

Worcestershire

ISSUE 405 SEPTEMBER 2019

What's On

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Malvern Autumn Show

Celebrating 25 Years

Harvesting the Best of Autumn

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A FESTIVAL OF GARDENING, FOOD & DRINK, ARTISAN PRODUCE & NOSTALGIA

THREE COUNTIES SHOWGROUND, MALVERN
SAT 28 - SUN 29 SEPTEMBER

Three Counties

inside:

thelist

Your 16-page week
by week listings guide

BROMYARD FOLK

Kelly Oliver takes to the stage
at popular local festival



DEAR ZOO LIVE

children's classic stops off at
Bromsgrove arts venue



STEP BACK IN TIME

as Avoncroft transforms into a
medieval village



BRITISH
SCIENCE
FESTIVAL

COVENTRY &
WARWICKSHIRE
10–13 SEPTEMBER 2019

Angela Saini

David Hogg

Professor Michael Scott

Professor Alice Roberts

Dr Maggie Adams-Pearce

Jack Monroe

The British Science Festival is coming to Coventry and Warwickshire this September!

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Avoncroft
Museum





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Live@The RSC



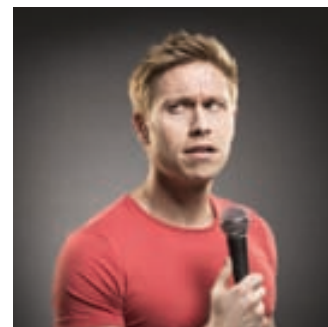
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Magnificent Magnum on display in new Compton Verney exhibition

Compton Verney Art Gallery is this autumn hosting an exhibition featuring some of the most significant and enduring images from the world famous Magnum Photos agency.

Magnum Manifesto focuses on the history of the second half of the 20th century, as seen through the lenses of 75 leading photographers.

Commenting on the show, Compton Verney Director Julie Finch said: "We are the only UK destination for this unmissable exhibition. It provides a snapshot of society, politics, cultures and changing economies crossing time and continents, a reference point in our turbulent times, a discussion piece and a mirror to the world - all captured through photography.

"This exhibition is a newsreel of images bridging the 20th and the 21st century, with something for everyone."

Magnum Manifesto shows at Compton Verney from 12 October to 15 December.

Family fun day celebrates British Science Festival

The University of Warwick is holding a Family Day on Saturday 14 September to celebrate its hosting of this year's British Science Festival.

Organisers promise that the day will be 'packed full of discovery and exploration', with events and activities taking place across the campus. All events are free to attend but some require booking in advance. For more information, visit warwick.ac.uk/about/community/warwickfamilydays

Stratford gig for Robbie's writing partner Guy

Songwriter, musician and producer Guy Chambers - best known for his work with Robbie Williams - will play a one-off concert at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, on Sunday 27 October.

As Robbie's writing partner, Guy has produced seven number one albums, sold millions of records around the world, and is responsible for some of the biggest singles of the last 25 years, including Angels, Let Me Entertain You, Strong, No Regrets, Millennium, Rock DJ and Feel.

The concert sees Guy performing tracks from his new album, *Go Gentle Into The Light* - a collection of piano instrumental versions of some of his best-known songs.



Euro sports event paves way for more of the same

The success of the European Corporate Games could lead to more international events being staged in Coventry & Warwickshire, according to the Games' Director, Doug White.

Around 2,700 people representing companies and organisations from across Europe took part in the Games, which included more than 20 sports and mainly took place at the University of Warwick's new Sports & Wellness Hub.

"The feedback from competing teams in this year's Games has been fantastic," said Mr White. "The facilities across Coventry & Warwickshire are among the best we've ever used. The hub hosted hundreds of Games participants across the weekend in badminton, squash, volleyball, netball and soccer-fives, and I'm sure it will host many more major sporting events in the future."

Midlands writer debuts drama at Coventry theatre

A Midlands writer is this month premiering her 'gripping new drama' at Coventry's Belgrade Theatre.

Joan Carty's *Holding The Centre* opens the venue's B2 season of *Love And Belonging* and runs from Wednesday 4 to Saturday 7 September.

The show is being presented by Women Writes, a company offering support to female playwrights from Black & Minority Ethnic

(BAME) backgrounds. Its aim is to bring female-driven stories and authentic voices of colour to the stage.

To book tickets for the show, call the box office on 024 7655 3055 or visit belgrade.co.uk, where prices are cheaper.



Birmingham arenas launch Ask For Clive anti-homophobia campaign

Arena Birmingham and Resorts World Arena have become the first venues in the second city to launch anti-homophobia campaign Ask For Clive.

The campaign encourages entertainment establishments to show solidarity in the fight against homophobia and transphobia. Posters on display let customers know that if they see any discrimination or abuse of LGBTQ people, they can discreetly report it to staff by 'asking for Clive'. They will then be taken to a safe space while the incident is investigated and appropriate action taken.

From one UK City of Culture to another...

An artistic duo who contributed to Hull's year as UK City of Culture are currently exhibiting their work in Coventry's Herbert Art Gallery & Museum.

Davy and Kristin McGuire's silent digital projections are inspired by film noir and focus on subjects that juxtapose adulthood and childhood.

With Coventry taking on the City of Culture title in 2021, the artists' exhibition is likely to be of significant interest to Warwickshire residents.



On the trail of art in Nuneaton

Nuneaton's Open Arts Trail is back for a fifth year this month.

Encompassing not only Nuneaton town centre but also Atherstone, Bermuda Park, Bedworth and Fillongley, the event sees a range of venues - including church halls, libraries, allotments and shopping centres - display a selection of usually-for-sale artwork produced by a number of talented local artists. The trail takes place on Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 September.



Imagine a better future at a new festival of Change

A new not-for-profit arts event which celebrates the future through the telling of stories about hope and possibility is launching at Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre next month.

Organisers of Change Festival describe their new event as 'championing the power of people to thrive if given the opportunity to imagine and dream'. A spokesperson for the event said: "The

festival will gather performers, speakers and audiences from the West Midlands and beyond to imagine, play and explore.

"Whether you're into theatre, comedy, spoken word, family shows or talks, we'll have both familiar faces and new performances to enjoy." Change takes place from Friday 18 to Sunday 20 October.

Crusaders at Warwick Words

Historian and broadcaster Dan Jones visits Warwick this month to talk about his latest book, *Crusaders*. The book focuses on the sequence of religious wars which were fought from the late 11th century to the late medieval period, as armies from European Christian states tried to wrest control of the Holy Land from Islamic rule. Dan's Sunday 8 September appearance at Warwick School's Bridge House Theatre is followed later in the month by Warwick Words History Festival, which runs from Monday 30 September to Sunday 6 October.

Midlands mental health festival returns to celebrate the arts and wellbeing

The fourth edition of Birmingham's Bedlam Arts & Mental Health Festival takes place next month (Tuesday 1 - Saturday 12 October). Created with the aim of using the arts to increase awareness of mental health & wellbeing issues, the event showcases a selection of new and creative works performed across the city.

Included in the line-up are new commissions, a world premiere, works in progress, a half-day Symposium, and events featuring spoken word, dance, theatre, film, visual art and hip-hop... Further information and tickets are available at macbirmingham.co.uk and birmingham-rep.co.uk



Wizard Express back for half term

There'll be ghostly goings-on and wizarding workshops aplenty at the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) this October half term, when the railway welcomes back two hugely popular services - its Ghost Trains and Wizard Express. Commenting on the news, Lewis Maddox, SVR's events co-ordinator, said: "We've got a really action-packed October half term in store and are preparing ourselves to welcome an influx of ghosts, ghouls, witches and wizards, who will be joining us to enjoy an unforgettable experience along the line."

For more information, visit svr.co.uk

Malvern dates for Woman In Black



Susan Hill's chiller thriller, *The Woman In Black*, is making a welcome return to the Midlands next year as part of a UK tour.

With the London production having just celebrated 30 years in the West End, the touring version of the show stops off at Malvern Theatres from Monday 11 to Saturday 16 May. Commenting on the announcement, the show's producer, Peter Wilson, said: "In celebration of *The Woman In Black*'s incredible 30 years in the West End, I'm thrilled that this iconic production is to tour the UK once again. This show is set to thrill and scare audiences like never before, and I can't think of a better way to mark our birthday!"



Final Five for Irish four

Long-in-the-tooth 'boyband' Boyzone will play Resorts World Arena next month (15 October) as part of the finale to their farewell tour. The Birmingham venue is one of five at which they'll perform to say farewell to their fans following the sell-out success of their Thank You & Goodnight tour.

"It's a bitter-sweet time for us as we announce our final ever shows," said the band. "The shows give us all one last chance to make some more special memories together. We can't wait to go out on the ultimate high as we take our final bow with *The Final Five*."

Dates for Solihull Summer Fest 2020 announced

After another highly successful year, Solihull Summer Fest will return on Saturday 25 & 26 Sunday July 2020. Loyalty tickets are now on sale for the event, and festival-goers who book in advance will receive a discounted rate. To bag your ticket, visit tkt.to/solihullsummerfest

Award-winning Korean quartet open new Leamington Music Winter Season

The 14th Leamington Music Winter Season will be launched in the town's Royal Pump Rooms next month (Friday 4 October) by the Esmé String Quartet from Korea.

The winners of the 2018 London International String Quartet Competition, Esmé are stopping off in Leamington as part of their first major UK tour.

To check the whole Leamington Music Winter Season line-up, visit royalspacentreandtownhall.co.uk



New Escape Room game in Worcester

A new Escape Room game has opened in Worcester.

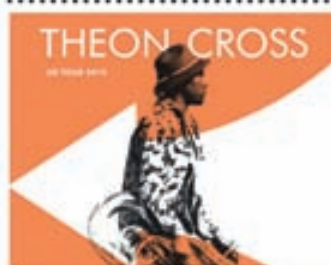
Located at Top Barn on the outskirts of the city, The Dentist is the creation of the company Top Escape Rooms and features 'mild horror themes'.

"The idea is simple," explains a spokesperson from the company. "We put you in the room and you have one hour to escape. There's a series of puzzles and codes hidden throughout the room which will help you achieve that ultimate goal. Games Masters will also be on hand to guide you through your quest - so it's time to see if you can rise to the challenge!"

Big Picture festival opens in Warwick

A new film festival is being launched at Warwick School's Bridge House Theatre this autumn. Taking place on Saturday 23 & Sunday 24 November, The Big Picture Festival will present mainstream, independent, family and classic movies.

Other activities will also feature across the weekend, with street food available for filmgoers who work up an appetite.



THEON CROSS
 FRI 20 SEPTEMBER
 7PM
HARE & HOUNDS



**REAL LIFE PARENTING:
 THE GOOD, THE BAD
 AND THE FUNNY**
 SAT 12 OCTOBER
 2PM
TOWN HALL



**BRADLEY WIGGINS:
 AN EVENING WITH**
 FRI 20 SEPTEMBER
 7:30PM
SYMPHONY HALL



**NADIYA HUSSAIN:
 FINDING MY VOICE**
 TUE 15 OCTOBER
 7:30PM
TOWN HALL



PENGUIN CAFE
 SAT 28 SEPTEMBER
 7:30PM
TOWN HALL



RIP IT UP: THE 70S
 SAT 19 OCTOBER
 7:30PM
SYMPHONY HALL



**HAPPY MUM, HAPPY
 BABY: LIVE**
 SUN 29 SEPTEMBER
 7:30PM
TOWN HALL



**OUT OF THE
 ASHES: A BRAND
 NEW EVENING
 WITH BOYCOTT &
 AGGERS**
 SUN 20 OCTOBER
 8PM
SYMPHONY HALL



LULU - ON FIRE
 TUE 1 OCTOBER
 7:30PM
TOWN HALL



**REUBEN JAMES
 TRIO**
 SUN 17 NOVEMBER
 8PM
SYMPHONY HALL STAGE

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Love at the Albany...

Albany Theatre is a relatively new addition to Coventry's burgeoning arts scene. The theatre's main house, however, already had a long history prior to the Albany's opening in 2013.

Earlsdon Place - the magnificent art deco-style building that houses the Albany - was built in 1935 as a technical college on the corner of Albany Street and The Butts. Albany Theatre's main house was the site of the college's main lecture theatre but started to be used for theatre, music and arts performances during World War Two.

The building is now divided up into various businesses, one of which is Albany Theatre. Reopening the space as a dedicated arts centre was made possible by the creation of a charitable trust. The trust remains active and is supported by dedicated volunteers who make the day-to-day running of the theatre possible. This community spirit is also in evidence in the venue's apprenticeship programmes, harking back to its days as an institute of education.

The theatre's auditorium, box office and bar space have been tastefully refurbished and a curved roof added to achieve better acoustics in the main performance space. Albany Theatre also features a new studio space - perfect for more intimate or cabaret-style performances.

There remains work to be done. With no Arts Council funding and only a small amount coming from the city council, the Albany relies solely on its sales profit and the hard graft of its volunteers and staff. They aim to raise enough money to convert the remaining space into more studios, which will hopefully house some of the groups that are springing up on Coventry's fast-emerging dance scene.

Despite the Albany's funding challenges, the theatre continues to grow in reputation, thanks in no small measure to some imaginative programming. The upcoming autumn season provides an excellent example of this...

October half term sees two kids' shows taking place at the venue: *The Very Hungry*

Caterpillar and *I Believe In Unicorns* by Michael Morpurgo. There are other family-friendly productions throughout the season too, including *Dear Zoo Live* and *Ballet Theatre UK's* version of *The Wizard Of Oz*, a show for which the Albany is letting in one child free for every adult ticket purchased. It's hoped that the offer will encourage youngsters to engage with ballet.

For adult audiences, there are theatrical productions ranging from an adaptation of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* to risqué adults-only panto *Jack (Off)* And *The Beanstalk*.

Music nights at the venue see some of the country's best tribute acts taking to the stage, including *The Mersey Beatles* and *Waterloo - The Best Of Abba*. There's a blast from the past, too, when *Kiki Dee* hits town, while the theatre's *Studio Sounds* series provides a high-profile showcase for the best in upcoming music talent.

To view the full autumn programme at the venue, visit albanytheatre.co.uk.

Check out these highlights in Albany Theatre's Autumn/Winter season...



BEYOND THERAPY **Mon 16 - Wed 18 Sept**

This quick-witted and touching comedy takes a look at modern-day relationships and poses the question: Are we all 'beyond therapy'?

The storyline focuses on the characters of Prudence and Bruce, who meet through an online ad with the help of their psychiatrists. But their date doesn't go quite according to plan...
Matt Lapinskas and Tracy Shaw star.



COME DANCE WITH ME **Wed 25 Sept**

Whenever life gets rough, everyone goes dancing! A darkly funny family drama full of spectacular routines, Come Dance With Me tells the true tale of two girls' hopes and dreams - and their extraordinary battle for survival through the tumultuous post-war years of the late 1940s and early 1950s. The show is choreographed by Richard Marcel - the man who puts Strictly couples through their paces.



GEORGE ELIOT BICENTENARY **various dates in October**

Shows celebrating the bicentenary of Coventry resident George Eliot include: Photography Exhibition: Coventry Photographic Society look at the local places that inspired Eliot's famous novels. From George To George: Margaret Eddershaw's compelling verse-drama is based on Eliot's relationship with the love of her life, George Lewes. Silas Marner: Adapted from Eliot's story about a reclusive weaver and his redemptive relationship with a young orphan girl.



VOLGOGRAD/COVENTRY **Sun 27 Oct**

A performance of traditional Russian dance, music and song to celebrate 75 years of the world's very first twin cities. Performances include Russian folk and ballet from children's dance company Volzhanochka. They'll be joined by local schools, composer/pianist Derek Nisbet, violinist Albert Zhmaev, pianist/conductor Yuri Ilinov and acclaimed soprano Yana Besyadynskaya.



SNOW QUEEN **Mon 9 - Sat 28 Dec**

Ceridwen Theatre Company make a welcome return to the Albany to present their brand new adaptation of this iconic story - an inventive take on a classic tale of bravery, friendship, epic adventure and spellbinding magic. Combining music, thrills and humour, Snow Queen comes complete with a friendly talking Yeti, who'll be helping the audience as they head off on their journey to a land of ice, snow and danger...



THIS IS ME **Thurs 27 Feb**

Strictly Come Dancing favourite Giovanni Pernice premieres his fourth year of touring at the Albany. Bringing together his natural Italian charm and infectious good humour with beautiful choreography and a memorable soundtrack, This Is Me pays homage to the music and dances which have inspired Giovanni on his career journey - from being a competition dancer to one of the biggest stars on Strictly.

THE ALBANY theatre



Autumn/Winter 2019 season... NOW BOOKING... see more online



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REVIEW: Mallory Court Hotel & Spa A truly outstanding Warwickshire gem

Mallory Court is a historic hotel & spa located between Warwick and Leamington. Providing the perfect mix of traditional country house charm and contemporary style, the venue features 43 bedrooms, a three-AA Rosette restaurant, a two-AA Rosette art deco brasserie and a heavenly Elan Spa.

A member of Relais & Châteaux, the beautifully grand Lutyns-style main house is set in 10 acres of lush green grounds and is the epitome of a quintessentially English country house hotel.

On arrival at the venue, my partner and I were politely greeted and shown to our room. Situated on the first floor of the manor house, it featured a kingsize bed, stunning en-suite, traditional decor and beautiful views of the gardens and herb gardens.

After we'd finished admiring our overnight surroundings, we made our way down to the outdoor terrace to peruse the menu while enjoying a glass of Champagne and some perfectly executed canapés - beetroot & cod emulsion, pig cheek & avocado emulsion and a gruyere bon bon.

Food at Mallory Court is firmly based around the seasons, and

the kitchen use plenty of organically grown produce from their own gardens, including soft fruits, figs, herbs, salads and root vegetables.

We decided to select from the tasting menu, which featured six mouthwatering dishes (an à la carte menu is available too). Mallory Court welcomes both hotel guests and non-guests to dine with them seven days a week. Afternoon tea and Sunday lunch are also available.

Five minutes into our bottle of pinot noir, the first of our six dishes arrived. Pollock. Featuring lovage-cured fresh, raw pollock pieces, sharp pickled apple, chilled tomato essence and lovage, the dish was presented in a small teacup-like receptacle and boasted some beautiful flavours.

Next up was the aesthetically pleasing and delightfully sweet Mallory Garden Salad. Featuring carefully placed pieces of home-grown young garden vegetables, a crunchy seed granola and a sweet Fosse Way honey reduction, it was positively bursting with bright pinks, oranges, yellows and greens and was almost too pretty to eat. On paper, it was the dish I was least looking forward to, but in reality

it ended up being one of the highlights of the meal.

The next offering was the second fish dish of the evening - the turbot. Regarded as the best of the flatfish - with great flavour and firm, white flesh to recommend it - it was accompanied by salt-baked kohlrabi, grilled leek and an incredibly moreish crab sauce. Kohlrabi translates as 'turnip cabbage', and its mild, sweet flavour is somewhere between a turnip and a waterchestnut - a taste which worked nicely with the meaty fish and the ever-so-flavoursome crab sauce.

As soon as I saw a lamb dish was included on the tasting menu, I was sold. It's one of my favourite meats, and Mallory Court's offering provided me with a truly fantastic experience. The dish featured loin and belly of spring Cotsworld lamb accompanied by roast shallot pieces, a ewe's curd filled shallot, garden courgette and lamb jus. The lamb loin was cooked to absolute perfection and the belly literally melted in the mouth. The courgette gave a sense of freshness, the creamy ewe's curd was another welcome flavour and the jus helped to bring the dish together. My partner went as far as to say that it was his favourite-ever lamb dish, and I was very much of the same opinion.

The next dish was the first of two desserts and acted as a palate cleanser. Featuring lime ice-cream, pineapple jelly and a mint sherbet, it was the perfect mix between sharp and sweet and a dish I'd definitely order again.

The finale featured a light and fluffy meringue filled with strawberry pieces, lime curd and tarragon ice-cream topped with strawberry sorbet and aerated white chocolate shards. It was absolutely delicious! With each bite came a phenomenal flavour explosion - I urge you to try the combination if you're yet to do so!

Full of fresh, contemporary flavours, the tasting menu came in at £75 per person, with a wine pairing available at an additional £50, and I cannot recommend it enough. Every dish showcased a combination of culinary precision and excellent technical ability. Hats off to both the chef and the polite and attentive staff, who explained every dish as it arrived and helped to ensure that our debut dining experience at Mallory Court was a memorable one.

After a relaxing and uninterrupted sleep - the bed was without doubt one of the most comfortable I've ever slept in - we headed down to the Elan Spa area before breakfast. Although we didn't have time to enjoy one of the fantastic treatments on offer - think massages, facials, rhasoul experiences, hand and feet treatments and more - we did make use of the hydro pool, the outdoor vitality pool - which overlooks the tennis courts and part of the perfectly maintained grounds - and the sauna & steamroom.

Choosing from a wide selection of breakfast options that included kippers and smoked salmon & scrambled egg, we both opted for the Full English, every element of which was, unsurprisingly, both tasty and of a high quality.

It was the perfect end to a perfect stay at a truly outstanding Warwickshire gem. *Lauren Foster*

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

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Dog dinners on menu at award-winning pub

Award-winning Leamington pub The Newbold Comyn Arms is now offering dog dinners as part of its menu. Local franchise Oscar Pet Foods has created two recipes for their Dogs Dinner range - and they've gone down extremely well with dogs visiting the pub. The meals on offer are gluten-free chicken & rice with added joint supplements and grain-free hypoallergenic fish & potato.

Real ale fans, rejoice!

The one-day mobile Real Ale Festival is making a welcome return this month (Saturday 14 September). The popular event will be visiting eight real-ale pubs and one microbrewery, all of which are located in the Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley areas of the region. And as if such splendid news for real-ale lovers isn't enough, there's also no need to take the car, as there will be shuttle buses in circuit all day long!

Stourport brothers launch local taproom

Two brothers from Stourport have launched their own taproom. Alex and Seb Vale converted a local 200-year-old unit after deciding it was high time they turned their hobby into a business. The brothers, who have already created 50 craft beer recipes, serve their own cask ales alongside guest beers and other alcoholic and soft drink options. They also provide BBQ street food at weekends. For more information about Alex and Seb's Brothers Of Ale initiative, visit facebook.com/brothersofale



Popular food festival returns for a 12th mouthwatering year

The hugely popular Leamington Food & Drink Festival returns to the town's Royal Pump Room Gardens on Saturday 7 & Sunday 8 September. Now in its 12th year, the free-to-attend event features 130 exhibitors serving up the very best local food & drink, including meats, organic

produce, wines, cakes and chocolates. Also featuring in the 2019 edition of the show is live music, demonstrations in the cookery theatre, a free kids' cookery school and a 'home cook of the year' competition, for which the festival has teamed up with Aubrey Allen.

A taste of Thailand comes to Leamington shopping centre

Thai restaurant chain Giggling Squid is opening a new premises in Leamington Spa's Priors Shopping Centre this autumn. The eatery's menu features dishes celebrating 'exciting and exotic ingredients found across Thailand'. These include bestselling salt & pepper squid, creamy massaman curry, pork dumplings, giant butterfly king prawn pad Thai and banana leaf grilled sea bass. For kids, the restaurant offers a 'little tapas for little people' range as well as pizza and chips.





BRADLEY WIGGINS

The five-time Olympic gold medal winner cycles into Brum...

The most decorated Olympic athlete in British sporting history and the first Brit ever to win the Tour de France, Sir Bradley Wiggins is heading out on an altogether different kind of tour this month. Neill Barston caught up with the five-time Olympic gold medal winner ahead of his visit to Birmingham, where he'll be talking about his life and career in his show, **Bradley Wiggins: An Evening With...**

Covering this year's Tour de France as a commentator proved to be a highly memorable experience for five-time Olympic gold medal winner Sir Bradley Wiggins.

"Covering the tour made me realise just how much I love it," says Sir Bradley. "When you're competing, there's a lot of emotion taken up actually dealing with the event and getting over the line. It's hard to get excited at the end of a race, so watching it as a fan, without all the pressure, was great.

"Going back to the tour and seeing some of those climbs brought back memories of just how hard it is. While people can make it look easy, it really isn't - especially when you see guys getting taken out of the peloton and some of the crashes you witness. It can be brutal.

"But it was a brilliant event. Cycling is all that I've ever known, right back to my school days when I was focusing on my riding rather than all the lessons."

Despite Sir Bradley's love of the sport, quitting three years ago to fully focus on the challenges of raising a young family with his wife at their home in Lancashire was not a difficult decision to make.

While the celebrity status following his unprecedented back-to-back victories at the Tour de France and London Olympics in 2012 may not have sat entirely comfortably with him, the wider effect of 'Wiggo's win' was clearly tangible. Cycling in the UK enjoyed a significant resurgence that's shown no sign of subsiding.

The achievement led to his knighthood in 2013. Three years later, at the Rio Olympics, he won a final gold as part of the winning British team pursuit squad.

Sir Bradley is currently focusing on a number of projects, including sports broadcasting and his nationwide touring show, *Bradley Wiggins: An Evening With*. The show, which visits the Midlands this month, sees him reflecting on his lengthy career and discussing some of the personal heroes who feature in his latest book, *Icons*.

