 June

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 21 June, showing at selected cinemas

BRIGHTBURN (15)

CHILD'S PLAY (15)

TOY STORY 4 (tbc)

Events

DUDLEY CASTLE TOUR Fri 21 June, Dudley Castle

ALIENS Meet deadly and aggressive extraterrestrials in this 'terrifying tribute' to the special-effects designers of the Alien movie series, Fri 21 June, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

SOLSTICE SLEEPOUT Enjoy the sunset

and sunrise on the shortest night of the year by joining in with this 'night of wild camping on the Long Mynd', Thurs 20 - Fri 21 June, Carding Mill Valley & The Shropshire Hills, Church Stretton, South Shropshire

PLANT HUNTERS' FAIR Featuring traditionally grown plants for every type of garden, Sat 22 June, Arley Arboretum, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

DISCOVERY DAY Featuring free activities, workshops, tours and exclusive competitions, Sat 22 June, The REP, Birmingham

THE GREAT GET TOGETHER AT SAREHOLE MILL 'Big-hearted community get-together', Sat 22 June, Sarehole Mill, Hall Green, Birmingham

STEAMPUNK FESTIVAL This year's theme is 'an apocalyptic Martian invasion of Earth and the fight back to ultimate victory', Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire

PAW PATROL AT CHURNET VALLEY RAILWAY Search-and-rescue dogs Chase and Skye put in an appearance during storyline sessions, Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, Churnet Valley Railway, Froghall, Staffs

BRITISH GT & BRITISH F3 CHAMPIONSHIPS Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, Donington Park Racing Circuit, Derby

OPEN COCKPITS WEEKEND Chance to learn about the museum's aircraft, Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, RAF Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

MEET THE VICTORIANS: QUEEN VICTORIA'S VISIT Queen Victoria graces Aston Hall with her presence, Sun 23 June, Aston Hall, Birmingham

For Foodies

FOODIES FESTIVAL Featuring masterclasses with some of the country's top chefs, workshops, tastings & live music from Boyzlife (pictured) & the Neville Staple Band, Fri 21 - Sun 23 June, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham



THE GIN TRAIN Sip gin while travelling through the spectacular Severn Valley in a 1936-built luxurious first-class carriage once hauled by the Flying Scotsman, Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster



Claire L Shaw - Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

Gigs

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY Mon 24 June, Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford, Shropshire

CULT LEADERS & BIRDS IN ROW Tues 25 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FEELS Thurs 27 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BARRY STEELE & FRIENDS Thurs 27 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

DAVE SHARP Thurs 27 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

JOHN OTWAY & WILD WILLIE BARRET - THE NEARLY FREE TOUR Thurs 27 June, The Robin, Bilston

WANNABE - THE SPICE GIRLS SHOW Fri 28 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THE MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES Fri 28

June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BLAKK SABBATH Fri 28 June, The Asylum, Birmingham

EAGLES Fri 28 June, Arena Birmingham

LIMEHOUSE LIZZY Fri 28 June, The Robin, Bilston

FRANKLY SINATRA Fri 28 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

JASON DALE & THE CASH ONLY Fri 28 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

UK GUNS N ROSES Fri 28 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

PHILIP H. ANSELMO & THE ILLEGALS + KING PARROTS Fri 28 June, The Mill Digbeth, Birmingham

ACTORS & EMPATHY TEST Fri 28 June, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

CARRIE UNDERWOOD Fri 28 June, Resorts World Arena, B'ham

HOWLIN' RIC AND THE ROCKETEERS Fri 28 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

STRAIGHT ACES Sat 29 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

ANDY SMITH WITH MURIEL & RIK Sat 29 June, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

UNDER THE COVERS Sat 29 June, The World Bar, Resorts World, Birmingham

KISS GB Sat 29 June, Eleven, Sandyford, Stoke on Trent

GOJIRA Sat 29 June, O2 Academy, B'ham



THROUGH THE DECADES WITH ROY ORBISON Sun 29 June, The Forest Arts Centre, Walsall

