

Worcestershire

ISSUE 402 JUNE 2019

What's On

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inside:

thelist

Your 16-page week
by week listings guide

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Hormonal Housewives - are you a 21st century girl at a challenging time of life?... page 26

Testament



takes new show Woke to
Coventry's Belgrade Theatre
feature page 8

Dagadana



fuse Polish and Ukrainian
culture at Artrix
page 17

BBC Good Food...



four days of summertime dining
inspiration at the NEC
page 45

the list



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

inside:

4. First Word

11. Food

17. Gigs

22. Comedy

24. Theatre

37. Film

42. Visual Arts

45. Events



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What's On

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Sir Lenny Henry to kick off UK tour in the Midlands

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 and Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, on Sunday 17 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 all dates and to book tickets, visit lennyhenryontour.net

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."



Time travel in Worcester

The world's first female time-travelling doctor - just about pipping to the post current *Dr Who* star Jodie Whittaker! - is heading for

Worcester Arts Workshop this month (Friday 14 June) to ask the question: What would you change if you could travel through time?...

Doctor Rosy Carrick's award-winning show, *Passionate Machine*, scored a huge hit at last year's Brighton Fringe and Edinburgh Festival.

The show is visiting Worcester as part of a national tour. For more information, visit worcesterartsworkshop.org.uk



Riding along in the Heart of England countryside

Fancy a great day of cycling in the Warwickshire countryside to help raise funds for charity? If so, then next month's Heart of England Bike Ride is the event for you. Taking place for the 14th time, on Sunday 14 July, and both starting and finishing at the historic Packwood National Trust House, the event will be raising funds for a number of good causes...

For more information, visit riderhq.com

Coventry street project gets £2million boost

A once-vibrant thoroughfare in Coventry is set to be regenerated thanks to a £2million grant from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport.

One of the city's oldest shopping streets, The Burges will now benefit from the restoration of existing building frontages and the reinstatement of historic shopfronts.

Commenting on the news, Ian Harrabin, Chairman of Historic Coventry Trust, said: "We have been working hard with Coventry City Council over many years to raise the funding to bring about the regeneration of this ancient street."

British Science Festival announces star speakers

This year's British Science Festival will take place across Coventry and on the University of Warwick campus this autumn (Tuesday 10 - Friday 13 September).

Highlights of the show include talks by Professor Alice Roberts (pictured) and journalist Angela Saini.

The event will also feature *The Sky At Night: Question Time* - a special edition of the world's longest-running science programme which will be recorded at the festival. For more information, visit britishsciencefestival.org



Taste of Thailand at Racecourse

If you're a lover of Thai cuisine, you should head for Warwick Racecourse this month.

Providing a chance for you to 'challenge your tastebuds and feast your eyes on world-class food', The Warwick Thai Festival takes place across the weekend of Saturday 1 & Sunday 2 June, with children under the age of 15 getting in for free. For more information, visit thejockeyclub.co.uk

Swimmingly good fun!

One of the few remaining open-air swimming pools in the country has reopened for the summer season.

The 40-metre-long Droitwich Spa Lido is located in stunning parkland and features a wet play area - complete with water cannons and fountains - to keep the kids happy and engaged. To find out more, visit riversfitness.co.uk



Fancy a charity challenge?

This year's Malvern Hills Challenge, which is raising money for the Help For Heroes charity, takes place on Saturday 14 September. The event last year raised more than £16,000, with organisers hoping to beat that total in 2019.

Participants can take part as individuals or as part of a team. There are two routes available to follow - one of 18km, the other of nine. For more information, visit malvernhillchallenge.org

New season of shows on sale at the Belgrade

Adaptations of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette* feature in Coventry Belgrade Theatre's line-up of shows for the forthcoming autumn/winter season. Other recently announced highlights include NJ Crisp's *Dangerous Obsession*, a new English version of *Madam Butterfly* - as told from a female, East Asian perspective and presented by Olivier Award winners OperaUp - *Close* - and The Goldhawks performing The Who's hit album, *Tommy*.

Previously announced autumn/winter shows at the venue include *The Entertainer*, *The Gruffalo*, *Horrible Histories* and *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*...

To check out the theatre's full line-up of shows and to book tickets, visit belgrade.co.uk.



On yer bike for the Banbury Run...



The Vintage Motorcycle Club is once again organising the ever-popular Banbury Run. Taking place for the 71st time, the Run starts out from the British Motor Museum and features 500 veteran & vintage motorbikes riding out en route to Banbury.

The event is this year being held on Sunday 16 June. Entry forms are available at banbury-run.co.uk

Seventy acts across five stages at this year's Coventry Godiva Festival

Organisers of Coventry's Godiva Festival are anticipating another blockbuster year, with the 2019 edition of the event featuring 70 acts across five stages, including headlining stars *Levellers* and *Busted*.

Commenting on the festival, Councillor Abdul Salam Khan said: "We're really proud of the fact that the Godiva Festival is massively popular. Importantly, we also know how beneficial it is for the city, generating an estimated £2.3million in direct economic activity for the area, which can only be good news for local businesses, traders and the wider local economy."

This year's festival takes place in War Memorial Park from 5 to 7 July. For more information, visit godivafestival.com



Fiona Bruce at Compton Verney

The BBC is filming an episode of its long-running Antiques Roadshow programme at Warwickshire's Compton Verney Art Gallery & Park on Tuesday 2 July. Locals interested in attending the Fiona Bruce-hosted show are being encouraged to look in their cupboards, attics and sheds, dust off a maybe-masterpiece and take it along to be assessed by the programme's talented team of experts. Entry to the show is free, everyone is welcome, and no ticket or pre-registration is required. You can share a story about items that are special to you by emailing shareyourstory@bbc.co.uk



Mindgame at Malvern theatre

Critically acclaimed psychological thriller Mindgame is visiting Malvern Theatres this month (Tuesday 4 - Saturday 8 June) as part of a UK tour. The mind-bending production is written by Anthony Horowitz, whose other notable works include BBC TV series New Blood, the bestselling series of books featuring 'teen spy' Alex Ride, and the Ian Fleming Estate-commissioned James Bond novel Trigger Mortis.



6 whatsonlive.co.uk



Disney celebrates 100 years of magic

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.

Programme announced for the fifth Birmingham Indian Film Festival

Birmingham Indian Film Festival is this month taking place for a fifth year. Running at various venues from Friday 21 June till Monday 1 July, the event showcases a rich assortment of independent movies, including an entry from India's new wave of LGBTQ+ films. Commenting on the festival, Cary Rajinder Sawhney, the event's executive & programming director, said: "Punching above our weight as always, this year is probably our strongest programme ever, with exciting Midlands premieres, rarely seen archival masterpieces, and some seriously cutting-edge dramas and documentaries."



Arts centre's family open day inspired by all things movement...

Warwick Arts Centre in Coventry is this month hosting a special Family Day event (Sunday 16 June) inspired by 'all things movement', with visitors being encouraged to take along their scooters, bikes and roller skates. Featured attractions include a range of free art, craft, sports and science-based activities, as well as a selection of 'tasty treats' at the on-site food market. For more information, visit warwick.ac.uk



An evening with Sir Bradley Wiggins



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.

£1 million boost for cathedral project

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded a grant in excess of £1million to Worcester Cathedral. The cash is to conserve and, for the first time, bring into public use the 12th century Undercroft to College Hall, creating a learning, arts and heritage space to benefit the whole community.



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 7:30PM
SYMPHONY HALL



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BEVERLEY CRAVEN
& JULIA FORDHAM**
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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

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REVIEW: The Chequers Inn

Refurbished 18th century pub scores high marks for cuisine and atmosphere

When it comes to historic surroundings, picturesque English landscapes and affordable luxury, Warwickshire is by no means short on choice. Little wonder, then, that a historic gem like The Chequers Inn was so hungrily snapped up by first-time purchasers Paul and Aman Bhandal when the property was put up for resale last year.

Having won the hearts and stomachs of locals and visitors alike, this unassuming village pub came with a formidable reputation; featuring on the Tripadvisor Hall Of Fame list eight years running, it was also recommended in the Michelin Guide.

Situated off Banbury Road in the picturesque village of Ettington, just a short drive from Stratford-upon-Avon and the Cotswolds, this thriving 18th century public house only recently reopened its doors following a full-scale refurbishment of its 38-cover restaurant & bar. With the stakes and expectations raised, could this well-loved landmark really live up to its reputation?... The answer was a resounding yes! An overflowing lobby leads to a

light, bright and exquisitely decorated interior bar and casual dining space. Floral feature walls, Parisian-inspired lampshades, eclectic artworks, parlour-style tables and soft oak finishings combine to create a quirky marriage of style and informality, making the most of both the abundant natural light and bold statement colours.