"I've been enjoying doing these shows, as I like to break down perceptions. I feel you never really know someone until you've heard their story properly.

"It gives me the chance to meet people, and I can particularly remember speaking to one guy in Nottingham. He said his wife would really have loved the show, but she hadn't made it as she'd just died of cancer. So I just told him that she was right there with him. So with this kind of show, people get to see your emotions, and I'm certainly looking forward to getting out there again."

Something else which Sir Bradley is focusing on is providing support for the next generation of potential cycling stars: "Cycling is a great and necessary force in my life and something I've been institutionalised in as well as passionate about. If there's a legacy from what I've done it's in terms of helping young people develop an interest in cycling and getting out there on their bikes.

"For many kids there's a lot that keeps them indoors on their iPads, so one of the great things about cycling is that it's something outdoors you can do as a family - you can't go out and play rugby as a family."

Sir Bradley was born in Ghent, Belgium, but his mother moved them to London after his father, who was also a cyclist, parted from the family. He had no involvement in his son's up-

bringing.

"In a weird way, my father is still my hero. I've kept two of his riding jerseys, even though I detested the man as he left us when I was just a baby. But my mum still glorified him, so if it hadn't been for her, I wouldn't have had my career."

As a 12-year-old, Sir Bradley took up cycling on the same south London circuit his dad had once ridden. But cycling was never going to help him fit in with the tough neighbourhood kids. He even resorted to wearing tracksuits over his riding gear for fear that he'd receive a barrage of homophobic abuse because of his clothing.

He earned his spurs in the early part of his career as a track specialist before turning to road racing: "I never found the process of going to road racing hard at all. I'm someone who can be coached, so it came easily to me. If it was a question of having to lose weight for the tour, then it was just something I did."

After coming fourth in the 2009 Tour de France, Sir Bradley started to be taken seriously as a road-based rider. But it wasn't until joining Team Sky in 2010 (recently re-named Ineos under new sponsors) that he embarked on his most impressive era of success.

"I know it means a lot to other people that I won the tour and Olympics in 2012, but I wouldn't be a very good person if those were the things that were the most important to me in my life."

.....

Bradley Wiggins: An Evening With is presented at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Friday 20 September.

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Land of Pope & Glory

ARMONICO CONSORT & BAROQUE PLAYERS
THE ENGLISH CORNETT & SACKBUT ENSEMBLE

Director: CHRISTOPHER MONKS
Narrators: OZ CLARKE (28 Sept)
TIMOTHY WEST (4 Oct)

28th September, 7:30pm,
Collegiate Church of
St Mary, Warwick
01926 334418

4th October, 7:30 pm,
Malvern Theatres
01684 892277



Intimate evenings with Armonico – Handelian Pyrotechnics

ARMONICO CONSORT & BAROQUE PLAYERS

Director: CHRISTOPHER MONKS
Countertenor: WILLIAM TOWERS

3rd November, 4:30pm,
St Mary's Church,
Temple Balsall, Solihull
01926 334418



Carols by Candlelight

ARMONICO CONSORT

Director: CHRISTOPHER MONKS
Organist: ADRIAN LUCAS
Narrator: JULIAN GLOVER

18th December, 7:30pm
The Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick
01926 334418

20th December, 7:30pm,
Holy Trinity Church, Coventry 01926 334418



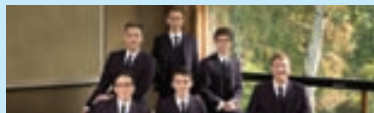
The King's Singers

THE KING'S SINGERS & AC ACADEMY SINGERS
VOICE SQUAD CHOIRS

Director: CHRISTOPHER MONKS
Composer: TOBY YOUNG

10th October, 7:00 pm,
Bushell Hall, Solihull School. 01926 334418

11th October, 7:00 pm,
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry. 02476 524524



Messiah

ARMONICO CONSORT &
BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Director: CHRISTOPHER MONKS

5th December, 7:30 pm
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry 02476 524524

21st December, 7:30 pm,
Malvern Theatres 01684 892277



J.S. Bach Mass in B Minor

ARMONICO CONSORT & BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Director: CHRISTOPHER MONKS
Soprano: ELIN MANAHAN THOMAS

1st February 2020 7:30pm,
The Collegiate Church of
St Mary, Warwick
01926 334418

8th February 2020 7:30pm,
Malvern Theatres
01684 892277





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Orchestra Of The Swan: The Carnival Of The Animals

Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sun 15 September

As well as being much admired for their championing of new music - having presented more than 70 world premieres - the Stratford-based Orchestra of the Swan are also held in high regard for their performances of works by legendary composers. And it's a piece by one such classical-music icon, Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns, which they showcase in this early-season concert...

Saint-Saëns described his *Carnival Of The Animals* as being 'such fun' to create that it had completely distracted him from work-

ing on his third symphony. Despite his love of the piece, however, he refused to allow its performance in public until after his death - he was concerned that its lightheartedness might detract from his status as a serious composer.

In the 98 years since he passed away - in 1921, at the age of 86 - *The Carnival Of The Animals* has become one of his best-known and most-loved compositions...

The Orchestra of the Swan is joined for this performance by narrator Matthew Sharp.



The Sixteen: The Choral Pilgrimage

St Philips Cathedral, Birmingham, Thurs 19 September

The Sixteen were formed by conductor Harry Christophers 40 years ago with the aim of providing a fresh insight into Baroque, early classical and more contemporary music.

Recognised as one of the world's greatest ensembles, with over 100 recordings under

their belt and numerous accolades to their name, they return to the Midlands this month to perform a concert featuring Sir James MacMillan's *O virgo prudentissima*. The piece is presented alongside music by Wylkynson, Sheppard, Tavener and Eric Whitacre.

Armonico Consort: Land Of Pope & Glory

Collegiate Church Of St Mary, Warwick, Sat 28 September; Malvern Theatres, Fri 4 October

Baroque consort Armonico - one of the largest organisations of its kind in the UK - uses authentic period instruments and regularly performs with some of the best solo musicians in the world.

Describing this month's concert as an 'enchanted journey through the extraordinary history of the Papacy', Armonico is joined in Warwick by wine writer and broadcaster Oz Clarke as narrator.

Actor Timothy West takes on the role for the Malvern concert next month.



CBSO: A Child Of Our Time

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 26 September

CBSO Music Director Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (pictured) kickstarts the orchestra's new season with a 20th century classic.

A strikingly original secular oratorio communicating a strong pacifist message, Michael Tippett's *A Child Of Our Time* was composed during the first two years of the Second World War.

The composer found his inspiration for the work in *Kristallnacht* - the Nazi government's pogrom against its Jewish population in 1938.

Perhaps best known for its most original feature - the use of African-American spirituals - and using a three-part format based on that of Handel's *Messiah*, Tippett's oratorio was well received when first performed and retains its status as a work of brilliant originality. The CBSO concert also features Benjamin Britten's *Sinfonia da Requiem*.



50 years of Ex Cathedra

The 50th anniversary celebrations of the moon landing and the Stonewall Riots have both received plenty of publicity this year, but there's another half-century being celebrated in 2019 too... Birmingham's Ex Cathedra is 50 glorious years old and still going strong - as What's On found out when we caught up with the ensemble's founder, conductor and artistic director, Jeffrey Skidmore...

Leading UK choir and Early Music ensemble Ex Cathedra celebrates its 50th anniversary this season with a jam-packed programme of great classical works. Its founder, Jeffrey Skidmore - awarded an OBE in the 2015 New Years honours list for his service to choral music - is both the artistic director and conductor of this extraordinary organisation.

"There are so many reasons why Ex Cathedra is different from other choral and orchestral groups," says Jeffrey. "The first thing is that the amount of time we've been going and continued to be popular is quite extraordinary. We also have a very interesting approach to the classical repertoire. We perform the great, iconic works alongside ones that are very old and have been somewhat lost, while also regularly commissioning new works. I think our programmes are always quite refreshing in that way. We have the most fantastic amateur and professional singers in Ex Cathedra, which is also supplemented by top-quality students, and we've just launched a graduate scholarship scheme. So that blend of professional, amateur and student is probably unique in the country in terms of choirs.

"We've always had an education part of Ex Cathedra. We work in schools, with communities, in hospitals and other healthcare facilities, so we're committed to making classical music and singing accessible to all. Singing is such an important part of people's lives and is fantastic for their physical and mental health. It brings joy to lives. There's so much scientific evidence to support the positive impact it has. Pop music is focused around singing rather than instrumental; at football matches, stadiums full of people sing their hearts out in support of their team. Singing is a basic human need, I think, along with nourishment and socialisation.

"Research is also an important part of what we do. We work with post-graduate students at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire to

research repertoire, including our particular speciality in French Baroque music. So putting all those things together, you get this special organisation that we have at Ex Cathedra."

The ensemble started as a small gathering of Jeffrey's friends: "Back when I was a sixth-former - just before I founded Ex Cathedra - I was singing in Birmingham Cathedral Choir. My great mentor, Roy Massey, didn't do much Renaissance music with the choir. I was a counter-tenor - a male alto - at the time and I loved Renaissance music, so initially I got a group of people together just to do that 16th century repertoire. Ex Cathedra grew out of that: just a few friends from Bournville, where I sang as a chorister and went to school, and a few older people from Birmingham Cathedral. When I went to Oxford for university, singers I met there came to Birmingham to join us. So, from there, it's expanded into the incredible resource we see today. Wanting to do Renaissance music was the initial spark, really."

Ex Cathedra will be celebrating its 50 years with a programme of old favourites and new commissions: "I've chosen five pieces that are amongst the greatest that exist in the choral repertoire and which have been particularly important in the 50 years of Ex Cathedra. We open our season with Rachmaninoff's Vespers, which we recently performed to a packed audience at Three Choirs Festival. Secondly, we have Bach Mass in B Minor, which is important to us as it launched our period instrument orchestra in 1983 - the first one of its kind outside London and which is still going strong.

"Next, we'll have Missa Solemnis, which is probably Beethoven's greatest piece but perhaps not that popular because it's a challenging work for both players and audiences. However, it's certainly his greatest piece as far as I'm concerned. We also did Missa Solemnis as part of our 25th anniversary

programme, so it's a piece we have a long history with and like to return to.

"Then comes Bach's St John Passion on Good Friday at Symphony Hall, which was the first of Bach's Passions we performed. Nowadays we do it with period instruments and a community choir, our Academy takes part in the liturgical reconstruction, and it's proved very popular. We're always trying to make this great music accessible to everybody, either by taking part in it in some way or by hosting discovery workshops to help people get into it.

"Our fifth and final concert isn't in our brochure yet because we're still in the planning and funding stages, but it looks as though it's going to happen in July. It's a classical Indian weekend of music, which is a genre we've been doing for a while. Alec Roth, who's been our composer-in-residence for the last 12 years, has written us some great pieces. One, called The Traveller, uses translated sacred Indian texts and is performed by an orchestra, children's and community choir. We have the orchestra Britten Sinfonia coming from Cambridge to play for us, and Mark Padmore, who's a big name in the singing world, is going to be the tenor, so that will be our contribution to the Indian Classical Weekend."

Jeffrey is confident that Ex Cathedra's programme for this season has something for everyone, from the classical music connoisseur to those who don't know their Bach from their Beethoven: "I think our 50th anniversary season is brilliant. We're focusing on such important works, both to us and to our audiences. But mainly Cathedra's ability to understand a piece and communicate to our audience, to get across the meaning and feeling of the piece to those listening, is a really special skill.

"I think if you're a regular concert-goer you will love what Ex Cathedra have to offer. But

equally, if you're someone who's never been to any concerts, then Ex Cathedral is just as great. We get such positive feedback from people who've never been to a classical concert before but who end up finding our concerts really engaging and then go on to become big fans of classical. Ex Cathedral really is the place to start for newcomers willing to give classical music the chance it deserves."

Jeffrey is also the artistic director of the Early Music programme at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, a role which he continually links back to Ex Cathedral: "The Conservatoire is really going from strength to strength, particularly in the area that I work in with early music and period instruments, as Julian Lloyd Webber is very keen to develop this area. We have an extraordinary, distinguished team of musicologists at Birmingham Conservatoire, and next year we've attracted the Biennial International Conference on Baroque Music, which previously had been held in Salzburg and Paris and now is coming to Birmingham. The bid we had was so strong because of the interest and expertise in Baroque music based in Birmingham - Birmingham Baroque seems to have a lovely ring to it! My role, then, is to link what Ex Cathedral are and have been doing to what's going on at the Conservatoire. For example, we have four Student Scholars from the Conservatoire who sing with Ex Cathedral."

It's Jeffrey's strong desire to engage as many people as possible with classical music - particularly the younger generation - that really drives him on: "Getting great classical music across to younger audiences is my mission, really. If people, especially young people, don't have the opportunity of experiencing this music, then it will be lost forever. Creating an appetite for high-quality music is always on the agenda."

The poor state of music education in schools is a major concern for Jeffrey: "Funding is one of the biggest challenges for the classical music scene. Music education is really in a terrible fix in state schools, while in private, independent schools it's blossoming. But music is for everyone, and that sector of education needs some special attention and funding, so that those in state schools don't miss out."

“If people, especially young people, don't have the opportunity of experiencing this music, then it will be lost forever. Creating an appetite for high-quality music is always on the agenda”



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For more information on the programme for Ex Cathedral's 50th anniversary season, visit excathedral.co.uk

OCTOBER 2019

HIGHLIGHTS



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Muse

Arena Birmingham, Tues 17 September

Comprising Matt Bellamy, Dominic Howard and Chris Wolstenholme, rock band Muse released their eighth studio album, *Simulation Theory*, last year. Its predecessors include *Black Holes & Revelations*, *The 2nd Law*, *Absolution*, *The Resistance* and *Drones*, all of which made it to the number-one spot in the official UK charts.

Widely recognised as one of the best live bands in the world, Muse have won a clutch of coveted music awards, including two Grammys, two Brits and an impressive 10 NMEs.



Benji Kirkpatrick & The Excess

The Tin Music & Arts, Coventry, Tues 10 September

Best known for being part of big band folkers Bellowhead and folk trio Faustus, Benji Kirkpatrick has been furiously writing mate-

rial for his own project - Benji Kirkpatrick & The Excess.

Leading on guitar and both electric and acoustic bouzoukis, Benji is accompanied by ex-Header Pete Flood on drums and Pete Thomas (Megan Henwood and Jackie Oates) on bass.

Peter Hook & The Light

Coventry Empire, Sat 21 September

Former Joy Division and New Order bassist Peter Hook formed The Light in 2010, kick-starting a new chapter in what has been a busy and significant career. Back in the day, Hook's bass playing instilled the importance of rhythm in punk rock, helping to inspire a generation of dance-orientated new wave bands. He also DJed, compiled *The Hacienda Classics* and *The Hacienda: Acid House Classics*, and even wrote a book, *How Not To Run A Club*.

The band here perform New Order's *Technique* and *Republic* albums, as well as an opening set of Joy Division material.



Keane

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Tues 24 September

Keane return to the forefront of the music scene with new offering *Cause And Effect* - their fifth studio album, to be released on 20 September. One of Britain's best-loved bands, their four previous albums have all entered the UK charts at number one, accumulating 13 million-plus worldwide sales and 2.6 billion streams. Fronted by Tom Chaplin, the band achieved mainstream international success with the release of debut album *Hopes And Fears* in 2004.

The Len Price 3

The Marr's Bar, Worcester, Fri 6 September

A thunderous set of well-honed melodic nuggets played at breakneck speed, shiny pop hooks and chrome-glazed harmonies. So reads the Len Price 3's promotional material. Dig a little deeper, though, and you'll also find a rich, lyrical content full to the brim with acid-tongued social observation. Hailing from Medway and much admired for their dazzling live performances, they're here playing Worcester for the very first time.

Chantel McGregor

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 21 September

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 comments, 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.



Leamington Music Autumn Season 2019

Friday 4 October at 7.30pm
Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington
Esmé String Quartet
Haydn • Beethoven • Schumann

Tuesday 8 October at 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, Warwick
The Gesualdo Six
Music of the Heavenly Spheres

Friday 18 October at 7.00pm
Royal Spa Centre Studio, Leamington
Curzon Brass
From 17th-century Venice to the Jazz Age

Friday 1 November at 7.30pm
Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington
London Haydn Quartet
with Eric Hoeprich clarinet
Krommer • Haydn • Weber

Wednesday 6 November at 7.30pm
Christ Church, Leamington
Tom Pickles cello & Roman Kosyakov piano
Bridge • Beethoven • MacMillan • Rachmaninov

Tuesday 12 November at 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, Warwick
Musica Secreta
From Darkness into Light

Thursday 21 November at 7.30pm
Leamington Museum & Art Gallery
Andrey Lebedev guitar
Savours of Spain with Paella and Cava

Saturday 23 November at 11.30am
Unitarian Chapel, Warwick
Palisander Recorder Quartet
Family Concert - Beware the Spider!

Friday 29 November at 7.30pm
Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington
Talich String Quartet
Kalivoda • Dvořák • Beethoven

Tuesday 3 December at 7.30pm
Lord Leycester Hospital, Warwick
The Mellstock Band
Christmas Frolics

Tuesday 10 December at 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, Warwick
Stile Antico
A Spanish Nativity

Wednesday 18 December at 7.30pm
St Mark's Church, Leamington
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Moseley Folk & Arts Festival

Moseley Park, Birmingham,
Fri 30 August - Sun 1 September

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

New for 2019 is a rich programme of arts & crafts, comedy & cabaret, poetry & literature and talks & debates.

Line-up includes: Don McClean, Jake Bugg, Public Service Broadcasting (pictured), The Zutons, Richard Thompson, Lucy Rose, Edwyn Collins, Daoiri Farrell, Peggy Seeger.



Onboard The Craft

Stoke Prior Country Club, Bromsgrove,
Thurs 5 - Sat 7 September

Organised by Sonic Rock Solstice Events and set in the beautiful Worcestershire countryside, Onboard The Craft returns for an eighth year to present a programme of space rock, prog & blues.

Four days camping is included in the price of a weekend ticket, while children under 14 can attend free of charge when accompanied by an adult ticket purchaser.

Line-up includes: Evil Blizzard (pictured), Here & Now, Mr Strange, Under Groundhogs, Capt. Roswell & The Lost Alien Tribe, Dr Has-been, Joshua Burnell Band, Orange Clocks, Sonic Trip Project, Civilian Zen, Strip Search Tramp, Sister Sandwich, Second Sunset, Firegarden, Wood Demons, Spiral Navigators.



Stratford-on-Avon Music Festival

Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon,
Fri 13 - Sat 21 September



The Stratford-on-Avon Music Festival presents a week of high-quality chamber music aimed at the local community, with a particular focus on young artists. Strong local partnerships with established arts organisations are in place for 2019, not only to reinforce quality community participation but also to emphasise the festival's importance to the town's annual cultural offer.

Line-up includes: Roderick Williams and Christopher Glynn (pictured), Raphael Wallfisch Cello Recital, Aquinas Piano Trio and Rebecca Low, Midlands Youth Jazz Orchestra, Thibaut Garcia Guitar Recital, Gildas Quartet and Jack McNeill.

Bromyard Folk Festival

Bromyard, Worcestershire,
Thurs 5 - Sun 8 September

Taking place for the 52nd time, Bromyard's much-loved celebration of folk music is now a well-established tradition in and of itself. This year's event promises more than 170 hours of entertainment, with some of the finest national and international folk musicians headlining a programme that also includes workshops, sing-arounds, ceilidhs, dance displays, children's entertainment and a traditional craft market.

Line-up includes: Kathryn Tickell and The Darkening, Flook, Melrose Quartet, The Daoiri Farrell Trio, Jackie Oates and John Spiers, Les Poules à Colin, Edgelarks, Granny's Attic, Will Pound and Eddy Jay, Kelly Oliver (pictured), The Tweed Project.





CHILDREN OF THE REVOLUTION

T.Rextasy's lead vocalist and lead guitarist Danielz chats ahead of their Shrewsbury gig...

Why did you form T.Rextasy?

In 1992 I was an original musician who was promised recording deals from various companies but always let down at the last hurdle. I decided to form T.Rextasy and go out playing the music of Marc Bolan - an artist who I'd always loved while growing up. As Marc died in 1977, I wanted people to experience the energy, excitement, the wonderful songs and performance he gave - always 100%. It was this that drove me to push the band as far as I could.

Did you ever see Marc and T.Rex Live?

Yes, I saw them four times; twice in Germany, in 1972 and '73 - my dad was in the Forces, so my family was based there for a few years - and then twice in England, in 1976 and '77. Marc's concerts were crazy - fans screaming and dancing, singing and shouting. They most certainly were *not* a serene affair! I try and recreate at least an atmosphere of those times - although at some venues times have changed and acting in that way is frowned upon! However, I do try to encourage fans to get involved with the gig as much as possible. It is a rock'n'roll gig, after all! My costumes are based on Marc's originals, and as I own some of his original clothing, I've been able to get some things made very close to them. We play, as Marc did, 100% live, raw and raunchy - just how T.Rex would've been back in the day. This is what makes the experience exciting. A few years ago, we even had an original member, Dino Dines (Marc's keyboardist) join the band, until his demise. I think having original members join a tribute band says a lot for our credibility and for us as a live unit, not to mention the fact we've received endorsements from Marc's own family and his record company.

What's your favourite T.Rex track?

This differs, as it's not the same as playing a favourite track live. My fave track of all time is a song called Metal Guru, but in terms of playing live, it could be one of many. Let's say for now that it's Get It On, as we do an eight-minute version that encapsulates the single and also how Marc played it live, with ex-

tended soloing and performance.

Tell us about your band members...

Well, there's me, Danielz - I take on lead vocals and lead guitar - Neil Cross - who plays rhythm guitar and does backing vocals - Rob Butterfield - who plays bass guitar and does backing vocals - and John Skelton, who plays drums and percussion. I'm very fortunate with my musicians, as they're skilful, loyal and love playing the music.

How do you prepare for a gig?

I try to get to each venue in good time, as I have a sequence of activities that I go through. On arrival, I go into my dressing room, unpack my clothing and make-up, and set it all out in order. I then go out to eat. It takes our roadie about 90 minutes to unload and set up all the equipment, then another 30 minutes for the engineer to mic up, so it gives us time to chill before sound-check. In the band, we all have our specific sounds that we require in each stage monitor. After that, we sort out the out-front sound. With our regular sound engineer, this normally takes only about 30 minutes, which is great. After sound-check, it's backstage to sort out my band merchandise, and then I normally play music on my I-Pod, which relaxes me while I'm putting on my make-up and changing into my stage clothing. Then I go to the side of the stage to check the tuning of all my guitars, and then, believe it or not, it's showtime!

What can an audience expect from one of your concerts?

Excitement, enjoyment and the chance to sing along, boogie, clap and shout. I don't mind if fans call out for a song - I usually oblige them by singing a couple of verses to them if it's a track that's not in the actual set. A bit of heckling doesn't go amiss either, as one-to-one contact with the crowd gives the evening an extra-special kick!

What do you enjoy most about the performances?

I absolutely love playing the songs of T.Rex. It's the actual buzz one gets from going on

stage and giving the audience a live experience. Fans are coming to have a good time, and when I see people smiling and doing just that, it makes it really worthwhile. I also love plugging my Gibson Les Paul into that amp and giving it some. There's nothing like it!

What have been the highlights of your career so far?

Playing Wembley Arena. We've done that three times over the years - and as it was Marc's biggest gig in the UK, it was a double-whammy for me to play there too. Another highlight was obtaining a major record deal with Columbia Records and releasing a couple of albums in Japan, which, in turn, enabled us to tour out there twice, on the second tour meeting up and chatting with David Bowie. Obtaining a publishing deal to write my autobiography was another highlight. I think I was the first guy in a tribute band to be approached by a publishing company to write about my life, which I was nicely pleased about. The book is called The Spirit Of Marc Bolan (Wymer Publishing). Then there was being called up by Marc Almond and recording a single with him called Death Of A Dandy, and then having it produced and mixed by legendary Bolan/Bowie producer Tony Visconti.

I think as well just gaining credibility with major original artists, meaning that they've appeared as our guests on stage, or we've been on the bill with them. So these include Slade, Roy Wood of Wizzard, Alvin Stardust, Shakin' Stevens, Steve Harley, Glen Matlock of the Sex Pistols, Boy George, Holly Johnson from Frankie Goes To Hollywood and The Sweet.

There are plenty of other highlights too, but that could well be a book in itself...

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T.Rextasy perform at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, on Saturday 7 September; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 18 October; Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Sat 19 October; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Thurs 28 November; The Robin, Bilston, Tues 31 December



Mawaan Rizwan Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 12 September

In the first year that stand-up comedian and actor Mawaan Rizwan made videos for YouTube, he accumulated one million views. In the second year, that number skyrocketed to more than six million...

The cause of the stark difference between those two totals was his mother, Shahnaz... Mawaan made a video with her in which the pair bantered back and forth, and it proved such a hit that they decided to make more. And then Bollywood came calling - for Mawaan's mum!

Shahnaz went on to become one of the most recognised faces in Asia after starring in a TV series called Yeh Hai Mohabbatein (This Is Love).