KICK UP THE 80S Sat 29 June, The Robin, Bilston

THE MIGHTY VIPERS Sat 29 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

LYNRYD SKYNYRD Sun 30 June, Resorts World Arena, B'ham

COMBICHRIST Sun 30 June, The Mill Digbeth, Birmingham

ROCK BOTTOM Sun 30 June, The Robin, Bilston

NELL BRYDEN Sun 30 June, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury

CLAIRE L SHAW Sun 30 June, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury



Combigchrist - The Mill, Digbeth, Birmingham

Classical Music

AMATIS TRIO Featuring Lea Hausmann (violin), Samuel Shepherd (cello) & Mengjie Han (piano). Programme includes works by Haydn, Shostakovich, Andrea Tarrodi & Brahms, Tues 25 June, Birmingham Town Hall

CBSO: THE DAMNATION OF FAUST Featuring Edward Gardner (conductor), Anna Stéphany (Margarite), Saimir Pirgu (Faust), Joshua Bloom (Méphistophélès) & Božidar Smiljani (Brander). Programme comprises Berlioz's The Damnation of Faust, 125', Wed 26 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS Sat 29 June, Mitton Manor, Staffordshire

GATECRASHER CLASSICAL Sat 29 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO CONCERTS IN THE PARK Featuring Micheal Seal (conductor) & a varied festival programme of popular classics, music from the movies and 'Last Night of the Proms' favourites, Sat 29 June, Boldmere Recreation Field, Sutton Coldfield

IL DIVO Sat 29 June, Arena B'ham

ENGLISH PRO MUSICA ORCHESTRA: A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES Hosted by actor James Nesbitt and also featuring the Let's Sing Choir, Sun 30 June, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

Comedy

NICK HELM (PICTURED) & PAUL F. TAYLOR Tues 25 June, Ludlow Brewery, South Shropshire



REGINALD D HUNTER Wed 26 June, Birmingham Town Hall

MANDY KNIGHT, KEITH FARNAN PLUS COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBISON Thurs 27 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CATHERINE BOHART & NICK DOODY Thurs 27 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

RHOD GILBERT Fri 28 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SEAN MCLOUGHLIN Fri 28 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MANDY KNIGHT, KEITH FARNAN, BOBBY

MAIR & JAKE LAMBERT Fri 28 - Sat 29 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ADAM KAY Sat 29 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

PETE OTWAY, NICK DIXON, JULIAN DEANE & DARIUS DAVIES Sat 29 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

CURTIS WALKER, WHITE YARDIE, WILL EDO & ANNETTE FAGON Sun 30 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY Brand new production for 2019 with over 60 all-time favourite songs, Mon 24 June, Oakengates Theatre at The Place, Telford, Shropshire

STEPPING OUT Warm and funny play about the lives of a group of women (and one man) attending a weekly tap-dance class in a dingy church hall, Tues 25 - Sat 29 June, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

THE FULL MONTY Amateur staging presented by Lichfield Operatic Society, Tues 25 - Sat 29 June, Lichfield Garrick

THE BODYGUARD Alexandra Burke & Jennlee Shallow share the role of Rachel Marron in this much-acclaimed romantic thriller based on the film of the same name, Tues 25 June - Sat 6 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

YEAR 12 MUSICAL THEATRE: DECADES BOA Year 12 students take audiences on a musical journey from the turn of the 20th century onwards, Wed 26 - Thurs 27 June, The Old Rep, Birmingham

FLARE PATH Shropshire Drama Company presents its version of Terrence Rattigan's wartime play, Wed 26 - Sat 29 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BICYCLES AND FISH Katie Arnstein combines comic poetry, period drama, storytelling & original songs in an award-winning show about the day she became a woman, Thurs 27 June, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

THE MOUSETRAP Agatha Christie's iconic thriller. Gwyneth Strong stars... Thurs 27 - Sat 29 June, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

HARPER REGAN Royal Birmingham Conservatoire present a tale of family, love & delusion, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 June, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

DEADTOWN Film, live action and magic combine to present the Wild West in a completely new way, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 June, The REP, B'ham