We made our way to the main dining area, a space which boasted an altogether more tranquil marriage of soft creams, hunter greens and earthy wooden tones, complete with fully restored Inglenook fireplace, plush floor-length drapes and hand-printed wall-art. A perfect location in which to enjoy a spring evening.

A sense of springtime was also evident in the venue's carefully chosen menu of seasonal specials, taster plates, hand-cooked pizzas and pub-grub classics. From continental favourites such as smoked salmon, artichoke & feta salad to pan-Asian-inspired dishes like the masala chickpea chaat starter with toasted pitta, this was a menu that placed freshness, quality and eclecticism at its heart.

Opting for a starter of red wine & thyme braised chorizo with tomato toast, I found myself momentarily transported to the tapas bars of Andalusia and Seville. Beautifully cooked with a rich paprika-smoked heat and complemented by the crisp texture of the tomato-infused ciabatta toast, the dish made me eager to sample more of the taster menu and sharer board.

Choosing for his starter the roast chicken, wild mushroom and spinach roulade served with piccillilli and dressed leaves, my partner took no time at all in praising both the freshness and delicacy of the dish. Though the combination of chicken and spinach was a tad bland in itself, the roulade was instantly uplifted by the zesty punch of the piccillilli and earthy tones of the wild mushroom; a magnificent marriage of flavour which added extra depth to an ordinarily light-touch starter. For a continental twist on a tried-and-tested pub classic, be sure to sample the pork & chorizo Scotch egg with spicy tomato sauce; a dish which has already proved a hit with regulars and day-trippers alike.

For my main course, I chose the pan-fried seabass with wild rice, black olives & cherry tomato compote. My carnivorous companion opted for the equally tempting braised lamb shoulder with spring greens, minted crushed new potatoes & red wine jus. Oozing freshness and pan-fried to perfection, the sea bass was, in so many ways, the perfect accompaniment to a spring evening. That said, whilst the wild rice and black olives offered an ideal complement by way of flavour, I nevertheless couldn't help but feel that the dish would've been improved by a more generous helping of red wine jus. This would have brought out the moisture in the fillets and helped undercut the heavily grained texture of the

rice.

The braised lamb shoulder was tenderness to a tee, falling off the bone on the first touch of the knife and fork. The minted crushed new potatoes and spring greens delivered a refreshing taste, and one which was perfectly complemented by the rich fruitiness of the red wine accompaniment.

Watching the springtime sun go down over the Ettington countryside, I felt compelled to sample one of Chequers' signature desserts. Tucking into the generously portioned lemon & lavender bundt cake, my sweet tooth was well and truly satisfied. Beautifully light in texture and served with a delicately flavoured crème anglais and candied lemon accompaniment, this unusual choice of German dessert was impressively refreshing in taste. My partner's selection of dark chocolate & orange tart with pistachio ice cream was decadence on a plate and every inch the chocaholic's delight.

Whether serving up Sunday lunch to a family of day-trippers, pulling a pint for village locals or delivering that special-occasion dinner, The Chequers' Inn hits the nail on the head where quality of produce, menu and atmosphere are concerned. Making the very best of its uniquely English surroundings, whilst at the same time channelling the culinary spirit of the continent, it's not hard to see why the venue is pulling in the punters time and time again....

Katherine Ewing

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

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Jephson Gardens' Glasshouse restaurant reopens to the public

After years of being closed to the general public, Jephson Gardens' Glasshouse restaurant in Leamington Spa has reopened for regular events. Over the next few weeks, the refurbished venue is hosting a series of dining experiences called Summer@The Glasshouse, taking place on selected Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays between 11.30am & 7pm. No advance bookings are taken and tables are available on a first come, first served basis.



FarGo Village to host summertime sausage and cider festival

Coventry's FarGo Village is hosting a sausage & cider festival on Saturday 15 June.

"Our event is exactly what it says on the tin," explains the festival's organiser. "And what better way can there be to spend a summer's afternoon than by enjoying a delicious hot dog and sipping cider in the sun?"

Coventry gets a new autumn food festival

A new two-day food festival will take place at Coventry's War Memorial Park on 21 & 22 September.

The free-to-attend War Memorial Food Festival will feature over 100 traders, local singers & bands and a collection of fairground rides for kids to enjoy. Other attractions will include glitter painting and chocolate workshops.



Droitwich's award-winning food festival makes a return

The Droitwich Spa Food & Drink Festival makes a welcome return this month.

Since debuting in 2013, the award-winning free-to-attend get-together has become one of the Midlands' leading events of its kind, with more than 100 exhibitors taking part and an estimated 15,000 people visiting the festival across its two days.

Celebrating the very best in local food & drink, this year's event features demonstrations, music and entertainment, including a sure-to-be-hot'n'sizzling chilli-eating competition.

The 2019 edition of the show is being merged with the Droitwich Spa Salt Festival and takes place in the town's Lido Park on Saturday 22 & Sunday 23 June.

Stratford hotel unveils a refurbished restaurant space

Stratford-upon-Avon's Arden Hotel has recently unveiled its refurbished restaurant space.

No44 Brasserie was previously known as the Waterside Brasserie.

New menus have also been introduced to complement the refurb. Featured dishes include numerous tapas-style sharing plates, among which are the following: salt & pepper squid with chilli, ginger and spring onion; honey roasted lamb sweetbread, celeriac and mild curry sauce; and crispy duck salad, Asian slaw and ketjap manis.

A range of homecooked favourites and in-season big plates are also available.

The Arden is part of the Eden Hotel Collection.





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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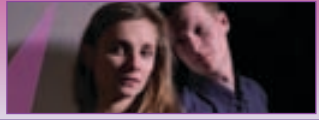
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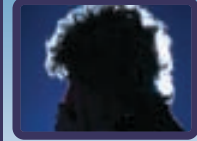
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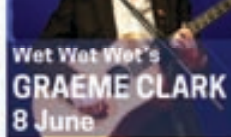
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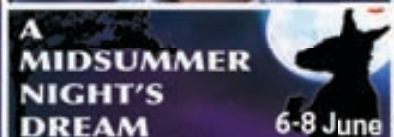
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Orchestra Of The Swan: Shakespeare's Songs

Stratford Play House, Stratford-upon-Avon, Wed 25 June

As well as being much admired for their performances of works by legendary composers, the Stratford-based Orchestra of the Swan are also held in high regard for their championing of new music, having presented more than 70 world premieres. As might therefore be expected, this latest concert will see them combining the new with the familiar - and no doubt doing so to excellent effect. Lucia Caruso and husband Pedro H Da Silva (pictured) were the orchestra's composers-in-residence between 2016 and last year, and their Shakespeare's Songs is here presented alongside the pair's Echoes Of Nature, Richard Rodney Bennett's 7 Country Dances and Ralph Vaughan Williams' Fantasia On Greensleeves.

Il Divo

Arena Birmingham, Sat 29 June

Since their formation by Simon Cowell in 2004, classical crossover quartet Il Divo have scored some major successes - a coveted Artist Of The Decade gong at the Classic Brit Awards, a multi-platinum self-titled debut album and millions of concert ticket sales worldwide.

Comprising Swiss tenor Urs Buhler, Spanish baritone Carlos Marin, French pop artist Sebastien Izambard and American tenor David Miller, the talented quartet this month return to the Midlands to present their greatest-hits tour, Timeless.



Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra

All Saints Church, Leamington Spa, Sat 8 June



Widely acknowledged as one of the best non-professional orchestras in the country, the Warwickshire Symp has established a well-deserved reputation for its imaginative programmes and full symphonic sound. This latest concert sees the orchestra playing a selection of masterpieces from French composers Debussy, Poulenc, Chausson and Canteloube. Roger Coull conducts. The soprano is Donna Lennard (pictured).

Armonico Consort

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 27 June

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

This Coventry concert sees Armonico retelling the legendary story of Beowulf, a fantasy saga and the oldest surviving poem in Old English.

The work has been written for soprano, choir, harp, keyboards and children's choir by Armonico's composer-in-residence and former BBC Proms Young Composer of the Year, Toby Young.



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.







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.

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Chantel McGregor

The Iron Road, Pershore, Fri 21 June

Blues rock musician Chantel McGregor was once told by a major label that she had "a great voice, but girls don't play guitar like that!" Ignoring their view, she enrolled at the Leeds College of Music and became the first student in the college's history to achieve a 100% pass mark at BTEC, with 18 distinctions.

