

Beyond the Bricks of Brum

Featuring Casey Bailey, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Black Voices, Sanity and more!

Birmingham Symphony Hall **17 June**•**2022** 

**B:Music** 

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**UP TO MISCHIEF** chaos at The Alexandra with The Play That Goes Wrong



**OUTSIDE THE BOX** The Story Of Squash at University of Birmingham



**CONFESSION TIME...** Cockney dancer reveals all at Birmingham Hippodrome



**Richard Battye** 

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# What's On

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#### A weekend of fantasy at University of Birmingham

The University of Birmingham is hosting a one-off weekend celebrating and developing the city's rich heritage of fantasy. Held in honour of JRR Tolkien, who spent his childhood in Birmingham, Fantasy Worlds Weekend (Friday 27 - Sunday 29 May) invites visitors 'to reconsider the city in relation to fantastic world building in the wake of Tolkien's achievements'. For more information, visit birmingham.ac.uk

#### History of Soul through song at Symphony Hall

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Strictly singing star Tommy Blaize and acclaimed vocalist Vanessa Haynes are inviting soul music fans to join them on a musical journey this month. Taking place at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Friday 27 May, History Of Soul explores the genre's initial influences of gospel, jazz, and rhythm & blues. The programme of music includes the greatest hits of soul legends such as Aretha Franklin and James Brown. To find out more and book tickets, visit cbso.co.uk



# Watercolour Masters in the West Midlands

Shropshire's Lilleshall Hall is this month hosting a prestigious exhibition celebrating the work of some of the world's greatest watercolour painters.

International Watercolour Masters sees 42 artists



displaying their work from Monday 16 to Sunday 29 May. Practical demonstrations by the Masters will take place on most days of the exhibition. To find out more, visit internationalwatercolourmasters.com

# Step out for Parkinson's fundraiser this summer

People in the West Midlands can now sign up and step out for Walk For Parkinson's, a series of annual walks which raises funds for vital research into the debilitating condition. The walks are coordinated by Parkinson's UK, Europe's largest charitable funder of Parkinson's research. A walk in Sutton Park, Birmingham, takes place on Sunday 10 July. To find out more, visit parkinsons.org.uk

# Community organisation awarded £525,000

West Midlands community organisation Culture Central is to receive £525,000 in funding to support community volunteering opportunities.

The money is being provided by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sports via Arts Council England. The funding will see Culture Central, in partnership with Birmingham Museums Trust, Creative Black Country, Stoke Creates

### Large-scale portraits on show across the city

A large-scale photographic portraiture exhibition - presented as part of Birmingham 2022 Festival - is aiming to celebrate 'families, individuals, diversity and the people of Birmingham and the West Midlands'. Titled Generations, the exhibition sees photographer Julian Germain use a largeformat camera to work collaboratively with families of four and five generations from across the region.

The photos will be displayed in prominent public spaces, including billboards and poster & exhibition sites.

and Open Theatre, working to deliver a regional and place-based volunteering & development programme.

#### Autin Dance to run May half-term workshops

Autin Dance Theatre is on the lookout for young male-identifying individuals aged 12plus from the West Midlands who would be interested in joining its youth company during the half-term holiday at the end of the month.

Man Made Youth Company's free artistic programme (at MAC Birmingham, from Monday 30 May to Thursday 2 June) will include dance and physical theatre workshops, indoor and outdoor work, and an exploration of digital programmes and screen dance. For more information, visit macbirmingham.co.uk

#### Commonwealth Games batonbearers selected

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games has revealed the identities of the people who will take on the role of batonbearers in the Queen's Baton Relay this summer. The Queen's Baton will reach the West Midlands on 18 July. It will then be carried through local communities, arriving at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium on 28 July for the Games' Opening Ceremony. To find out more, visit birmingham2022.com/qbr.



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#### Barber concert explores city's trade history

An evening concert at the Barber Institute this month sees Grammy Award-winning percussionist Lekan Babalola (pictured) teaming up with multi-instrumentalist Kate Luxmoore and a narrator to explore the prominent historical role which Birmingham played in terms of trade, both of substances and people.

The Saturday 14 May show is being presented as part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival.



#### Mutt-see cinema season at Brum's Luna Springs

Now here's an experience that mutt-loving movie fans would be barking mad to miss... Luna Springs - Birmingham's largest outdoor events and music space - is this summer presenting a selection of, er, paw-some movies at its openair cinema.

This month's canine cracker is 101 Dalmations, showing on Sunday 8 May.

Turner And Hooch is lined up for June (the 5th), with Cats & Dogs screening on 10 July. For more information and to book tickets, visit lunasprings.co.uk



#### Festival promising to turn Birmingham into a dancefloor!

Birmingham International Dance Festival returns next month with three weeks of showstopping performances presented in a variety of venues and locations.

Produced by FABRIC (DanceXchange and Dance4) and taking place from 17 June to 3 July, the country's largest dance festival will feature 11 UK premieres and nine world premieres. With the event partnering with Birmingham 2022 Festival, work from acclaimed Commonwealth artists will also feature.

For more information and up-to-the-minute programme announcements, visit bidf.co.uk

#### Step back in time at the British Motor Museum



The British Motor Museum is inviting visitors to step back in time next month when it hosts the Classic & Vintage Commercial Show on 11 & 12 June. The show offers visitors a rare opportunity to reminisce about days gone by and check out hundreds of pre-2002 commercial vehicles. For more information, visit britishmotormuseum.co.uk

#### BE Festival call-out to residents...

Organisers of a well-established and hugely popular summer event are looking for Birmingham residents who would like to contribute to two large-scale community projects.

BE Festival, a theatre initiative which 'crosses borders and blurs boundaries between audiences and artists', is presenting Atlas Birmingham (3 & 4 June) - a living map of the city - and Garden State (8 - 11 June) - a green utopia for which a number of house plants are required. If you would like to be part of the living map project or donate your favourite plant to Garden State, visit befestival.org/festival to find out how to get involved. The website also provides more detail about each of the projects and the rest of the festival.

BE Festival runs at various venues from 3 to 11 June.



#### News from around the region



#### Exhibition showcases Brum's cinematic history

An exhibition exploring how cinema has shaped the streets of Birmingham and the social lives and dreams of Brummies over the past 125 years is available to view at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (until 30 October).

The display, titled Wonderland, showcases unseen photographs and cinema memorabilia alongside historic magic lanterns and optical toys from Birmingham's Collection.

A unique 3D map sets the scene for a treasure hunt across the city. Visitors can get involved by sharing their own cinema-going memories, watching film screenings or taking part in drop-in activities.



#### **Colmore District hosts** free wellbeing fortnight

At a time when businesses are being called upon to better support the mental and physical health of their staff. Colmore BID's free Wellbeing Fortnight is making a return. Taking place from Tuesday 3 to Friday 13 May, the initiative sees Colmore BID teaming up with MK Healthhub, PureGym Snow Hill, Sun Kyeong and Brewin Dolphin to deliver two weeks of webinars and classes to kickstart the process of managing wellbeing. For more information and to book sessions. visit colmorebusinessdistrict.co.uk

#### **Celebrating art and** diversity...

The West Midlands Open exhibition launches at The New Art Gallery Walsall this month. Running from 20 May to 25 September, the Open celebrates the quality and diversity of the region's visual arts, providing artists from across the West Midlands with the chance to showcase their talent and sell their work. To find out more, visit The New Art Gallerv Walsall's website.



#### Brindleyplace to host mass-participation tap dance

A mass-participation tap-dancing and storytelling 'extravaganza' is taking place in Brindleyplace next month (18 June) as part of Birmingham 2022 Festival and Birmingham International Dance Festival.

'Celebrating the stories of the West Midlands

and the people who call it home', Tappin' In aims to bring people together 'to get the region tap dancing and chatting about themselves whilst having a good time'. To find out more, including how to access instructional videos, visit tappinin2022.com

#### Community groups to benefit from Jubilee fund



Heart of England Community Foundation is awarding 47 grants - totalling £330,787 - to voluntary and community organisations in the West Midlands and Warwickshire. The money is being donated from Arts Council England's Let's Create Jubilee Fund, an initiative which ensures that thousands of people from communities across England will have the opportunity to take part in creative events celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

#### BCMG in two events celebrating composers

Some of contemporary music's most respected composers are being celebrated in a free concert at Birmingham Symphony

Hall this month.

The concert, which takes place on Wednesday 4 May, will see Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (BCMG) perform three works by Oliver Knussen, a piece by American composer Elliott Carter, Charlotte Brav's Trail Of Light and three works by Sir Harrison Birtwistle.

Later in the month, BCMG will celebrate the work of another greatly admired composer, the revolutionary Iannis Xenakis, when they present a festival of music & maths at Symphony Hall, CBSO Centre and The Exchange, Birmingham.

Xenakis, who was born a century ago this year, famously applied maths, random probability and graphic software to sound, creating worlds previously unheard of. The festival is being held across the three venues on Sunday 29 May. To find out more about BCMG's May performances, visit the group's website at bcmg.org.uk



# **B:Music**

#### There's something for everyone at Symphony Hall and Town Hall



# Book Online: **bmusic.co.uk**

# $\mathbf{R}$

Oti Mabuse talks influences, inspirations, Strictly Come Dancing and more...

#### Oti Mabuse tells her story in brand-new stage show I Am Here, featuring 'some of the world's greatest dancers and singers'. What's On recently caught up with the former Strictly champion to find out more...

Strictly fans will no doubt have sighed in disappointment when Oti Mabuse declared earlier this year that she was quitting the show after seven successful seasons.

Having lifted the coveted glitter ball twice in succession - with Kelvin Fletcher in 2019 and Bill Bailey in 2020 - Oti is a viewer's favourite whose routines appear effortless and are totally mesmerising to watch. Her affable nature and ability to turn the most unexpected of celebrities into winners - think Bill Bailey - has seen her become one of the show's best-loved professionals.

There's no doubt that Oti will be missed when the Saturday evening dance show returns for its 20th season this autumn, but she hasn't completely disappeared from our lives.