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE Shakespeare's controversial masterpiece is transported to 1950s' New York, a

city where communities are divided by wealth and religion, Thurs 27 June - Sat 13 July, Stafford Castle

STILL FREEZIN' Join the Fizzogs as they present a Black Country version of Disney blockbuster Frozen, Fri 28 June, Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Dudley

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM The Lord Chamberlain's Men perform this Shakespearean classic, Fri 28 June, Winterbourne House & Gardens, Birmingham

MEASURE FOR MEASURE Gregory Doran directs a new version of Shakespeare's 'problem play', Fri 28 June - Thurs 29 Aug, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

14/48 WOLVERHAMPTON 2019 The 'world's quickest theatre festival', in which 14 new plays are written, directed and performed within a 48-hour timespan, Fri 28 - Sat 29 June, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

PLAYHOUSE PROJECT A series of specially commissioned plays by leading playwrights directed by local primary school teachers and youth theatre directors, Fri 28 - Sat 29 June, The REP, Birmingham

THE STRANGE UNDOING OF PRUDENCIA HART A journey of self-discovery that promises 'to enchant your imaginations and take you into a magical world where anything is possible but nothing is as it seems'. Fri 28 June - Sat 13 July, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

GREYHOUNDS Production fusing Shakespeare's famous story of 'war-like Harry' with the trials and tribulations of village life during the Second World War, Sat 29 June, RAF Museum, Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

THE M.M.O.R.P.G. SHOW - SCRUFFY LOOKING NERD-HERDER Three brave volunteers play characters in a story made entirely from audience participation, with this year's show focusing on cults and group mentality, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

WUTHERING HEIGHTS Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Emily Bronte's classic tale of love & revenge, Sun 30 June, Eastnor Castle, Ledbury, Herefordshire

Kids Shows

THE GRUFFALO Tall Stories' musical adaptation of the classic picture book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, Tues 25 - Wed 26 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

BEN & HOLLY'S LITTLE KINGDOM A musical adventure featuring elves, princesses, games, songs & laughter from the makers of Peppa Pig, Tues 25 - Wed 26 June, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DANNY CHAMPION OF THE WORLD David Wood's award-winning version of Roald Dahl's classic tale, Sat 29 June, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

PIRATES OF THE CURRY BEAN Stage It! Academy present a 'thrilling adventure' set on the high seas, Sun 30 June, Tamworth Arts Centre

Cabaret

THE DREAMBOYS The 'UK's most famous girls' night out', Thurs 27 June, The Prince of Wales Theatre, Can-nock

CRAIG DAVIES 'ONE MAN AND HIS MONKEY' COMEDY MAGIC SHOW Ninety minutes of 'visual fast-paced comedy magic, gags, banter & audience participation', Thurs 27 June, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

TINA T'URNER TEA LADY & FREAKS! Fantasy, obsession & loss come to the fore in this celebration of showbiz and the surreal, Thurs 27 - Fri 28 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham



The Strange Undoing Of Prudencia Hart - New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

Talks

GYLES BRANDRETH: BREAK A LEG! Join the actor, author and ex-MP for an hour of 'wit, wisdom, high drama, low comedy, and hilarious name-dropping.' Sat 29 June, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

POETS AND STORYTELLERS ASSEMBLE Evening of poetry, storytelling and spoken word, 'brought to you by the best the Black Country has to offer', Tues 25 June, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

COLETTE (15) Biography/Drama. Starring Keira Knightley, Fiona Shaw. Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire, Mon 24 June

SPEED (15) Action/Adventure. Starring Keanu Reeves, Dennis Hopper. Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, Mon 24 June

CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME? (15) Biography/Comedy. Starring Melissa McCarthy, Richard E. Grant. Stourbridge Town Hall, Mon 24 June

ROCKETMAN (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Taron Egerton, Bryce Dallas Howard. Wem Town hall, North Shropshire, Fri 28 June

SWIMMING WITH MEN (12) Comedy/Drama. Starring Rob Brydon, Rupert Graves. Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Tues 25 June