She's since released two albums, *Like No Other* and *Lose Control*, and is currently writing her third.



Bon Jovi

Ricoh Arena, Coventry, Sun 23 June

One of the biggest rock bands ever to grace the planet, Bon Jovi perform in the UK for the first time in six years as part of their *This House Is Not For Sale* tour, which has previously visited Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Japan and Australia. Expect to hear all the classics, including *You Give Love A Bad Name*, *It's My Life* and *Livin' On A Prayer*. "We've become a new, rejuvenated Bon Jovi," says Jon. "A refreshed line-up that kills every night. We sound better than ever and we're enjoying every minute. We are out there as a band, feeding off each other and the fans, having the time of our lives all over again." The boys are joined for their Coventry gig by special guests Manic Street Preachers.



Dagadana

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Thurs 27 June

Since 2008, Dagadana have triumphantly been merging elements of Polish and Ukrainian culture through jazz, electronic and world music. They've also brought their

unique sound to the masses in some particularly interesting locations, including the Moroccan deserts and China's Forbidden City, in the process collecting excellent reviews both from critics and audience members alike.

Spice Girls

Ricoh Arena, Coventry, Mon 3 & Tues 4 June



The best selling and arguably most famous female group of all time reunite on stage - minus Victoria Beckham - for the first time since the London 2012 Olympics. Emma, Mel B, Melanie C and Geri will be performing all their much-loved classics, including *Wannabe*, *Spice Up Your Life*, *Stop*, *2 Become 1*, *Say You'll Be There* and *Viva Forever*.

Jess Glynn, who came to prominence in 2014 following her guest spot on Clean Bandit's *Rather Be*, supports on both evenings.

Eddi Reader

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 26 June

After travelling around Europe with the circus back in the early 1980s, Eddi Reader moved to London and quickly became a sought-after session vocalist. A tour with Annie Lennox and The Eurythmics brought her into the limelight, since which time she's released multiple successful albums, including chart topper *First Of A Million Kisses* and *Candyfloss & Medicine*. Bringing joyous life to all forms of song, from the traditional to the contemporary, she visits Coventry in support of her brand new album, *Cavalier*.

Dr Feelgood

The Marr's Bar, Worcester, Thurs 13 June

Hailing from Essex in the early 1970s, Dr Feelgood have enjoyed global success with hits including *Roxette*, *Back In The Night*, *Milk And Alcohol*, *Down At The Doctors* and *She Does It Right*. The band's raw and uncompromising style of performance ensures they remain one of the most exciting live rhythm & blues acts around.

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PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

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SUNDAY 28TH JULY 2019
PERRY PARK, BIRMINGHAM

TICKETS: INNERCITYLIVE.CO.UK/BIRMINGHAM



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.

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.



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



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 Jennlee 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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Sat 15 Jun



Wed 19 -
Sat 22 Jun



Tue 25 &
Wed 26 Jun



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



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."

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



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..."

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

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."



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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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.

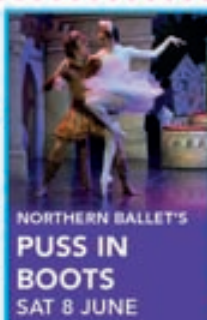
A classic comic opera - here updated to modern times and taking place in and around Pasquale's doner kebab van - the show tells the much-loved story of an old bachelor's romantic delusions and the young lovers who outwit him... The production follows on from Welsh National Opera's 2018 success with Elena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



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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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"In the best satirical
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The Frost Report"
Musical Theatre Review

★★★★★
"Percy, really, impressive
and very funny"
Reviews Hub

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

★★★★★
"Boris and his Johnson
in full view"
New Theatre Magazine

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

"Better as it should be"
Coffinhead

"Genuinely funny"
Some reviews on Twitter

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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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



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



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

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.

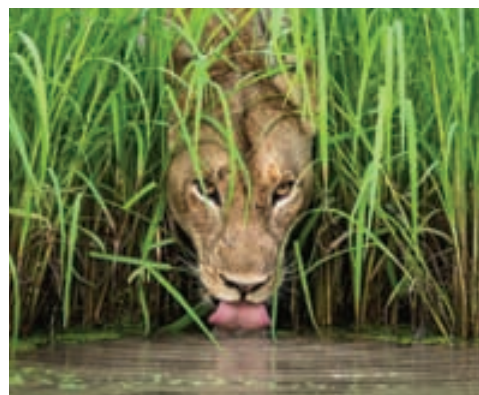
Wildlife Photographer Of The Year

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

EXPLORE THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF WARTIME BRITAIN



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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
17 July

A Midsummer Night's Dream
24 July

Alice in Wonderland
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



As You Like It at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon until Sat 31 August

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

What's On

Sat 1 to Sun 9 June



The Little Prince at
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Sat 1 June

Mon 10 to Sun 16 June



Classic Cars For Father's Day at
Witley Court, Worcestershire

Sun 16 June

Mon 17 to Sun 23 June



Joan As Police Woman at The
Assembly, Leamington Spa

Sun 23 June

Mon 24 to Sun 30 June



Dan Cassidy at Upton Jazz
Festival, Upton-upon-Severn

Thurs 27 - Sun 30 June

THROUGHOUT JUNE

Visual Arts

Artrix, Bromsgrove

NEW LYN SHARP: OUT OF AFRICA Lyn started her animal portraits with pastels and now also uses watercolour, acrylic, mixed media, textile and fibre art, Tues 4 June - Mon 15 July

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

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

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

Compton Verney Gallery, Warwick

PAINTING CHILDHOOD: FROM HOLBEIN TO FREUD A celebration of children, childhood and innocence, bringing together some of the most iconic paintings, sketches and sculptures of children from the past 500 years, until Sun 16 June

CHILDHOOD NOW Exhibition bringing together the works of three contemporary figurative painters - Chantal Joffe, Mark Fairington and Matthew Krishanu, until Sun 16 June

ART IN THE PARK - GREEN DWELLING Installation by Dutch artist Krijn de Koning consisting of a collection of differently sized green blocks ranged across the Old Town Meadow, until Sun 15 Dec

Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch

MAKING A POINT WITH LACE Exhibition from the Lace Guild Museum looking at the important role needle lace played in the development of lace and fashion, until Sun 16 June

Rugby Art Gallery & Museum

EDUCATING RUGBY Explore the history of schools and colleges in Rugby with objects from the museum's social history collection, until Sat 22 June

WHEN THE GOLDEN SUN IS SINKING

Indre Serpytyte is concerned with the impact of conflict and war on history and perception. She works with photography, sculpture and installation, until Sat 22 June

The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR Exhibition from the Natural History Museum featuring breathtaking animal portraits, dramatic landscapes, bizarre species and endangered habitats, until Sun 2 June

Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery

SPRING CRAFT CASES Spring show of lino-cut prints from two Malvern makers whose work is inspired by the beauty of nature, until Wed 26 June

THE YOUNG TURNER: AMBITIONS IN ARCHITECTURE AND THE ART OF PERSPECTIVE Exhibition featuring JMW

Turner's drawings, paintings and engravings from the 1780s to the 1810s, illustrating his interest in architecture, until Sat 6 July

FIFTY OBJECTS; FIFTY STORIES EXHIBITION Curator Garston Phillips shares the tales, anecdotes and memories that have helped shape the museum for five decades, until Sat 9 Nov

Other VISUAL ARTS

DIGITAL DIORAMA Imagine a day in the life of a young William Shakespeare. Explore his experience through augmented realities and see Shakespeare's world through a new lens, until Sun 8 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

DAWN HOMER - DOGS AND DONUTS With her cakes and donuts, Dawn aims to make you think you can reach into the painting, grab them and eat them. When painting animals, she likes to capture a side of her subject that won't have been seen before, until Sun 30 June, Evesham Arts Centre

THE PLAY'S THE THING Display of costumes and props from the archives, until Tues 31 Dec, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

FASHIONING PEACE: LIFE AND LIBERTY AFTER THE GREAT WAR EXHIBITION Exhibition exploring how the changes brought about through the Great War were reflected in clothing and fashion from 1918 through to the Roaring 20s, until Mon 12 Oct 2020, Hartlebury Castle, Kidderminster

NEW AN ENTERTAINMENT Exhibition showcasing the many entertainments on offer in Leamington over the past two centuries, Fri 14 June - Sun 1 Sept, Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum, Leamington Spa