A gutsy lady with big ambitions that extend way beyond our TV screens, Oti is currently concentrating on her UK tour, I Am Here. In the show, she tells her remarkable story from growing up in South Africa and deciding to pursue her love of dance, right through to her 2015 debut on Strictly, where she partnered Olympic boxer Anthony Ogogo.

So why I Am Here, and why now?

"It has been a long wait, as the tour was supposed to happen two years ago," Oti explains. "It's something I feel really passionate about, as there has never been a female-led solo dance tour ever, ever, ever... I feel really lucky to be the first one to go out there and tell my story.

"The show starts here in the UK with everything I have today and focuses on the experiences I have been through - all the amazing dance shows that I've been lucky enough to be a part of. Then we go back in time to Germany, to see where the trainingcrazy Oti came from. We then take it all the way back to South Africa, to where I was born and to the history of South Africa itself telling love stories as we go."

Oti's journey is sure to inspire many who have their hearts set on a future in the performing arts. Together with her two siblings - Motsi (who's now a judge on Strictly) and Phemelo - she began having dance lessons at school and started competing - very successfully - at the tender age of five. Unlike many whose inspiration comes from the stars they see on TV and social media, Oti's motivation came from her family.

"There weren't dancers who came from South Africa, to be honest. We didn't have the likes of Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly and all that. We didn't have them to watch on TV and to look up to. That was not our world. My family, and my mom specifically, was our inspiration for a very, very, very long time. We still honour and love her so much because she did so much for us, as did our father."

As Oti grew older, a career in civil engineering became her main focus. But working on-site in construction, she had a moment that led her to question her choices and subsequently brought about a huge life change...

"I was just walking and giving people instructions, and suddenly this moment came to me. I had this real sense of missing something. I then realised I was missing the sensation of dancing. I hadn't danced in three months and was really missing it! I questioned if I was really happy. Did working in construction fulfil me? I had to really reflect on what I was doing and what I was feeling. I told my mom: I'm sorry but I can't do this anymore. I'm going to become a professional dancer and I'm leaving next month."

Oti's news wasn't received particularly well...

"It took 10 years for me to get to a place where I'm, like, yeah, it was the right decision. At the time, I was young, and like any mom, she was concerned that her 19year-old daughter had decided to leave home to follow her dream in another country, on another continent, where they spoke a different language. It was really difficult for her to understand why I would do that to myself, but now I think she's really, really proud."

Oti is now reaping the rewards of her decision - and of all the hard work she's put into becoming one of the biggest stars in her field. Although her journey hasn't always been easy, following her gut instinct has certainly paid off, and she recommends that anyone wanting to follow in her footsteps should do the same. "It's all about hard work and realistic passion, working your way and always having an idea about what you want to have happen next. At 17, everything I thought I would achieve, I did. Same at 24. Now, at 30, I have new goals..."

That said, Oti didn't plan to be on TV - that wasn't something she saw coming at all.

"All I ever wanted to do was be a professional dancer. That happened and next came Strictly Germany. The goal was to win that, and although that didn't happen, it led to me being invited to do Strictly UK. I was, like, okay, so here's the next goal then! I put 200% into it, as it's everyone's dream to win that show and lift the glitter ball."

Oti still has to pinch herself regarding her Strictly success, but having made her dream come true, she's now concentrating on her upcoming tour.

So is there a part in I Am Here that she's really looking forward to performing?

"Even though we're talking a lot about Africa, my favourite part is the musical section, where we talk about the West End and all my favourite musicals. It's fast-paced, with lots of costume changes, and is so much fun. The whole time we're dancing you just hear us go 'Yeah, come on, guys, we've got this!'"

As well as preparing for her UK tour, Oti is working alongside Arlene Phillips to choreograph brand-new musical The Cher Show - which comes to the Midlands later this year - and is also hosting TV show Romeo And Duet.

But can she see herself returning to Strictly at some point in the future?

"It fills my soul when people say I will be missed, and obviously when I watch it, there will be a couple of tears. But I will be there in the background, supporting my sister and my friends and giving them advice. Those people are my family here, and I absolutely love everything about them."

Oti Mabuse: I Am Here shows at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on Sun 29 May; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 26 June; and Birmingham Hippodrome, Sun 3 July

# **COMING UP AT THE ALEX**



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Food

# Gourmet burger joint opens in Digbeth

Gourmet burger & cocktail bar Hanbao has opened on Floodgate Street in Birmingham's Digbeth district. Offering a range of eastern and western-style burgers, menu options include: Odd Future - beef patty, American cheese, Bourbon bacon jam, maple streaky bacon, fresh chilli, baconnaise and glazed donut bun - and Death Row: gold rum, bourbon, cognac, orange liqueur, apricot liqueur, passion fruit purée, lime juice, apple juice and orange juice.

#### Burger Fest back at Aston Hall in July

Seasonal Markets' Burger Fest returns to Aston Hall on Saturday 16 July with what's being called 'the best line-up yet'.

Visitors can get filthy with the likes of Stripclub Street Food, Meat Meets Bun, Original Patty Men, Yardbirds, Patty Freaks, Meat Shack Burgers, Flying Cows Burgers, Smoke And Bones and more.

Local craft beers, homemade cocktails, cider and prosecco will be on offer too, with market traders, live music and DJs further adding to the event's appeal. Children under 12 get in for free and the popular event is dog friendly. Tickets are available via designmynight.com



#### Attic Brew Co wins Beer of the Year award

A Birmingham-brewed beer has been named Beer of the Year at the prestigious London Beer Competition. Intuition, produced by Attic Brew Co, took home the contest's biggest prize, with judges being particularly impressed by the beer's 'prominent grapefruit aromas, and other tropical fruits like mango, pineapple, and peach on the nose'.



#### Pub In The Park returning to the Midlands next month

Tom Kerridge's Pub In The Park - 'the UK's biggest celebration of food and music' - returns to St Nicholas Park in Warwick from Friday 10 to Sunday 12 June.

Celebrity chef James Martin and pastry chef and Junior Bake Off judge Ravneet Gill will be hosting the event, while participating venues include Cryrus Todiwala's Café Spice Namaste and Mike Bullard & Dan Androne's The Butcher's Social.

Fan favourites making a welcome return at this

### Taste of Sri Lankan street food at new city venue

Award-winning Sri Lankan street food restaurant group The Coconut Tree has opened premises on Birmingham's Gas Street. The new restaurant bar offers a menu made up of smaller tapas-style plates. These include: hot battered spicy cuttlefish; Hoppers - bowlshaped coconut pancakes served with sambal and Sri Lankan salsa; cashew nuts and green peas soaked and cooked in coconut cream; and black pork, which consists of diced pork belly cooked in 30 roasted spices. Larger sharing options include the signature Devilled Dishes - meat or fish cooked in spices,

then stir-fried with traditional banana peppers and finished off with crushed chillies. The eatery seats 70 covers, with an open-plan kitchen on the ground floor and an upstairs cocktail bar serving The Coconut Tree's signature 'cocotails'... To book a table, visit: thecoconut-tree.com/birmingham year's get-together include: Kerridge's The Hand And Flowers; Atul Kochhar Restaurants; one-time Great British Menu contestant Andrew Pern's The Star Inn; Stephen Terry's The Hardwick; and Warwick's The Rose & Crown. The music line-up features Australian songstress Natalie Imbruglia (Friday evening), British boyband royalty McFly (Saturday evening) and the queen of the kitchen disco, Sophie Ellis-Bextor (Lazy Sunday session).



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### **Family Fun Coming Soon**





#### Monday 30 May | 2pm & 4pm | Ages 2-7

Nonsense Room Productions (Shark in the Park) bring you a brand new interactive musical show for all the family. But in this show – **YOU CHOOSE** what happens!

Based on the brilliant book by Pippa Goodhart and Nick Sharratt. Book now!



#### Oddsocks: Hamlet - The Comedy Sat 9 – Sun 10 July | Ages 7+

Shakespeare's famous tragedy performed live and outdoors, with lots of laughs and music.



May Half Term Courses for Children Mon 30 May - Fri 3 June | Ages 6+

Check out our exciting creative courses for children and young people! See website for details.

macbirmingham.co.uk | 0121 446 3232 Midlands Arts Centre, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, B12 9QH





# Food, Glorious Food

### Greedy Gourmet founder Michelle Minnaar talks about how her childhood passion for food inspired a successful career as an award-winning blogger...

"I started blogging before it was cool," explains Michelle Minnaar, the founder of the award-winning Greedy Gourmet food blog.

Greedy Gourmet was born in 2007 and has since blossomed into an extensive food site enjoyed by users across the world.

Having launched after Michelle made a lifechanging move from South Africa to the UK, the blog has since scored success after success, with Food Blogger of the Year and Best Entertainment Blog in Essex among the various awards it's hoovered up.

It has also been named one of the UK's top 10 food blogs.

"I used to eat out a lot in South Africa, and there was a big difference in the quality and the price tag of the food," says Michelle. "I soon came to realise that the food here, especially in Essex, wasn't that great. I'd eat out in restaurants and think 'you're paying all this money for mediocre food'. I couldn't cook, so when I came across the blogging scene, I thought it was a good way to document my experiences but also to 'learn as I go'."

Greedy Gourmet features more than 1,000 recipes, ranging from international cuisine and comfort food, to family favourites and sweet treats. There's also a dedicated 'special diets' section, which is home to vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, dairy-free, pescatarian and keto recipes.

From alcoholic butterbeer and elderberry gin, to braised short ribs and monkfish curry, there are plenty of options to tantalise the tastebuds, no matter what your preference. Each published recipe article is loaded with useful information on its history, as well as suggestions on how to customise dishes to suit your taste.

But Greedy Gourmet isn't just a recipe site. It features restaurant reviews and recommendations too, a 'places to visit' section and an ingredient substitute section. There's even a 'my first weight loss retreat' blog, as well as a section on the dos and don'ts of reheating specific foods. With her 15 years of experience, Michelle really has got all bases covered.