STAN & OLLIE (15) Biography/Comedy. Starring John C. Reilly, Shirley Henderson. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 28 - Sat 29 June

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 28 June, showing at selected cinemas

ANNABELLE COMES HOME (tbc)

IN FABRIC (tbc)

YESTERDAY (tbc)

Events

UCAS BIRMINGHAM HIGHER EDUCATION EXHIBITION Join hundreds of university representatives, employers and gap-year specialists, Mon 24 - Tues 25 June, NEC, Birmingham

A SPECIAL 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY WWI MANSION TOUR Guided tour focusing on the lives of the eighth Lord & Lady Berwick during the First World War, Fri 28 June, Attingham Park, Shrewsbury

UNDER 5'S DAY Featuring the famous Himley Beach, Music Bugs, Rugby Tots, Creation Station, Baby Ballet, Baby Glowbugs, mini First Aid, animal corner with giant tortoises, entertainer Mad Dom, and much more, Fri 28 June, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

THE BIG EVENT The UK's largest display of vehicles for disabled people, Fri 28 - Sat 29 June, NEC, B'ham

THE CREATIVE CRAFT SHOW SUMMER A 'haven for knitting, cross stitch, paper crafting, jewellery & dressmaking and stitching enthusiasts', Fri 28 - Sun 30 June, NEC, Birmingham

THE LUDGATE FINANCE QUEEN VICTORIA CYCLOCROSS Some of the UK's top cyclo-cross riders ride modern bikes through Blists Hill as part of a special cycling event, Sat 29 June, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire

VINTAGE MOTORSPORT FESTIVAL Celebration of Donington Park's rich pre-war Grand Prix heritage, Sat 29 June,



Bicycles And Fish - Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

Donington Park Racing Circuit, Derby

SUGAR, SPICE AND ALL THINGS NICE...

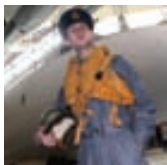
Visit the confectionary garden, featuring a display of toffee, sweets and chocolate packaging from the last century, Sat 29 June, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

THE DATING SHOW The world's first consumer dating event, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, NEC, Birmingham

TUDOR DANCING AND NATIONAL GARDENS SCHEME OPEN DAYS Meet the green-fingered people behind Harvington's flora and fauna, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, Harvington Hall, Kidderminster

ARMED FORCES WEEKEND Celebrate Armed Forces Day with a weekend of nostalgic activities for the whole family to enjoy, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, RAF Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

STEP BACK TO THE 1940s Featuring a selection of day-time attractions up and down the line, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster



PLANT HUNTERS' FAIR Featuring traditionally grown plants for every type of garden, Sun 30 June, Cholmondeley Castle, Whitchurch

SWEET MEMORIES Enjoy a chocolate 'afternoon tea' and with a nostalgic presentation about the sweet treats of bygone childhoods, Sun 30 June, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

OSWESTRY COLOUR RUN Run, walk or skip through a course of multi-coloured paint stations, Sun 30 June, The British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

For Foodies

SHREWSBURY FOOD FESTIVAL Featuring 200 exhibitors, demos, chef school, kids activities and a bigger, better BBQ area, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, The Quarry Park, Shrewsbury

BIRMINGHAM RUM FESTIVAL Chat to experts and discover new rums, sip cocktails, enjoy live music and feast on delicious street food, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, The Cuban Embassy, B'ham



The Ludgate Finance Queen Victoria Cyclocross

Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire, Sat 29 June

One of the UK's most unusual cycle races, the Ludgate Finance Queen Victoria Cyclocross sees hundreds of riders from across the country participating in several laps of a gruelling Blists Hill circuit that features cobbled streets, wooded trails and steep hills. As well as enjoying the cycling - for which the officials dress in Victorian costume - visitors can also sample a selection of traditional Victorian entertainment, with barrel organs, steam engines and a funfair all featuring.

Anyone and everyone is welcome to join in with the cycling, but would-be participants should definitely be braced for a serious challenge, as the cyclocross is a really tough off-road race.



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Lachlan Menaghan and Beatrice Parma. Photo © Bedia Kotak

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