NEW WARWICKSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS Venues range from artists' homes, studios and gardens to pop-up exhibitions in churches, cafés, pubs, shops and galleries, Sat 15 - Sun 30 June, Various venues in Warwickshire

Gigs

LEO SAYER Sat 1 June, Birmingham Town Hall

SHOWADDWADDY Sat 1 June, Bedworth Civic Hall

KING OF THE SLUMS Sat 1 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MAJOR TOMS Sat 1 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CELESTIAL Sat 1 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE AMPS Sat 1 June, The World Bar, Resorts World, Birmingham

HATS OFF TO LED ZEPPELIN Sat 1 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE ULTIMATE COMMITMENTS AND BLUES BROTHERS EXPERIENCE Sat 1 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

BRASS AGAINST Sat 1 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MEGAN MCKENNA Sat 1 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

A CERTAIN RATIO Sun 2 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa



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

MADE IN MOTOWN Sun 2 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

RAHSAAN PATTERSON Sun 2 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SANGRE DE MUERDAGO Sun 2 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SPICE GIRLS Mon 3 - Tues 4 June, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

ROBERT MIZZELL & THE COUNTRY KINGS Mon 3 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SAARA AALTO Mon 3 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SNAIL MAIL Mon 3 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JULIA HOLT Tues 4 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PIP BLOM Tues 4 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SOME GUYS HAVE ALL THE LUCK - THE ROD STEWART STORY Wed 5 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

PAUL YOUNG Wed 5 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

JANE MCDONALD Thurs 6 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

1DELANEY Thurs 6 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE PINHEADS & HIGH KNUCKS Thurs 6 June, The Tin Music and Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

MATT OWENS (EX NOAH AND THE WHALE) Thurs 6 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

THE KILKENNYS Fri 7 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE BOB DYLAN STORY Fri 7 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

MOTHER POPCORN Fri 7 June, The World Bar, Resorts World, Birmingham

CARNIVAL MAGNifico 2019 Fri 7 June, Digbeth Arena, B'ham

JOE BROUGHTON'S CONSERVATOIRE FOLK ENSEMBLE Fri 7 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

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

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

UK PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE Fri 7 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

BIFFY MCCLYRO Fri 7 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

FAITH: THE GEORGE MICHAEL LEGACY Sat 8 June, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

TERRY DASH MUSIC - TWISTING THE NIGHT AWAY Sat 8 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

SOPHIE ELLIS-BEXTOR

Sat 8 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



THREE TIMES SCARLET Sat 8 June, The World Bar, Resorts World, Birmingham

A WEIRD & WONDERFUL DAY OUT Sat 8 June, The Mill Digbeth, Birmingham

TINA - SIMPLY THE BEST Sat 8 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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

THE RUTLES - GET UP & GO AGAIN Sat 8 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

HELLO AGAIN - THE STORY OF NEIL DIAMOND Sat 8 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE SUMMER OF LOVE Sat 8 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

SIMON & GARFUNKEL THROUGH THE YEARS Sat 8 June, Warwick Hall, Warwick

ABBA FOREVER Sat 8 June, Evesham Arts Centre

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

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

HANDS OFF GRETTEL, FACE UP, KILLER BOB & THIRD ANGLE PROJECTION Sun 9 June, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

VILLAGERS Sun 9 June, Hare & Hounds, Bham



Classical Music

ENGLISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: FESTIVAL GALA CONCERT Featuring Kenneth Woods (conductor) & Raphael Wallfisch (cello). Programme includes works by Elgar, Sat 1 June, Worcester Cathedral

FONTANELLA: THE WOODS SO WILD Sat 1 June, Old St Martin Church, The Cornmarket, Worcester

THE ELGAR CHORALE Featuring Piers Maxim (conductor). Programme includes selections from Vaughan Williams' Shakespeare Songs, John Rutter's Birthday Madrigals and Elgar's Part Songs, Sat 1 June, The Firs, Elgar's Birthplace, Worcester

DOWLAND WORKS WITH EMMA KIRKBY Sat 1 June, Worcester Guildhall

PROTEUS ENSEMBLE Featuring Stephen Shellard (conductor). A concert of sacred & secular music by Edward Elgar, Sat 1 June, Chapter House, Worcester Cathedral

COVENTRY & DRESDEN IN CONCERT Featuring Spires Philharmonic Orchestra & Chorus alongside the Dresden Neuer Choir. Programme includes choral music by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Copland, Elgar, Fauré, Handel, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Parry, Rachmaninov, Schubert & Spofforth, Sat 1 June, Coventry Cathedral

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

EMILY ASKEW BAND Exploration of folk & early music, Sun 2 June, Old St Martin Church, The Cornmarket, Worcester

ELGAR'S VIOLIN SONATA WITH ZOË BEYERS AND PHILIP MOORE Programme includes works by Debussy, David Matthews & Elgar, Sun 2 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

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

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

EX CATHEDRA: SUMMER MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Sarah Latto (conductor), Thurs 6 June, Hereford Cathedral

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 LONDON CONCERTANTE: VIVALDI FOUR SEASONS BY CANDLELIGHT Fri 7 June, Coventry Cathedral

WARWICKSHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Roger Coull (conductor) & featuring Donna Lennard (soprano) and Gaynor Keeble (mezzo soprano). Programme includes Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*; Poulenc's 'Les Biches Suite' and Chausson's 'Symphony in B flat major', Sat 8 June, All Saints' Parish Church, Leamington Spa

CBSO SONG FESTIVAL Featuring Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla & Simon Halsey (conductors), the CBSO Chorus & Tom Redmond (presenter). Programme includes works by Kutavičius, Peep Sarapik / Juhan Liiv, Jurjāns, Parry & Handel, Sun 9 June, University of Birmingham

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

MARK STEEL Sat 1 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

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

THE HILARITY CHARITY GALA FEAT. DAVID O'DOHERTY, ROSE MATAFEO, JOHN ROBINS, DARREN HARRIOT, TOM PARRY, TOM ALLEN & COMPERE DANIEL KITSON Wed 5 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

AFTERMIRTH Wed 5 June, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

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

DALISO CHAPONDA, ROGER MONKHOUSE FEATURING COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 6 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RAW COMEDY Fri 7 June, Evesham Arts Centre

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



As You Like It - Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

Club, Birmingham

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

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

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

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

A PHOENIX NIGHT Evening of sketches, songs & laughs, Thurs 30 May - Sat 1

June, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

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

PRIVATE LIVES Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Noel Coward's celebrated comedy, Sat 1 - Sun 2 June, Jephson Gardens, The Parade, Leamington Spa

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

MENOPAUSE THE MUSICAL Musical parody featuring a host of one-liners about hot flushes, memory loss and pop classics. Cheryl Fergison, 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

STRANGERS ON A TRAIN Amateur staging of Patricia Highsmith's thriller, Mon 3 - Sat 8 June, Talisman Theatre, Coventry

MALCOLM STENT'S SONGS OF PRAISE Featuring songs, monologues and comedy, Tues 4 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MIDDAY VARIETY - VINCE HILL & FRIENDS The Coventry-born star celebrates his 85th birthday with a farewell charity performance, Tues 4

June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry
MINDGAME Psychological thriller from the pen of Anthony Horowitz, Tues 4 - Sat 8 June, Malvern Theatres

LEGALLY BLONDE Masqueraders Theatrical Society present an amateur staging of the smash-hit musical, Tues 4 - Sat 8 May, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING The Festival Players present their version of Shakespeare's beguiling comedy, Wed 5 June, Himbleton Parish Hall, Himbleton, Worcestershire

ROMEO & JULIET Heartbreak Productions present a 'super glam' outdoor staging of Shakespeare's most passionate tale, Wed 5 - Thurs 6 June, Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa

THE ADDAMS FAMILY THE MUSICAL Amateur performance staged by The Harlequins Drama Group, Wed 5 - Fri 7 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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

ROMAN ROMP Adult comedy brimming with farcical confusion and outrageous innuendo, Thurs 6 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

MOTHER'S RUIN: A CABARET ABOUT GIN Lose yourself in the company of sailors, barmaids and bootleggers in this darkly comic cabaret starring Maeve Marsden & Libby Wood, Thurs 6 June, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM National Production Company presents its version of Shakespeare's romantic comedy, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 June, Albany Theatre, Coventry

COLD MEAT All & Sundry present an amateur production of Roger Goddard's new black comedy, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 June, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

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

ROMEO & JULIET Heartbreak Productions present a 'super glam' outdoor staging of Shakespeare's most passionate tale, Fri 7 June, Coombe Abbey, Warwickshire