"I like to explore new dishes. I grow my own vegetables too, so I know what you can do with all those courgettes you have left over, for example. Greedy Gourmet is a mix-match of recipes - I don't want to loophole myself into anything specific. I do look into searchengine optimisation, so sometimes I'm very much cooking by numbers. It's not always up my street, but if there's demand, then I do it. I do always try to make my best version of the dish, though."

Michelle also takes her own photographs for the blog.

"I get really irked by the fact that some recipes in cookbooks aren't accompanied by a photo! I didn't used to have a great camera so had to work my way up. I'm currently in the process of updating a lot of my old content that I published back in 2007. To look at what I created then compared to what I can create now... what a journey!"

Michelle's passion for food developed when she was growing up.

"My father was quite a foodie. We used to go on holiday and look at all the restaurant menus to see which looked the best and try as many as we could. Wherever we'd travel we'd always check out the supermarkets, the green grocers etc. He had a big influence on me - we ate out multiple times a week."

Fast forward to 2022, and it's no secret that the possibility of enjoying some free grub is the main incentive for many bloggers. So it's refreshing indeed to talk to someone whose motivation comes from an entirely different place. Even so, attending press events - both in the UK and abroad - is part and parcel of running an award-winning food blog for Michelle.

"Travel wise, the trip that stuck out for me was Norway. I was lucky enough to be invited on a press trip. It was a big novelty going to the Fjords and actually catching some king crab. They took us to the shore and prepared it - they boiled it in salt water. It was amazing. So fresh. It's a favourite memory of mine, even though it was absolutely freezing! The other trip I really enjoyed was the Isles of Scilly. We ate fresh seafood in this old cowshed. Very rustic!"

With the blogging market now saturated (we can blame Instagram for that), what advice does Michelle have for budding bloggers?

"Make sure you know what your aim is. I know a lot of people who have stopped blogging because it's just got too much and they ended up falling out of love with it. If you want to start food blogging, your heart has to be in it - it's a rollercoaster ride. Just keep asking yourself what your goals are. One thing to remember is, if you're going to be a hobby blogger, then do what you like and see what happens. Just don't have much in the way of expectation."

Michelle has recently launched her second food venture - eatmycheesecake.com - with ex-chef husband Edward. Although it's not been an overnight success, her experience in the blogger field has proved invaluable.

"It's only a few months in and the traffic isn't there yet, but if you know something is good, you have to have faith that it will work out.

"We started making cheesecakes and posting them on Greedy Gourmet, and they went wild. You know all these ready meals you get these days? There's such a wide variety of them, but I feel the dessert section is still very limited, and people like making their own desserts. It seemed like a good idea to experiment and see what happened, as they're quite simple recipes. Hopefully it'll work out because a lot of countries love cheesecake!"

Check out Michelle's blog, Greedy Gourmet, at greedygourmet.com



# SUMMER SOUNDS WITH THE CBSO!

#### SYMPHONY HALL, BIRMINGHAM

#### HISTORY OF SOUL FRIDAY 27 MAY, 7.30PM

CBSO

The greatest Soul hits including Natural Woman, Son of a Preacher Man, Georgia On My Mind, Respect, Pappa's Got a Brand New Bag and more!

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#### Miloš Karadaglic: Homage to Segovia

Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 28 May

Miloš Karadaglic left his home country of Montenegro as a teenager to pursue his passion for classical guitar.

After studying at the prestigious Royal Academy of Music in London, he secured an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon in 2010.

Solo performances with international orchestras followed, as did five studio

#### Birmingham Bach Choir: Durufle's Requiem

Selly Oak Methodist Church, Birmingham, Sat 21 May

One of the city's oldest and most distinguished musical groups, Birmingham Bach Choir is here inviting people to 'come and sing' as they get their teeth into Maurice Duruflé's mid-20th century masterpiece.

Conductor Paul Spicer leads an afternoon workshop, after which participants can join the choir in an informal performance of the Requiem.



albums.

His Town Hall concert sees him paying tribute to a man he greatly admires. "This programme is in tribute to one of my heroes," says Miloš. "Andrés Segovia was a true pioneer of the instrument, and we guitarists of today owe him a lot because he put us on the map."

#### James Lisney plays Chopin & Beethoven

Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Sun 8 May

"Although I am permanently upbeat about my concerts and thoroughly enjoy performing, I'm also extremely critical," admits James Lisney. "I



never feel that they are 'good enough'." In contrast to James, his legion of fans have no qualms whatsoever about singing his praises. And for anybody who's had the pleasure of hearing him play, it's easy to understand why.

A concerto and recital soloist, chamber musician, song accompanist and pianist director, James here presents a programme featuring Chopin's Fantaisie, Impromptu and Sonate, and Beethoven's 33 Variations On A Waltz By Anton Diabelli.

#### CBSO: Gabriela Montero - Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 11 & Thurs12 May

"The piano is my voice and my confidante," says Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Montero. "It enables the continuation of beauty and one of the most noble of human endeavours - to speak about who we are through art." Gabriela first played the piano - albeit a toy one - at the tender age of seven months, made her concerto debut (with the National Youth Orchestra of Venezuela) at the age of eight, and as an adult has established herself as one of the world's most talented and visionary classical pianists.

Her performance here of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto kickstarts a programme that also includes Anton Bruckner's sixth symphony and Brahms' third. The concert is conducted by Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, whose tenure as CBSO music director concludes at the end of this season.



#### One Night At The VE Day Proms

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sun 15 May The London Gala Orchestra visit town to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Accompanied by talented singers, the orchestra present a show that features a host of classic wartime numbers, including Vera Lynn's The White Cliffs Of Dover and Glenn Miller's In The Mood. Classical masterpieces such as Land Of Hope And Glory and Jerusalem also feature.



BEAST



Birmingham Contemporary Music Group

# >music & maths< Festival

pizzaexpresslive.com

Birmingham City Centre 29 May 2022

A day of events featuring new music, workshops, and an acousmatic performance by BEAST

www.bcmg.org.uk/music-maths

#### Emeli Sandé

The Mill, Birmingham, Thurs 19 May; Birmingham Town Hall, Mon 30 May

Emeli Sandé is one of Britain's most successful songwriters. Her list of impressive achievements includes: having the UK's biggest-selling album of 2012 (and the second biggest in 2013), 19 million single listens, three number-one singles, four BRIT Awards and an MBE for services to music. She brings her Brighter Days tour to Birmingham in support of latest album Let's Say For Instance, which is set for release on the sixth of this month.



#### Ashe

O2 Institute, Birmingham, Mon 30 May

Blending orchestral pop and grandiose '70s rock with sublimely timeless piano balladry, LA-based Ashe brings her Fault Line tour to Birmingham this month.

Talking about her debut album, the singersongwriter explains: "Ashlyn is deeply reflective and honest, full of stories of my experiences with fear and pain and turning those hard things into joy and independence... I think you have to be vulnerable to create something really great, and I believe I did that."





#### **Gregory Porter**

Resorts World Arena, Birmingham, Wed 11 May

Gregory Porter's warm baritone vocals and earthy brand of jazz, soul and gospel shot him to stardom more than a decade ago. Now with two Grammy Awards to his name, the Sacramento-born singer will be hoping latest album Still Rising leads to further

#### accolades.

Featuring collaborations with Paloma Faith and Moby, the record boasts five new tracks, two new arrangements, and nine of Gregory's most popular songs, covers and duets.

Gias

"This is my music up until now, but it's not a 'greatest hits'," he explains. "They often come at the end of someone's career, and I still feel new and young in mine."

#### Space

Hare & Hounds, Birmingham, Fri 27 May

Known for their dark-humoured lyrics think serial killers, failed relationships, social outcasts and mental illness - indie rock band Space came to prominence in the mid-1990s with the release of hit singles Female Of The Species and The Ballad Of Tom Jones (with whom they worked in 1999).

Their sound, although inspired by '60s guitar groups such as The Kinks and The Who, features an imaginative use of electronic instruments and sampling from hip-hop and classic film soundtracks.

#### **Bloc Party**

O2 Academy, Birmingham, Thurs 26 May

Producing music that's rooted in rock but which also features elements of various other genres, including electronica and house, Bloc Party have scored numerous significant hits, most notably Banquet, Helicopter, Flux and This Modern Love. The band are touring in support of sixth studio album Alpha Games - their first since 2016's Hymns.

#### Tom Ollendorff Trio

Pizza Express Live, Birmingham, Fri 27 May

Guitarist Tom Ollendorff has worked with some of the leading names in the industry, including Ari Hoenig, Geoff Simkins, Bill McHenry, Jeff Williams and Huw Warren. An outstanding improviser, imaginative composer, and one of the top young voices on the London jazz scene, he released his debut album, A Song For You, on Fresh Sound Records in May last year.



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# **Tempest on tour**

Ahead of a Birmingham Town Hall gig, spoken-word artist, musician & playwright Kae Tempest talks about new album The Line Is A Curve...

#### Did you have any idea about what you wanted to achieve with new album The Line Is A Curve before you started it, Kae?

There's never a plan to start with, it just evolves naturally. I get into the studio with Dan Carey and we don't know what's going to happen; we just want to get together and write. The ideas lead the way. Usually we spend a couple of days and see what we come up with; then, when we have a bunch of songs, we know we have something. Then we'll take a few days away to reflect on them and go back in with a more precise focus on where it's going.

#### This time around you decided to record your vocals with three takes in front of three generations of people. What was your thinking there?

I always want to do the whole album as one take, as it gives a feeling of movement and makes me excited. This time I was thinking of how to get the most truthful performance with the most live delivery, and felt I had to be speaking to someone - an audience of one. I thought, 'What if I do three takes in one day, to three different people? Someone younger, someone older and someone of my generation. What would happen to my delivery?' It was an incredible experience and showed me how much language changes depending on who is listening. I'd recommend it to everyone to try for themselves. It's a really nerve-wracking thing to do, but really exciting too.

#### Your last album, The Book Of Traps And Lessons, was very internal and personal, but this new one has a much more outward perspective, while still coming across as a deeply personal affair. What was behind this different approach?