More recently, Mawaan's brother, Nabhaan, bagged the starring role in the highly acclaimed BBC television series *Informer* - and even Mawaan's dad has found his way onto the radio!

To his credit, Mawaan has taken it all in his stride and makes light of the way in which the rest of his family have seemingly accelerated beyond him on the rocky road to showbiz stardom.

Not that he's exactly doing too badly himself, mind, having not so long ago starred in the emotionally disturbing BBC drama, *Murdered By My Father*.

He visits Birmingham this month with his well-reviewed touring show, *Juice*.

Rob Rouse

Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury,
Fri 13 September

Boasting a plethora of TV credits, Rob Rouse peddles a hyperactive brand of humour that's much in demand.

"I'm hugely lucky not to have a real job," says Rob. "Something that essentially used to get me told off at school now earns me a living. There's stuff that I wasn't meant to say at school, or things that I wasn't meant to say at work, that I can now say on stage. I can arse about and say exactly what I want, regardless of how offensive people may or may not think it is. Without being churlish about it, it feels like a very healthy way for me to live my life."



Gary Meikle

The Place, Telford, Fri 20 September

Rising star Gary Meikle has had a real rags-to-riches life experience.

By the age of 16, he'd been kicked out of four schools, involved with gangs, packed off to a children's home by his mother and was drinking heavily.

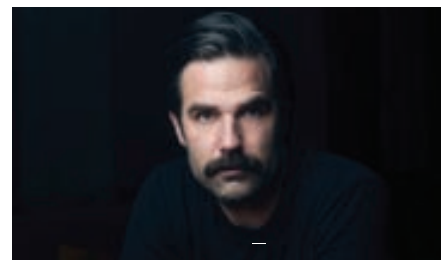
A one-night-stand led to the birth of his daughter, Ainsley, who now has a daughter of her own - Gracie. The three of them currently live together in Glasgow.

In recent times Gary has become enormously popular both on the comedy circuit - where he's even joked about his daughter's first period - and social media, where his rants about eyebrows, hair extensions and 'dick pics' have gone viral.

He's visiting the Midlands this month with his latest show, *The iBrow Guy*.

Rob Delaney

The REP, Birmingham, Mon 16 September



American comic Rob Delaney is best known on this side of the Atlantic for co-starring with Sharon Horgan in four series of hit Channel Four comedy *Catastrophe*.

He was also once voted the funniest person on Twitter. Rob bagged the accolade from Comedy Central for his clever line in gleefully juvenile and sometimes overtly sexual offerings.

At this point, we *could* reproduce his rude'n'crude Twitter musing on whether the contents of Catwoman's litter tray acts like an aphrodisiac on Batman - but we won't. Somewhat more palatable Twitter fare includes, "As far as I'm concerned, the scariest thing to come out of the Muslim world is algebra", and "WiFi at my uncle's funeral is a ****ing joke..."

Rob's movie credits include *Deadpool 2*, in which he played fan favourite 'Peter W.'. The newest member of the X-Force team of superheroes, he had no powers but "just responded to the ad".

Tape Face

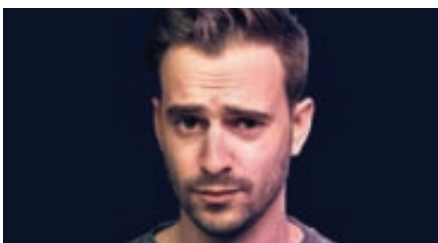
Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 19 September

Otherwise known as The Boy With Tape On His Face, hailed as a modern-day Buster Keaton and described as 'a mad scientist of vaudevillian pranks', there's no doubt that Canadian comedian Sam Wills brings something to the table which is just that little bit different. Mime with noise, stand-up with no talking, and drama with no acting are among the novelty numbers he peddles in his shows, which have also been known to include magic, puppetry and Motown. Oh, and references to the films of Patrick Swayze... Jonny Awsum supports.



Luke Kempner

The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, Sat 28 September; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Thurs 3 October; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 12 October



Puppeteer, dancer, singer, pianist, actor, impressionist and stand-up comedian Luke Kempner began his showbusiness career in musical theatre, playing Marius in the UK touring version of *Les Misérables*. Comedy-wise he's since made a name for himself on screen in shows including *Murder In Successville* and as resident funnyman on *Celebrity Big Brother's Bit On The Side*.

Luke is currently touring *House Of Faces*, a show about television that has plenty to recommend it but which hasn't met with universal approval. Critics have felt it contains so many references to TV programmes that all but the most ardent of telly watchers will struggle to keep up.

Romesh Ranganathan

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 26 September; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Saturday 16 November

With his support slots having included one for Ricky Gervais, it's fair to say former maths teacher Romesh Ranganathan has made a significant impact since bursting onto the comedy circuit in 2010.

It's all a far cry from his previous career in a Crawley classroom. "In the early days, I would be performing to eight people in a pub and my sixth formers would turn up," Romesh recalls in an interview with *Crawley News*. "I couldn't help but think, 'Oh God, this isn't going to end well'. It undermined my authority to tell the students off the next day, because it must've been hilarious for them to see me die on stage and think, 'I'm just going to heckle him now!'"

Romesh's latest show, *The Cynic's Mixtape*, is a carefully curated selection of all the things he's found unacceptable since his last tour. These include why trying to save the environment is a scam, why nobody is truly free, and his suspicion that his wife is using gluten intolerance to avoid sleeping with him.



Live At The RSC

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Thurs 12 - Sat 21 September

Proving that comedy at the RSC isn't confined to William Shakespeare's cobwebbed collection of 16th century witticisms, this two-weekend festival features some of the circuit's most well-respected comics. Among the better-known names contributing to proceedings are Bridget Christie & Milton Jones (pictured), Matt Forde, Suzi Ruffell, Zoe Lyons and Rory Bremner, while lovers of Edinburgh Fringe phenomenon *Showstopper!* can enjoy watching a brand new musical comedy being created from scratch.

Rounding off the festival is Adam Kay, about whose act a watching Stephen Fry once 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 here presenting his latest touring show, *This Is Going To Hurt: Secret Diaries Of A Junior Doctor*. Expect splendidly silly spoof songs and some seriously shocking stories from the NHS frontline...



A portrait of actor Shane Richie, dressed in a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. He has a serious, slightly pouting expression and is looking off-camera to the left. His hands are clasped together, adjusting his tie. The background is a plain, light grey.

LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU

**Shane Richie brings Archie Rice to life in
updated version of iconic play**

John Osborne's *The Entertainer*, widely considered to be among the greatest plays of the 20th century, is this autumn touring for the first time ever.

West End and EastEnders star Shane Richie talks to What's On about playing the character of Archie Rice, one of the most iconic roles in British theatre...

Written by John Osborne in the 1950s, *The Entertainer* tells the story of washed-up music hall star Archie Rice. A performer long past his expiry date, Archie is struggling to negotiate the changing sociopolitical landscape of the mid-20th century...

Heading out on tour for the first time ever, *The Entertainer* has been updated somewhat - to the 1980s - and unfolds against the backdrop of the Falklands War and Margaret Thatcher. The production is directed by Sean O'Connor and stars Shane Richie - best known as EastEnders' Alfie Moon - in the title role.

"The *Entertainer* really is like nothing you've ever seen before," says Shane. "If you don't have a sense of humour or you're easily offended, you might not enjoy it! It's a real tough piece - a real slice of social realism - and deals with sexism, racism, homophobia... all the things that are still around today to some degree. Most of all, though, it's a thrill to watch because it'll really get your back up and show you how much society has or hasn't changed socially and politically over the last 30-odd years. If I wasn't in it, I'd want to see it!"

Archie Rice is a role that's been earmarked for Shane for over a decade: "I was approached by the director, Sean O'Connor, about 12 years ago. He spoke to me about it when we met while I was working on *EastEnders*. I was too young at the time, so he told me he'd wait until I was in my mid-50s because he was sure I'd make a great Archie Rice. So I guess I've been clock-watching since then!"

"The characters I've played in the past have been likeable, whether that be Alfie Moon or on *Benidorm*. To play Archie Rice, who's so out of step and such a total opposite, goes against everything I've ever learnt as a performer. Obviously, when you go out on stage as a stand-up comic, you want people to like you. Archie Rice doesn't care whether you like him or not, and he goes against all my principles. I like stretching and challenging myself, pushing how far I can take the character, so that's also why I wanted to play Archie. I'll also be following in the footsteps of the likes of Laurence Olivier, Robert Lindsay, Michael Gambon, Kenneth Branagh - it's a

real thrill and an honour."

Shane has no worries about the update from the '50s to the '80s: "If you've never seen the original, it won't matter. This is almost like an entirely new piece all on its own in terms of the setting. Whereas the original is set against the backdrop of the Suez Crisis, this version deals with the Falklands. A lot of people who were around in the 1980s will remember that the face of comedy was really changing then. We had new, upcoming sitcoms like *The Young Ones* and *Spitting Image*, and comics like Archie Rice just became dinosaurs overnight. So *The Entertainer* is basically about how Archie can't seem to cope with that and just loses his s*** really!"

Shane thinks the play really resonates in 2019: "It seems that every 30 or so years there's great social and political change. I think we're in that place now, just like we were back in the '80s with Margaret Thatcher's government, the Trades Union disputes and the Falklands. I feel like *The Entertainer* allows us to question and explore how much we've actually moved forward. It will be interesting to see if those who come and see it think we've progressed that much or not - so in that way, it's really exciting.

"Back in the day, *The Entertainer* came out as a real state-of-the-nation play, off the back of John Osborne's other major work, *Look Back In Anger*. Osborne was a real maverick. He was part of a group of playwrights who made theatre for and about the actual working class. He turned that on its head, though, and made stark social commentary by putting a mirror up to the audience. So the play was really relevant back then, and I think we can still see a bit of ourselves in it now."

Given the wide-ranging nature of his show-business career, it's fair to say that Shane himself is something of an 'entertainer'. His CV includes stand-up comedy, straight acting, and performing in the West End as a drag queen...

"I've just finished playing Hugo - also known as drag queen Loco Channel - in *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*. Hugo is a character at the complete opposite end of the spectrum from Archie Rice. *Everybody's Talking About*

Jamie is all about diversity and embracing everyone, regardless of differences. Archie is the polar opposite. He's racist, homophobic, sexist - so far removed from the subject matter of *Jamie*. I've loved having the opportunity to play both characters this year, as it's really exciting for me to do such different projects."

Playing Archie Rice seems to have brought Shane's career full-circle: "I started off as a jobbing actor at the age of 15 or 16. I did a couple of seasons in holiday parks, where in between acting jobs I had a stand-up act. So coming towards my 20s, I was performing in pubs, clubs and anywhere I could, just to keep my head above water. So that's where it started for me. Playing a character like Archie Rice now is really interesting because I've seen him; as I was starting off my career, the careers of people like Archie were coming to an end."

Shane has every intention of going one better than Archie by remaining in-demand: "When this tour is over, I'll be doing panto - another completely different role. Then next year I'll be going on tour with *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*, and then I'll hopefully get to have a holiday. I know that *Tootsies* has just opened on Broadway, and I'd love to be in it if it came over here to the UK. I'd also love to play Sweeney Todd."

For now, though, Shane is concentrating on *The Entertainer* - and firmly believes that audiences should grab the opportunity to see the production with both hands: "This show has never toured the UK before, and there's a reason for that - it really is asking the audience who we are as a society. In the show, I'm doing some very different stand-up to what I've ever been used to, so it'll be interesting both for me and the audience. *The Entertainer* really isn't to be passed up!"

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The *Entertainer* shows at Malvern Theatres from Monday 9 to Saturday 14 September; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 7 to Saturday 12 October; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Tuesday 15 to Saturday 19 October; and Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, from Monday 18 to Saturday 23 November.



Cabaret

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 3 - Sat 7 September;
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 22 - Sat 26 October;
Malvern Theatres, Tues 19 - Sat 23 November

When a show visits the region which, between its stage and screen versions, boasts multiple Oscars, BAFTAs and Tony Awards, it makes sense to get along and check it out. Cabaret is one such show. John Partridge here takes on the role of Emcee, with Kara Lily Hay-

worth stepping into the lead part of the legendary Sally Bowles, a nightly performer at the infamous Kit Kat Klub in early-1930s Berlin. Featuring 'show-stopping choreography, dazzling costumes and some of the most iconic songs in musical theatre' - including, of course, the famous title number - Cabaret is helmed by National Theatre Artistic Director Rufus Norris and choreographed by the Olivier Award-winning Javier de Frutos. Veteran song & dance star Anita Harris also features.

Blood Brothers

Birmingham Hippodrome,
Mon 30 September - Sat 12 October

Although it's effectively a class-driven 'scouse melodrama', to describe Blood Brothers as such is to greatly underestimate the emotional response it produces within its audience. The show features adult actors playing children, a narrator who wanders through the scenes with warnings of impending doom, a good helping of sharp social awareness to counteract the sticky sentimentality and a raft of much-loved musical numbers, including Bright New Day, Marilyn Monroe and the emotionally charged Tell Me It's Not True. It's also one of only three musicals to have been performed more than 10,000 times in the London West End.



Gaslight

The Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham,
Mon 30 September -
Sat 5 October

Bella Manningham's life is a fun-free zone. Losing her mind and feeling trapped in her gloomy home, she sits alone each night dreading the sound of footsteps from locked and empty rooms, waiting for the gaslight to dim.

When a stranger arrives one evening with a terrifying tale to tell, Bella must work out whether her visitor is really there to help, or whether she herself is about to descend into a pit of madness from which she may never return... Martin Shaw stars in this brand new production of Patrick Hamilton's classic play.

The Lovely Bones

The REP, Birmingham, Fri 6 - Sat 21 September

This poignant human drama, based on Alice Sebold's best-selling novel, concerns a murdered girl who watches from heaven as her family attempts to cope with their devastating loss... Featuring adult themes and a soundtrack combining 1970s favourites with original music, the production makes a welcome return to The REP after scoring a major hit first time round.





What a way to make a living...

Dolly Parton musical heads to Brum



The touring version of Dolly Parton's 9 To 5 The Musical stops off in the Midlands this month. What's On caught up with one of its three leading ladies - Amber Davies - to talk about meeting Dolly, the production itself and her 2017 success on hit reality TV series Love Island...

Inspired by the cult 1980 film starring superstar Tennessee country singer Dolly Parton - who's written the production's score - feel-good comedy musical 9 To 5 is a show which Dolly would surely suggest y'all should go see this month, y'hear...

"Dolly is very much involved in the show," says one of the touring production's lead actors, Amber Davies - best known for winning hit reality TV series Love Island in 2017. "9 To 5 is about three very different women whose boss's awful behaviour towards them brings them together. Although they work in the same place, the women are taking very different paths in life: you've got single mum and recent widow Violet; my character, Judy, who's completely heartbroken and turns up having never had a job before because she's only ever been a housewife; and Doralee, the character that Dolly played, who is judged purely on her appearance despite having a heart of gold. It's very much a musical about female empowerment and is full of surprises and real comic moments."

In the wake of the Me Too movement and the gender pay gap revelation, Amber believes 9 To 5's serious side is just as relevant now as it was when the film was released nearly 40 years ago: "I think to a certain extent we've come a long way, but in other ways we still have a long way to go. There's a bit of an ironic joke in the show where Violet says that the sexism these characters deal with probably won't even be an issue in 10 years' time - and yet here we are staging 9 To 5 in 2019 and it's still relevant today. But I always love the audience's reaction at the end of the night - we send them out of the theatre on a real high because this show really illustrates what women can achieve when they come together. We definitely highlight issues of equality, but in a lighthearted way."

And can we expect a country score in 9 To 5?

"Dolly wrote a new song especially for the West End cast called Hey Boss, which definitely has a country twang to it. But there are all kinds of different styles and genres in the show. I've got a great, heartfelt ballad number, but there are also fun songs in there, like

the title track itself. What's so great about Dolly's score is that each song has such depth to it. For example, Doralee has a number called Backwards Barbie that really expresses her feelings about the way people view her based on her appearance."

Meeting Dolly Parton was a surreal experience for Amber: "If you'd have told me last year that I'd be working with Dolly, I would've laughed at you! Dolly is one of the show's executive producers, so she's had so much more involvement than people would ever imagine. If there was even a tiny change in the script, it would have to go through her. She really wants everyone involved in the show to do well, so the first night when she came to watch, she was just as nervous as the rest of us."

"When I went out to Nashville to meet her, her advice to me was that no one is ever in competition with anyone apart from themselves, which is so true. You should never compare yourself to anyone else because everyone's timeline is so different. Considering how famous and iconic Dolly is, she was just so down-to-earth and lovely. I'll certainly be taking her advice forward with me."

Musical theatre has always been a big part of Amber's life. Her sister, Jade, has appeared in a whole host of famous stage shows, including Les Misérables and Andrew Lloyd Webber's Phantom Of The Opera.

"My sister is a role model for me and set the bar when she got offered her first West End role. She helped me believe that it was possible. Obviously, it's extremely difficult to get to the West End, but you just have to get your one break, so I was always hopeful. I had the most amazing year on Love Island, but I just really, really missed being on stage. Performing brings me so much joy."

"I believe everything happens in life for a reason. I think I was meant to go on Love Island when I did, and now I've gone full-circle to being back doing what I love. It was scary accepting the challenge of being in 9 To 5, but it's just a joy to be a part of."

While Love Island definitely helped boost Amber's profile, she's fought hard to prove

herself in the musical theatre world: "Love Island definitely helped give me a platform, but I've also been really keen to prove to people that I haven't just got where I am in my career because of that. I'm here because I genuinely deserve to be; I've worked incredibly hard to get into professional musical theatre, just like all the other performers have. The reaction I get from the audience is always so positive. I get a lot of tweets congratulating me and saying that they'd definitely judged a book by its cover, so couldn't believe how great I was. It's just so, so lovely to read."

Amber hopes the future will prove to be even more exciting for her than the present: "I think at the moment I'm very grateful and content with where my career is going. I really can't wait to tour. I don't have many commitments - no boyfriend, no children - so it really is the best time for me to do it. I really do want to continue doing musicals, and Broadway is a massive goal for me. I would also like to keep my face on telly, whether that be presenting or acting. TV work is definitely something that I have in my sights. I just need to make my contacts and wait for the right role to come along. I'm really not one to rush into things - I don't take the job if I don't think it's for me."

So which roles in the world of musical theatre would Amber most like to play?

"Just like every other musical theatre student, I'd love to play Elphaba [in Wicked]. It's such a strong role, but I'm maybe a little too young for that at the moment, so it's one for the future. I love any feelgood musical - like Hair-spray, for instance. I'd make a great Amber Von Tussle, which I actually got offered just before I went on Love Island. It would be amazing to go full-circle and actually get to play that role. Rumour has it Mean Girls and Pretty Woman are coming to the West End, too - both musicals I'd be really interested in doing because I know I'd have so much fun!"

9 To 5 The Musical shows at The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, from Friday 6 to Saturday 14 September.



Stardust

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Sat 14 - Sat 21 September

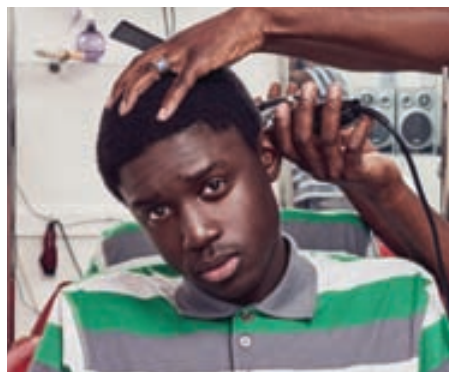
This is British theatre's first ever South Asian theatrical production to feature same-sex marriage. Presented by well-established performing arts company Phizzical, Stardust follows British-Asian singer Amar's struggle to make his mark as a mainstream performer. While on his journey towards what he hopes will be real stardom, he discovers a long-lost star of the 1980s' Bollywood music scene - and finds that events soon take a rather chilling turn...

Speaking about the show and its inclusion of same-sex marriage, Stardust's director, Samir Bhamra, said: "I'm an ally of the LGBTQI+ community and have actively supported some of their campaigns. When I look at the world around us today, reading the results of surveys and talking to people, I am discovering that sexuality is becoming more and more fluid, and that people are more open and accepting of their identities. We still have a long way to go to remove the impact of several centuries of colonisation, though."

Barber Shop Chronicles

The REP, Birmingham,
Thurs 26 - Sat 28 September

The value and importance of the barber shop in the lives of African men is explored in this critically acclaimed play from Inua Ellams. While the main action takes place in a south London barbers, the story also drops in on haircutting premises in Lagos, Johannesburg, Harare, Accra and Kampala. The play's series of intertwining vignettes cleverly illustrates the way in which the barbershop is so many things to so many people - from a political platform and confession box to a preacher-pulpit and newsroom... The Olivier Award-winning Bijan Sheibani directs.



Jane Eyre

Malvern Theatres, Tues 24 - Sat 28 September

Blackeyed Theatre are the company behind this latest stage version of Charlotte Bronte's classic novel. For those not up to speed with the story, it follows the orphaned Jane as she's sent by her cruel Aunt Reed to the bleak Lowood School. On securing a position as governess at Thornfield Hall, Jane finds herself falling for the charms of enigmatic master Edward Rochester, unaware that the new object of her affection harbours a dark and terrible secret...

The Hound Of The Baskervilles

Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham,
Mon 2 - Sat 14 September

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

This time out, Dr John Watson is Dr Jane Watson and the two actors presenting the tale are determined to make it as fun and farcical as

possible. And if London Mayor Sadiq Khan's appraisal of the show is anything to go by - he called it the cultural highlight of the year - then the duo have obviously succeeded in their intention. Although they do wonder if maybe the mayor had had a few too many to drink on the occasion he shared his opinion!

The Fizzogs: Back In Our Day

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
Mon 9 September

Black Country laughter merchants The Fizzogs make a welcome return with their internet sensations The Dancing Grannies, presenting a production that charts the elderly trio's fabulous friendship, from the 1940s right through to the present day. "Our shows are riotous, poignant and nostalgic," say The Fizzogs, "but most of all, they're hysterically funny. Even the BBC like us and said that if they had the money you'd see us on the telly box."

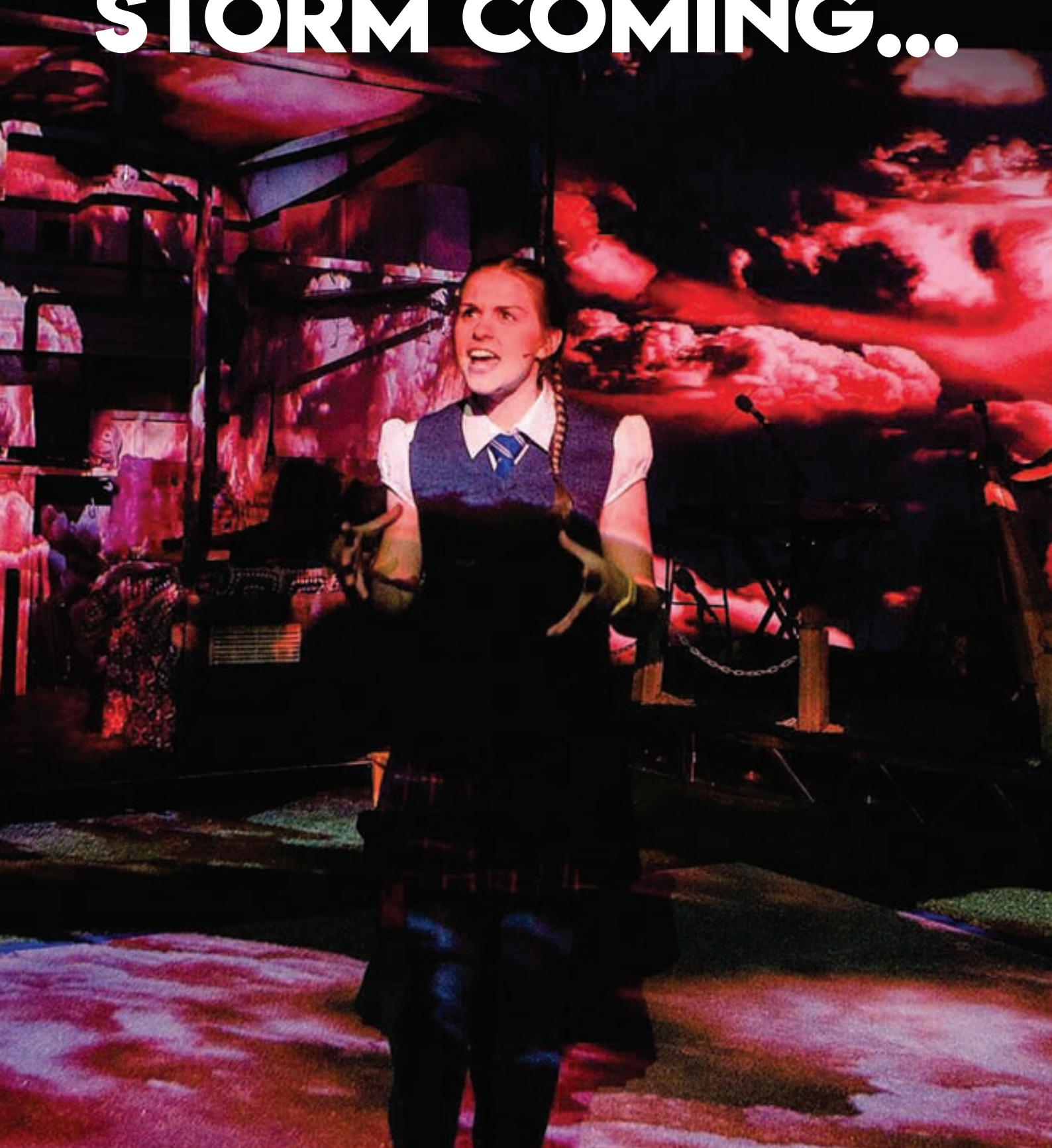




EXPERIENCE THE *magic of live theatre* AT WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE



**THERE'S A
STORM COMING...**



Eye Of The Storm is a ground-breaking climate change musical about the whirlwind world of a young carer who dreams of becoming a stormchaser in America...