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

GREASE Sirens Theatre present an

amateur staging of the feelgood musical, Fri 7 - Sat 8 June, Bedworth Civic Hall

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM The Lord Chamberlain's Men perform this Shakespearean classic, Sat 8 June, Packwood House, Solihull

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING The Festival Players present their version of Shakespeare's beguiling comedy, Sat 8 June, The Railway Inn, Ripple, Tewkesbury

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

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 8 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS Cult musical comedy, Sat 8 - Sat 15 June, Rugby Theatre

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

ROMEO & JULIET Heartbreak Productions present a 'super glam' outdoor staging of Shakespeare's most passionate tale, Sun 9 June, Wood Norton Garden & Terrace, Evesham

Kids Shows

IF ALL THE WORLD WERE PAPER Big Window Theatre present a poignant play about falling out, making up and the joy of true friendship, Sun 2 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

HONK! Reimagining of Hans Christian Andersen's The Ugly Duckling... Tues 4 - Sat 8 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ZOG Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved character comes to life in a new staging accompanied by a 'sumptuous' folk score, Wed 5 - Thurs 6 June, Malvern Theatres

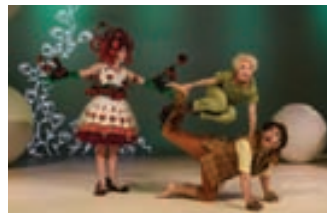
JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH Amateur staging of Roald Dahl's classic novel, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 June, The Dream Factory, Warwick

GANGSTA GRANNY Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of David Williams' bestselling tale, Fri 7 - Sat 8 June, Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa

Dance

THE LITTLE PRINCE Protein fuse dance, music and fun in Luca Silvestrini's

new show, which 'invites audiences to reimagine the world through their hearts and reconnect with the child within', Sat 1 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry



SWAN LAKE Ballet Theatre UK present a new production of the timeless classic, Sat 2 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

GISELLE Vienna Festival Ballet present a tale of innocence, love, betrayal and madness, Sun 2 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

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

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 Join the much-loved 'female impersonator' for a non-stop quick-change homage to his favourite singers, Wed 5 - Thurs 6 June, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE LADYBOYS OF BANGKOK A cabaret like no other featuring 16 of the world's most beautiful showgirls - who just happen to be men, Thurs 6 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

Talks

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, Mon 3 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

BEN MACINTYRE LIVE: THE SPY AND THE TRAITOR Historian Ben tells the tale that changed the course of the Cold War forever, Tues 4 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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, Wed 5 June, Albany Theatre,

Coventry

STUART MACONIE: JARROW ROAD TO THE DEEP SOUTH From choral even-song to curry house, austerity to affluence, Wearside to Westminster, writer & broadcaster Stuart takes an enlightening journey through Britain then and now, Thurs 6 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

WONDER PARK (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Sofia Mali, Jennifer Garner. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 31 May - Sat 1 June

WHEELY (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Barbara Goodson, Chris Jai Alex. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 1 June

TOLKIEN (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Nicholas Hoult, Lily Collins. Number 8, Pershore, Fri 31 May - Sat 1 & Mon 3 June; Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sun 2 - Thurs 6 June; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 7 & Mon 10 June

THE SISTERS BROTHERS (15) Adventure/Comedy. Starring John C. Reilly, Joaquin Phoenix. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Mon 3 June

VAN GOGH & JAPAN Documentary. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Mon 3 June

HAPPY AS LAZZARO (12a) Drama. Starring Adriano Tardiolo, Agnese Graziani. Foreign language, subtitled. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Wed 5 - Fri 7 June

ARCTIC (12a) Drama. Starring Mads Mikkelsen, Maria Thelma Smáradóttir. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Thurs 6 - Sun 9 June

ROCKETMAN (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Taron Egerton, Bryce Dallas Howard. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 7 - Thurs 18 June

SPY CAT (12a) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Erik Borner, Alexandra Neldel. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 8 June

A DOG'S JOURNEY (PG) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Dennis Quaid, Abby Ryder Fortson. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sat 8 - Sun 9 June

THE SISTERS BROTHERS (15) Adventure/Comedy. Starring John C. Reilly, Joaquin Phoenix. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Mon 3 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

WOOLLY WEEK See traditional shearing demonstrations, learn how sheep fleece is spun into wool and make a Tudor braid to take home, until Sun 2 June, Mary Arden's Farm, Stratford-upon-Avon

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, Bournville

MAY HALF TERM - DESIGNER WEEK Discover the fascinating stories behind the museum's most famous cars - then pop into the studio to design your own, until Sun 2 June, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

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

GET HANDS-ON WITH HISTORY Join the academy for hands-on medieval fun and transform yourself into a courtly lord or lady, until Sun 2 June, Kenilworth 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

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

PLANTS AND PLANETS WORKSHOP Series of free workshops, including how to make a constellation of stars to take home, Sat 1 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

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

PAPER CRAFT WORKSHOP Make something wonderful with paper, inspired by the If The World Were Made Of Paper family theatre show, Sun 2 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

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

DAS AUTO SHOW The German car show comes to Santa Pod for Audi, BMW, Mercedes, VW, Porsche and more, Sun 2 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough

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

MINI MUSEUM ENGINEERS - BUILDING IT UP Playful sessions introducing STEM concepts (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), Wed 5 June, Coventry Transport Museum

DISCOVER YOUR IRISH FAMILY HISTORY Presented by expert Maggie Loughran, Thurs 6 June, Birmingham Back to Backs

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



Mini Museum Engineers: Building It Up - Coventry Transport Museum

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

BRITISH INTERNATIONAL OPEN 2019 This weightlifting competition is an IWF Bronze event and will act as a qualifier for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, Fri 7 - Sun 9 June, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

THE WORLD OF PARK & LEISURE HOMES Whether you're searching for the latest design ideas or wanting to upgrade or refurbish, this is the show for you... Fri 7 - Sun 9 June, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth

RAF DEFFORD AIRFIELD GUIDED WALK Tour of the top-secret airbase which was home to Airborne Radar testing and development during the Second World War and the early years of the Cold War, Sat 8 June, Croome Park, Worcester

COVENTRY TRANSPORT MUSEUM BREAKFAST CLUB Check out a range of vehicles on display and chat with the people who own them, Sat 8 June, Coventry Transport Museum

MONSTER JAM Expert drivers compete in both championship racing and gravity-defying freestyle competitions, Sat 8 June, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

POETRY WITH PUNCH Poetry workshop hosted by Matt Windle, Birmingham's Poet Laureate 2016-2018, Sat 8 June, The Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

KENILWORTH SHOW The 76th annual show offers 'a fun-filled, action-packed, exciting and educational day', Sat 8 June, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth

CLASSIC & VINTAGE COMMERCIAL SHOW Two-day show featuring more than 400 pre-1999 commercial vehicles, Sat 8 - Sun 9 June, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

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, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

CHILDREN'S ART WEEK 2019 Sketch a selfie to add to the Herbert's growing display of children's artwork, Sat 8 - Sun 16 June, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

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, Shifnal, Nr Wolverhampton

JAPSHOW 2019 All Japanese cars and bikes are welcome at the show, Sun 9 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough

For Foodies

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

ITALIAN STREET FOOD FESTIVAL Featuring authentic regional Italian food, drinks, arts, culture & entertainment, Sun 2 June, Soho House, B'ham

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



Lego Sea Explorers - National Sea Life Centre, Birmingham

The English Choral Tradition



Saturday 6 July
7.30pm

St Mary's Church, Old Square
Warwick CV34 4RA

Birmingham Festival Choral Society

Tickets £14 from www.bfcs.org.uk
or available at the door

A Midsummer Night's **TEASE**

An Enchanted Evening of Cabaret



4th July 2019 at 7.30pm
Alveston Manor
Stratford upon Avon
www.midsummernightstease.com







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Daniel Kemish - The Marr's Bar, Worcester

Gigs

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

WALLOWS Mon 10 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MAISHA Tues 11 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

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

JOE LONGTHORNE Wed 12 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

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

THE GOOD LIFE - THE GREAT SONGS OF TONY BENNETT Wed 12 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MIGHTY MIGHTY Wed 12 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DR FEELGOOD Thurs 13 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

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

LET'S ROCK THE 70S Thurs 13 June, Albany Theatre, Coventry

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

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT - A TRIBUTE TO TINA TURNER Thurs 13 June, Malvern Theatres

THE SEX PISTOLS EXPERIENCE Fri 14 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