I wasn't very well making the last one. I was in some trouble, really. What I was going through in my life was challenging and it culminated in some pretty heavy mentalhealth stuff. This album is like me getting out of that, to be honest. It's about looking for people and connections. Traps And Lessons was about how can we see the traps in our lives before we fall into them? How can we change? This album is about the line being a curve - life is circular and we will repeat, so accept it. Pick yourself up and keep fighting.

#### The album features a collaboration with Fontaines DC frontman Grian Chatten. How did that come about?

It was amazing to work with Grian. He's a

stunning writer and a fantastic artist. His lyrics give this impression of simplicity, where he says these things that just feel so true, as if it's just come straight out of his heart with no filter. What he's doing as a writer, though, is so skilful at the same time; he's just a really fantastic poet. I believe him and I believe in him. That soul of his, that person he is, when I hear him sing, he takes me. It feels real to me. I've been a big fan for years, and I've known him for a long time, as Fontaines DC recorded with Dan, so we've hung out before. There's a lot of respect from me to the whole band, so when it came to making the album, it was an obvious thing to ask him to be involved.

#### Lianne La Havas also features on the record. How was it working with her?

It's the same thing with Lianne. I've known her a long time and have so much respect and love for her. Her guitar playing is just wicked; she's brilliant. Again, I know her from Dan's studio and parties, so there's a lot of mutual respect and love there. So I really wanted to use those feelings to see if we could make something out of it - take that energy we have together and create. She absolutely killed it when she came down, too. I was blown away.

#### The album is produced, as always, by Dan. What does he bring to the table for you?

Our connection is really profound. I have a true partner in Dan Carey. He understands my ideas, he knows how to create an environment where my ideas can be unlike how they would be anywhere else. I don't have the same ideas without Dan being there. There's something about everything we've been through over the last 10 years of working together that's just unique. The experiences we've shared, nobody will ever know so much of it or understand it. Like flying over to Malibu to make demos in Bob Dylan's old tour bus for Rick Rubin! It's like playtime for adults when we hang out. I feel understood by him, and I feel cared for. He makes me feel that anything is possible. It's deep. That's not to say I don't love collaborating with other musicians; there's just something we have that is pretty special.

#### Like every other artist, you've not been able to play live during the pandemic and lockdowns. What was that like for you?

Like everybody, we had to change our perspectives on our lives, as it all stopped. The misery of people losing livelihoods, the illness and deaths that so many people had to endure, that was heavy. Personally, though, privately and in my own space, I actually found the time completely revelatory. My relationship broke down, so I was just in the yard on my own. So I went deep. It was profound. I didn't have the headspace to do that when I was on tour, but during lockdown I did. I came out the other side so much stronger. Also, I'm a writer, so I could still work. I wrote songs, I worked on a play and did some poetry too. I still had that, but other musician friends of mine weren't so lucky. I feel fortunate for that.

#### You finally have a tour coming up, though. You must be excited...

I can't wait. We have new crew and a whole new feeling to it. I think what we're creating is going to be a beautiful experience, not just for us but everyone in the room. It'll be a very deep thing to be in front of audiences again after so long and after everything we've all gone through, so I'm going to give it everything I've got. It's the most beautiful and incredible thing to stand up in front of people and play your music. These last couple of years have given me time to really focus on that - on what I want from a performance and what I can bring to it for people.

#### After everything that's gone on, and having had such a long layoff from playing live, are there any nerves about getting back to it?

I'm definitely a little nervous about the whole thing. Well, I'm a *lot* nervous actually, but I feel ready. I just can't wait to get out there and see what happens. You'd be mad if you weren't nervous, to be honest. It's a crazy thing to do, when you think about it, isn't it? I just really want to be able to experience it all again. I hope people will feel curious enough to come out, so we want to make sure that we put enough value in the experience for them to buy tickets and come out and be a part of it. That's the dream, isn't it? To have a room full of people and something to deliver. Hopefully it'll be a beautiful night.

#### Kae Tempest plays Birmingham Town Hall on Tuesday 10 May, with tickets available at bmusic.co.uk



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#### Wychwood

Cheltenham Racecourse, Fri 3 - Sun 5 June

Renowned for its decade-spanning line-up, family favourite Wychwood takes place annually at Cheltenham's famous racecourse. As well as music, the popular festival features workshops for all ages, comedy, a kids' literature festival, a headphone disco, healing gardens and idyllic camping beneath the Prestbury Hills.

**2022 line-up includes:** Sophie Ellis-Bextor (pictured), Levellers, Deacon Blue, Boney M, The Selecter, The Undertones, Peter Hook & The Light, The South, The Real Thing, Dreadzone, Skerryvore, Doctor & The Medics, Lottery Winners, Craig Charles Funk And Soul Club, Tankus The Henge, Folk On and Merry Hell



#### **Bearded Theory**

Catton Hall, Derbyshire, Thurs 26 - Sun 29 May

Having started life as a birthday party in the garden of a pub in Derbyshire, Bearded Theory has evolved into one of the country's bestloved and most critically acclaimed festivals, winning a host of awards including best small festival and best family festival at the UK Festival Awards.

**2022 line-up includes:** Placebo, Patti Smith & Band, Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes, The Hives, Frank Turner & The Sleeping Souls, Amy Macdonald (pictured), Fat White Family, The Selecter and Ferocious Dog



#### Beardy Folk Festival

Hopton Court, nr Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire, Thurs 16 - Sun 19 June

Beardy Folk Festival is a beautifully crafted midsummer weekend boasting a line-up of folk, roots and acoustic music.

There are plenty of workshops to sample too, including group singing, French dancing, ceilidh, yoga, morris dancing, mini melodeons, Bodhran, spoken word, comedy, storytelling, circus skills and woodland craft making.

Under-13s go free, and four camping zones are available with the purchase of a day or weekend ticket.

**2022 line-up includes:** The Young'uns, Edward II, Hope & Social, Martin Simpson, The Magpie Arc, Ross Ainslie & Tim Edey, Gaz Brookfield, The Trials Of Cato (pictured), Will Pound & Jenn Butterworth, Bar Steward Sons Of Val Doonican, Rachael McShane & The Cartographers, Rachel Newton and Bonfire Radicals



#### Rock And Bowl

Picnic Area, Market Drayton, Shropshire, Thurs 2 - Sat 4 June

Described as a small festival with a big heart, not-for-profit community event Rock And Bowl boasts a wide variety of acts, including indie, rock and ska bands plus some of the UK's best tribute performers. The event has a number of weekend camping tickets available for a friendly, family-run campsite just a short walk from the festival grounds.

**2022 line-up includes:** Fight The Bear (pictured), The Droogs, The Wayne Martin Band, The Clause, Good To Go, Secret Elephant, Hipster and The Superskas



#### **Download Festival**

Donington Park, Leicestershire, Fri 10 - Sun 12 June



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

Conceived as a follow-up to the Monsters Of Rock Festival, Download partly owes its name to the pioneering way in which it uses technology to connect with audiences and build a community.

**2022 line-up includes:** Iron Maiden, KISS, Biffy Clyro, Korn, A Day To Remember, Skindred (pictured), Deftones, Megadeth, Steel Panther, Shinedown, Volbeat, Funeral For A Friend, The Darkness, Airbourne, Mastodon and The Ghost Inside



#### **Russell Peters**

Utilita Arena, Birmingham, Tues 17 May

"I was supposed to start this tour in 2020," says Canadian comedian Russell Peters, "but then, I'm not sure if you guys heard, but something happened..." A little later than intended, then, Russell is

A little later than intended, then, Russell is visiting the Midlands with Act Your Age, a show in which he contemplates cancel

#### Lou Sanders

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 19 May

A huge and regular success at the Edinburgh Fringe, Lou Sanders has appeared on all manner of television comedy series, co-hosted an improvised podcast entitled Why Is Your Bottom So Dirty? and won series eight of Taskmaster. She's here returning to the stage with brand-new stand-up offering One Word: Wow - a show in which she promises to 'tell all' about 'the time I gave this horse a boner'. Jokes include: "I waited an hour for my starter, so I complained: 'It's not rocket salad,'" and "I was the prettiest, cleverest girl in my class. I was home-schooled."



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culture and the current state of the world. "Act You Age is a bit different from the rest of my shows," Russell informed the National News. "It's a little bit more mature... trying to reason with the immature me. I'm going to be 52 this year, so I'm not a young kid anymore who can get away with 'why do people do this?'. Now, I have to take responsibility for why things are the way they are."

#### **Milton Jones**

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 20 May; Birmingham Town Hall, Wed 19 October; The Swan Theatre, Worcester, Sat 5 November

With a style of humour that's mainly based around puns and one-liners, Milton Jones has established himself as one of Britain's most in-demand funnymen.

"If my comedy's working well, I put a cartoon in people's heads that surprises them," explains Milton. "So you start off and they're thinking one thing, then you surprise them by changing the ending as you go along. It's not political or particularly edgy, it's just daft. It's a sort of verbal practical joke, but some people really hate that. I think the better the comic you are, the stronger the flavour you are. I think if you're bland and everyone quite likes you, you're probably just not very good."

Milton's gags include: "Recently on a flight to America, all the way across my wife was going, 'Why don't you get an upgrade, why don't you get an upgrade?' It took a bit of time, but in the end I got a better wife."

#### **Chris Rock**

Utilita Arena, Birmingham, Fri 13 May

The Will Smith 'slapgate' incident at this year's Oscars ceremony isn't the first time Chris Rock has been at the centre of controversy during a career spanning almost 40 years.

At the 2007 London Live Earth concert, his decision to call the crowd 'mother\*\*\*\*\*s' led to the BBC immediately terminating its live broadcast of the event.

He's also been slammed for his willingness to use the 'n' word and his view that highprofile celebrities shouldn't be under extra pressure to behave as role models. Chris' jokes include: "I had a cop pull me over the other day - scared me so bad, made me think I stole my own car. 'Get out of the car,' he said, 'get out of the f\*\*\*\*\*\* car! You stole this car!' I was like, 'Damn, maybe I did!'"