The family show is a collaboration between Grammy-winning songwriter Amy Wadge and South Wales theatre company Theatr na nŌg. We spoke to Amy and Theatr na nŌg's director, Geinor Styles, to find out more about the show...

Although Eye Of The Storm is an award-winning family musical that confronts weighty issues including young carers, the climate emergency and the worrying decline in the number of girls studying science, songwriter Amy Wadge is determined to ensure that her music makes the show an uplifting experience for its audiences.

You may not know her name, but you will definitely have heard Amy's music. Her long-running songwriting partnership with Ed Sheeran has yielded numerous worldwide hits - as well as a Grammy award in 2016 for Thinking Out Loud. She has since worked with artists including John Legend, Kylie Minogue, Keith Urban and Camila Cabello.

Amy is excited about creating her first stage musical with South Wales company Theatr na nŌg: "You watch Stormzy at Glastonbury, where people are making a really strong point about something, about certain issues, but with music it's drip-fed in a way that feels exciting. And I think, emotionally, people who're going to the theatre are ready to be open to these things."

Amy and Theatr na nŌg's director, Geinor Styles, have just finished polishing off some new songs for Eye Of The Storm. After a short run in 2017, the show is returning for a UK tour this autumn. Amy is a woman in demand, so what did she find attractive about the idea of working on a project with a small, subsidised theatre company based in Neath?

"I knew of Theatr na nŌg and who Geinor was, but that was it, to be honest," she admits. "Thinking Out Loud had literally just come out, so life hadn't gone completely crazy yet, and I got an email asking if I wanted to provide some country songs for a show Geinor was developing. At that point I wasn't going back and forth to Nashville as much, so any chance I got to write country, I jumped on it. Geinor and I met and connected

straight away on the musicians we love."

The choice of a country-style songbook seems somewhat curious for a musical set mainly in a caravan park in South Wales.

"The main character, Emmie, dreams of being in America, chasing tornadoes," Geinor explains. "Driving those long distances, with that amazing landscape, it only ever seems to be country you hear on the radio there. The songs can be so poignant and yet really clever and ironic. Country tells a story within a song, so you don't have to play tricks with the audience."

Amy agrees about the choice of genre: "Obviously country is usually Texas or Tennessee or wherever, but there's something about Wales that, for me, lends itself to country music more than anywhere else in Europe. It's got a small-town vibe, and our character lives in a trailer park - albeit in Wales. The story talks about coming from nothing, and about hardship - the same stuff country music does."

Initially Geinor and her team developed Eye Of The Storm through drama workshops conducted with young carers in the Valleys and facilitated by Barnardo's: "One of the things they said to me was, 'Why would you do a play about being a young carer? We don't want to be labelled as that - you're not treating us as normal kids'. We then realised we needed to make the show about the aspirations of someone who just happens to be a carer."

The pressing problem of climate change has presented Geinor and Amy with a new creative challenge as they prepare to relaunch Eye Of The Storm two years on from its premiere. It was at that premiere that Louis Michaud, a Canadian scientist acting as the show's consultant, observed the power of the play's message.

Michaud's own invention - the Atmospheric

Vortex Engine, which artificially generates tornadoes - is being developed to create sustainable energies and features prominently in Eye Of The Storm.

"Originally all we wanted was for Emmie to be a girl with big aspirations who invents something to do with extreme weather systems," explains Amy. "It was only when Louis Michaud told us that what we'd done was create a climate change musical that we realised how important that aspect was. Since 2017, those issues have become a huge priority for all of us, and so we've tweaked a lot of the things about that. Emmie realises that what she does could change the world."

So does such heavy subject matter impinge on the process of creating an entertaining family-friendly musical?

"If you're clever about it, then you make something which, firstly, people will like and which isn't too preachy," says Amy. "It's not too highbrow but it says something. People accept messages in musicals much more these days."

Amy's recording studio is adorned with gold discs, numerous awards and framed photographs showing her hanging out with the likes of Stevie Wonder and Elton John. Could she be tempted away from the recording world again to write more musicals?

"I hope musical theatre features in my future. I've had offers, but it's a different challenge. In my usual job, I have to write to a strict brief and a record company will tell me 'this has to be a hit' or whatever, so to be given a script like Geinor's and to be able to do what I want with it...well, it was freeing. It's been a real gift."

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Eye Of The Storm shows in Birmingham Hippodrome's Patrick Studio next month, on Tuesday 8 & Wednesday 9 October.

Calendar Girls: The Musical

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
Tues 24 - Sat 28 September

Based on a true story, Calendar Girls tells the terrific tale of a group of women who spark a global phenomenon when they decide to pose nude for a charity calendar.

Tim Firth and Gary Barlow's award-winning stage version of the hit Julie Walters film stars Sarah Jane Buckley, Sue Devaney, Julia Hills, Judy Holt, Ruth Madoc, Lisa Maxwell and Rebecca Storm.



Theatre previews from around the region

Handbagged

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme,
Fri 6 - Sat 28 September

As you'd expect from an Olivier Award nominee, Handbagged made a significant splash when it debuted in the West End. It speculates about the relationship between Her Majesty The Queen and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, two powerful and iconic women who were born in the same year. But what did the pair really talk about behind closed palace doors?

The play was written by Moira Buffini in 2010 and was originally a one-act show. Buffini expanded it in 2013, since which time it's garnered plenty of praise from theatre critics and audiences alike. This new version is directed by the playwright's sister, Fiona.

Dangerous Obsession

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
Mon 9 - Wed 11 September

NJ Crisp's classic thriller finds Sally Driscoll being watched by a man through the window - a man who, while not a total stranger to her, is more likely to be remembered by her husband. Before too long, it becomes chillingly evident that the mysterious stranger has something more on his mind than simply making a social call...

The Merchant Of Venice

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon,
Mon 30 September - Sat 5 October

Undoubtedly one of Shakespeare's most difficult, complex and controversial works, The Merchant Of Venice follows the fortunes of

the unfortunate Antonio, who bets on a venture that fails to repay and finds himself forced to borrow money from Shylock, a man he detests... This 90-minute production (specially created for children aged seven to 13) is brought to the stage by 22 actors from the RSC's Next Generation Company.



Peeling

Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton,
Sat 28 September

Alfa, Beaty and Coral are fierce, intelligent female performers who, it seems, are always the chorus and never the lead. Why should that be? Perhaps because they're deaf and disabled performers - participants in a theatrical endeavour only because it allows the box of inclusivity to be ticked (even though the dressing rooms are inaccessible!)...

Kaite O'Reilly's acclaimed play, first performed in 2002, shines a spotlight on the issue of inclusivity, questioning who are the real beneficiaries of the policy and vigorously challenging societal expectations of deaf and disabled women.

Presented by the always-compelling Taking Flight theatre company.

Quentin Crisp: Naked Hope

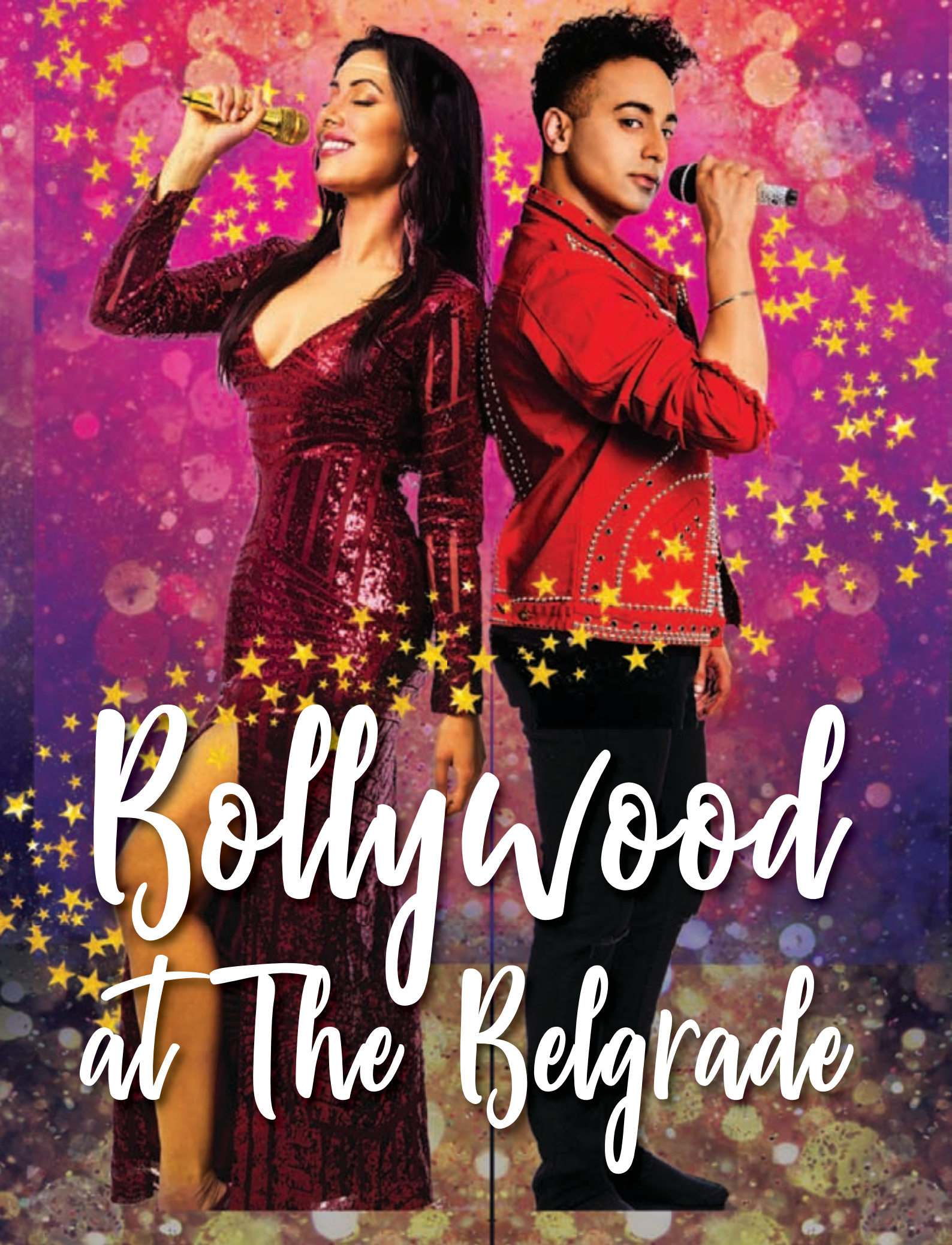
The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham,
Thurs 5 - Sat 7 September

This one-man show debuted to rave reviews at the Edinburgh Festival and depicts the legendary Quentin Crisp in two distinct phases of his extraordinary life: firstly in the late 1960s in his filthy Chelsea flat, where he surveys a lifetime of degradation and rejection; and then in New York in the 1990s, where, finally embraced by society, he regales the audience with his hard-earned philosophy on how to make the most of one's time on earth. "Life will be more difficult if you try to become yourself," he advises. "But avoiding this difficulty renders life meaningless. So discover who you are. And be it. Like mad!"

The production is written and performed by Mark Farrelly, whose next solo show will explore the life of controversial gay filmmaker Derek Jarman.







Bollywood at The Belgrade

South Asian performing arts company Phizzical are premiering their LGBTQ Bollywood musical thriller, *Stardust*, in the Midlands this month...

What's On spoke to director Samir Bhamra about the ground-breaking production and the importance of representing same-sex Asian relationships on stage...

South Asian performing arts company Phizzical is 15 years old in 2019 - and to celebrate, it's launching a 'thriller musical' entitled *Stardust*. The show is a first for the British stage, as it's the only South Asian theatre production to feature same-sex marriage.

Stardust was sparked by the marriage of director Samir Bhamra's brother - and by listening to the music of singer-songwriter Robby Khela.

"About 20 years ago, I adopted a young man as a younger brother," explains Samir. "After gay marriage was legalised in the UK, he and his partner wanted to marry. Unfortunately his parents didn't know that he was gay. I played a small part in supporting him and his parents, and it was a magical wedding; a meeting of two cultures. Literally a few weeks later, singer-songwriter Robby Khela shared a song with me. It reminded me of every emotion that I'd witnessed during my brother's wedding, and I immediately felt that we needed to make a musical about acceptance and love."

The influence of Bollywood is hugely evident in *Stardust* - and was also a factor in Samir's arrival in the world: "My mother was a big Indian cinema fan. When she was pregnant with me, her waters broke at the cinema while she was watching a Bollywood film. She named me after the character who was the hero of the film!"

As well as writing the songs, Robby Khela also takes the lead role in the show, playing the character of Amar. But Samir and Robby weren't the only creatives involved in the project: "*Stardust* has been in the making for almost a decade. Robby has written and produced a wealth of songs independently since 2008. We officially began working on this in 2013, collaborating with an incredible writer. Unfortunately the world was not ready for that story, so we made it into a short musical film, which we released earlier this year. It's been winning several awards at film festivals globally.

"Then, two years ago, we decided to take a different approach. We'd just finished our previous show, *Bring On The Bollywood*, and every venue wanted something similar, so we set about changing the story and introduced a Bollywood angle with emerging writer Shahid Iqbal Khan. Set designer Rich Evans

came on board in 2017, which we felt was important because *Stardust* relies heavily on design."

Stardust follows British-Asian singer Amar's struggle to make his mark as a mainstream performer. Amar discovers a long-lost star of the 1980s' Bollywood music industry, a woman called Amor. His journey takes a chilling turn when he discovers that Amor was silenced for uncovering an explosive secret involving Cyrus, her music producer and husband...

"We want audiences to immerse themselves in a pop, R&B and Bollywood thriller. *Stardust* is set in the music industry and features a mix of love, reincarnation and revenge."

A musical thriller is an interesting angle to take on a Bollywood-inspired production. Samir explains the choice: "When someone says the word Bollywood, you automatically assume kitsch dances, melodramatic scenes and colourful costumes. Unfortunately this is a terrible stereotype for a film industry that produces musical films in every genre. The kind of cinema and music produced changes with each decade. The films and songs reflect global politics. So we've pretty much set our minds to change the outdated perception of Bollywood in the UK."

Stardust also pays tribute to Bollywood's reincarnation genre...

"The reincarnation story has been told several times in some of the best Bollywood films. The first reincarnation thriller, *Mahal* (which translates as 'Palace'), was made by legendary director Kamal Amrohi in 1949. Then came possibly the best reincarnation romances - *Madhumati*, *Neel Kamal*, *Kudrat*, *Karz*, *Karan Arjun*, *Om Shanti Om* etc. Whilst we wanted to pay a tribute, our approach to the genre had to be very different, so we set about watching these films intensely to work out how we could be different. One of the things we found was that the films presented the notion that the soul has a gender. So the male characters are reborn as male and female characters as female. A lot of mystics and ancient South Asian poets contradict this notion and believe the spirit has no gender and is equal."

Samir has high hopes for *Stardust* when it premieres this month: "Aside from being the

director and co-writer, I originally commissioned this idea because I felt that we needed progressive stories on the British stage to reflect the Asian identity and the Bollywood experience. There have been some incredible plays reflecting Asian same-sex relationships, such as *Hijra* by Ash Kotak and *My Beautiful Laundrette* by Hanif Qureshi. However, we want to take our stories to the widest audiences in the deepest parts of the country - to inspire people, to move them and to thrill them until they leave hand in hand and happy."

So why the Belgrade for the premiere?

"The Belgrade and Coventry has been our second home since we brought a Bollywood version of William Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* to the city and theatre in 2013. And after the incredible success of *Bring On The Bollywood* in 2016, we literally moved in. With the eyes of the world on Coventry as the City of Culture 2021, and with the Belgrade this autumn presenting a season of productions about love and belonging, I couldn't imagine opening the show anywhere else."

Stardust reflects some of the issues facing the British-Asian community right now.

"Let's just look at what's happening in Birmingham, or search for the hidden stories of marriages of convenience, of gay men marrying women hoping for a cure, or worse, murdering them when the secret is discovered. And that's just skimming the surface."

Samir believes it's vitally important for South Asian theatre companies to represent the LGBTQ+ community: "It should be compulsory. I have always worked with the widest and most diverse creatives and actors, and have directed work that touches on the LGBTQI+ community - be it Pulitzer Prize-nominated play *A Perfect Ganesh* by Terrence McNally, *The Maids* by Jean Genet or Omar Khan's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, titled *What You Fancy*. It's about representation and inclusion."

.....

***Stardust* shows at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Saturday 14 to Saturday 21 September.**

THE EXORCIST

iconic horror takes to the stage...



The Oscar-winning 1973 film version of William Peter Blatty's novel, *The Exorcist*, was one of the 20th century's most celebrated and successful movies. Now, a theatrical version that premiered in Birmingham and created a significant stir in the West End is returning to the Midlands as part of a national tour. What's On caught up with the man who wrote the stage show, John Pielmeier...

Inspired by a true story, *The Exorcist* was a successful novel and Oscar-winning film. Now, a new stage production is coming to the Midlands direct from the West End.

The show has been written by the award-winning John Pielmeier, who finds it surprising that no one had considered making *The Exorcist* into a stage production before: "The story is incredibly theatrical. It essentially takes place inside a house, mostly inside one room, with a small number of characters. It's very contained physically, but it's absolutely boundless in an emotional and intellectual way.

"Being in the same room in which it's all happening is a very different, wonderful experience to seeing a movie. Being in front of living people reenacting something right before your eyes in a very present, tense way is an incredible experience."

John has known about the story since the early 1970s, when William Peter Blatty's original novel was published. But it was the second time he delved into the book, decades later, that it had a profound effect on him: "The novel was very interesting, scary and moving, but it didn't affect me as much the first time I read it as it did when I re-read it for this project. I took on the stage adaptation because I found so much of it related to my own inner life. It spoke to me as a person, and it was also something I felt I could comment on.

"Yes, it's a story about a 12-year-old girl who's

supposedly possessed by the devil. But it's really about struggles of faith; the struggles that her mother has with her own lack of faith, and those of the priest who's trying to help her. I think all of us have gone through situations where we've changed our beliefs in some way; times when we've lost faith or gained faith in something."

John is particularly excited by the visual aspects of the production, which help bring the story to life on stage: "It was incredibly exciting seeing it for the first time. Ben Hart, who's the illusions designer on the show, is absolutely brilliant. I'd say, 'Ben, this is what I was thinking' and he'd have an even better idea because he knows so much more about it than I do."

Taking an interest in exploring the supernatural through his work with *The Exorcist* has helped John explore the concept of faith: "I probably don't believe in the devil in the way that he's characterised in the play, but I think symbolically it's a very powerful thing. I've always been fascinated by asking questions about the supernatural and not so much about finding the answers. A lot of these things we can't know the answers to - that's why faith is about taking something without proof."

The demon in *The Exorcist* will be voiced by Sir Ian McKellen.

"What was so exciting about that, for me personally, was to be in the studio when he made

those recordings. I was watching Ian McKellen doing all this amazing stuff. That was terrific."

John is thrilled that *The Exorcist* will be touring the UK: "I think it's so important to take productions on tour around a country, to make these stories accessible to people both financially and in terms of proximity. I think so many stories, and especially *The Exorcist*, have something important to say.

"I hope audiences will be excited by *The Exorcist* and a little scared by it at times. They might get a few of those chilling moments. But I hope they will come away with a feeling that it's not just a horror story; there's so much more to it than that."

Having enjoyed an extensive, successful career writing plays, screenplays and novels - winning numerous awards into the bargain - is there anything John feels he has left to achieve?

"I try not to think of things in terms of achievement. What I want to achieve is to keep working and creating. Having my creations take form in a way that's beyond what I ever could've imagined from the words on my computer is the best I can hope for."

.....
***The Exorcist* shows at the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, from Tuesday 1 to Saturday 5 October, and at the Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, from Tuesday 15 to Saturday 19 October.**





Madagascar The Musical

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Wed 25 - Sun 29 September

The smell of the greaspaint and roar of the crowd has tempted the furry cast of Madagascar the movie to forsake New York's Central Park Zoo in favour of treading the boards on a UK tour.

The blockbuster DreamWorks film comes to life in The Potteries as Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe and Gloria the hip hip Hippo stampede their way into Stoke-on-Trent at the end of this month.

Imaginative sets and costumes are all present and correct in a show that producers promise will send your kids home positively wild. X Factor-winner Matt Terry stars.

Stick Man

The Place, Telford, Shropshire, Sat 28 & Sun 29 September; The Swan Theatre, Worcester, Tues 1 - Wed 2 October

"Freckle Productions send shivers down my spine," reveals Julia Donaldson, the co-creator (along with Alex Scheffler) of the hugely popular children's book on which this show is based. "They're so lively and innovative. I love their production of Stick Man, and so do the audiences."

Julia's not wrong - audiences most definitely do love the show, as a smash-hit season in the London West End ably demonstrated. Featuring a trio of talented performers, the production brings together puppetry, songs, live music and 'funky moves' to tell the story of Stick Man's desperate attempts to get back to the family tree... The show is suitable for children aged three and older.



Hey Diddle Diddle

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Sun 29 September; Sparc Arts Centre, Thur 10 October, Bishops Castle, South Shropshire

If your youngsters have ever asked you how the cow jumped over the moon or why the dish ran away with the spoon in classic nursery rhyme Hey Diddle Diddle, you can now

point them in the direction of this brand new show to find out the answers.

Presented by Goblin Theatre Company, the production brings together puppetry and music in a 50-minute entertainment created for children aged three and older.



Dear Zoo Live!

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sun 8 - Tues 10 September; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sun 22 & Mon 23 September; Malvern Theatres, Tues 8 - Wed 9 October; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Mon 21 - Tues 22 October; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Wed 13 - Thurs 14 November

First published in 1982, Rod Campbell's lift-the-flap book has delighted generations of children and accumulated in excess of eight million sales worldwide.

This first-ever stage version of the story features child-friendly puppets, original music and lots of audience participation.

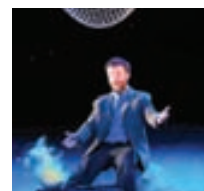
First Stages: What A Wonderful World

The REP, Birmingham, Sat 14 September

The ever-impressive Lyngo Theatre make a welcome return with a show created for

children aged between two and five.

This time round they're taking their audience on an 'amazing romp' through the universe. Starting with 'putting the stars in the sky', then creating life and discovering fire, they finally arrive at the one-world tree, 'where we celebrate the new home that we made all together'.



Safari Adventure

The Old Rep, Birmingham, Sun 15 September

A blend of action, songs, live music and audience participation should ensure this high-energy production is a real, er, *roaring* success of a show. The McDougalls - otherwise known as award-winning performers Ryan Moir and Ruairidh Forde - are off on safari to find some colourful creatures and critters. And find them they most certainly do, with laughing giraffes and monkeys who go bananas among the many and varied animals adding to the musical magic and mayhem. Young audience members (and older ones, for that matter!) are encouraged to come along dressed as their favourite animal.





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**IMAGINE A TIME
WHEN LOVE IS
FORBIDDEN...**

Sir Matthew Bourne brings a contemporary dance reimagining of Romeo And Juliet to the Midlands this month. What's On talks to him about his dystopian interpretation of Shakespeare's famous tale of forbidden love - the first new production from his New Adventures company in three long years...

There aren't many, if any, more distinguished figures in the dance community than Sir Matthew Bourne, whose choreography has featured in musicals, theatre productions and movies for more than 30 years. His own company, New Adventures, brings a new production of Romeo And Juliet to Birmingham this month. Shakespeare's classic tale of star-crossed lovers appears to be the perfect fit for the passionate and expressive art form of dance.

Combining Bourne's choreographic expertise, an adaptation of Prokofiev's famous score and a story by the world's greatest-ever dramatist, the production promises to be a show-stopping interpretation of one of literature's most famous tragedies.

"I avoided doing Romeo And Juliet for years," explains Matthew. "I think it was something everyone expected me to do, and it had been done in so many different ways in so many different mediums. I thought it would be hard to find a new way into it, which is something I always search for. The thing that really made me want to do it was the opportunity to work with young people. It's a story about them, and about young love. I got even more excited when it was suggested we cast it with young people and work with young creative associates in all the different departments of the show, alongside my usual world-class team. It's all about nurturing young talent and telling the story."