JAGGED LITTLE PILL Fri 14 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

BONNY LOU BAND Fri 14 June, The World Bar, Resorts World, B'ham

BERNADETTE PETERS Fri 14 June, Birmingham Town Hall

FCS: STIFF JOINTS Fri 14 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

HACKNEY COLLIERY BAND Fri 14 June, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

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

THE YORK WAITS Fri 14 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

LEATHER & LACE - ROCK ANTHEMS & POWER BALLADS SHOW Fri 14 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

CITYLIGHTZ Sat 15 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ROADTRIP Sat 15 June, The Asylum, B'ham

BACKSTREET BOYS Sat 15 June, Arena Birmingham

MUSED Sat 15 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

JIVE TALKIN' Sat 15 June, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

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

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

WAITING FOR SUSAN Sat 15 June, The World Bar, Resorts World, Birmingham

NEIL DIAMOND THE EXPERIENCE Sat 15 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

MAET LIVE Sat 15 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

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

AN EVENING WITH RICK KEMP Sat 15 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

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

DANIEL KEMISH Sun 16 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

STEREOLAB Sun 16 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CANAAN COX Sun 16 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FROM THE JAM Sun 16 June, The Mill Digbeth, Birmingham

GYPSYFINGERS Sun 16 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME MUSIC Featuring Risa Sekine (violin) & Jonathan French (piano). Programme includes Ravel's Sonata for Violin & Piano No.2 in G, M.77 & Roman Kosyakov (piano). Programme comprises Rachmaninov's 10 Preludes Op.23, Mon 10 June, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE SAXOPHONE ENSEMBLE Featuring Andy Tweed & Anna Brooks. Programme includes works by Stravinsky arr. Olaf Mühlenhardt, Bartók arr. Wood & Richard Ingham, Mon 10 June, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

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

COULL QUARTET: FROM SUFFOLK TO SCHUBERT Featuring Michal Kaznowski (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn, Imogen Holst & Schubert, Thurs 13 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

BAX: IN MEMORIAM Featuring Katherine Thomas (harp), Rachael Pankhurst (oboe), Kirsty Lovie & Elizabeth Golding (violins), Michael Jenkinson (viola) & Helen Edgar (cello). Programme includes works by Pasculli, Ibert & Bax, Fri 14 June, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

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

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS Programme comprises Mendelssohn's Elijah, Sat 15 June, Coventry Cathedral

WORCESTER MALE VOICE CHOIR ANNUAL CONCERT Sat 15 June, Worcester Cathedral

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

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
RBC INTERNATIONAL PIANO FESTIVAL Sat 15 - Tues 18 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 PLUS COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 13 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

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

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

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

Theatre

MENOPAUSE THE MUSICAL Musical parody featuring a host of one-liners about hot flushes, memory loss and pop classics. Cheryl Fergison, Maureen Nolan, Rebecca Wheatley & Katherine Lynch star, Mon 10 - Wed 12 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ADMISSIONS Alex Kingston (ER & Doctor Who) and Sarah Hadland (Miranda) star in an award-winning new comedy from Joshua Harmon, Mon 10 - Sat 15 June, Malvern Theatres

WHILE WE'RE HERE Swan Theatre Amateur Company present Barney Norris's 'small play with a big heart', Tues 11 - Sat 15 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

SWEET CHARITY Queensbridge Musical Theatre Society present an amateur staging of the Broadway classic, Tues 11 - Sat 15 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

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 -



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Thurs 13 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

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

THE WIZARD OF OZ Amateur staging presented by Three Spires Guildhall, Wed 12 - Sun 16 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

WUTHERING HEIGHTS Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Emily Bronte's classic tale of love & revenge, Thurs 13 - Fri 14 June, Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa

WOKE Beatboxing, spoken word, storytelling & hip-hop classics combine in a one-man show about feminism, Thurs 13 - Sat 15 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

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

THE BARRICADE BOYS Sat 15 June, Malvern Theatres

WUTHERING HEIGHTS Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Emily Bronte's classic tale of love & revenge, Sat 15 June, Packwood House, Solihull

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

UP ON THE ROOF Wymysical Theatre, The Fenice Singers & Malvern Hills Music present an evening of musical entertainment, Sat 15 June, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

A NIGHT AT THE MUSICALS Phoenix Theatre Productions present an evening of song & dance, Sat 15 June, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE Chapterhouse

Theatre Company presents its version of Jane Austen's classic tale, Sun 16 June, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

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

HORMONAL HOUSEWIVES 'Allo 'Allo actress Vicki Michelle stars in a no-holds-barred romp about the joys of being a 'fabulous' 21st century woman, Sun 16 June, Malvern Theatres

Kids Shows

HONK! Warwick Prep School Year 6 present a reimagining of Hans Christian Andersen's The Ugly Duckling... Thurs 13 - Fri 14 June, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

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 Walliams' bestselling tale, Sat 15 June, Bewdley Museum QE11 Gardens, Bewdley, Worcestershire

IGGLEPIGGLE'S BUSY DAY Join Igglepiggle and Upsy Daisy at In the Night Garden Live! Sat 15 - Sun 16 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa



Dance

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: UNLEASHED 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

FREEMAN DANCE SUMMER SHOW Showcase of everything from street to ballet, tap to arco, Irish to musical theatre, Fri 14 & Sat 15 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

Talks

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, Tues 11 June, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

WOMAN AT WAR (12a) Drama/Thriller. Starring Halldóra Geirharðsdóttir. Foreign language, subtitled. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Wed 12 - Wed 19 June

AMAZING GRACE (tbc) Documentary/Music. Starring Aretha Franklin. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 14 & Sun 16 June

ALADDIN (PG) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Naomi Scott, Will Smith. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 14 - Thurs 20 June

A DOG'S JOURNEY (PG) Adventure/Comedy. Starring Dennis Quaid, Abby Ryder Fortson. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 15 June

THE SOUND OF MUSIC (U) Biography/Drama. Starring Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer. Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton, Sun 16 June

Events

MINI MUSEUM ENGINEERS - CODING INVENTIONS Investigate different ways of coding - without computers, Wed 12 June, Coventry Transport Museum

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

THE MURDER OF PETER HANNIGAN Enjoy an evening of intrigue and mystery at the atmospheric Back to Backs, Fri 14 June, Birmingham Back to Backs

THE GT BICYCLES MALVERNS CLASSIC MOUNTAIN BIKE FESTIVAL Packed weekend of events, including flat-out racing, Fri 14 - Sun 16 June, Eastnor Castle, Ledbury

KITFEST Show for owners and enthusiasts of all makes and models of kit car, Fri 14 - Sun 16 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough

ROYAL THREE COUNTIES SHOW Celebration of regional food, farming and

family entertainment, Fri 14 - Sun 16 June, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

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

MEDIEVAL BANQUET Immersive evening of medieval entertainment, Sat 15 June, Warwick Castle

FAMILY SATURDAYS - PARACHUTE BIKES Explore a variety of playful STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) challenges, Sat 15 June, Coventry Transport Museum

FESTIVAL OF CREATIVITY & WELLBEING Chance to experience and connect with creativity in a wide range of ways, Sat 15 June, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

SWINGTIME IN THE GARDENS Family-friendly vintage festival, Sat 15 June, Ragley Hall, Alcester

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

POETRY FEST 2019 Featuring new writing and music, Sat 15 - Sun 23 June, Stratford Town Centre

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

VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE CLUB BANBURY RUN Featuring hundreds of veteran and vintage motorcycles, Sun 16 June, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

CLASSIC CAR RALLY & WEAPONS AND WEAPONRY THROUGH THE AGES Bringing together classic cars and a weaponry-based reenactment, Sun 16 June, Harvington Hall, Kidderminster

CLASSIC CARS FOR FATHER'S DAY Dads and car enthusiasts alike can admire various makes and models - and discover the castle's remarkable connection to motor pioneer John Siddeley, Sun 16 June, Kenilworth Castle

RETRO SHOW Open to all retro vehicles from the 1950s through to 1995, Sun 16 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough

CLASSIC CARS FOR FATHER'S DAY Dads and car enthusiasts alike can admire various makes and models, Sun 16 June, Witley Court, Worcestershire



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Gigs

LUTHER: A CELEBRATION OF LUTHER VANDROSS Mon 17 June, Malvern Theatres

CAGE THE ELEPHANT Tues 18 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE LAFONTAINES Tues 18 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TOM JONES & THE SHADES OF THE 60S Tues 18 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

CONFIDENCE MAN Wed 19 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ISLANDS IN THE STREAM Thurs 20 June, Malvern Theatres

WILL POUND'S THROUGH THE SEASONS Thurs 20 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