And also... "We got so much food in America that we're allergic to food. Allergic to food! Hungry people ain't allergic to s\*\*\*. You think anyone in Rwanda's got a f\*\*\*\*\* lactose intolerance?"

Chris stops off in Birmingham with his latest touring show, Ego Death.



#### **Tony Law**

Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Fri 20 May

If you like your comedians to be touched with genius while at the same time prone to meander off-topic with gag-laden dialogues, Tony Law is definitely the laughter merchant for you.

Zany alternative comedy is Canadian Tony's stock-in-trade - a fact which means his audience is always guaranteed an evening of off-the-wall, boundary-defying standup. He visits the Midlands this month with his latest touring show, A Now Begin In Again.



#### **Patrick Kielty**

The Old Rep, Birmingham, Sun 22 May; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 19 June

Northern Irish purveyor of mirth Patrick Kielty here returns to his satirical roots with a personal take on borders, national identity and the future of the Union in a post-Brexit landscape.

Patrick is this year celebrating a decade of marriage to Midlands-born television presenter Cat Deeley, and is happy to share his strategy for a contented life: "First find a woman who's out of your league," he advises, "and then convince her that she isn't..."



#### Sam Avery

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 20 May

Can you be a role model on four hours' sleep? Can you mentor someone who thinks you're a moron? And how do you change the world if you can't even clean your kitchen? Sam Avery is aiming to find answers to these questions and many more when he visits Shrewsbury with Role Model, a show in which he contemplates the challenge of helping his kids find their moral compass without losing sight of his own. Sam's hoping this latest gig will win him a whole new audience, and is encouraging fans to bring along their friends: "I'll win them over with my cheeky northern charm," he says. "And if that fails, I'll hit them with some high-quality knob gags."





Russell Brand Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 25 May

Blending a memorable look with a penchant for courting controversy, it's fair to say that Russell Brand has very much ploughed his own furrow in the world of light entertainment.

Bursting onto the scene via Big Brother's 'Big Mouth' spin-off show, Russell had no trouble finding a spotlight in which to stand during the years that followed. His more high-profile moments included an ill-starred marriage to Katy Perry and an offensive voicemail call to Fawlty Towers actor Andrew Sachs. In more recent times he's developed a reputation as a public activist and campaigner, with climate change and corporate capitalism among the issues he's tackled.

He's also been described as a freethinking contrarian, using his hugely popular podcasts and YouTube channel to espouse theories around topics including the Covid vaccine and Russia's war with Ukraine. Russell stops off in the Potteries with brandnew live show 33, in which he contemplates the strangeness of the last two years and asks the question: how do you 'get back to normal' if you've never been normal?

#### Jo Enright

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 May

Birmingham-born actor and comedian Jo Enright admits she's happiest when she's hiding behind a character. "I like anonymity," says Jo. "That's the great thing about being an actor; you can be in things without anybody recognising you."

Jo's career so far has seen her taking refuge behind one character or another in some of the UK's most successful comedy series, including Peter Kay's Phoenix Nights, Steve Coogan's I'm Alan Partridge, and Ricky Gervais & Stephen Merchant's Life's Too Short.

"Growing up, I didn't actually know anyone who performed comedy for a living, although I knew plenty of really funny people," she recalls. "When I started playing the circuit, there were only a handful of women working at it full-time. That said, the handful did include Hattie Hayridge, Jo Brand and Linda Smith - so the bar was set very high!"

#### Flo & Joan

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 6 May; Stourbridge Town Hall, Wed 25 May



"Our latest show, Sweet Release, is a collection of new songs that cover loads of different stuff," explain siblings Nicola & Rosie Dempsey, better known as musical comedy duo Flo & Joan. "But it also touches on what you want to keep hold of in life and what you choose to let go of, which is where the title Sweet Release came from.

"Someone asked us if a 'sweet release' is a fart. That's not what the show is about, but if you want to view it through that lens then all power to you."

# MAGIC, MISCHIEF AND MAYHEM

### as a West End winner visits the Midlands



#### Legendary magicians Penn & Teller explain how they found themselves working with The Play That Goes Wrong producers Mischief Theatre on hit show Magic Goes Wrong, which is stopping off in Birmingham this month as part of a UK tour...

Legendary magicians Penn & Teller have been sawing the magic rulebook in half since the mid-1970s.

Presenting shows that combine bamboozling illusions and dark comedy with magic that often seems to go horribly wrong, they are notorious for revealing to the audience exactly how their tricks are done - a habit which has long prevented them from being members of the Magic Circle.

#### Not that they mind.

In fact, they revel in the illusion of chaos. So when they announced in 2019 that they were getting together with Mischief Theatre the team behind smash-hit shows The Play That Goes Wrong, Peter Pan Goes Wrong and The Comedy About A Bank Robbery, as well as BBC One TV series The Goes Wrong Show it seemed like a perfect match.

The result of the collaboration - Magic Goes Wrong - opened in the West End to rave reviews and is now casting its spell on audiences across the UK.

The team-up with Mischief came about when Penn & Teller were performing in London, and Penn Jillette's family decided they wanted to see a show in the West End...

"I don't go to comedy theatre at all," says Penn. "I like theatre to be deadly dull, slow and depressing. But my wife and children picked The Play That Goes Wrong. I realised that not only was my family laughing harder than I've ever seen them, but I was too!"

He immediately told Teller (that one word is now the magician's legal name) to book a ticket.

Despite being known for his onstage silence, it was Teller who started discussions with Mischief's artistic directors, Jonathan Sayer, Henry Shields and Henry Lewis.

"I'm more shy than Teller, so it never crossed my mind to go backstage," says Penn, "but Teller took himself backstage and said, 'Hey, I'm a star!'"

Teller insists it wasn't quite like that: "As I was sitting in my seat, someone tapped me

on the shoulder and said, 'You're Teller, aren't you? The cast wants to give you free ice cream'. So afterwards I went backstage to thank the cast and compliment them, because it really was one of the finest shows I've ever seen."

A few months later, the two magicians and all three of Mischief's artistic directors were eating homemade pancakes at Teller's Las Vegas house and plotting a brand-new show.

Working on a stage production with unfamiliar people was a new experience for Penn & Teller, who rarely collaborate with anyone else.

"Teller and I have a dynamic that we've built over 47 years, so this was a huge leap of faith," says Penn. "We couldn't go out to dinner with these guys, we had to jump straight into bed. We were told: they are going to be here at 10am on Wednesday and you'll start writing your show. You won't even know which one is Jonathan and which ones are Henry. But it took only about 20 minutes before I felt like I was around my closest friends."

Shields, Sayer and Lewis spent a week and a half putting together the bones of the show in a small side room off the stage of The Rio hotel, where Penn & Teller are the longestrunning headline act in Vegas history.

"There was one moment when Henry (Lewis) and Jonathan said, 'It could kind of go like this'," Penn explains. "And then the two of them did a five-minute improvisation. Now, I have sat in a room with Lou Reed playing Sweet Jane four feet from me. I've talked to Richard Feynman about physics. I've spoken to Bob Dylan. But I said, 'This is a moment I will bookmark for the rest of my life'. I felt like I was watching the Pythons at their peak, and I thought, 'This is why I'm in showbiz: to be this near to that level of talent and skill'. And when I'm on my deathbed listing the 100 artistic events of my life, that moment will be there."

After a few more sessions, the show had come together. But, by adding the trademark

Goes Wrong approach, all the tricks in the production had to work on not just one level but two: there had to be the trick that goes wrong, and then the trick that actually dazzles the audience.

So how did they devise the illusions? "You get an idea, which is usually quite a grand one," explains Teller, "and then you find that it's impossible, so you revise it over and over again until it works.

"There's a trick in the show where one of the cast members gets accidentally sawed in half by a buzzsaw. That was more than a year of work. Part of the trick involves blood, but if you just show the blood on stage, it looks boring; it has no impact at all. So a big part of the buzzsaw trick for us was developing it in such a way that when the blood came, it would be sprayed up against a huge backdrop where you could truly enjoy the bright red colour."

Speaking of blood and buzzsaws, Magic Goes Wrong - which takes the form of a disastrous fundraising benefit - is definitely more comically gory than Mischief's previous work. Was that Penn & Teller's influence?

"I'm afraid it might have something to do with us," Teller admits. "We think that gore is essentially funny. It's really hard to pull off serious gore in the theatre because people tend to want to laugh. They know that it's fake, but they see that it looks real. And that's very much like a magic trick."

Despite the fact that Penn & Teller have built their career on making it look like everything is going horrifically wrong, the magicians insist that mishaps are incredibly rare in real life. "While we're rehearsing we might get a minor cut or bruise," Teller says, "but we don't ever allow the possibility of something going seriously wrong. If we did, we wouldn't have been working successfully for 47 years."

Magic Goes Wrong shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tues 24 - Sun 29 May

#### Theatre



#### Mamma Mia! Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 3 May - Sat 14 May; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 17 - Sat 21 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 17 - Sat 28 January

This legendary show is of course a nicely contrived vehicle for the chart-topping music of 1970s Super Troupers Abba.

Back in the day, the Swedish Fab Four scored mega-hit after mega-hit with catchy numbers including Waterloo, Dancing Queen, The Name Of The Game, The Winner Takes It All and Take A Chance On Me (all of which are present and correct in this blockbuster offering). Set in a Greek-island paradise, Mamma Mia! tells the story of single mum Donna and her 20-year-old daughter, Sophie, who's soon to get married. Formerly the lead singer of a three-piece girl group called The Dynamos, Donna led something of a crazy, carefree existence when she was a younger woman. As a result, Sophie's never known who her father is... and if truth be told, Donna's not entirely sure either. After stealing a sly glimpse at her mum's old diary, sneaky Sophie identifies three possible candidates. Masquerading as Donna, she sends messages inviting each of the men to attend her wedding. Hijinks, chaos and confusion inevitably ensue, all of which are best experienced to a pulsating Abba soundtrack, of course...