The intense tale of love at first sight, family feuds and death is one that works well as a dance piece: "The medium is very good at extreme emotions, and Romeo And Juliet as a story is certainly full of those. It has passion, love against the odds, and several extremes of murder and violence. It's all those big emotions. Shakespeare captured it very well.

"Young people are very hot-headed and react very quickly to things. One thing I've tried to bring out is that when young people first fall in love and feel that passion, they really go overboard in many ways. I often think about how classical ballet handles this, and how the

young girl gets very excited by a kiss on the cheek. Young people today, if they're into each other, are kissing until their mouths are sore. I have tried to capture that intensity."

Matthew's desire to stage Romeo And Juliet in a new and thought-provoking way led to him setting his production in a dystopian world where love is forbidden...

"It's set a little way into the future, but it's not quite futuristic. It's a time when society is frowning on young people having the excess of feeling and emotion which sends them off on wrong tracks as far as that society is concerned. I got the idea from Arthur Laurents, the co-creator of West Side Story, who was asked why the young people in it are violent and act the way they do. He said that they have too much feeling and need to find a way to release it. I thought that was an interesting way into the story and very true. It made me go in the direction I went in."

Matthew's vision even meant that Prokofiev's magnificent score had to be tweaked for the production: "While it's wonderful and lush for big opera-house productions, I wanted something a bit more earthy and a bit more quirky. We nervously went to the Prokofiev Estate and asked them if we could do a new arrangement. It's very faithful to Prokofiev's and it's only 15 musicians who multi-task and play lots of different instruments. It's quite rare for us to take an orchestra out on tour with us, but it's sounding wonderful and I hope the Prokofiev Estate is happy. It's a very recognisable score and that is really the script that we work with."

This world premiere tour of Romeo And Juliet follows a similar model to Matthew's Lord Of The Flies tour, in which the production was used to support emerging dancers by having them perform alongside New Adventures' professionals. Three of the young men from Lord Of The Flies have been cast in Romeo And Juliet, while others in the new production formed part of Matthew's 2019 Swan Lake company.

At each venue on the Romeo And Juliet tour, six up-and-coming dancers - three male, three female - will work with New Adventures: "They're an integral part of the show, not just token appearances. They're part of the main company. Our success stories from Lord Of The Flies have gone through several programmes that we run to nurture young British-trained dancers. We're very proud of those young guys, and we hope that this time we will bring into the fray some women who we've nurtured. We hope that will mean that even more people who started in Lord Of The Flies or Romeo And Juliet will come back into the company."

New Adventures have certainly had a stellar year so far, putting on four major productions, including company favourite Swan Lake. And Matthew himself has also enjoyed major success, being recognised at the Olivier Awards for his services to dance.

"It's been amazing. Swan Lake coming back is always a thrill because it introduces so many more people to dance and to our company. It always has an incredible effect on audiences around the country, and our casts are so devoted to it. Then, getting the Olivier Special Award right in the middle of creating a new show was rather good because the award can feel a bit like it's the end of your career and people are saying, 'Thank you, please stop'. So it felt great to be in the middle of a new creation like Romeo And Juliet. This year has been about the past and the future at the same time."

Despite his early misgivings about staging Romeo And Juliet, Matthew is very positive about his vision for the production: "What started out as quite a scary project involving so much untested talent and so many unknown young people has ended up being rather an exciting new show."

Romeo And Juliet shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 10 to Saturday 14 September.

Dance previews from around the region



Birmingham Royal Ballet

Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 19 - Sat 21 September
& Wed 25 - Sat 28 September

Hippodrome-going dance lovers get not one but two chances to enjoy productions by the ever- exceptional Birmingham Royal Ballet this month.

BRB first take to the stage with a triple bill showcasing their collaboration with award-winning ensemble Ballet Black, a company dedicated to increasing diversity in the genre.

The bill opens with the fourth Ballet Now commission, *A Brief Nostalgia*, choreographed by young Queensland Ballet dancer Jack Lister and composed by Tom Harrold.

The evening also features performances of Cathy Marston's *The Suit* (pictured left) - an award-winning work about a broken marriage - and Twyla Tharp's *Nine Sinatra Songs*...

BRB then return four days later with David Bintley and Galina Samsova's highly acclaimed production of *Giselle*, a ballet which, along with *Coppélia* and *Swan Lake*, is one of the most celebrated of the 19th century.



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ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND



James Wilton Dance: The Storm

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham,
Wed 25 September

The award-winning James Wilton's choreography is always distinctive, his productions powered by an energy the audience can almost reach out and touch.

Wilton's in-demand company previously scored a massive hit with *Leviathan* - a retelling of Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* which was widely considered to be the ensemble's best and most finely tuned work to date.

Wilton here makes a welcome return with *The Storm*, a show that combines acrobatics, breakdancing and martial arts with a soundtrack of thundering electro-rock.



Rosie Kay's Fantasia

Patrick Studio, Birmingham
Hippodrome, Wed 25 & Thurs 26
September

Rosie Kay's Midlands-based company here present a work that perfectly illustrates why they are so highly regarded on the UK dance scene. Featuring three female dancers and a soundtrack comprising works by Vivaldi, Purcell, Beethoven and Bach, *Fantasia* fine-tunes choreography with neurological research to explore the relationship between dance, music and emotion.

BalletBoyz: Them/Us

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
Sat 14 September

The ever-inventive BalletBoyz this month return to the Midlands with two high-energy and impressively innovative works.

Contemplating the question of where individuals see themselves in relation to the 'other', the all-male company present their own creation, *Them*, alongside a second work called *Us*. The latter, choreographed by the award-winning Christopher Wheeldon, has been inspired by the critically acclaimed duet which he created for the company's highly acclaimed 2017 production, *Fourteen Days*.



Diversity: Born Ready

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, 21 September;
The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham,
Fri 1 - Sun 3 November



With eight sell-out tours under their belt and more than half a million tickets sold, it's fair to say dance troupe Diversity have made the most of their 2009 success on Britain's Got Talent. The boys are this autumn visiting the region with 10th anniversary tour *Born Ready*. It's a show which creator and choreographer Ashley Banjo says "will not only look back at some of the iconic Diversity moments of the past 10 years, but will also look forward to the future, at how Diversity continues to evolve and how we plan to pass on what we've created to the next generation."

"Be prepared for dance, illusions, mind-blowing stunts and inspiring stories in a show that will hopefully leave people amazed!"



BALLETBOYZ

All-male troupe bring innovative
double-bill to Theatre Severn



Award-winning dance ensemble BalletBoyz bring their production, Them/Us, to the Midlands this month. What's On caught up with long-serving dancer Harry Price to talk about the show and the company's approach to classical dance...

Co-founded by ex-Royal Ballet dancers Michael Nunn and William Trevitt, BalletBoyz burst onto the UK dance scene in the year 2000. The male-only group has since played an important role in revolutionising classical dance by focusing much more on its fusion with the contemporary.

Their contribution hasn't gone unnoticed either, with numerous coveted awards coming their way, including the National Dance Award for Best Independent Company in 2013.

"I'd dreamed of being in BalletBoyz ever since I was in training," says Harry Price, a dancer approaching his fifth season of working with the ensemble. "It's a company I always aspired to be a part of, so I was thrilled when I got the job. Since then, BalletBoyz has continued to captivate me because we're constantly evolving and changing. We create a lot of original work, collaborate with different musicians and artists, and work with new choreographers. We have such a wide span across the arts industry, meaning that as dancers we're given amazing opportunities. This year we even performed at Glastonbury! Plus, we've done the West End and Edinburgh Fringe."

Harry believes it's the ability of BalletBoyz to evolve that's the key to the company's success: "We're constantly pushing the boundaries and aiming to take a fresh approach to contemporary ballet. BalletBoyz is always committed to doing something new and is constantly adapting to do so. In that way, I think we're keeping ballet very relevant. Regular audience members say that they always know our show will be great, but they never know quite what to expect. It's a good thing that we're consistently surprising audiences and expanding our horizons."

BalletBoyz's latest production is a double-bill entitled Them/Us.

"The first half, Them, was actually created by us, the dancers - we worked together to come up with the piece. We've got a real sense of ownership of it, which is really lovely. It's a really fun piece, and because we've created it,

it seems to have all of our different personalities shining through in there. Charlotte Harding, who created our accompanying score, was actually in the studio with us while we were choreographing, so it was a really collaborative process. And I think that's very evident in terms of how well the movement of the dance and the music marry. We're also wearing lovely shiny '90s tracksuits, which is fun to see!

"The second half, Us, is by Chris Wheeldon. He's predominantly known as a classical ballet choreographer, so there's a real contrast in style. Our half is a lot more contemporary and Chris's is a lot more traditional, with more classical elements, but obviously still with that contemporary edge BalletBoyz is known for. The Us piece concludes with a duet that was choreographed for us by Chris back in 2017. So for this production, we extended the duet into a full-group piece. It's been really nice to return to and revitalise something we'd already done."

Them/Us is about relationships forming and breaking on stage, particularly between groups and the individual.

"Like with all our shows, the story is very much open to audience interpretation. The show is just as much for them as it is for us. A BalletBoyz production is really about what each individual takes away from it. I guess the title of Them/Us alludes to the contrast of the two pieces, and the fact that they're choreographed by different creatives. A lot of people have said that, in Us in particular, there's this idea of the outsider character, and of exploring what it means to be part of a group or to be excluded from it. That's definitely a theme that runs through both pieces."

Harry believes Artistic Directors Michael Nunn and William Trevitt have had an in-company piece in their sights for a number of years: "I think it was just a case of waiting for the right timing and the right group of dancers. They obviously thought it was a great time to go for it. They've seen that when we do work with choreographers we take a

very creative stance. It's always a risk, though, because in-company creations have a history of not working so well. But I think this one's worked out!"

BalletBoyz prides itself on its mix of dancers: "We're all so different, with such different personalities and backgrounds. Some of us are trained in classical dance, others more in contemporary, and some didn't start dancing until much later in life than you might expect of a professional dancer. It's for those reasons that we all have such different visions, making the company so successful and the creation of Them sometimes a little problematic. But we're all very close and incredibly proud of how the piece turned out."

Even when working with renowned choreographers such as Christopher Wheeldon, Javier de Frutos and Craig Revel Horwood, the BalletBoyz dancers are able to get creative: "Working with Christopher was like a dream come true. I was trained classically so was very aware of his work. That's another thing I love about BalletBoyz - our approach to working with big-name choreographers is very collaborative. I've never worked with a choreographer at BalletBoyz who's had no room for movement; it's always a conversation, with free rein to put ourselves into the piece."

Harry hopes that contemporary ballet companies such as BalletBoyz are able to encourage more people to attend ballet performances: "BalletBoyz prides itself on being very accessible. We've had people who've never seen ballet before give very positive feedback after our shows - even those who were sure they wouldn't like it. One of the company's main goals is to create dance that's for everyone, so we definitely banish those misconceptions of ballet being stuffy. So I would encourage anyone who's worried about not liking traditional ballet to push that from their minds and come to see BalletBoyz!"

.....

Them/Us shows at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, on Saturday 14 September

What's On Readers' Awards 2019: Best Midlands Arts Festival & Best Birmingham Arts Festival

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The Goldfinch

CERT 15 (149 mins)

Starring **Ansel Elgort, Oakes Fegley, Aneurin Barnard, Finn Wolfhard, Sarah Paulson, Luke Wilson, Jeffrey Wright, Nicole Kidman**
Directed by **John Crowley (USA)**

Adapted from Donna Tartt's 2013 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, this drama follows the odyssey of a 13-year-old boy, Theo (Oakes Fegley, and later Ansel Elgort), whose mother is killed in a terrorist bombing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Out of the wreckage, Theo finds a painting of the eponymous bird that becomes a source of hope for him through his spiralling feelings of grief and then guilt. Nicole Kidman is already being tipped for an Oscar nomination in the category of best supporting actress. John Crowley's last film as director was the Bafta-winning *Brooklyn* (2015).

Released Fri 27 September

CRITIC'S CHOICE

Film highlights released in September...

It: Chapter Two CERT 15 (169 mins)

Starring **James McAvoy, Jessica Chastain, Bill Hader, Isaiah Mustafa, Bill Skarsgård**
Directed by **Andy Muschietti (USA)**

When the second version of Stephen King's *It* opened two years ago, it became the highest-grossing horror film of all time, eclipsing even *The Sixth Sense* and *The Exorcist*. A sequel, then, was inevitable. The new movie is set 27 years after the first, with the young losers from the original now all grown up and ready to face the evil clown Pennywise all over again... But, be warned, the film is 169 minutes long.

Released Fri 6 September



The Shiny Shrimps

CERT 15 (103 mins)

Starring **Nicolas Gob, Alban Lenoir, Michaël Abiteboul, Geoffrey Couët**
Directed by **Maxime Govare and Cédric Le Gallo (France)**



When an Olympic swimmer makes a homophobic comment on TV, he is disciplined by the national swimming body and forced to coach an up-and-coming and flamboyantly gay water polo team. It sounds loopy enough to be true, but is actually a fictitious comedy and a huge success in its native France.

Released Fri 6 September

Honeyland CERT 12a (87 mins)

Directed by **Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov (Republic of Macedonia)**

A fly-on-the-wall documentary filmed in Macedonia, *Honeyland* is a unique contemplation of the fragile balance of nature. Its central character is a solitary woman who lives in harmony with her surroundings, harvesting wild honey and caring for the bees which she finds in a symbiotic relationship. Then she is invaded by new neighbours who want in on her act...

Released Fri 13 September



Hustlers CERT tbc (107 mins)

Starring **Constance Wu, Jennifer Lopez, Julia Stiles, Keke Palmer, Lili Reinhart, Cardi B**
Directed by **Lorene Scafaria (USA)**



Based on an article in New York magazine, Hustlers focuses on a group of strippers that struggles to find new ways to support themselves when the sex industry is hit by the financial crisis. But where there's a will...

Released Fri 13 September

Phoenix CERT 15

Starring **Ylva Björkaas Thedin, Maria Bonnevie, Sverrir Gudnason, Casper Falck-Løvås**
Directed by **Camilla Strøm Henriksen (Norway)**

At just 13, Jill (newcomer Ylva Björkaas Thedin) has taken on the role of sole carer for her close-knit family, including her younger brother and unstable mother. Threading in elements of fantasy, Phoenix has received glowing reviews for its debutante director, the Norwegian actress Camilla Strøm Henriksen.

Released Fri 13 September



Rambo: Last Blood CERT tbc

Starring **Sylvester Stallone, Paz Vega, Sergio Peris-Mencheta, Adriana Barraza, Yvette Monreal**
Directed by **Ric Roman Waugh (USA)**

Now 73, John J Rambo heads to Mexico to save a friend's daughter from the clutches of a local drug trafficking cartel... This is the fifth chapter in the Rambo franchise which kicked off with First Blood in 1982.

Released Thurs 19 September



The Farewell CERT PG (100 mins)

Starring **Awkwafina, Tzi Ma, Diana Lin, Zhao Shuzhen, Lu Hong**
Directed by **Lulu Wang (USA)**

Actress and rapper Awkwafina has been a scene-stealer in such films as Ocean's Eight and Crazy Rich Asians and now has the lead in this comedy-drama filmed in Changchun, China. She plays Billi, a Chinese-American writer who discovers that her beloved grandmother has been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. So she heads home for a planned goodbye celebration, while her grandma is kept in the dark about her imminent demise.

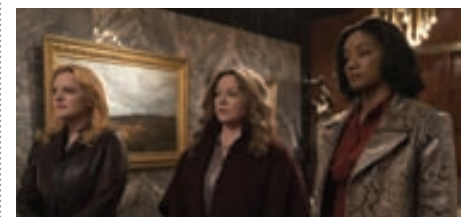
Released Fri 20 September

The Kitchen CERT 15 (89 mins)

Starring **Melissa McCarthy, Tiffany Haddish, Elisabeth Moss, Domhnall Gleeson, James Badge Dale, Margo Martindale**
Directed by **Andrea Berloff (USA)**

With their husbands no longer in the picture, the wives of certain gangsters take the law into their own hands in the Manhattan neighbourhood of Hell's Kitchen. And Hell hath no fury... In spite of the presence of Melissa McCarthy, this is no laughing matter.

Released Fri 20 September



Ad Astra CERT tbc

Starring **Brad Pitt, Tommy Lee Jones, Ruth Negga, Liv Tyler, Donald Sutherland, Kimberly Elise**
Directed by **James Gray (USA)**

When Roy McBride (Brad Pitt) sets off to the outer edges of the solar system to find his father, he inadvertently threatens the

status quo of earth's place in the cosmos. For his sci-fi mystery, the director James Gray went to huge pains to present the most realistic look at space travel yet committed to screen. Incidentally, the title is Latin for 'to the stars.'

Released Wed 18 September

Hotel Mumbai CERT 15 (123 mins)

Starring **Dev Patel, Armie Hammer, Nazanin Boniadi, Tilda Cobham-Hervey, Jason Isaacs**
Directed by **Anthony Maras**
(USA/India/Australia)

A dramatic reworking of the documentary *Surviving Mumbai* (2009) which covered the 2008 terrorist attack at the Taj Mahal hotel in Mumbai. Dev Patel plays a waiter who risks his own life to save the patrons he serves.

Released Fri 27 September



The Last Tree CERT 15 (98 mins)

Starring **Tai Golding, Gbemisola Ikumelo, Nicholas Pinnock, Denise Black, Sam Adewunmi, Jammal Ibrahim**
Directed by **Shola Amoo** (UK)

Although of Nigerian heritage, young Femi (Golding) suffers major culture shock when he moves from the Lincolnshire countryside to inner-city London to be with his mother. He is now faced with some major life choices.

Released Fri 27 September

Poms CERT 12a (113 mins)

Starring **Diane Keaton, Jacki Weaver, Pam Grier, Celia Weston, Alisha Boe, Phyllis Somerville**
Directed by **Zara Hayes** (UK/USA)

Aimed squarely at the grey pound, this comedy-drama is about a gaggle of women at a retirement home who form their own cheer-leading squad. The title refers to the brightly coloured pom-poms used by cheerleaders.

Released Fri 27 September



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Downtown Abbey

CERT PG (122 mins)

Starring **Hugh Bonneville, Jim Carter, Michelle Dockery, Elizabeth McGovern, Maggie Smith, Imelda Staunton, Penelope Wilton, Matthew Goode, Tuppence Middleton**
Directed by **Michael Engler** (UK)

Scripted by Julian Fellowes and with most of the original cast returning, this *Upstairs/Downstairs* soap should guarantee a huge audience of devoted followers of the

TV series. Here, the Yorkshire country estate is graced with a visit by HRH King George V (Simon Jones) and Queen Mary (Geraldine James), which will undoubtedly cause much excitement and a crash-course in regal etiquette for all concerned. Imelda Staunton joins the cast as Lady Bagshaw, which will be nice for her husband, Jim Carter, who reprises his role as the head butler, Mr Carson.

Released Fri 13 September

Ready Or Not CERT 18 (95 mins)

Starring **Samara Weaving, Adam Brody, Mark O'Brien, Henry Czerny, Andie MacDowell**
Directed by **Matt Bettinelli-Olpin and Tyler Gillett** (USA)



On her wedding night, a young bride discovers that her new in-laws are off their respective trolleys as they involve her in a perilous game of hide-and-seek. Expect some pretty explicit violence.

Released Fri 27 September

Skin CERT 15 (120 mins)

Starring **Jamie Bell, Danielle Macdonald, Daniel Henshall, Bill Camp, Vera Farmiga**
Directed by **Guy Nattiv** (USA)

In a remarkable transformation, Jamie Bell plays the heavily tattooed skinhead and white supremacist Bryon 'Pitbull' Widner whose path of destruction is stalled when he meets the love of his life. Inspired by the 2011 documentary *Erasing Hate* (2011).

Released Fri 27 September





British Ceramics Biennial in the China Hall of the original Spode Factory site. Photography: Joel Fildes

British Ceramics Biennial

Various venues in Stoke-on-Trent,
Sat 7 September - Sun 13 October

An expanded programme of exhibitions, installations and events featuring more than 300 contemporary artists should ensure that the 10th anniversary of this hugely popular free festival is celebrated in fine style.

Taking place across six venues, the event has as its centrepiece the vast China Hall, located in the former Spode Factory.

The Hall features 13 exhibitions and hosts not only a number of workshops but also the festival's two flagship shows. The first, entitled Award, features new work by 10 leading ceramic artists, all of whom are vying for prize money of £10,000.

The second, Fresh, showcases a selection of pieces by some of the UK's most promising ceramics graduates.

Work by celebrated artists from other ceramic biennials around the world is also available to view.

Wolverhampton Art Gallery Tim Mara: Not Pop?

21 September 2019 - 29 March 2020

This exhibition presents work by Irish artist Tim Mara, bringing together items from the Gallery's collection and loans from his family and Advanced Graphics London. Featuring prints, sculptural works and ephemera from across Mara's career, the exhibition highlights his virtuosity as a printmaker and explores his associations with Pop Art.



Tim Mara, *The Second Room (detail)*, 1971-3. ©The artist's estate



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Thoughts On Portraiture

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, until Mon 18 November

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery's autumn exhibition provides visitors with a rare chance to view an impressive range of expressionistic artworks from the city's collection.

Exuding a palpable psychological intensity, the pieces explore the experiences, beliefs, fears and passions either of the people who created them or

of those who are depicted.

Many of the artworks on view are receiving their first public outing, taking up positions alongside a number of favourites not seen for some time.

The exhibition includes artwork by, among others, Pablo Picasso, Ana Maria Pacheco, Frank Auerbach and the Birmingham-born David Bomberg.

Barry Flanagan

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham,
Wed 18 September - Sun 24 November

Welsh artist Barry Flanagan was best known for his bronze sculptures of animals; in particular, hares, but also cougars, elephants and horses. For many art critics, these iconic creations seem to be at odds with Flanagan's earlier pieces, which saw him using materials including rope, sand, cloth and stone.

This latest exhibition of his work seeks to challenge this popular viewpoint, demonstrating that his later output does not in fact display any sort of marked shift in his approach. Instead, it represents the distillation of what was a decades-long fascination for him - with ontology, with movement and with the physicality of the various materials in which he worked.



Jim Holyoak & Matt Shane: The Hills Are Shadows

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Sat 21 September - Sun 24 November

This is the 20th collaboration between Jim Holyoak and Matt Shane, Canada-based artists best known for presenting large-scale dream-like pieces which expand across entire walls during the course of their exhibitions...

And Jim and Matt are producing just such

an artwork at Midlands Arts Centre this month and next. The pair will be on site for the first five weeks of their show, creating a new drawing that will grow from the other exhibition pieces and weave its way across 12 metres of gallery space.

Amalia Pica

New Art Gallery, Walsall, Fri 20 September -
Sun 19 January

British/Argentinean artist Amalia Pica is best known for producing installations and sculptural works which explore forms of communication and realms of civic participation.

Her latest presentation, a major solo exhibition, aims to explore the material culture of bureaucracy, as exemplified by shredded paper and items of office stationery.

Pica uses her personal experience of obtaining British citizenship - and the wider context surrounding the UK's exit from the European Union - to provide a unifying conceptual framework for her show.

"Every now and then, there is a moment when things fall together and events string into narratives," says Amalia in explaining her art. "In such a moment, things appear to make sense - but, like any moment, it's temporary. It's that sense of time as something lived and fleeting that I try to capture in my work. My art comes together to exist, to make sense of something or of itself, and then to fall apart."

BIRMINGHAM WEEKENDER IS BACK!

Birmingham Weekender is back - and for the 2019 edition, the festival has set up home in Digbeth, the city's creative quarter. Featuring a FREE programme of dance, music, art and performance - presented by some of Birmingham's leading artists and arts organisations - the three-day event takes place from Friday 4 to Sunday 6 October. Check out a few of this year's highlights below...



Dance

Dance Hub Birmingham presents work from dance artists across a range of disciplines, each responding to the unique Digbeth location.

Dance meets projection in Sonia Sabri Company & Cirque Bijou's Kindred, bringing nature and technology together... Join Altered Skin for It's Your Round, combining dance with a pint and a chat at The Old Crown... Experience two b-boys colliding at the Custard Factory in a collaboration from Jamaal

O'Driscoll and Marius Mates...

And get a flavour of some of the best professional dance currently being made in the city by checking out Birmingham Dance Network's Introducing.

Jamaal Birkmar, Carlos Pons Guerra and Birmingham Royal Ballet also make contributions not to be missed.



Performance

There's a competitive edge to performance at this year's Weekender. Birmingham Hippodrome present DJ Pyskhomantus' VisionBombing Game Show, which sees the city's hip-hop artists compete in a number of game formats - think hip-hop meets A Question Of Sport with a bit of The Krypton Factor thrown in for good measure! Weekender visitors also get to decide the Grand Prize winner of internationally celebrated performance artist Symoné's Fierce Flow, which brings New York's '80s voguing culture to Digbeth.





The Glue Collective

For children

Families are warmly welcomed to Birmingham Weekender In Digbeth (see the website for any specified age guidance). Some events are designed specifically with children and young people in mind. Highlights include experimenting and exploring with The Glue Collective in their yurt, which offers a quiet, safe space where children and adults of all ages can make

potions and mud pies. Birmingham Repertory Theatre, meanwhile, invites youngsters to explore the classic story of Peter Pan through an action-packed workshop of games and drama. Other attractions for families to enjoy include Think Tank's Science Garden, which can be visited for free throughout the weekend, and a Digbeth-based workshop hosted by the Barber Institute of Fine Arts.