HALFWAY TO PARADISE: THE BILLY FURY STORY Thurs 20 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

RAYMOND FROGGATT ACOUSTIC Fri 21 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE MECHANICAL HEARTS Fri 21 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

STEVE KNIGHTLEY Fri 21 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

RAVE ON - A TRIBUTE TO BUDDY HOLLY Fri 21 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

MAD ABOUT THE MUSICALS Fri 21 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MUSIC THROUGH THE DECADES Fri 21 June, Evesham Arts Centre

MARIO BAKUNA TRIO Fri 21 June, The Tin Music and Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

THE SMALL FAKERS & READY STEADY WHO Fri 21 June, The Empire, Coventry

THE ORIGINAL WAILERS FEATURING AL ANDERSON Fri 21 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

ONE NIGHT IN DUBLIN Fri 21 June, Malvern Theatres

THE PHONICS Fri 21

June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

CRAIG OGDEN IN CONCERT Fri 21 June, Warwick Hall, Warwick

BOWIE BY MOONLIGHT Fri 21 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE MAVERICKS Fri 21 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

WESTLIFE Fri 21 - Sun 23 June, Arena Birmingham

WANNABE - THE SPICE GIRLS SHOW Sat 22 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

WHOLE LOTTA LED Sat 22 June, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

WHAT'S LEFT Sat 22 June, The Tin Music and Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

TAKE THAT - SHINE Sat 22 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

TROPICAL SOUNDCLASH Sat 22 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BLACK KNIGHT SATELLITE Sat 22 June, The Flapper, Birmingham

GIANTS OF ROCK USA 2019 TOUR Sat 22 June, The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton

MOISHE'S BAGEL Sat 22 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

HEAVY SOL Sat 22 June, The Night Owl, Birmingham

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MUSIC Sat 22 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE SPIRIT OF ELVIS Sat 22 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

JOAN AS POLICE WOMAN Sun 23 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

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



Joan As Police Woman
The Assembly, Leamington Spa

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT Programme includes works by W. Russell, C. Pepusch, Handel, Franck & Coates, Mon 17 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: SUMMER MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Tues 18 & Wed 19 June, Birmingham Cathedral

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

CBSD: STEPHEN HOUGH PLAYS BEETHOVEN Featuring Edward Gardner (conductor) & 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

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK CHAMBER CHOIR: CHORAL CONCORD Fri 21 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

2019 BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION: FIRST ROUND Sat 22 June, The Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

MALVERN FESTIVAL CHORUS: DURUFLE'S REQUIEM Featuring Claire Williams (mezzo soprano) & musicians from Regency Sinfonia. Programme includes works by Durufle, Faure, Brahms & Barber, Sat 22 June, Malvern Theatres

BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR: STEAL AWAY Featuring Paul Spicer (conductor) & Martyn Rawles (pianist). Programme includes works by Moses Hogan, Rutter, Tippett, Will Todd & Paul Spicer, Sat 22 June, Pershore Abbey

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
UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & CHORUS: CAPRICCIO Sun 23 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Comedy

AL MURRAY Wed 19 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham



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

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

ROB ROUSE, JOSH PUGH, STEVE WILLIAMS & FREDDY QUINNE Sat 22 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

Theatre

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

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Oddsocks celebrates its 30th year with a high-energy adaptation of Shakespeare's terrific tale of magic & mayhem, Tues 18 - Thurs 20 June, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

HELLO, DOLLY! Amateur staging presented by Walsall Operatic Society, Tues 18 - Sat 22 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

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



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BOULDER Half A String present a reimagining of a Greek myth in which a beautiful mechanical puppet struggles to move a colossal, burdensome stone, Wed 19 - Thurs 20 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN Acclaimed drama exploring the after-effects of repression on hearts and souls... Thurs 20 June, Albany Theatre, Coventry

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

ROMEO & JULIET Heartbreak Productions present a 'super glam' outdoor staging of Shakespeare's most passionate tale, Thurs 20 June, Bosworth Hall Hotel Walled Garden, Market Bosworth, Nuneaton

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

MY FAIR LADY An amateur staging of Lerner & Loewe's iconic musical, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 June, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

SHERLOCK HOLMES: A STUDY IN SCARLET Cloud8 Theatre Company presents its version of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous story, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 June, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

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

BUGSY MALONE Kings High School present an amateur staging of the classic comedy musical, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 June, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

CROOKED DANCES New play by Robin French which examines music, time and attention in the modern digital age, Thurs 20 June - Sat 13 July, Studio Theatre @ The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

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, Birmingham

MAD ABOUT THE MUSICALS Featuring some of musical theatre's most iconic numbers, Fri 21 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MRS BROWN'S BOYS D'MUSICAL The promise of an 'exhilarating, side-splitting and musical adventure', Fri 21 - Sun 23 June, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

Kids Shows

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE LIVE An educational, fun & anarchic approach to science communication and the inventors & engineers who've shaped the modern world... Thurs 20 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

MILKSHAKE! LIVE Show for younger audiences with plenty of laughter & audience participation, Sat 22 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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

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

HERE COME THE GIRLS Dianne Buswell, Chloe Hewitt & Amy Dowden showcase a mix of ballroom and Latin routines choreographed by Patrick Helm, Sun 23 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

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

JEREMY VINE: WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?! Jeremy tries to make sense of a world that increasingly makes no sense at all, Fri 21 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

THE WHITE CROW (12a)

Biography/Drama. Starring Oleg Ivenko, Ralph Fiennes. Number 8, Pershore, Mon 17 June

WHERE HANDS TOUCH (12a)

Drama/War. Starring Amandla Stenberg, Abbie Cornish. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Mon 17 - Sun 19 June

STYX (12a)

Drama. Starring Susanne Wolff. Foreign language, subtitled. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Thurs 20 - Tues 25 June

ROCKETMAN (12a)

Biography/Drama. Starring Taron Egerton, Bryce Dallas Howard. Number 8, Pershore, Fri 21 June

ROMEO + JULIET (12a)

Drama/Romance. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Claire Danes. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 21 June

THE HUSTLE (12a)

Comedy. Starring Anne Hathaway, Rebel Wilson. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Fri 21 - Thurs 27 June

THE GREAT GATSBY (12)

Drama/Romance. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Carey Mulligan. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 22 June

MOULIN ROUGE! (12a)

Drama/Musical. Starring Nicole Kidman, Ewan McGregor. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 22 June

Events

RAF DEFFORD AIRFIELD GUIDED WALK

Guided talk about the top-secret airbase which was home to Airborne Radar testing and development during the Second World War and the early years of the Cold War, Tues 18 June, Croome Park, Worcester

TEDDY BEARS PICNIC Take along your favourite teddy bear, grab a blanket and settle down with friends for some quality time together, Tues 18 June, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

MINI MUSEUM ENGINEERS - LIGHT

HOUSES Build things that can direct or hold light, Wed 19 June, Coventry Transport Museum

PANORAMA TOWER OPEN DAY

Panoramic views of Worcester from the top of the tower, Thurs 20 June, Croome Park, Worcester

THE MIDSUMMER MOTORHOME SHOW A long weekend of jive, dance and rockabilly, Fri 21 - Sun 23 June, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth

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

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

BRITISH GT & BRITISH F3 CHAMPIONSHIPS Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, Donington Park Racing Circuit, Derby

LEGENDARY JOUST Four legendary knights compete for honour and glory in the 'grand medieval joust', Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, Kenilworth Castle



OPEN COCKPITS WEEKEND Chance to learn about the museum's aircraft, Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, RAF Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

THE SUMMER NATIONALS 2019 National Drag Racing Championships featuring the MSA British Championship for Pro Mod, Sat 22 - Sun 23 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough

MIDSUMMER MADNESS Celebrate 'the most magical time of the year' with the resident Tudors, Sun 23 June, Mary Arden's Farm, Stratford-upon-Avon

FORD NATIONALS Featuring a selection of modern and modern-classic Ford vehicles, Sun 23 June, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

For Foodies

FOODIES FESTIVAL Featuring masterclasses with some of the country's top chefs, workshops, tastings & live music from Boyzlife & 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

Gigs

TINA - SIMPLY THE BEST Tues 25 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

LUNASA Tues 25 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

CULT LEADER & BIRDS IN ROW Tues 25 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

EDDI READER Wed 26 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

HELLO AGAIN NEIL DIAMOND Thurs 27 June, Malvern Theatres

FEELS Thurs 27 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BARRY STEELE & FRIENDS Thurs 27 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