#### We Will Rock You

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 23 - Sat 28 May; Birmingham Hippodrome, Mon 4 - Sat 30 July

A joyous homage to the music of Queen, We Will Rock You is short on storyline but boasts bags of energy and just about as brilliant a soundtrack as any musical's ever likely to feature. The show's frontline performers give it their all to excellent effect, while the sets and choreography ensure a visual spectacle to remember.

For those who care about the plot, the story is set in a future where originality has been quashed, musical instruments banned, and a hero is needed to bring back rock music...

Yes, it's all a bit contrived, but then how else are you going to glue together all of Queen's greatest hits in a single show?...

#### Frankenstein: How To Make A Monster

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 25 - Sat 28 May

If you're dubious about the merits of hip-hop and beatbox but are open to the possibility of finding out more, this unique, clever and hugely energetic show is definitely one to check out.

A 21st-century gig-theatre classic created from a 204-year-old gothic horror novel, the show sees six performers with six microphones taking apart Mary Shelley's original story in order to reimagine a world of modern monsters.

The production is presented by BAC Beatbox Academy, who bagged an Off-West End Award for the show when it premiered four years ago at Battersea Arts Centre.



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Sat 21 -



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#### The Play That Goes Wrong

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 16 - Sat 21 May

Mischief Theatre's hit production makes a welcome return to the region.

Written by Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer and Henry Shields, the award-winning comedy is liberally peppered with perfectly timed killer dialogue and positively awash with all manner of bumbling buffoonery.

A play within a play (in the style of Michael Frayn's Noises Off), the show's premise sees the entirely fictitious, utterly incompetent and seriously accident-prone Cornley Polytechnic Drama Society doing their very best to stage a 1920s' murder-mystery entitled Murder At Haversham Manor.

Cue all manner of laugh-out-loud disasters from missed cues and misplaced props, to repeated dialogue and collapsing scenery...

#### Waitress

Birmingham Hippodrome, Mon 16 - Sat 21 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 28 June - Sat 2 July

"Waitress is one of my favourite shows and definitely my favourite soundtrack," reveals Chelsea Halfpenny, who takes the lead role of Jenna in this touring version of the hit musical. "You can't help but love the characters. And it's so funny. I don't think people expect it to be funny, but it really is." Waitress' storyline sees expert pie-maker Jenna accidentally fall pregnant while trapped in a loveless marriage. After developing romantic feelings for her new doctor, she decides to search for the recipe for happiness. She is helped in her endeavour by fellow waitresses and close confidantes Becky and Dawn...

"Waitress tackles some really hard-hitting topics in a way that some musicals don't," Chelsea continues, "and I think that strikes a chord. It shows that humans are flawed and that we all make mistakes, which really resonates with people.

"Every night is brilliant, the audience reaction has been incredible, and everyone goes away feeling full of love."



#### Jane Eyre

terrible secret ...

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Wed 4 - Sat 28 May



This 'witty and fleet-footed' new version of Charlotte Bronte's classic novel features actor-musicians, playful multi-roling, and 'a host of 19th-century pop hits'. 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. Later, on securing a position as governess at Thornfield Hall, Jane finds herself falling for the charms of the enigmatic Edward Rochester, unaware that the new object of her affection harbours a dark and

### A Double Bill Of William Shakespeare

The Old Rep, Birmingham, Thurs 26 May

"Performing in spaces great and small, our work is playful but never lacks focus," explain talented theatricals 440 Theatre, the ensemble behind this double bill of the bard. "We formed to provide live-action Shakespeare that educates and entertains in as little as 40 minutes!

"Stripping the narrative to its core, we keep the essence of Shakespeare's words alive, to help his magnificent stories shine at the heart of our shows. Anarchy is equally balanced with a safe and family-friendly environment, which keeps our audiences relaxed and engaged, secure in the knowledge they're in good hands!" This Old Rep show sees the 440 Theatre team presenting 'a side-splitting' Macbeth and 'an even more outrageous' A Midsummer Night's Dream.

#### **Private Peaceful**

Malvern Theatre, Tues 10 - Sun 14 May; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 17 - Sat 21 May

Based on the same-named book by War Horse author Michael Morpurgo and perfectly pitched for the audience at which it's primarily aimed (children aged nine and older), Private Peaceful packs a real punch. The story focuses on two brothers who, having been brought up in rural Devon, find themselves on the muddy and brutal battlefields of World War One as shells explode, comrades fall and a fearful countdown begins...





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#### Where Is Mrs Christie?

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 20 May

In 1926, bestselling whodunnit writer Agatha Christie was at the centre of a mystery of her very own. Her crashed car was discovered in Surrey, with Agatha nowhere to be found. It was 11 long and baffling days before the legendary author resurfaced, eventually popping up at a luxury hotel half the country away in Harrogate...

Actor Liz Grand here presents a one-woman show speculating about what happened to the Queen of Crime during the period she was missing.

Liz returns to the Gatehouse stage on the 21st in The Second Best Bed, a tell-all tale in which she plays Shakespeare's widow, Ann Hathaway, on the night of the bard's funeral.



### Would You Bet Against Us?

The Rep, Birmingham, Thurs 19 May - Sat 4 June

Forty years ago this month, Aston Villa achieved something which, to this day, only a handful of English football clubs have managed: they became the Champions of Europe. To do so, they had to beat not only Bayern Munich but also the odds. Pundits assessing the likelihood of the team causing an upset against the hugely experienced German giants really didn't think they stood much of a chance. Meanwhile, a Geography teacher didn't think 16year-old student Paul stood much of a chance either. At anything!... Created by the Rep - in collaboration with skilled storytellers Told By An Idiot - and written by lifetime Villa supporter

Paul Hunter, Would You Bet Against Us? is a play about challenging expectations and proving people wrong.

The 20th May performance of the show is followed by a Q&A with two players from that all-conquering Villa team - Tony Morley and captain Dennis Mortimer.

#### A Matter Of Law

Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 12 - Sat 14 May

If you've always fancied doing a spot of jury service but have never received the call, here's the chance to make that particular dream come true.

TwoJens&Me is the highly rated company behind this award-winning show, tasking the audience with the challenge of deciding the outcome of a make-believe trial. Trevor Frankield has injuries that can't simply be explained as accidental, and the prosecution is determined to show that Trevor's wife, Edwina, has inflicted them. The defence counters with the claim that Mr Frankield has serious mental-health issues, and that it is *he*, rather than his spouse, who is the abuser in the marriage.

Hear the evidence, decide for yourself which story holds water, and then deliver your verdict on defendant Edwina...

#### **Dead Lies**

Lichfield Garrick, Tues 24 - Sun 29 May; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 27 - Thurs 30 June

Bestselling crime writer Hilary Bonner's fastmoving thriller focuses on the character of politician Peter George, a man admired by the British people for his determination to restore trust in a political system badly damaged by an era of sleaze and spin. But Peter has a shocking secret in his past one that threatens to derail him during a fiercely fought election campaign... Holby City's Jeremy Edwards stars.

### Rebellion/Wars Of The Roses

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 28 May and Sat 4 June respectively

The Royal Shakespeare Company's longdelayed productions of Henry VI Parts Two and Three have finally reached the Stratfordupon-Avon stage.

The two shows - in this instance titled Rebellion (showing until Saturday 28 May) and Wars Of The Roses (until Saturday 4 June) respectively - follow on from Part One of the epic history cycle, which was screened online while the theatre was closed in the pandemic.

"Every time the RSC mounts Shakespeare's early history plays, they strike a powerful chord," says RSC Artistic Director Gregory Doran. "This ferociously vivid account of the brutal struggle for the English crown will, without doubt, strike different resonances deep in its audience's consciousness today. "I'm thrilled to be working alongside (Director) Owen Horsley once more, to bring this dynamic story of power and corruption, saints and psychopaths, of then and now, to life afresh in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre."



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Wed 11 May 7.30pm The acclaimed harmonica and melodeon player embarks on a musical journey across the European Union.



#### **JUSTIN ADAMS & MAURO DURANTE**

Sun 15 May 7.45pm Adams and Durante's mesmerising collaboration calls on their passions for Arabic and African trance/blues, Italian folk songs, and Americana.



#### **ELLIE GOWERS**

Sat 21 May 7.45pm Contemporary song writing meets folklore in this project created by this Warwickshire musician.



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And now for something a little different...





#### Trixie Mattel: Grown Up

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 5 May;

The latest RuPaul's Drag Race star to grace a Birmingham stage is Brian Michael Firkus, an American singer, actor, stand-up comedian and musician who's better known in his drag-



queen persona of Trixie Mattel. Back in 2018, Trixie won the third season of RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars, having originally competed in Drag Race series seven. In the years which have followed, pretty much everything she's touched has turned to gold, from a comedy web show with fellow Drag Race competitor Katya Zamolodchikova, to chart-topping country records and her own line in cosmetics. Trixie visits the Midlands with a show that's been described as 'an exciting electro-folk reinvention'. Audiences, she says, should expect to feel like they've "landed in a PeeWee Herman video, complete with some surf rock and a love for '60s country music". You have been warned...

#### The Guilty Feminist Live

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Fri 27 May

Deborah Frances-White reckons her regular podcasts are a worthwhile listen for anybody who's ever felt like they should be better at feminism. And given the show's popularity, it would



who've felt exactly that way - in a six-year period, The Guilty Feminist has racked up a staggering 95 million downloads! This latest installment sees Deborah and guests examining 'our noble goals as 21stcentury feminists - and our hypocrisies and insecurities that undermine those goals'.

#### Paul Merton Impro Chums

Birmingham Town Hall, Fri 20 May; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 21 May; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 27 May

In his time, Paul Merton has been considered by many to be the UK's funniest comedian, if not the funniest man alive. His heyday was back in the late '80s and the 1990s, when he shot to



stardom on television improv show Whose Line Is It Anyway. Although he's slipped from the nation's collective conciousness a little bit over the last few years, he remains an allaction purveyor of mirth, not least when he's out on the road with his fellow manic improvisers. He's joined on this latest tour by Richard Vranch, Suki Webster, Mike McShane and accompanist Kirsty Newton.