Music

Birmingham Weekender In Digbeth features concerts, pop-up performances and musical workshops. Join master drummer Ansoumana 'Vieux' Bakayoko for an African drumming workshop, or check out the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's classical concert, directed by one of the world's most celebrated violinists, Dmitry Stikovetsky. World music pops up too, as Sampad and Eastside Projects join forces to present the

unique South Asian sound of Kefaya, performing alongside percussionist Bernhard Schimpelsberger. And if you fancy a blues adventure, Big Bear Music's Leaving Mississippi Birmingham Bound is the show to catch. Tracing the history of the blues, from the cotton fields of Mississippi, through Memphis, New Orleans and Chicago, to rock, heavy metal and Birmingham's Black Sabbath, the production is presented over the three nights of Weekender.



Big Bear Music

Street Arts

Break Mission present a weekend of hip-hop events featuring dance, music, street sports and art. There's an international dance competition too, DJ and rap battles both indoors and

outside, and an open skate tournament. A street sports showcase includes some crazy BMX stunt riders and Parkour free runners. Throughout the weekend Live Graffiti will add to Digbeth's much-loved graffiti walls.



Break Mission

Art

Digbeth is the spiritual home of the city's thriving contemporary art scene. For Birmingham Weekender In Digbeth, galleries are opening their doors to present special exhibitions and performances - so why not dare to try something new at Eastside Projects, Grand Union Gallery

& Studios, Vivid Projects or Centrala. You can also roll up your sleeves and Play With Clay with Sundragon Pottery, add your welcome to Redhawk Logistica's A Million Welcomes, and check out the latest gaming innovations at Birmingham Open Media's Hacked! exhibition.



Eastside Projects

Discover Digbeth

Digbeth is fast developing a reputation as the coolest place to be. In this post-industrial area - just a short walk from Bullring and Moor Street Station - contemporary art galleries, music venues, artists' studios, street food vendors, cafes, restaurants and even an independent cinema rub shoulders with small industrial businesses, universities and colleges.

Discover Digbeth for yourself by joining professional West Midlands writers BOLDtext on a sometimes giddy, often unhygienic theatrical walking tour aimed at uncovering the area's hidden history. Expect to be guided through childhood memories and ushered past passionate exchanges on a one-hour stroll. Alternatively, drop by on Friday night as Birmingham Weekender joins up with the popular Digbeth First Friday for an evening of late-night openings and free performances.

You can find full listings and programme information at birminghamweekender.com

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Peaky Blinders Festival

Digbeth, Birmingham, Sat 14 & Sun 15 September

The first official Peaky Blinders-themed festival takes place this month, allowing the show's creators, stars and fans to come together in the series' home city and create what promises to be an imaginative immersive event.

Attractions across the weekend include live recreations of Peaky Blinders scenes, fashion shows and five different music stages.

Artists confirmed for the festival include Scottish rock band Primal Scream, Mercury Prize-nominee Anna Calvi, Slaves and Nadine Shah. There's also a BBC Introducing stage and a host of music performances reflecting one of the sharpest soundtracks on television. The festival has been co-curated by the show's creator, Steven Knight, and also features a live Q&A with the man himself and some of the series' stars.

British Science Festival

Various venues throughout Coventry,
Tues 10 - Fri 13 September

In partnership with the University of Warwick, the British Science Association brings an imaginative programme of science & culture events to various venues around Coventry this month.

The event is Europe's longest-established science festival, celebrating world-leading research in areas including energy, transport, healthcare and digital innovation. Highlights include a workshop on the art of Persian dance and numerous talks exploring the politics of scientific issues.



Science Of The Circus

Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham,
Sat 14 September



Roll up, roll up, the circus is coming to Thinktank! Combining the wonder of performance with the underlying science that helps create the magic of the circus, this unique event sees the ever-brilliant CircusMASH taking over Thinktank for the day.

Visitors can learn how science makes tricks easier to master, enjoy CircusMASH's brand new space-themed show, marvel at talented local performers and have a go at circus tricks while busying themselves exploring the museum.

HSBC Let's Ride

Coventry city centre,
Sun 8 September

Following the success of last year's event, British Cycling and HSBC make a welcome return to Coventry this month, providing thousands of locals with the opportunity to explore their city from the saddle. The event aims to build excitement in the run-up to the UCI World Championships and ties in closely with local cultural attractions.



Midland Game Fair

Weston Park, Staffordshire,
Sat 14 & Sun 15 September

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

The event showcases a wide range of rural attractions, including clay shooting, gundog competitions, falconry displays and ferret racing.

There's plenty of musical entertainment to enjoy as well, with folk, jazz & blues, Celtic and country stages all featuring.



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A Place In The Sun Live

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 20 - Sun 22 September

The official exhibition of Channel Four's popular series, A Place In The Sun Live is the perfect event at which to negotiate the process of finding a property abroad.

More than 150 exhibitors will be flying in from

locations including Spain, France, Portugal, Italy and Florida to showcase a wide range of properties and answer potential punters' purchasing questions.

The stars of the TV show will be on hand to share top tips for overseas property hunting, while a panel of experts will take visitors through the ins and outs of buying a home abroad.



The Cycle Show

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 13 - Sun 15 September

The UK's biggest cycling event, The Cycle Show features the very latest bikes and accessories and gives enthusiasts the opportunity to discover all that's new in the industry.

Main-stage attractions include industry talks, interviews with professionals and the chance to pick up plenty of hints and tips about cycling - from how to get started to safety for families. Visitors to the 2019 edition of the show also have the chance to be among the first to test-ride some of the latest models.

The Trampoline & Tumbling Championships

Arena Birmingham, Sat 28 & Sun 29 September

With the Tokyo Olympics less than a year away, the gymnasts participating in this ever-popular event will certainly be looking to impress.

Olympic medal-winning trampolinist Bryony Page takes on stiff competition from Kat Driscoll and Laura Gallagher, while Nathan Bailey and Luke Strong go head-to-head for the men's trampoline crown.

Other attractions include the very best of Britain's DMT gymnasts, who'll be executing plenty of high-flying stunts to take your breath away.



Retro Truck Show

British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire, Sat 7 & Sun 8 September

This always-popular show is now in its ninth year and features up to 400 of the best trucks produced between 1970 and 2000.

A celebration of top truck manufacturers including Volvo, Scania, DAF and Foden, the event also features an indoor model show, live entertainment, a licensed bar and a Saturday night disco.



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Events previews from around the region



Imagineers: Bridge

Coventry City Centre,
Thurs 26 - Sat 28 September

Bridge is the latest large-scale project from the team behind the Festival Of Imagineers, Coventry's week-long annual celebration of art and engineering. The festival has collaborated with artists and civil engineers Arup to create the project, which sees its host cities taking part in

a programme of bridge building and artistic activity.

Crafted by engineers and turned into an audience-pleasing spectacle by artists and performers, the project features numerous pop-up events throughout its three days.

It climaxes on the Saturday evening with a show comprising theatre, comedy, circus acrobatics and live music.

Autumn Steam Gala

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley,
Nr Kidderminster,
Thurs 19 - Sat 22 September

Check out an array of home-fleet and visiting steam locomotives at Severn Valley Railway's ever-popular Autumn Steam Gala.

Attractions include: overnight running on the Friday and Saturday; an early-morning express from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth on the Friday and from Bewdley to Bridgnorth on the Saturday and Sunday; Eardington Halt open visits; and the chance to enjoy Paddock Railway & Coalyard Miniature Railway in steam.



The Glamping Show

Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire,
Thurs 19 - Sat 21 September

Glamping - a more luxurious form of camping - has become increasingly popular during the last few years and is now a prominent part of the leisure industry.

This annual show presents a wide selection of pop-up, temporary and pre-pitched accommodation solutions, including yurts, tipis and safari tents.

The show also offers a diverse range of seminars, presented by experts and suited not only to complete beginners but also those who're looking to grow and diversify their business.



Malvern Autumn Show

Three Counties Showground, Malvern,
Sat 28 & Sun 29 September

A weekend of home-grown family fun is in store at the Malvern Autumn Show this month. For green-fingered visitors, there's not only the chance to stock up on plants and bulbs for winter, but also an opportunity to glean some useful know-how from the gardening and floral experts in attendance - including Gardener's World presenters Alys Fowler and Joe Swift.

Other show highlights include the Giant Vegetables Championship, numerous floral displays, family fun & games such as mini-golf and giant Jenga, and a jam-packed dog show. New for 2019 is the Malvern Gin Show, featuring gin producers from across the three counties and beyond.



Step Back In Time

Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove,
Sat 28 & Sun 29 September



Travel back in time to 1459 and learn all about the Battle of Bewdley Bridge, as Avoncroft Museum transforms into a medieval village for the weekend. Visitors can enjoy watching skilled re-enactors, talk to knights, ladies and squires, and witness archery competitions and weapon drills. Highlight of the weekend is the jousting tournament, where skilled riders and their highly trained horses take part in one-to-one combat to win favour with the audience.

The weekend also offers plenty of opportunity to explore Avoncroft's 19-acre grounds and enjoy its collection of 30 rescued and restored buildings.



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Your week-
by-week
listings guide
September 2019

the list



Russell Howard at Resorts World Arena, Birmingham - Wed 18 & Sun 22 September

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

What's On

Sun 1 to Sun 8 September



Miranda Sykes at
Artrix, Bromsgrove
Fri 6 September

Mon 9 to Sun 15 September



Heritage Open Day at
Worcester Cathedral
Sat 14 September

Mon 16 to Sun 22 September



Friendsical at
Malvern Theatres
Mon 16 - Sat 21 September

Mon 23 to Mon 30 September



Mini Museum Engineers at
Coventry Transport Museum
Wed 25 September

THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER

Visual Arts

Artrix, Bromsgrove

NEW VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE Collaborative exhibition by Lickey Hills Art Society, Mon 2 - Mon 30 Sept

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

BIRMINGHAM IN THE 1980S: FILMS BY YUGESH AND SUNANDAN WALIA A trilogy of films which explored specific cultural moments and experiences for black and Asian communities in Birmingham: *Mirror Mirror*, 1980, until 8th Sept; *Sweet Chariot* 1981, 9 Sept - 13 Oct; *African Oasis*, 1982, 14 Oct - 18 Nov

HOME OF METAL PRESENTS BLACK SABBATH - 50 YEARS Exhibition celebrating the impact and cultural legacy of Black Sabbath, until Sun 29 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

A TEA JOURNEY: FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE TABLE Exhibition telling the story of how Britain's favourite drink became an everyday commodity, until Sun 22 Sept

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

SANCTUARY Exhibition by Hilary Beatrice, Fri 30 Aug - Sun 27 Oct

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

AN ENTERTAINMENT Exhibition showcasing the many entertainments on offer in Leamington over the past two centuries, until Sun 8 Sept

NEW ARTIST ROOMS: DIANE ARBUS Diane Arbus (1923-1971) is considered one of the great figures of American photography. The works in this

exhibition are drawn from the Artist Rooms collection, jointly owned by Tate and National Galleries of Scotland, Fri 20 Sept - Sun 1 Dec

Rugby Art Gallery & Museum

RUGBY COLLECTION 2019 This year's annual exhibition celebrates texture, pattern and colour, until Sat 7 Sept

NEW CYNTHIA CHANDLER Floor one exhibition, Sun 1 - Fri 13 Sept

NEW EMMA BARFORD Floor one exhibition, Sun 15 - Fri 27 Sept

NEW CALENDAR COMPETITION Floor one exhibition, Sun 29 Sept - Thurs 10 Oct

The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum

WONDER - WHERE REALITY AND IMAGINARY COLLIDE Exhibition featuring urban landscapes, reimagined cartoon characters, a light pavilion, and creatures brought to life by augmented reality, until Sun 15 Sept

Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery

NEW LIVING RUINS Artworks from 18c to the contemporary, Thurs 26 Sept - Sat 30 Nov

Other VISUAL ARTS

WILDLIFE OF THE SEVERN PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION A selection of photographs curated by professional wildlife photographer Iain Green, who has been leading workshops for volunteers of all ages to reveal the amazing array of wildlife along the River Severn, until Sun 1 Sept, The Hive, Worcester

SCULPTURES IN THE GARDENS Exhibition of sculptures from the Oxford Sculptors Group, displayed throughout the Gardens. All sculptures are available for sale, until Sun 8 Sept, Spetchley Park Gardens

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

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



Koan Sound - O2 Institute, Birmingham

Gigs

DANNY JONES Mon 2 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FÖLLAKZOID Mon 2 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

STAND UP & ROCK Wed 4 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

SANDRO PERRI + SING LEAF Wed 4 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

JOHN BLEK Thurs 5 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

CHRIS BANNISTER - THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER Thurs 5 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE BUTTERS ALIENS + THE UNDERCLASS + THE EARNEST SPEARS + SPACETOAST + THE LIGHTWEIGHTS Thurs 5 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

KOAN SOUND Fri 6 Sept, O2 Institute, B'ham

FLARES + EASY COMPANY Fri 6 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

UN:KNWN Fri 6 Sept, The Mill, Digbeth, Birmingham

THE LEN PRICE 3 + THE HUMDRUM EXPRESS Fri 6 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

COUNTRY CHIX Fri 6 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

grove

MIRANDA SYKES Fri 6 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

MARTY WILDE Fri 6 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch

BLACK CELEBRATION - DEPECHE MODE TRIBUTE Fri 6 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE ELO EXPERIENCE Fri 6 - Sat 7 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

K-TRAP Sat 7 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE FEELGOOD BAND Sat 7 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

THE S.L.P. Sat 7 Sept, O2 Institute, B'ham

LABOUR OF LOVE - UB40 TRIBUTE Sat 7 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

DIRE STREETS Sat 7 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch

ITS JUST ROCK N ROLL

Sat 7 Sept, The Empire, Coventry

WATERLOO - BEST OF ABBA Sat 7 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

MEATLOD AGAIN Sat 7 Sept, Evesham Arts Centre

FOR THE LOVE OF BRIAN FT. SUSAN CADOGAN, WINSTON REEDY & MORE... Sat 7 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TALON - THE BEST OF THE EAGLES Sun 8 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

BRASS BAND GALA 2019 Sun 8 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CV FOLK SECOND SUNDAY Sun 8 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

JASPER MALONE Sun 8 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester



Miranda Sykes - Artrix, Bromsgrove

Comedy

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON & COMIC TBC Thurs 5 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MIKE WILMOT & COMIC TBC Fri 6 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MARLON DAVIS, JAKE LAMBERT, STEVE SHANYASKI & FREDDY QUINNE Sat 7 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

Theatre

HOLES Tom Basden's apocalyptic comedy, in which four survivors of a plane crash realise they may be all that's left of the human race, Sat 31 Aug - Sat 7 Sept, Criterion Theatre, Coventry

THE PROVOKED WIFE Outspoken Restoration romp that shocked 17th century society, 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

FUN & GAMES Collection of original short plays, Mon 2 - Wed 4 Sept, The Studio, The Dream Factory, Warwick

THE VICAR OF DIBLEY Amateur staging based on the TV sitcom, Mon 2 - Sat 7 Sept, Talisman Theatre & Arts Centre, Kenilworth

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES Inventive two-man staging of Arthur Conan Doyle's acclaimed Sherlock Holmes mystery, Mon 2 - Sat 14 Sept, Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE Presented by the National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company, Tues 3 - Wed 4 Sept, Malvern Theatres

ON YOUR FEET! Smash-hit musical inspired by the true love story of Emilio and Gloria Estefan, Tues 3 - Sat 7 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

CABARET John Partridge stars as Emcee in a new staging of the famous musical, Tues 3 - Sat 7 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ROMEO & JULIET Outdoor presentation that sees Heartbreak Productions bringing Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers into the 21st century, Wed 4 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD Presented by the National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company, Wed 4 Sept, Malvern Theatres

STAND UP AND ROCK Evening of comedy & music featuring Jasper Carrott, the Bev Bevan Band & Geoff Turton from the Rockin' Berries. Wed 4 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

HOLDING THE CENTRE New play from Birmingham writer Joan Carty exploring themes of shadism, implicit bias, violence & deception, Wed 4 - Sat 7 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

PRIVATE LIVES Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Noel Coward's celebrated comedy, Thurs 5 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE GONDOLIERS Presented by the National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company, Thurs 5 - Sat 6 Sept, Malvern Theatres

QUENTIN CRISP: NAKED HOPE Mark Farrelly's acclaimed solo play, Thurs 5 - Sat 7 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

WUTHERING HEIGHTS Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Emily Bronte's haunting tale, Fri 6 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

9 TO 5 THE MUSICAL New production of Dolly Parton's rip-roaring musical comedy, Fri 6 - Sat 14 Sept, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

THE LOVELY BONES Alice Sebold's coming-of-age tale returns to The REP following its well-received debut run last year, Fri 6 - Sat 21 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

THE MIKADO Presented by the National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company, Sat 7 Sept, Malvern Theatres

HANCOCK & CO James Hurn's celebration of radio comedy classic Hancock's Half Hour, Sat 7 Sept, Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



Gangsta Granny

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 7 September

The ever-popular Heartbreak Productions make a welcome return with their brand new open-air adaptation of David Walliams' best-selling book.

Ben's no lover of Friday nights - and why would he be? After all, Friday nights mean having to stay at Granny's house, where he's not only bored senseless but also has to eat an unholy trinity of cabbage dishes - cabbage soup, cabbage pie and cabbage cake. But experiences can sometimes be deceptive, and Ben soon finds out that there's way more to his boring old Granny than meets the eye...

ONE NIGHT ONLY South Staffs Musical Theatre Company present a concert compilation of show tunes, drama, dance and comedy, Sun 8 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

DAN JONES CRUSADERS: AN EPIC HISTORY OF THE WARS OF THE HOLY LANDS Part of Warwick Words 2019, Sun 8 Sept, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

Kids Shows

GANGSTA GRANNY Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of David Walliams' bestselling tale, Sat 7 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

DEAR ZOO LIVE Rod Campbell's children's classic, live on stage... Sun 8 - Mon 9 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

Cabaret

BIANCA DEL RIO Thurs 5 Sept, Arena Birmingham



Talks

HAZEL FINDLAY: THE CLIMB WITHIN Join Hazel as she talks about her passion for climbing... Tues 3 - Wed 4 Sept, Malvern Theatres

MALORIE BLACKMAN: NOUGHTS & CROSSES Malorie Blackman talks about Crossfire, the latest novel in her bestselling series, Noughts & Crosses, Sat 7 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

HAZEL FINDLAY: THE CLIMB WITHIN Join Hazel as she talks about her passion for climbing... Sat 7 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

MAKING NOISE QUIETLY (15) Drama. Starring Meg Coombs, Deborah Findlay. Malvern Theatres, Sun 1, Tues 3 & Thurs 5 Sept

VITA & VIRGINIA (12a) Biography/Drama. Starring Gemma Arterton, Elizabeth Debicki. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Mon 2 Sept; Number 8, Pershore, Mon 2 - Tues 3 Sept

BALLOON (12a) History/Thriller. Starring Friedrich Mücke, Karoline Schuch. Foreign language, subtitled.



Dear Zoo Live - Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa



Take a trip of discovery and meet talented artists showing original work across the region. Enjoy the diversity of their work and find out how they make it and maybe take the opportunity to buy original artwork.

21 & 22 September

Amazing art in wonderful places!



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ESCAPE ROOMS

CAN YOU ESCAPE?

TIME IS SHORT

We host groups of between 2 to 6 people whose aim it is to complete the game objective with 60 minutes. The idea is simple: we put you in a room and you have one hour to escape. There are a series of puzzles and codes hidden throughout the room which will help you achieve your ultimate goal - Escape.

www.topescaperooms.co.uk 01905 620208
Unit 18, The Well Top Barn Holt Heath Worcester WR6 6NH

Medieval Joust at Avoncroft Museum

Saturday 28th—Sunday 29th September 2019



Travel back in time to 1459 & experience the thrill of a medieval joust at Avoncroft Museum!

Skilled re-enactors will demonstrate horseback skills, weapons drills & joust contests where courageous riders and their highly-trained horses take part in dramatic one-to-one combat to test their honour and win the favour of the audience.

A thrilling weekend of medieval family entertainment not to be missed!



www.avoncroft.org.uk

Avoncroft
Museum



Number 8, Pershore, Thurs 5 Sept

THE CURRENT WAR (12a)

Biography/Drama. Starring Benedict Cumberbatch, Tom Holland. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 6 & Mon 9 Sept; Number 8, Pershore, Fri 6 - Mon 9 Sept

MRS LOWRY & SON (PG)

Biography/Drama. Starring Vanessa Redgrave, Timothy Spall. Malvern Theatres, Fri 6 - Thurs 12 Sept

THE LION KING (U)

Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Jason Sudeikis, Bill Hader. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 7 Sept

PHOTOGRAPH (15) Drama. Starring Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Sanya Malhotra. Foreign language, subtitled. Malvern Theatres, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Sept

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 6 Sept, showing at selected cinemas

IT: CHAPTER TWO (tbc)

RAPID RESPONSE (12a)

Events

LEGO CITY Featuring character appearances, new building activities and the chance to explore what a city of the future would look like, until Sun 1 Sept, Legoland Discovery Centre, Birmingham

FREDDO'S TREASURE TROVE Cadbury's Freddo dons his captain's hat to teach little ones about what it takes to become a pirate, until Sun 1 Sept, Cadbury World, Bournville, B'ham

KAPOW: THE SUMMER OF COMIC ART Take inspiration from the Comic Art exhibition and join in comic-themed workshops, until Sun 1 Sept, Enginuity Museum, Ironbridge, Shropshire

SUMMER ACTIVITIES AT BLISTS HILL Travel back to the Victorian era and enjoy an action-packed day, until Sun 1 Sept, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire

GET HANDS ON WITH HISTORY Youngsters can learn to sword fight, shoot with a bow & arrow or be transformed into a little lord or lady, until Sun 1 Sept, Kenilworth Castle

GREAT SUMMER ADVENTURE Family fun including laser combat, foam parties, and tractor safaris, until Sun 1 Sept, Hatton Adventure World

'THE MINISTRY OF WILD THINGS' NEEDS YOU - SUMMER FAMILY TRAIL Become an agent for the Ministry of Wild Things and help track & map Croome's landscape, until Sun 1 Sept, Croome Park, Worcester

PIRATES AND MERMAIDS Enjoy 'the ultimate underwater adventure', until Sun 8 Sept, National Sea Life Centre,

Birmingham

RETURN TO THE FAIRY BALL Trail & scavenger hunt in preparation for the Arboretum's annual fairy ball, until Sun 8 Sept, Arley Arboretum, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

THE FALCONER'S QUEST Up to 70 birds of prey take to the sky in a display of aerial acrobatics, until Thurs 31 Oct, Warwick Castle

THE FORD MOTOR SHOW Featuring a range of vehicles, Sun 1 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

KNIGHT SCHOOL AT BLAKESLEY HALL Learn the code of chivalry and the ways of combat with swordfighter Mark Vance, Sun 1 Sept, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

SPITFIRE 10K AND SPITFIRE FAMILY RUN COSFORD 2019 Event raising money for charity, Sun 1 Sept, RAF Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

ON THE BUSES Featuring more than 25 beautifully preserved vintage and modern buses, Sun 1 Sept, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

MINI MUSEUM ENGINEERS - MARBLE RUNS Become a marble run specialist in a session where you can play with giant ball runs and small marble runs, Wed 4 Sept, Coventry Transport Museum

GUIDED TOUR: HERITAGE AND HISTORY OF BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS Learn about how the Gardens were designed and have evolved over time, Wed 4 Sept, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

BIRMINGHAM HERITAGE WEEK: SOHO ROOFTOP TOURS Enjoy panoramic views from the roof of Soho House, Wed 4 - Thurs 19 Sept, Soho House, Birmingham

IN:SITE FESTIVAL Graduates transform the outdoor space around the cathedral by creating unusual craft interventions, Thurs 5 - Sat 7 Sept, Birmingham Cathedral Grounds

FIA/FIM EURO FINALS Drag racing at its best and featuring 250-plus entrants, Thurs 5 - Sun 8 Sept, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough

PEAKY BLINDERS NIGHT Step back in time to the Roaring 20s and discover the murky underground world of the Peaky Blinders, Fri 6 - Sat 7 Sept, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

I SEE THE FUTURE Innovative artistic project exploring the experiences and perspectives of Stratford residents, Fri 6 - Sun 8 Sept, Various locations in Stratford-upon-Avon

FIREWORK CHAMPIONS Three of the UK's biggest firework companies battle it out for the title of Firework Champion, Sat 7 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

HIGH VIS STREET CULTURE FESTIVAL Day-long celebration of all things



The Ford Motor Show - British Motor Museum Gaydon

street culture, from street art to street food, graffiti to graphic novels, skateboarding to breakdancing, Sat 7 Sept, Digbeth, Birmingham

SCHOOL OF ROCK - PRESENTED BY COLMORE CINEMA CLUB & BMAG To celebrate the venue's Home Of Metal exhibition, Colmore Cinema Club screens the Jack Black movie, School Of Rock, Sat 7 Sept, Birmingham Museum And Art Gallery