FOLK IN THE FOYER: COLIN PITTS Thurs 27 June, Evesham Arts Centre

999 Thurs 27 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

DAGADANA Thurs 27 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

DAVE SHARP Thurs 27 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

THE MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES Fri 28

June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BLAKK SABBATH Fri 28 June, The Asylum, Birmingham

EAGLES Fri 28 June, Arena Birmingham

HITS OF MOTOWN Fri 28 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE UNRAVELLING WILBURYS Fri 28 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

FRANKLY SINATRA Fri 28 June, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

YE VAGABONDS AND BRIGHDE CHAMBEUL Fri 28 June, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

ROCK FOR HEROES Fri 28 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

ELLIE JONES & THE GIANTS Fri 28 June, The World Bar, Resorts World, Birmingham

THE 1990S Fri 28 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

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

CARRIE UNDERWOOD Fri 28 June, Resorts World Arena, B'ham

FOREVER IN BLUE JEANS Fri 28 June, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

THE BOOTLEG BEATLES Sat 29 June, Kasbah, Coventry

BOWIE BY MOONLIGHT Sat 29 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

UNDER THE COVERS Sat 29 June, The World Bar, Resorts World, Birmingham

KING OF POP: THE LEG-END CONTINUOUS Sat 29 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

NELL BRYDEN Sat 29 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

GOJIRA Sat 29 June, O2 Academy, B'ham

JACKSON LIVE IN CONCERT Sat 29 June, Evesham Arts Centre

LYNRYD SKYNYRD Sun 30 June, Resorts World Arena, B'ham

COMBICHRIST Sun 30 June, The Mill Digbeth, Birmingham

GAYGIRL + SKETCH + MODERN COMFORTS Sun 30 June, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham



Eddi Reader- Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONGS Featuring Bruce O'Neil (conductor) & Pedro H da Silva (guitar), Tues 25 June, Stratford Play House, Stratford-upon-Avon

COVENTRY MUSIC HUB SUMMER SHOWCASE Tues 25 - Wed 26 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

ARMONICO CONSORT & AC ACADEMY: BEOWULF Thurs 27 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

RACHEL PODGER & BRECON BAROQUE: VIVALDI'S THE FOUR SEASONS & MORE... Fri 28 June, Malvern Theatres

BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONIC WINDS Narrated by Midlands Today news presenter Michael Collie & featuring works by John Williams, Ennio Morricone, William Walton, George Gershwin & Elmer Bernstein, Sat 29 June, Warwick Hall

IL DIVO Sat 29 June, Arena B'ham

REDDITCH ORCHESTRA: LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS Sun 30 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Comedy

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 E DO & ANNETTE FAGON (PICTURED) Sun 30 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham



Theatre

THE PILLOWMAN A Bear Pit Theatre Company production of Steve Farr's disturbing tale about a writer in a totalitarian state who's interrogated about the gruesome content of his short stories, Mon 24 - Sat 29 June, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THRILLER LIVE Michael Jackson tribute show, Mon 24 - Sat 29 June, Malvern Theatres



THE BODYGUARD Alexandra Burke & Jennlee Shallow share the role of Rachel Marron in this much-claimed 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

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Alan Bennett's version of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved riverside tale, Thurs 27 June, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

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 27 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

DREAMS DIE HARD One-woman show which 'travels through numerous landscapes and summons ghosts from the past on a journey towards truth and tolerance', Thurs 27 - Fri 28 June, Albany Theatre, Coventry

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

MY FAIR LADY Amateur staging of Lerner & Loewe's iconic musical, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 June, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

Monday 24 - Sunday 30 June

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

FOREVER IN BLUE JEANS A 'big hearted show' fusing singing and dancing with the music of Patsy Cline and a host of other much-loved country music artists, Fri 28 June, The Roses, Tewkesbury

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

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

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN Acclaimed drama exploring the after-effects of repression on hearts and souls... Fri

28 - Sat 29 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Alan Bennett's version of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved riverside tale, Sat 29 June, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

ROBIN & THE SHERWOOD HOODIES Theatretrain Solihull present an all-singing all-dancing romp through the medieval mayhem of Merry England, Sat 29 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM The Crescent Theatre Company present a modern-dress production of one of Shakespeare's best loved and most enduring comedies, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, Solihull

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

PIRATES OF THE CURRY BEAN Stage It! Academy present a 'thrilling adventure' set on the high seas, Sun 30 June, Tamworth Arts Centre

Measure For Measure

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Fri 28 June - Thurs 29 August

The darkest of Shakespeare's comedies, Measure For Measure is usually considered a problem play, which basically means that it asks more questions than it answers. The structure is simple enough. Poor old Angelo is left in charge of an anarchic Vienna, whilst the Duke pretends that he has work overseas. Instead, he uses the opportunity to spy on his diligent though misguided deputy, waits for a mistake, then reappears to make Angelo a convenient scapegoat for Vienna's woes. A stitch-up or just judicial authority? No wonder politicians of all parties quote Shakespeare to justify their dark deeds...

WUTHERING HEIGHTS Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Emily Bronte's classic tale of love & revenge, Sun 30 June, Eastnor Castle, Ledbury, Herefordshire

ries... Mon 24 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa



THE GRUFFALO Tall Stories' musical adaptation of the classic picture book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, Tues 25 - Wed 26 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

Kids Shows

THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR Children's show which faithfully recreates four of Eric Carle's much-loved sto-



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Dance

ROMEO A JULIET Ballet Cymru present an adaptation of Shakespeare's masterpiece, Sat 29 June, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

LC PRESENTS COLLABORATION Show containing a variety of dance styles and music, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

Cabaret

THE DREAMBOYS The 'UK's most famous girls' night out', Tues 25 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE DREAMBOYS The 'UK's most famous girls' night out', Wed 26 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

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

JOHN BARROWMAN: FABULOUS Sun 30 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

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', Mon 24 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

WOMAN AT WAR (tbc) Drama/Thriller. Starring Halldóra Geirharðsdóttir. Ar-

trix, Bromsgrove, Mon 24 June

ROCKETMAN (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Taron Egerton, Bryce Dallas Howard. Number 8, Pershore, Mon 24 - Tues 25 June; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 28 June

RAFIKI (12a) Drama/Romance. Starring Samantha Mugatsia, Neville Misati. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Tues 25 - Sun 30 June

THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS 2 (U) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Patton Oswalt, Eric Stonestreet. Artrix, Bromsgrove, 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

MINI MUSEUM ENGINEERS - TURNING IT AROUND Play with gears and cogs to explore cause-and-effect, Wed 26 June, Coventry Transport Museum

THE BIG EVENT The UK's largest display of vehicles for disabled people, Fri 28 - Sat 29 June, NEC, B'ham

THE 4X4 AND PICK UP SHOW 2019 Featuring exhibitors who specialise in tyres, lighting, off-road equipment, accessories and more, Fri 28 - Sat 29 June, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth

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

HOME AND GARDEN SHOW Featuring a hand-picked selection of stallholders from across the region, Sat 29 June, Compton Verney Gallery, Warwick



Dan Cassidy - Upton Jazz Festival, Upton-upon-Severn

BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONIC WINDS Fun concert for kids. The programme includes Paddington Bear's First Concert, narrated by Michael Collier. Take along your favourite teddy to show and tell, Sat 29 June, Warwick Hall

MURDER MYSTERY A murder has taken place at Shakespeare's New Place - and they need your help to find the killer, Sat 29 June, Shakespeare's New Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

JAGUAR SUPER SATURDAY Featuring approximately 100 iconic and historic cars from the Swallow, SS, Jaguar and Daimler brands, Sat 29 June, Coventry Transport Museum

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, Donington Park Racing Circuit, Derby

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 daytime attractions up and down the line, Sat 29 - Sun 30 June, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

DOG'S TRUST FUN DAY Featuring doggy demonstrations, a grand raffle and an opportunity to meet some of the dogs from the Trust, Sun 30 June, Ragley Hall, Alcester

THE FAST SHOW RELOADED Enjoy RWYB, stunts, club displays, jet car, FWD drag series, live entertainment and lots more, Sun 30 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough



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

Festivals

UPTON JAZZ FESTIVAL Line-up includes Alan Barnes, Hot Club 42, Something New And Exciting In September, Savannah Jazz Band, Sliphorn Summit and Dan Cassidy Swing Quartet, Thurs 27 - Sun 30 June, various venues, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire



Home & Garden Show - Compton Verney, Warwickshire



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Lachlan Menaghan and Beatrice Parma. Photo © Bella Kotak

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