#### Two Mr Ps In A Podcast

The Old Rep, Birmingham, Mon 30 May

Given how overworked teachers are, it's a wonder that Manchester primary school educator Lee Parkinson (nowadays better known to the world as Mr P) found the time to become an internet sensation - but legions of fans across the country are certainly thankful that he did.

Lee's amusing videos about classroom life

#### Outside The Box: The Story Of Squash

University of Birmingham Squash Courts, University of Birmingham, Sat 21 & Sun 22 and Sat 28 & Sun 29 Mav

This family-friendly Birmingham 2022 Festival production sees a cast of professional players, actors and school children presenting a celebration of the sport of squash on three glass-back courts. Highlighting the way in which squash's story mirrors the evolution of the Commonwealth, Outside The Box features a special appearance by current Commonwealth Games Gold medal holder James Willstrop.

have seen him become one of the UK's mostfollowed teachers on social media - and particularly since he teamed up with his younger brother, Adam, to create the award-winning Two Mr Ps In A Podcast.



With the show having amassed over three million listens, the siblings are now hitting the road to present a live version. Expect an evening of lighthearted chat, funny anecdotes and interesting discussions on a wide range of educational topics.

#### Showstopper: The Improvised Musical

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 7 May

If ever there was a show worth seeing more than once, this is it - and not only because it's an Olivier Award winner. Showstopper! is exactly what it says on the tin: a musical



that's improvised (meaning that no two nights are ever the same).

The rotating cast of quick-witted performers take audience suggestions and then spin a brand-new comedy musical out of thin air, complete with tunes, lyrics, dances and harmonies.

It's clever stuff performed by clever people and if audience reaction so far is anything to go by, you can expect to be well and truly gobsmacked.



#### Theatre, Film & Event Screenings



Theatre Matt Ford's Sing, Sing, Swing 16-17/5 All Our Yesterdays nostalgia show **The Manfreds** Johnny Cash Roadshow 20/5 The Muslims are Coming! comedy The Simon & Garfunkel Story Johnny McEvoy **Talon - The Acoustic Collection** Film Last Night in Soho (18) 26/5 In the Heights (12A) Clifford the Big Red Dog (PG) Locked Down (15) King Richard (12A) 29/6 Our Ladies (15) Belfast (12A) Nightmare Alley (15) **Event Screenings** Merlin by Northern Ballet 2pm An epic and magical adventure in dance.

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Box Office: 01782 717962 newvictheatre.org.uk Theatre for younger audiences...





#### **Billionaire Boy**

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 5 - Sun 8 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 1 -Sun 5 June

The always excellent Birmingham Stage Company make a welcome return with this clever and lively production.

For those unfamiliar with David Walliams' original book, Billionaire Boy tells the tale of how Mr Spud made and lost his money, and how his son, Joe, became the richest boy in the world.



#### I Spy With My Little Eye

Tamworth Assembly Rooms, Sat 28 May; Stourport Civic Hall, Sun 5 June

If you're familiar with Steven Lee's previous work - including Don't Dribble On The Dragon and How The Koala Learnt To Hug - you'll surely want to take your little ones to see this brand-new stage version of his latest picture book.

Presented by The People's Theatre Company, I Spy With My Little Eye sees Molly and Bingo the Puppy-Dog inviting youngsters and their families to Molly's sixth birthday party. The celebration comes complete with 'a terrific treasure hunt, all your favourite singalong songs and lots of fantastic games to play'.



#### Oi Frog & Friends

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Fri 13 & Sat 14 May; Birmingham Hippodrome, Sat 21 - Sun 29 May

Fifty-five minutes of frog-focused fun is the name of the game when this award-winning stage adaptation of Kes Gray & Jim Field's bestselling series of picture books stops off in the Midlands. Expect 'songs, puppets, laughs and more rhymes than you can shake a chime at', as a new day at Sittingbottom school begins...



#### The Gruffalo

Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Sun 1 & Mon 2 May: Swan Theatre, Worcester, Tues 24 & Wed 25 May; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Fri 1 & Sat 2 July

With millions of copies of the book having been sold, it's fair to say that Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's award-winning Gruffalo has captured the hearts and minds of children everywhere.

Presenting songs, laughs and 'monstrous' fun for children aged three and upwards, this much-loved stage version of the terrific tale follows Mouse as he heads out on a journey through the deep dark wood, scaring away hungry animals with tall stories of the terrifying Gruffalo. Imagine his surprise, then, when he suddenly finds himself coming face-to-face with the very creature he's imagined!

#### Zog And The Flying Doctors

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 25 & Thurs 26 May; Birmingham Town Hall, Tues 23 - Sun 28 August

With previous shows having included Tiddler And Other Terrific Tales, Tabby McTat and the first Zog story, it's fair to say that Freckle



Productions know a thing or two about presenting stage adaptations of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler stories... This brand-new show finds Zog providing an air-ambulance service with the assistance of his 'flying doctor' crew, Princess Pearl and Sir Gadabout. But Pearl's uncle, the king, doesn't believe that princesses should be doctors, and before too long she finds herself locked up in the castle and once again forced to wear a crown and a 'silly frilly dress'. Needless to say, help is soon at hand...

#### Twirlywoos

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Sat 14 May; Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Sun 15 May; Malvern Theatres, Tues 17 & Wed 18 May

This theatrical adventure for younger audiences comes from the producers of The

Very Hungry Caterpillar Show and Sarah And Duck Live. Expect mischief, music and delightful puppets.



# Here we go again...

#### Mamma Mia! producer Judy Cramer looks back at 23 years of the smash-hit musical

It's the mother of all contemporary musicals, a global, record-breaking super trouper of a show that's been seen by over 65 million people worldwide, in 50 productions and 16 different languages.

Mamma Mia!, the feelgood musical with a score of irresistible ABBA songs, has given birth to two smash-hit films: the first, released in 2008, sank even the mighty Titanic at the box office; the second, 2018's Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again, is the most successful musical movie sequel of all time. Now, with theatres open again, the show embarks on a new UK tour. It's likely to prove just the pick-me-up that audiences crave.

Now 23 years old, Mamma Mia! has established its place in theatre history - so it's hard to believe that right up until its very first opening night - on 6 April 1999, at the Prince Edward Theatre in London's West End - many theatre pundits were anticipating a flop. Looking back, Judy Craymer - the visionary producer and creative dynamo who dreamt up the idea for the show and powered it tirelessly to spectacular success - chuckles at the nail-biting uncertainty that surrounded that world premiere. "A lot of people doubted us. The Lion King opened about the same time, and we were very modest by comparison."

Many were expecting a kind of ABBA tribute show about the band. "They just couldn't get their heads around it. They were constantly asking me who was going to play Frida and Agnetha."

Even ABBA songsmiths Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus had their doubts: "They said, okay, Judy, it'll be a small show, just in London, and if it doesn't work it'll close." They needn't have worried. Together with writer Catherine Johnson and director Phyllida Lloyd, Craymer achieved a landmark theatrical triumph. Boasting blockbuster, cross-generational appeal, the show delighted ABBA's loyal fans and won them legions of new ones.

This was, though, no overnight feat - Mamma Mia! had a long gestation. Craymer, who trained at London's Guildhall School of Music & Drama in stage management, was working in the production office of musicaltheatre royalty Tim Rice in the early 1980s when she first conceived of the idea. Rice was in the throes of writing Chess, his collaboration with Andersson and Ulvaeus. One of Craymer's first tasks was to collect Ulvaeus from the airport, and the pair quickly struck up a friendship. "It was huge fun. Chess was a big project, and then there was the cast album, so I was flying to Stockholm with Tim Rice every week, working in Benny and Björn's studio. Then we did a crazy tour of Europe with about 5,000 people - the whole of the London Symphony Orchestra and the Ambrosian Choir, and all the artists. It was very exciting, and I got lots of experience."

Crucially, she also had access to the ABBA pair, "which was very fortunate, because otherwise I'm not sure they would have taken this on. I had to pester them for a long time!"

Spending so much time in their company, she rediscovered their music. "I listened to their songs with a whole different ear, having met the guys. I'd play them over and over again on my cassette player, and I was fascinated that Björn had written these lyrics. They meant so much, and they were about strong women. They take you on a journey. And that was the beginning of me falling in love with those songs."

Craymer began to see the dramatic potential in ABBA's infectious pop. "They spoke to me as theatre songs. You'd be lucky to have two like that in a musical, let alone 20. So I started thinking about how to turn them into narrative."

At first, she wasn't sure what form this dramatisation would take - she considered a film, or a children's show. But she felt sure that, because the music was held in such affection, it should be "weddings, holidays, something celebratory, because everyone listens to ABBA in a happy moment".

She had a meeting with Catherine Johnson, who at the time was working on TV's Band Of Gold. Johnson suggested focusing the story on a mother and daughter. Craymer knew at once she'd found the right formula. "We were both penniless. Catherine was a single mum. I only had about £1,000, so I said, I'll pay you £500 now, and £500 when you've written it."

The next step was a meeting at Ulvaeus' home in Henley-on-Thames. "We couldn't afford the train fare! It was all very hairy, but somehow we did it. I introduced Björn to Catherine, and she was too shy to pitch the idea, so I had to - and then I had to stop her stealing the soap from his bathroom as a souvenir. We had nothing to lose. It's so difficult to get a project going, but we just got on with it."

Phyllida Lloyd, who came on board as director, shared their passion, and together, "living on sandwiches", the trio created a female-led show full of joyous romance and fierce mother-daughter affection: an exuberant matrimonial comedy set on an idyllic Greek island, with a playful nod to the family dramas of classical tragedy. It's the strength of that narrative, Craymer believes, that sets Mamma Mia! apart from other jukebox shows. "It's an original story, and there's a structure and properly developed characters and themes. I do like to think that Mamma Mia! raised the bar."

That universal appeal has seen the show play to packed houses around the world. In New York, it helped revitalise Broadway after 9/11, its warmth proving an unexpected balm for theatre-goers in the traumatised city. In 2011 it became the first Mandarin-speaking production of a Western musical in China. And Craymer has particularly fond memories of the opening of the Japanese production: "Because of theatre etiquette there, the cast can't leave the stage until the audience stop clapping. I thought they'd be there all night!"