JEWELLERY QUARTER HERITAGE WALK Guided walk looking at the people, places and themes that have helped to shape the district, Sat 7 Sept, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

750 MOTOR CLUB CAR CHAMPIONSHIPS Featuring a mix of saloon and sports cars, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Sept, Donington Park

RETRO TRUCK SHOW Featuring up to 400 modern and classic trucks, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

PANORAMA TOWER OPEN DAY Enjoy panoramic views of Worcester from the top of the tower, Sun 8 Sept, Croome Park, Worcester

HSBC UK LET'S RIDE COVENTRY Free family cycling event, Sun 8 Sept, Coventry City Centre

Festivals

MOSELEY FOLK & ARTS FESTIVAL Featuring Don McLean, Jake Bugg, Public Service Broadcasting, The Zutons, Richard Thompson, Edwyn Collins & more... Fri 30 Aug - Sun 1 Sept, Moseley Park, Birmingham

BACK TO THE 80'S AND 90'S FESTIVAL 2019 Line-up includes Tony Hadley, Nik Kershaw, East 17, S Club Party, Jive Bunny & more... Fri 30 Aug - Sun 1 Sept, Cattows Farm, Heather, Leicestershire

ONBOARD THE CRAFT Line-up includes Evil Blizzard, Here & Now, Mr Strange, Under Groundhogs & more... Thurs 5 - Sat 7 Sept, Stoke Prior Country Club, Bromsgrove

BROMYARD FOLK FESTIVAL Line-up includes Kathryn Tickell & The Darkening, Flook, The Daoiri Farrell Trio, Rosier & more... Thurs 5 - Sun 8 Sept, around the town, Bromyard, Herefordshire

ILLUSIVE FESTIVAL Line-up includes Shy FX, Beardyman Vs JFB, The Upbeats, Critical Sound Takeover & more... Fri 6 - Sun 8 Sept, Deene Park, Corby, Northamptonshire

Food & Drink

CAMRA BEER FESTIVAL Bridgnorth-station event featuring 60-plus real ales, ciders and perries, Thurs 5 - Sat 7 Sept, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

ALE & CIDER FESTIVAL Sat 7 Sept, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham









TAMWORTH FOOD GUSTO FESTIVAL Featuring live music, cooking demonstrations, children's activities & more... Sat 7 - Sun 8 Sept, Tamworth Castle Pleasure Grounds, Staffs

LEAMINGTON FOOD FESTIVAL Hugely popular FREE event featuring around 130 exhibitors, cookery theatre, live music & more... Sat 7 - Sun 8 Sept, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

THE CORE
theatre solihull

Season Highlights

Sun 15 Sept. £17 BARNHART & HUXLEY HOT FIVE Jazz and Jokes IV back and better than ever! Hosted by Malcolm Stent. 2.30pm 	Tues 17 Sept. £12 KEITH SLATER'S SINATRA CELEBRATION An afternoon of classic Sinatra. 2pm 
Tue 24 & Wed 25 Sept. £16/£15 MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS From Timeless Theatre - book early for matinee shows. 2.30pm & 7.30pm 	Fri 4 Oct. £20 A BLACK COUNTRY NIGHT OUT The comedy and music of the Black Country returns! 7.30pm 
Sat 5 Oct. £18.50/£17.50 conc. PATSY CLINE AND FRIENDS Tribute Concert to Patsy Cline, Hank Williams and Jim Reeves. 7.30pm 	Wed 9 Oct. £33 JOE BROWN 60th Anniversary Tour for the Rock 'n' Roll legend. 7.30pm 

Box Office: 0121 704 6962
www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk

Bromsgrove Concerts
www.bromsgrove-concerts.org.uk
Autumn 2019

Fri 27 September 2019 at 8pm Luke Jones (piano) at Routh Hall Debussy: Images Book 1 Ravel: Miroirs Schumann: Waldszenen Op 82 Prokofiev: Piano Sonata No 8 Op 84 
Fri 11 October 2019 at 7.30pm Navarra Quartet Magnus Johnston - Violin Marjorie Johnston - Violin Brian O'Kane - Cello Sascha Bota - Viola Pateris Vasks: String Quartet No 4 Janacek: String Quartet No 1 'The Kreutzer Sonata' Schubert: String Quartet in D minor D 810 'Death and the Maiden' 
Fri 8 November 2019 at 7.30pm Hyungi Lee (percussion) Hyungi will be playing a range of percussion instruments during her recital for us Full details will be announced later. 
Fri 22 November 2019 at 7.30pm Mark Bebbington (piano) Jenny Wood - Oboe Richard Tatum - Bassoon Faure: Nocturne No 8 in D flat Op 63 Poulenc: Trio for Piano, Oboe and Bassoon Franck: Prelude, Chorale et Fugue Chopin: Piano Sonata No 3 in B minor Op 58 

Advance booking - see website www.bromsgrove-concerts.org.uk for details or leave text or voicemail with name and postcode on 07936 984415.
 Tickets also available on night at the door.

PALACE BOX OFFICE
THEATRE 01527 65203
www.redditchpalacetheatre.co.uk

SOUL LEGENDS SAT 14 SEPT 7.30 SOUL LEGENDS 	ROCK FOR HEROES WED 18 SEPT 7.30 ROCK FOR HEROES 	DRIFTERS WED 25 SEPT 7.30 THE DRIFTERS 
LES McKEOWN'S BAY CITY ROLLERS FRI 27 SEPT 7.30 LES McKEOWN'S BAY CITY ROLLERS 	DON MACLEAN & MALCOLM STENT FRI 11 OCT 7.30 DON MACLEAN & MALCOLM STENT TWO OF A KIND BUT DIFFERENT 	JIMEOIN THUR 17 OCT 7.30 JIMEOIN RAMBLE ON! 
BOB MARLEY FRI 18 OCT 7.30 THE MUSIC OF BOB MARLEY LEGEND 	BEE GEES FEVER SAT 19 OCT 7.30 BEE GEES FEVER 	THUNDER WED 23 OCT 7.30 THUNDER Unplugged & Unscripted An Evening of Conversation & Music 

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DEAN MORRIS



Hozier - Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Gigs

ALICE CHATER Tues 10 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BENJI KIRKPATRICK & THE EXCESS Tues 10 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

SHARON SHANNON & BAND WITH SPECIAL GUEST SECKOU KEITA Wed 11 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FROTH Wed 11 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SOUND OF SPRINGSTEEN Wed 11 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

TALON - GREATEST HITS TOUR Wed 11 - Thurs 12 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

TRASH BOAT Thurs 12 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE MANFREDS Thurs 12 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

KING KHAN'S LOUDER THAN DEATH Thurs 12 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE KING IS BACK - BEN PORTSMOUTH IS ELVIS Thurs 12 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN Thurs 12 - Fri 13 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

FLEETWOOD BAC Fri 13

Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SIMON AND GARFUNKEL THROUGH THE YEARS Fri 13 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

GO NOW! THE MUSIC OF MOODY BLUES Fri 13 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch

NORTHERN SOUL LIVE Fri 13 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

VOODOO ROOM Fri 13 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

AMY LOUISE ELLIS Fri 13 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

PETER BRUNTNELL Fri 13 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

WORCESTER MUSIC FESTIVAL DAY 1 Fri 13, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

THE ROY ORBISON STORY Fri 13 - Sat 14 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

WORCESTER MUSIC FESTIVAL DAY 2 Sat 14, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

SOUL STRIPPER Sat 14 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

SOUL LEGENDS Sat 14 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch

AND FINALLY - PHIL COLLINS Sat 14 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

FIREBIRDS' FLOORFILLERS Sat 14 Sept,

Albany Theatre, Coventry

FOYER FOLK : DAMPIER'S ROUND Sat 14 Sept, Number 8 Community Arts Centre, Worcester

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Sat 14 Sept, Kasbah, Coventry

FLEECEY FOLK: DUNCAN CHISHOLM Sat 14 Sept, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW & THE LOW RIDERS Sat 14 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

COMPLETE MADNESS Sat 14 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

DEATH OF GUITAR POP Sat 14 Sept, The Empire, Coventry

ARIANA GRANDE Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Arena Birmingham

BROKEN MINDS PRESENTS: LOVE MUSIC, HATE RACISM Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE WORLD OF WHITFIELD CRANE Sun 15 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

HOZIER Sun 15 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

HAINBACH + MODULAR MEET Sun 15 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

BARNHART & HUXLEY HOT FIVE Sun 15 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

Classical Music

A CELEBRATION OF OPERA Celebrate the wonder of opera in the company of Mozart, Verdi, Bizet, Puccini, Offenbach, Gilbert & Sullivan and more... Wed 11 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

CZECH NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: HARRY POTTER & THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE John Williams' unforgettable score live, Wed 11 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RODERICK WILLIAMS (BARITONE) & CHRISTOPHER GLYNN (PIANO) Programme comprises Schubert's Winter Journey, Fri 13 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

LAST NIGHT OF THE ROTARY PROMS 2019 Featuring City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Treorchy Male Choir and Anthony Inglis (conductor), Sat 14 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CHANDOS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Paul Hoskins (conductor). Programme includes works by Sibelius, Tübin & Dvorak, Sun 15 Sept, Malvern Theatres

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS Featuring Saint Saens' pieces of classical music for children with narration by Matthew Sharp, Sun 15 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

Comedy

JACK DEE Wed 11 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury



MAWAAN RIZWAN Thurs 12 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

BRIDGET CHRISTIE, FIN TAYLOR, RHYNS NICHOLSON, SARAH KEYWORTH & CARL DONNELLY Thurs 12 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

PHIL NICHOL & THANYIA MOORE PLUS COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBISON Thurs 12 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JIMMY CARR Fri 13 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

HENN NIGHTS Fri 13 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

RAW COMEDY Fri 13 Sept, Evesham Arts Centre, Evesham

PHIL NICHOL & THANYIA MOORE, CARL HUTCHINSON & ADAM HESS Fri 13 - Sat 14 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

MILTON JONES, MATT FORDE, SUZI RUFFELL, ALUN COCHRANE & FLO AND JOAN Sat 14 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

JARLATH REGAN, MORGAN REES, QUINCY & BARRY CASTAGNOLA Sat 14 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

Theatre

THE FIZZOGS: BACK IN OUR DAY Comedy charting the friendship of three Black Country women who met through their shared love of dance, Mon 9 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

DRACULA THE BLOODY TRUTH Fast-paced and faithful(-ish) adaptation of Bram Stoker's Gothic novel, Mon 9 - Sat 14 Sept, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

THE ENTERTAINER Shane Richie, Diana Vickers and Sara Crowe star in a new staging of John Osborne's classic play, Mon 9 - Sat 14 Sept, Malvern Theatres

THE HAUNTING The Nonentities present an amateur staging based on original ghost stories by Charles Dickens, Mon 9 - Sat 14 Sept, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

LAST PODCAST ON THE LEFT An evening of all things horror with hosts Ben Kissel, Marcus Parks and Henry Zebrowski, Wed 11 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

JEKYLL & HYDE 'Chilling' adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic tale of good & evil, Wed 11 - Sat 14 Sept, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

NEVILLE'S ISLAND Sudden Impulse Theatre present Tim Firth's comedy concerning four out-of-condition middle-aged businessmen on a team-building exercise in the Lake District, Wed 11 - Sat 14 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

DILLIE KEANE: SONGS OF LOVE AND OTHER BAD IDEAS Sat 14 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

STARDUST Romantic pop, R&B and Bollywood 'musical thriller' from the makers of Bring On The Bollywood, Sat 14 - Sat 21 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

NELL GWYNN 'Bawdy, joyful and irreverent account' of the rise to fame of a most unlikely heroine, Sat 14 - Sat 21 Sept, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

RUBY WAX: HOW TO BE HUMAN Ruby is joined by Buddhist monk Gelong Thubten & neuroscientist Ash Ran-

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pura in a show 'to help you upgrade your mind as much as you've upgraded your iPhone.' Sun 15 Sept, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

Kids Shows

THE FAMILY FOLK SHOW Award-winning folk duo Megson present a concert for younger children, Sat 14 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre, B'ham

WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD Lyngo Theatre presents a show for children aged between two and six, Sat 14 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

SAFARI ADVENTURE Roaring musical adventure packed with action songs, live music and audience participation, Sun 15 Sept, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

Dance

MATTHEW BOURNE'S ROMEO & JULIET Contemporary re-imagining of Shakespeare's famous love story, told in classic Matthew Bourne style, Tues 10 - Sat 14 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

Talks

OPEN DOOR: TEAR & SHARE Writing night inviting writers/audiences to create/respond to new work in a live setting, Tues 10 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH GILL SIMS Author of the popular Why Mum? series, Wed 11 Sept, The Core, Solihull

THE LIFE AND RHYMES OF BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH Benjamin shares a selection of his favourite stories & poems, Fri 13 Sept, Malvern Theatres

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

ONLY YOU (U) Drama/Romance. Starring Isabelle Barth, Tam Dean Burn. Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Mon 9 - Wed 11 Sept

WEST SIDE STORY (PG) Drama/Musical. Starring Natalie Wood, George Chakiris. Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 10 Sept

PHOTOGRAPH (15) Drama. Starring Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Sanya Malhotra. Foreign language, subtitled. Malvern Theatres, Tues 10 & Thurs 12 Sept; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 13 Sept

DOWNTON ABBEY (PG) Drama. Starring Hugh Bonneville, Maggie Smith. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, from Fri 13 Sept; Malvern Theatres, Fri 13 -

Thurs 26 Sept

KURSK: THE LAST MISSION (12a) Drama/History. Starring Matthias Schoenaerts, Léa Seydoux. Number 8, Pershore, Fri 13 - Sat 14 Sept

ONCE UPON A TIME... IN HOLLYWOOD (18) Comedy/Drama. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt. Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 13 - Wed 18 Sept

HORRIBLE HISTORIES: THE MOVIE - ROTTEN ROMANS (PG) Comedy/Family. Starring Sebastian Croft, Emilia Jones. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 14 Sept

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT (12a) Comedy/Drama. Starring Viveik Kalra, Hayley Atwell. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sun 15 - Mon 16 Sept

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 13 Sept, showing at selected cinemas

DOWNTON ABBEY (PG)

HUSTLERS (tbc)

PHOENIX (15)

HONEYLAND (tbc)

Events

BRITISH SCIENCE FESTIVAL The British Science Association presents a full programme of science and culture, Tues 10 - Fri 13 Sept, various venues In Coventry

MINI MUSEUM ENGINEERS - ROALD DAHL DAY SPECIAL Chance to find out about some of Roald Dahl's amazing inventions, crazy concoctions and fantastic creations, Wed 11 Sept, Coventry Transport Museum

OPEN-AIR CINEMA Featuring screenings of A Star Is Born, Pulp Fiction and Rocketman, Wed 11 - Fri 13 Sept, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

A SERVANT'S LIFE GUIDED TOUR Special guided tour focusing on the life of the servants at Aston Hall, Thurs 12 Sept, Aston Hall, Birmingham

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS Take part in free costumed tours, Fri 13 Sept, Sarehole Mill, Hall Green, Birmingham

ARTY PARTY 2: INTEGRATE One event over 2 venues - featuring visual art, digital projections, spoken word, live performances, workshops & DJ set, Fri 13 Sept, West Indian Centre & Basement of Holyhead Studios, Coventry

FARGO VILLAGE TAKE OVER Featuring everything 'from holograms to comedy and mind-reading technology to an adult mud kitchen', Fri 13 Sept, FarGo Village, Coventry

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS AT HERBERT ART GALLERY & MUSEUM Join one of the Herbert's free behind-the-scenes

tours of the museum stores, Fri 13 - Sat 14 Sept, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

NSRA HOT ROD DRAGS The 31st show of its kind, Fri 13 - Sun 15 Sept, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough

GUIDED TOURS OF THE ALBANY THEATRE Taking place as part of Heritage Open Days, Fri 13 - Sun 15 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

THE CYCLE SHOW The UK's biggest event for cycling enthusiasts, Fri 13 - Sun 15 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

TOURS OF THE LEAMINGTON SPA ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM Free guided tour, including behind-the-scenes access, Fri 13 - Sun 22 Sept, Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

RAF DEFFORD AIRFIELD GUIDED WALK Take a tour of the top-secret airbase, which was home to airborne radar testing & development during the Second World War and early years of the Cold War, Sat 14 Sept, Croome Park, Worcester

DRAWING THE BIRTHPLACE Workshop with drawing and watercolour artist Ed Isaacs, Sat 14 Sept, Shakespeare's Birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS - OLD YARDLEY WALK Join experts from the Birmingham & Warwickshire Archaeological Society for a stroll around the village, Sat 14 Sept, Blakesley Hall, B'ham

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Free costumed guided tours of the Smith & Pepper jewellery factory, Sat 14 Sept, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS AT MUSEUM OF THE JEWELLERY QUARTER Free entry and tour of the popular visitor attraction, Sat 14 Sept, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

SCIENCE OF THE CIRCUS Learn new skills and see how science can make each trick easier to master, Sat 14 Sept, Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham

HERITAGE OPEN DAY AT WORCESTER CATHEDRAL Learn all about the cathedral's history, Sat 14 Sept, Worcester Cathedral

FAMILY DAY: EXPLORE, DISCOVER, EXPERIMENT Featuring dozens of stalls, workshops, talks and performances, Sat 14 Sept, The University of Warwick

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Free entry and costumed guided tours, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS - FREE ADMISSION Enjoy free admission to the museum as part of the Heritage Open Days celebration of Coventry's contribution to the transport industry, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Coventry Transport Museum

BRITISH GT & BRITISH F3 CHAMPIONSHIPS Donington Park's full Grand Prix circuit sets the scene for the

British GT Championship's 2019 season finale, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Donington Park, Castle Donington

THE LEGITIMATE PEAKY BLINDERS FESTIVAL Official celebration of the hit TV series, co-curated by its creator, Steven Knight, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Digbeth, Birmingham

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS Visit Aston Hall for free as part of Birmingham Heritage Week and Heritage Open Days, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Aston Hall, Birmingham

VICTORIAN LIVING HISTORY Step back in time and join the Victorian governess, housekeeper and servants as they go about their daily tasks, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Tamworth Castle

FESTIVAL OF CRAFTS Family day out, with displays, demonstrations, and stalls showing the 'craftier' side of Coventry & Warwickshire, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Sept, Coombe Abbey, Binley, Coventry

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS AT BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME Series of events celebrating the theatre's 120th birthday, Sat 14 - Sat 21 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR Explore over 500 stalls packed with all kinds of collectable toys, trains and models for sale, Sun 15 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

HARVEST HOME Join the harvest festival and celebrate the bounties of the season with the resident Tudors, Sun 15 Sept, Mary Arden's Farm, Stratford-upon-Avon

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Explore the Botanical Gardens, take a picnic and enjoy the beautiful scenery, Sun 15 Sept, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Walk in the footsteps of some of Birmingham's greatest industrialists, learn about the Boulton family and life in the 18th century, and find out about the servants who worked at Soho House, Sun 15 Sept, Soho House, B'ham

MID AUTUMN FESTIVAL Celebration of Chinese culture featuring traditional dances, face-changing magic & musical performances, Sun 15 Sept, The Birmingham Conference & Events Centre

Festivals

STAR SHAPED FESTIVAL 2019 Line-up includes Cast, Dodgy, Space, Geneva, Salad, Mark Morris & Chris Helme, Sat 14 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

Food & Drink

BRINDLEYPLACE FOOD FESTIVAL Debut event, Fri 13 - Sat 14 Sept, Brindleyplace, Birmingham

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ARTRIX

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NEW SEASON ON SALE

12 September NT LIVE: FLEABAG See the hilarious, award-winning, one-woman show 	18 September THE CARPENTERS EXPERIENCE The amazing voice of Maggie Nestor and eight top-class musicians 	21 September CHANTEL MCGREGOR Oh boy, can that girl play guitar! 
22 & 23 September DEAR ZOO LIVE! A must see show with engaging puppets, music and lots of audience interaction 	25 September FOREVER ELTON & BAND A homage to the music of Sir Elton John & Bernie Taupin 	28 September JOHN-LUKE ROBERTS The critically acclaimed idiot 

COMING SOON: Vita & Virginia, John Blek, Country Chix, Miranda Sykes, Photograph, Blinded by the Light, Andy Fairweather Low & the Low Riders, Once Upon A Time In Hollywood, Paul Foot: Image Conscious, The Strawbs 50th Anniversary Concert, Brainstormers Comedy, Theo's Comedy Skool, Pain & Glory, The Counterfeit Sixties, Luke Daniels, National Theatre Live: One Man, Two Guvnors, Encore, Ralph McTell, Gordon Hendricks as Elvis, Playmobile: The Movie - Saturday Matinee, Luke Kempner: House Of Faces, Graham Wilson - Living The Dream, Duotone, Daliso Chaponda: Blah Blah Blacklist...

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Pixies - O2 Academy, Birmingham

Gigs

PIXIES Mon 16 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham

FERRIS & SYLVESTER Mon 16 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SNUTS Mon 16 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

NEON GLOW RAVE Mon 16 Sept, The Empire, Coventry

MUSE Tues 17 Sept, Arena Birmingham

KEITH SLATER'S SINATRA CELEBRATION Tues 17 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

BIG HEATH Tues 17 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

STEPHEN MALKMUS Tues 17 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE CARPENTERS EXPERIENCE Wed 18 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ROCK FOR HEROES Wed 18 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch

ITCH Wed 18 Sept, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE DELEGATES Wed 18 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE BEACH BOYS TRIBUTE SHOW Thurs 19 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

LUTHER VANDROSS CELEBRATION Thurs 19 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

SUPREME QUEEN Thurs 19 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SPEAR OF DESTINY Thurs 19 Sept, Hare &

Hounds, Birmingham

THE CHESTERFIELDS Thurs 19 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NO HOT ASHES Thurs 19 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

JOE BROWN AND HIS FRIENDS Fri 20 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THEON CROSS Fri 20 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

REP MY FLAG Fri 20 Sept, The Empire, Coventry

TALON - GREATEST HITS TOUR Fri 20 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

80'S MANIA Fri 20 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

COVTEMBER Fri 20 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry

PAINKILLER Fri 20 Sept, Scruffy Murphys, Birmingham

THE GT'S Fri 20 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

ODETTE ALBUM TOUR Fri 20 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

THE STRAWBS 50TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT Fri 20 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

FIREBALL Sat 21 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE HARA Sat 21 Sept, The Asylum, B'ham

THE JONESES - THE SMITHS TRIBUTE Sat 21 Sept, The Flapper, Birmingham

FREEDOM! GEORGE MICHAEL TRIBUTE Sat

21 Sept, Malvern Theatres

PETER HOOK & THE LIGHT Sat 21 Sept, The Empire, Coventry

THE BEACH BOYZ Sat 21 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

BLADE BROWN Sat 21 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SPIELBERGS, YR POETRY, WOOD & NAILS, MUTT Sat 21 Sept, The Flapper, Birmingham

THE BEST OF WHAM! Sat 21 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

KHALID Sat 21 Sept, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

CHANTEL MCGREGOR Sat 21 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

80'S MANIA Sat 21 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

FETTY WAP Sun 22 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SON OF JOHN & JOHN PARKER Sun 22 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

GOW NOW! THE MUSIC OF THE MOODY BLUES Sun 22 Sept, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

PAUL SIMON'S GRACELAND PERFORMED BY THE LONDON AFRICAN GOSPEL CHOIR Sun 22 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

DIZRAELI Sun 22 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BEN PORTSMOUTH IS ELVIS Sun 22 Sept, Arena Birmingham

Classical Music

ALBION STRING QUARTET Featuring Tamsin Waley-Cohen & Emma Parker (violins), Ann Beilby (viola) & Nathaniel Boyd (cello). Programme includes works by Mozart & Schubert, Mon 16 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

PIANO RECITAL BY MARIAM BATSASHVILI Programme includes works by Bach, Liszt & Chopin, Mon 16 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

BRITTEN-SHOSTAKOVICH FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Featuring Jan Latham-König (conductor) and Pavel Kolesnikov (piano). Programme includes works by Britten, Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Tchaikovsky, Tues 17 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GILDAS QUARTET & JACK MCNEILL (CLARINET) Programme includes works by Haydn, Britten & Brahms, Tues 17 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

THIBAUT GARCIA GUITAR RECITAL Programme includes works by Agustin Barrios Mangore, Alexandre Tansman, J.S. Bach, Isaac Albeniz & Astor Piazzolla, Tues 17 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

A HUM ABOUT MINE EARS Musical retelling of Shakespeare's The Tempest - featuring twenty 9 to 12 year olds, an adult community choir, professional players from Orchestra of the Swan, Clara Sanabras (soloist) & Harvey Brough (conductor), Wed 18 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

RAPHAEL WALLFISCH CELLO RECITAL Programme includes works by Bach & Weinberg, Thurs 19 Sept, Stratford Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE SIXTEEN Featuring Harry Christo-

phers (conductor). Programme includes works by Plainsong, Sir John Tavener, John Sheppard, Eric Whitacre, Robert Wykynson, Robert Fayrfax, Gabriel Jackson & Sir James MacMillan, Thurs 19 Sept, St Philips Cathedral, Birmingham

GILDAS QUARTET WITH KATHERINE SPENCER (CLARINET) Programme includes works by Mozart, Janacek, Shaw & Weber, Thurs 19 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

AQUINAS PIANO TRIO PLUS REBECCA LOW (VIOLA) Programme includes works by Mozart & Schumann, Fri 20 Sept, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

INKBERROW SINFONIA Programme includes works by Mendelssohn, Schumann & Beethoven, Sat 21 Sept, St Peter's Show, Inkberrow, Worcestershire

Comedy

ROB DELANEY Mon 16 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

BEN ELTON Tues 17 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

LIZA TREYGOR Tues 17 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SINDHU VEE Tues 17 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

EDDIE IZZARD Tues 17 - Sat 21 Sept, the Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

RUSSELL HOWARD Wed 18 Sept, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

ED BYRNE Thurs 19 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

HAL CRUTTENDEN, NINA CONTI, PHIL WANG, ZOE LYONS & IVO GRAHAM Thurs 19 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



Russell Howard - Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

TAPE FACE Thurs 19 Sept, Birmingham
Town Hall

**PAUL MCCAFFREY PLUS COMEDY
CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON &
COMIC TBC** Thurs 19 Sept, The Glee
Club, Birmingham

**DARREN HARRIOTT, DESIREE BURCH,
RHYS JAMES, RORY BREMNER & FELIC-
ITY WARD** Fri 20 Sept, Royal Shake-
speare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

MICKY OVERMAN, PAUL MCCAFFERY,

PAUL F TAYLOR & MAFF BROWN Fri 20 -
Sat 21 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

ADAM KAY Sat 21 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

DAVE JOHNS Sat 21 Sept, Midlands
Arts Centre, Birmingham

TOM WRIGGLESWORTH, MARK SIMMONS, ROGER MONKHOUSE & DAISY EARL Sat 21 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

BARNSTORMERS COMEDY NIGHT Sat 21

Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

RUSSELL HOWARD Sun 22 Sept, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

DESI CENTRAL COMEDY SHOW Sun 22
Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

IMPROV COMEDY WITH BOX OF FROGS
Sun 22 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

HOT FLUSH Hit show about 'the friendships, secrets, tears, laughter and ups and downs of four ordinary women - and one man - living extraordinary lives', Mon 16 Sept, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

BEYOND THERAPY Modern-day look at relationships starring Tracey Shaw, Sam Lupton & Matt Lapinskas, Mon 16 - Wed 18 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

FRIENDSICAL Parody musical about friends, Mon 16 - Sat 21 Sept, Malvern Theatres

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER Hit musical based on the legendary 1970s movie starring John Travolta. Casualty star Richard Windsor takes the lead, Tues 17 - Sat 21 Sept. Belgrade Theatre.

Coventry

CHICAGO Intimate version of the acclaimed musical, Tues 17 - Sun 22 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

A BUNCH OF AMATEURS Kidderminster Operatic & Dramatic Society present an amateur staging of Ian Hislop & Nick Newman's comedy, Wed 18 - Sat 21 Sept, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

THE BLACK SNOW ROADSHOW Film, songs and stories about mining life, Thurs 19 Sept, Criterion Theatre, Coventry

REBEL MUSIC Robin French's new play, celebrating Midlands' diverse music legacy, Thurs 19 Sept - Sat 5 Oct, The REP, Birmingham

KING JOHN Shakespeare's rarely performed tale of a nation in turmoil,
Thurs 19 Sept - Sat 21 Mar, The Swan
Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

JOHN FINNEMORE'S FLYING VISIT The writer and star of the hit BBC radio programme presents his new live show, Fri 20 Sept, Malvern Theatres

SHAKUNTALA Epic tale of love, loss and redemption, told in Hindi with English surtitles, Sat 21 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

The poster features a vibrant background with large, overlapping diagonal stripes in shades of teal, pink, yellow, and blue. In the top right corner, there is a repeating pattern of the text "JOIN THE CO-OP(T)" in various colors (pink, yellow, blue) following the curve of the stripes. The main title "arty party 2 : INTEGRATE" is prominently displayed in the upper left quadrant. Below it, event details are listed in a clean, sans-serif font. At the bottom left, logos for the Arts Council England Lottery Funded and supported by public funding are visible.

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BRAVERY TO THE BELL Evening of family entertainment while raising funds for Children With Cancer UK charity. Performers include Fleur East, Joe McElderry and Flawless, Sun 22 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Kids Shows

DEAR ZOO LIVE Rod Campbell's children's classic, live on stage... Sun 22 - Mon 23 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Dance

BRB MIXED PROGRAMME Birmingham Royal Ballet collaboration with Ballet Black, Thurs 19 - Sat 21 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

Talks

BRADLEY WIGGINS: AN EVENING WITH... Britain's most decorated Olympian tells his story, Fri 20 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



MY NAME IS WHY: IN CONVERSATION WITH LEMN SISSAY The poet, playwright & broadcaster reads from his new memoir and reflects on his childhood in care, self-expressionism and Britishness... Fri 20 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT (12a) Comedy/Drama. Starring Viveik Kalra, Hayley Atwell. Number 8, Pershore, Mon 16 - Tues 17 Sept

PHOTOGRAPH (15) Drama. Starring Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Sanya Malhotra. Foreign language, subtitled. Number 8, Pershore, Thurs 19 Sept

MRS LOWRY & SON (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Vanessa Redgrave, Timothy Spall. Number 8, Pershore, Fri 20 Sept

TRANSIT (12a) Drama. Starring Franz Rogowski, Paula Beer. Foreign language, subtitled. Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 20 - Mon 23 Sept

ONCE UPON A TIME... IN HOLLYWOOD (18) Comedy/Drama. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 20 - Mon 23 Sept

ASTRO KID (PG) Animation/Adventure. With the voices of Landen Beattie & Jason Anthony. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 21 Sept

DORA AND THE LOST CITY OF GOLD (PG) Adventure/Family. Starring Isabela Moner, Eugenio Derbez. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 21 Sept

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Wed 18 Sept, showing at selected cinemas

AD ASTRA (tbc)

RAMBO: LAST BLOOD (tbc)

THE LAST TREE (15)

THE KITCHEN (15)

THE FAREWELL (PG)

Events

MINI MOTORISTS Activity morning for the under-fives, Mon 16 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

RAF DEFFORD AIRFIELD GUIDED WALK Take a walk around the top-secret airbase, which was home to airborne radar testing & development during the Second World War and early years of the Cold War, Tues 17 Sept, Croome Park, Worcester

MINI MUSEUM ENGINEERS - CODE Introduction to STEM concepts (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) through play with a range of toys and tools, Wed 18 Sept, Coventry Transport Museum

SECOND CITY EXECUTIONS Experience a 'gruesome' evening at the Back to Backs, exploring the dark side of Birmingham's history, Wed 18 Sept, Birmingham Back to Backs

GUIDED TOUR: HERITAGE AND HISTORY OF BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS Learn more about how the Gardens were designed and have evolved over time, Wed 18 - Thurs 19 Sept, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

THE GLAMPING SHOW Featuring suppliers from across the glamping industry, Thurs 19 - Sat 21 Sept, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth

AUTUMN STEAM GALA Flagship gala featuring all-night running, an array of visiting locomotives and an intensive timetable, Thurs 19 - Sun 22 Sept, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

KENILWORTH ARTS FESTIVAL Featuring events, workshops, exhibitions, writers, musicians and visual artists, Thurs 19 - Sat 28 Sept, various locations, Kenilworth



Kenilworth Arts Festival

various locations, Thurs 19 - Sat 28 September

As in its three previous years, the Kenilworth Arts Festival takes over open spaces, theatres, churches, bookshops and streets to present 10 days'-worth of arts, music and spoken-word performances.

The festival is opened by New Zealand's critically acclaimed singer-songwriter Nadia Reid. Multi-award-winning pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason (pictured) also appears at the event, performing pieces from her debut album, *Romance*, as well as a selection of Brahms compositions.

HERITAGE OPEN DAY TOURS AT BELGRADE THEATRE Go behind the scenes at one of the Midlands biggest theatres, Fri 20 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

GUIDED TOURS OF THE ALBANY THEATRE A Heritage Open Days activity, Fri 20 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

A PLACE IN THE SUN LIVE Official exhibition of the Channel Four TV show, Fri 20 - Sun 22 Sept, NEC, B'ham

PROFESSOR BRIAN COX Brian talks about the origin and evolution of the solar system and universe, Sat 21 Sept, Arena Birmingham



COVENTRY TRANSPORT MUSEUM BREAKFAST CLUB Opportunity for vehicle owners to share stories and expertise, while visitors can check out a range of vehicles and chat to the people who own them, Sat 21 Sept,

Coventry Transport Museum

FAMILY SATURDAY: THIS MAKES THAT WITH THESE - CODE AND DOODLE Doodle with code via a variety of experiments and resources, Sat 21 Sept, Coventry Transport Museum

MSVR GT SPORTS CAR WEEKEND Headlined by the GT Cup Championship, featuring a grid of supercars, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Sept, Donington Park, Castle Donington

STP NATIONAL FINALS National Drag Racing Championship Finals, headlined by the 200mph Pro Mod doorslammers, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Sept, Santa Pod Raceway, Wellingborough

MINECRAFT CASTLE BUILDING Castle building workshops curated by experts at Blockbuilders, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Sept, Kenilworth Castle

GUIDED TOURS OF THE ALBANY THEATRE Part of Heritage Open Days, Sun 22 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

Festivals

DUBS COLLECTIVE PARTY IN THE PARK Line-up includes works by Toyah, The Lambrettas, The Neville Staple Band, Curiosity Killed The Cat, The Christians & more... Fri 20 - Sun 22 Sept, Himley Hall, Dudley

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LEAM
FOOD
FEST

07-08 SEPT '19

STAR & GARTER

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GreenMatthews - Swan Theatre, Worcester

Gigs

BIG ZUU Mon 23 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham
PAUL GILBERT Mon 23 Sept, The Mill, Digbeth, Birmingham
CAMP COPE Mon 23 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
ROAM + WITH CONFIDENCE Mon 23 Sept, O2 Institute, B'ham
PALE WAVES Tues 24 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham
KEANE Tues 24 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham
GREENMATTHEWS PRESENTS WITTY DITTIES Tues 24 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester
JEFFREY LEWIS & THE VOLTAGE Tues 24 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry
THE HOWL & THE HUM Tues 24 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS Tues 24 - Wed 25 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull
THE DUST CODA Wed 25 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham
AVERAGE WHITE BAND Wed 25 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall
TOBY WALKER Wed 25 Sept, The Tin Music And Arts, Canal Basin, Coventry
FOREVER ELTON Wed 25 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove
THE DRIFTERS Wed 25 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch

SAM CARTER PLUS CLAIRE BOSWELL Wed 25 Sept, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham
RICHARD STRANGE PERFORMS THE SONGS OF LOU REED Thurs 26 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham
THE LEISURE SOCIETY Thurs 26 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
STARS OF IRISH COUNTRY Thurs 26 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull
THE NIGHT CAFE Thurs 26 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham
KOYO + GUESTS Thurs 26 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
SIMPLY RERED Thurs 26 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
BARRY STEELE - THE ROY ORBISON STORY Thurs 26 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry
MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS Thurs 26 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch
THE BOHEMIANS Thurs 26 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall
TINY MOVING PARTS Fri 27 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham
OYE SANTANA Fri 27 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester
THE COUNTERFEIT SIXTIES Fri 27 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove
LOST FRESHERS FESTIVAL Fri 27 Sept, The Mill, Digbeth, B'ham
SYKED - TRIBUTE TO JOHN SYKES Fri 27 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

LES MCKEOWN'S BAY CITY ROLLERS Fri 27 Sept, The Palace Theatre, Redditch
BALAM AND THE ANGEL Sat 28 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham
RALPH MCTELL Sat 28 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove
BUDDY HOLLY AND THE CRICKETERS Sat 28 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa
JOE / BRANDY & DRU HILL Sat 28 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham
INTO CLIFF & THE SHADOWS Sat 28 Sept, Evesham Arts Centre
EARTHGANG Sat 28 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham
FAUX FIGHTERS Sat 28 Sept, The Marr's Bar, Worcester
DETROIT MAGIC Sat 28 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester
BRIGHOUSE AND RASTRICK BRASS BAND Sat 28 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry
NEW RULES Sun 29 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham
RORY MCLEOD Sun 29 Sept, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham
NEW HOPE CLUB Sun 29 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham
VOLBEAT Mon 30 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham
ZEBRAHEAD Mon 30 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham
RODRIGO Y GABRIELA Mon 30 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

Classical

FRITH PIANO QUARTET Featuring Benjamin Frith (piano), David Le Page (violin), Robin Ireland (viola), Richard Jenkinson (cello) & John Tattersdill (double bass). Programme includes works by Farrenc, Fauré & Schubert, Thurs 26 Sept, Malvern Theatres
CENTRE STAGE: PURCELL & TCHAIKOVSKY Featuring Kate Suthers & Charlotte Skinner (violins), Christopher Yates & Amy Thomas (violons), Helen Edgar & Catherine Ardagh-Walter (cellos), Thurs 26 Sept, CBSO Centre, Birmingham
ISATA KANNEH-MASON SOLO RECITAL Programme includes works by Brahms & Schumann, Thurs 26 Sept, St John's Church, Kenilworth
LUKE JONES PIANO CONCERT Programme includes works by Debussy, Ravel, Schumann & Prokofiev, Fri 27 Sept, Routh Hall, Bromsgrove School
ARMONICO CONSORT: LAND OF POPE & GLORY Featuring Christopher Monks (director) & Oz Clarke (narrator). Programme includes works by Gabrieli, Monteverdi & Palestrina, Sat 28 Sept, St Mary's Church, Warwick
CBSO: SHEKU PLAYS ELGAR Featuring Mirga Gražinyte-Tyla (conductor) & Sheku Kanneh-Mason (cello). Programme includes works by Purcell (arr. Stucky), Elgar, George Benjamin & Vaughan Williams, Sat 28 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham
LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by Parry, Hurford, J.S Bach, Howells & Elgar, Mon 30 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

TEZ ILYAS, HYDE PANSER, KIRAN MORJARIA & KANE BROWN Mon 23 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry
ROB BECKETT Tues 24 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch
MARTIN MOR PLUS COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON & COMIC TBC Thurs 26 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham
PAUL FOOT Fri 27 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

GEORGE EGG Fri 27 Sept, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick
NOEL JAMES, GARETH RICHARDS, MARTIN MOR & SARAH KEYWORTH Fri 27 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham
PATRICK MONAHAN Fri 27 Sept, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham
GUZ KAHN, MICKY P KERR, JAMIE HUTCHINSON & HAYLEY ELLIS Sat 28 Sept, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham
JOHN-LUKE ROBERTS Sat 28 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove
GEOFF NORCOTT Sun 29 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

FIRST AID Midlands playwright Laura Liptrot takes a look at what happens when a group of people are thrown together on a first-aid course, Mon 23 - Wed 25 Sept, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham
MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS Timeless Theatre take audiences on a fast-paced journey through the music of the '50s, '60s & '70s, Tues 24 - Wed 25 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull
CALENDAR GIRLS THE MUSICAL Tim Firth & Gary Barlow's award-winning production, starring Sarah Jane Buckley, Sue Devaney, Julia Hills, Judy Holt, Ruth Madoc, Lisa Maxwell and Rebecca Storm, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre
THE TEMPEST Amateur staging presented by Worcester Repertory Company, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
THE LADY VANISHES Juliet Mills & Maxwell Caulfield star in a stage version of Alfred Hitchcock's classic thriller, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry
JANE EYRE Blackeyed Theatre present Charlotte Brontë's Gothic masterpiece, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Sept, Malvern Theatres
COME DANCE WITH ME Epic family dance drama, Wed 25 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry
THAT'LL BE THE DAY Nostalgic variety show featuring hits from the '50s to the '80s, Wed 25 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa



The Lady Vanishes - Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

OUT OF ORDER Amateur production of Ray Cooney's farce, presented by the Abbey Players, Wed 25 - Sat 28 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

BELIEVE Poignant tale of love and belief, which follows the trials and tribulations of an angel with an impossible task, Wed 25 - Sat 28 Sept, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ALICE - WONDERLAND THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS Chantry Dance fuse dance with puppetry and acrobatics in an innovative staging of Lewis Carroll's classic tale, Thurs 26 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS Timeless Theatre take audiences on a fast-paced journey through the music of the '50s, '60s & '70s, Thurs 26 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

BARBER SHOP CHRONICLES New comedy that leaps from a barber shop in Peckham to Johannesburg, Harare, Kampala, Lagos and Accra over the course of a single day, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

STRANGE ENCOUNTERS OF A SOCIAL KIND Comedy drama exploring what happens when a bunch of strangers are brought together and have to deal with a tricky situation, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Sept, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

MUSHY - LYRICALLY SPEAKING Rifco Theatre present an uplifting tale inspired by the true story of Musharaf Asghar (from the TV series Educating Yorkshire), Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Sept, The REP, Birmingham

NO MAN'S LAND London Classic Theatre present Harold Pinter's beguiling play, Fri 27 Sept, The Roses, Tewkesbury

GIFTED 37 Dance, music and spoken word combine in a celebration of Birmingham's creative future, Sat 28 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

ANNA MUDEKA: KURE KURE (FARAWAY) Anna takes audiences on a thought-provoking journey to ancient and modern-day Zimbabwe, Sat 28 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Nostalgic variety show featuring hits from the '50s to the '80s, Sat 28 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

NIGEL SLATER'S TOAST An evocative tale of love, loss and... toast - direct from the West End, Mon 30 Sept - Sat 5 Oct, Malvern Theatres

GASLIGHT New staging of Patrick Hamilton's psychological thriller, Mon 30 Sept - Sat 5 Oct, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

A BUNCH OF AMATEURS Malvern Theatre Players present an amateur staging of Ian Hislop & Nick Newman's comedy, Mon 30 Sept - Sat 5 Oct, Malvern Theatres

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Russell's award-winning musical makes a welcome return to the region, Mon 30

Sept - Sat 12 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

FIRST ENCOUNTERS: THE MERCHANT OF VENICE Shakespeare's story of justice and mercy is brought to life in a production created specially for seven to 13-year-olds, Mon 30 Sept - Sat 5 Oct, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

Kids Shows

GULP! The Bone Ensemble present a story about water for younger audiences, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

HEY DIDDLE DIDDLE Goblin Theatre Company fuse music and puppetry in an adventure story for younger audiences, Sun 29 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

Dance

JAMES WILTON DANCE: THE STORM High-energy show blending acrobatics, breakdancing, martial arts and 'edge-of-the-seat contact work', Wed 25 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre, B'ham

ROSIE KAY'S FANTASIA Three female dancers 'discover love, loss, emotion and joy' to a soundtrack of Vivaldi, Purcell, Beethoven and Bach, Wed 25 - Thurs 26 Sept, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: GISELLE David Bintley & Galina Samsova's production of one of the most celebrated ballets of the 19th century, Wed 25 - Sat 28 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

Talks

RICHARD DAWKINS Join ethologist Richard Dawkins as he attempts to rethink the 'big questions', Mon 23 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

ANT MIDDLETON - MIND OVER MUSCLE Brand new show in which Ant talks about the mental strength it took to complete his recent SAS series and huge Everest challenge, Fri 27 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



GIOVANNA FLETCHER: HAPPY MUM, HAPPY BABY The author, podcaster, presenter, YouTuber and mother shares her personal account of motherhood, Sun 29 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall



Mini Museum Engineers - Coventry Transport Museum

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

MRS LOWRY & SON (PG) Biography/Drama. Starring Vanessa Redgrave, Timothy Spall. Number 8, Pershore, Mon 23 - Tues 24 Sept

WEST SIDE STORY (PG) Drama/Musical. Starring Natalie Wood, George Chakiris. Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 24 Sept

PHOTOGRAPH (15) Drama. Starring Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Sanya Malhotra. Foreign language, subtitled. Number 8, Pershore, Wed 25 Sept

TOP DOG FILM FESTIVAL A collection of heartwarming short films about dogs and their people. Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 27 Sept

ONCE UPON A TIME... IN HOLLYWOOD (18) Comedy/Drama. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt. Number 8, Pershore, Fri 27 - Sat 28 Sept

PAIN AND GLORY (15) Drama. Starring Antonio Banderas, Penelope Cruz. Foreign language, subtitled. Arrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 27 - Mon 30 Sept

THE SOUVENIR (15) Drama/Mystery. Starring Honor Swinton Byrne, Tom Burke. Midlands Arts Centre, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 27 - Mon 30 Sept

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released from Fri 27 Sept, showing at selected cinemas

THE GOLDFINCH (15)

HOTEL MUMBAI (15)

THE HUNT (tbc)

POMS (12a)

READY OR NOT (18)

21 BRIDGES (tbc)

THE WOMAN IN THE WINDOW (tbc)

Events

MINI MUSEUM ENGINEERS - FUN WITH MAGNETS See what you can build with different types of magnets and other materials, Wed 25 Sept, Coventry Transport Museum

BRIDGE Circus acrobatics, dance,

comedy, theatre and live music, all inspired by local people's stories, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Sept, Coventry City Centre

THE NATIONAL WEDDING SHOW Featuring 200-plus wedding specialists, thousands of dresses from leading designers and a show-stopping catwalk, Fri 27 - Sun 29 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

MEDIEVAL BANQUET Immersive evening of medieval entertainment and hearty food & drink, Sat 28 Sept, Warwick Castle

LIVING WITH A CLASSIC CAR - AUTUMN WORKSHOP Practical workshop for classic-car owners looking to develop their maintenance and restoration skills, Sat 28 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

THE 2019 TRAMPOLINE, TUMBLING & DMT BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS Gymnasts soar through the air as they bid to become British champion, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Sept, Arena Birmingham

MALVERN AUTUMN SHOW Weekend of home-grown family fun, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Sept, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

MEDIEVAL JOUST WEEKEND Travel back in time to 1459 as Avoncroft transforms into a medieval village, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Sept, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

MSVR CLUB CAR CHAMPIONSHIPS MotorSport Vision Racing return for the second of two back-to-back race meetings, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Sept, Donington Park, Castle Donnington

THE AVENGER WEEKENDER The Avenger Triathlon returns to Ragley Hall and features a range of activities, from trail runs and open water swims to middle, classic and sprint triathlons, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Sept, Ragley Hall, Alcester

MINECRAFT CASTLE BUILDING Castle building workshops curated by experts at Blockbuilders, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Sept, Kenilworth Castle

WARWICK WORDS HISTORY FESTIVAL The local history project, taking the theme of In And Around Warwick, joins forces with Unlocking Warwick for a reconstruction of a 19th century trial, Mon 30 Sept - Sun 6 Oct, Various venues around Warwick



BIRMINGHAM
ROYAL BALLET



BIRMINGHAM
HIPPODROME

DAVID BINTLEY & GALINA SAMSOVA'S

GISELLE

CHOREOGRAPHY MARIUS PETIPA, JEAN
CORALLI, JULES PERROT, DAVID BINTLEY
MUSIC ADOLPHE ADAM
PRODUCTION DAVID BINTLEY
DESIGNS HAYDEN GRIFFIN
LIGHTING MARK JONATHAN
LIVE MUSIC ROYAL BALLET SINFONIA



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City Council

25 - 28 SEP

brb.org.uk/giselle

Mamoka Hirata as Giselle. © Bella Kotak.

CURATED BY STEVEN KNIGHT, CREATOR AND WRITER OF PEAKY BLINDERS

TICKETS
ON SALE NOW



THE LEGITIMATE PEAKY BLINDERS FESTIVAL



2 DAYS AND NIGHTS OF LIVE MUSIC, IMMERSIVE SITE-WIDE THEATRE AND EXPERIENCES,
A BESPOKE BALLET RAMBERT PERFORMANCE, POETRY, FASHION, STREET FOOD,
POP UPS AND BARS. EXPECT 1919 TO COME CRASHING INTO 2019 AND, BE ASSURED,
EVERYTHING IS OFFICIALLY BY ORDER OF THE PEAKY BLINDERS

SAT 14TH SEPTEMBER

12-11PM

SUN 15TH SEPTEMBER

PRIMAL SCREAM

HEADLINER TO BE ANNOUNCED

VERY SPECIAL SECRET SET

SLAVES

NADINE SHAH

MIKE SKINNER DJ SET

ANNA CALVI

JAYKAE • HOTEL LUX • MARTHAGUNN • THE CORRESPONDENTS

BILL JEFFERSON • ELECTRIC SWING CIRCUS • SWING DANCE WITH BIRMINGHAM SWING

MISS KIDD AND THE CAT • SWING ZAZOU • PUNCH THE SKY • BAGHDADDIES • THRILL COLLINS

SWINGROWERS • JIM WYNN SWING BAND • JIVE ACES • HEAVYBEAT BRASS BAND (NEW ORLEANS SET)

PLUS MANY MORE ARTISTS, GUESTS AND SURPRISES TO BE ANNOUNCED

DIGBETH BIRMINGHAM

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Peaky Blinders

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