Hollywood quickly wanted in on the act, and Craymer found herself fielding eager calls from several studios. There was some pressure to consider a younger star for the leading role of mum Donna, but Craymer held out for the team's original vision, and for her ambitious dream casting of Meryl Streep, who leapt at the chance.

It was a coup Craymer repeated with the film's sequel, in which Cher delivers a magnificent diva turn as Donna's mother. The icon had, according to Craymer, already been to see the show twice in London, where she danced in the aisle; after making the film, she went on to record her own album of ABBA covers.

"Over the last 20 years, there have been so many white-knuckle rides. As a producer, you need enormous powers of persuasion, and a lot of tenacity."

And she's still up for more: even during the 2020 lockdown, she was busily planning for a third Mamma Mia! movie. "I wanted something to cheer us all up! It's something I have in my sights. I think there's a trilogy there. There are lots of wonderful ABBA songs that we haven't yet mined, and Björn and Benny have written a couple of new ones. They're keeping them under wraps for now, but they should prove very useful!"

Whatever comes next for this sunniest of shows, there's sure to be an audience for it. To misquote those famous, singalong lyrics: how can we resist it?

Mamma Mia! is at Birmingham

Hippodrome from 4 to 14 May. Book your tickets at birminghamhippodrome.com


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#### Dracula Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 19 May

Bram Stoker's legendary gothic horror story about the undead Prince of Darkness provides a solid launchpad from which this critically acclaimed production takes bat-like flight.

Produced by Portugal's Vortice Dance Company - an ensemble renowned for the intense physicality of their performances - and

#### Confessions Of A Cockney Temple Dancer

Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome, Wed 18 & Thurs 19 May

Taking a journey from the temple rituals of India to the bad-boy streets of London, Shane Shambhu's bilingual solo work is a contemplation on both his own life and the experience of performing Indian dance in the UK. "I draw on my experience from differing artistic roles and practices," explains Shane. "In doing so, I unearth new creative pathways that challenge perceptions of performance and cultural identities..." Confessions Of A Cockney Temple Dancer is being presented as part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival.



bringing together music by composers as varied as Philip Glass, Sergei Rachmaninoff and Lou Reed, the show blurs the boundaries of contemporary ballet and performance art to excellent effect, in the process stylishly living up to its promise to provide a mouthwatering feast for the senses.



## Strictly Come Dancing: The Professionals 2022

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 8 May

Helmed by Strictly's creative director of choreography, Jason Gilkison, this production features the TV series' professional dancers strutting their stuff to a fabulous soundtrack, along the way revealing plenty about themselves to their sure-to-be-enthralled audience. Previous incarnations of this show have gone down a treat with Strictly fans, and there's every reason to suppose the 2022 edition will prove equally popular. Line-up includes Dianne Buswell, Nadiya Bychkova, Graziano Di Prima, Karen Hauer, Katya Jones, Neil Jones, Cameron Lombard, Gorka Marquez, Luba Mushtuk and Kai Widdrington.

# On Your Marks...

Get set... Go! Birmingham Royal Ballet are up and running post-lockdowns with a bumper season of shows. Director Carlos Acosta speaks exclusively to What's On about what audiences can expect from the company this year.

Carlos Acosta is a busy man. After two years of leading Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB) through the Covid pandemic, he and the company are making up for lost time with a packed schedule promising greatly loved classics and a host of new works.

With a series of interactive and family events at Birmingham Rep this month, a Commonwealth Games-inspired triple bill at the Hippodrome in June, a further triple bill of new works alongside Delibes' Coppélia in October and then the launch of the refurbished Nutcracker before Christmas, Carlos has a lot on his hands.

But he is keen to use this year to showcase the talents of the company.

"So much of what we wanted to do has been suppressed for two years, and now we can go out and deliver it," he says. "It is a really ambitious programme, but I have always said I want to develop the dancers and the company. BRB is one of the crown jewels of Birmingham, it's a company people can be proud of, and now we're delivering new works, new talent and a new repertory. BRB is fresh and exciting - and it's quality."

After successfully touring Carlos' Don Quixote in February, the company have been working on two programmes for the spring. From 8 to 14 May, a residency at Birmingham Rep features Dance Track 25, a celebration with more than 200 former and current students of the company's Dance Track programme, which offers free teaching to Birmingham children. The season also includes a family concert with a new 23minute Cinderella, and two performances of An Evening Of Music And Dance, featuring excerpts from classics including The Sleeping Beauty, Winter Dreams and Agon. In addition Carlos will lead an open masterclass in Studio To Stage, which sees him joined by Assistant Director Dominic Antonucci to share backstage secrets about creating new ballets.

"These are chances for people to see BRB on another level," Carlos explains. "We are celebrating what we have done in the past with Dance Track but also looking forward. It's a great awakening after this pandemic nightmare and allows us to show people what is coming from the company. It is part of our ongoing relationship with Birmingham Rep, a relationship in which we produced City Of A Thousand Trades and where we hope to produce more works in the future."

In June the company move back to the Hippodrome stage for triple bill On Your Marks, inspired by the Commonwealth Games. Forming part of Birmingham International Dance Festival and Birmingham 2022 Festival, the triple bill is the first time BRB will perform with dancers from Carlos' other company, Cuba-based Acosta Danza.

"Acosta Danza have for a long time performed a really popular work called Twelve by Jorge Crecis, with music by Vincenzo Lamagna. Now Jorge has upgraded this work so it has 12 dancers from Acosta Danza and 12 dancers from BRB in this new version, 24. It's all about celebrating sports and mathematics and is a really fun crowdpleaser." Receiving its world premiere as part of the triple bill is Interlinked, a new commission from Brazilian choreographer Juliano Nunes. Will Tuckett's Lazuli Sky - which the company premiered in October 2020 to reduced audiences because of Covid - also features.

"Juliano is a brilliant choreographer and is working with the Australian composer Luke Howard on this piece, which has the Commonwealth Games in mind. And this is also a chance for everyone who couldn't see Lazuli Sky before to come and experience it now. It's a great piece by Will, who is from Birmingham, and uses augmented reality in a really amazing way."

October sees BRB presenting one of its most challenging triple bills ever. Into The Music features three works new to the company: Uwe Scholz's Seventh Symphony, set to Beethoven, and Jiří Kylián's Forgotten Land neither of which have been performed in the UK before - plus Morgann Runacre-Temple's Hotel, which will be receiving its world premiere.

"This is a very ambitious triple bill that includes three ballets which have never been performed here, and one is a new creation as well. There is a lot of work learning them and getting to the right level technically to perform them. I keep giving dancers works which help their development. You need to stimulate them artistically and give them the opportunity to have access to the work of these amazing choreographers from across the world.

"Kylián is a genius, and Forgotten Land has

never been done in the UK. It's one of Kylián's classics, with eight couples, 16 dancers, and music by Benjamin Britten. Seventh Symphony is a piece for the whole company - there are about 40 dancers on stage - and it's also a gift for the Royal Ballet Sinfonia to be playing Beethoven's symphony."

Runacre-Temple's Hotel is a journey into the secrets and lies that are hidden behind closed doors. Set to music by Swedish composer Mikael Karlsson, the piece is the latest commission from BRB's Ballet Now programme, which fosters new talent by commissioning work from emerging choreographers.

Alongside the triple bill, BRB will perform Delibes' ever-popular full-length ballet, Coppélia, for the first time in five years. The story of toymaker Dr Coppélius and his lifelike doll is a charming comedy classic.

"It's the ultimate family ballet - apart from The Nutcracker. People like Coppélia a lot, and so it starts the new annual season on a high. It's a feelgood ballet."

The year ends with a grand finale when the refurbished Nutcracker is unveiled at Birmingham Hippodrome in November. First staged in 1990, the production's sets have undergone a £1million refresh, and Carlos is promising an eye-popping treat.

"The effect is going to be great. You are going to see that red room with the red coming at you very vividly, like when it was first created 30 years ago. It will be like it was created for the first time." Now Carlos is urging Birmingham audiences to return to the theatre after Covid and experience live BRB performance.

"I want this company to be unpredictable and eclectic and fresh, performing worldclass dance in Birmingham, and the programmes for this year are part of this. There are so many exciting things happening in the company, and I really want Birmingham people to come and see these amazing shows. This year is the time to come and see BRB."

#### Diary dates for 2022 and beyond...

Dance Track 25 takes place at Birmingham Rep on Sun 8 May

An Evening Of Music And Dance shows at Birmingham Rep from Fri 13 to Sat 14 May

On Your Marks! (three works which form part of Birmingham 2022 Festival) shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Thurs 23 to Sat 25 June

Into The Music - a triple bill celebrating the marriage of music and movement - shows at Birmingham Hippodrome on Fri 21 & Sat 22 October

Sir Peter Wright's world-famous production of The Nutcracker returns to Birmingham Hippodrome from Sat 19 November until Sat 10 December.

BRB's much-loved staging of Swan Lake is back in the Midlands in 2023, playing Birmingham Hippodrome from Wed 15 to Sat 25 February

#### **Doctor Strange In The Multiverse Of Madness**

CERT 12a (126 mins)

Starring Benedict Cumberbatch, Rachel McAdams, Elizabeth Olsen, Patrick Stewart, Michael Stuhlbarg, Xochitl Gomez Directed by Sam Raimi

Benedict Cumberbatch once again reenters the Marvel Universe to make his sixth appearance as Master of the Mystic Arts Dr Stephen Strange. In this latest adventure - and with the help of mystical allies both old and new - the good doctor traverses the mindbending and dangerous alternate realities of the Multiverse to confront a mysterious new adversary... The sequel to 2016's Dr Strange, the movie is the 28th film of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU).

**Released Thurs 5 May** 

## This Much I Know To

Be True CERT tbc (105 mins) Starring Earl Cave. Nick Cave. Andrew Dominik, Warren Ellis, Marianne Faithfull Directed by Andrew Dominik

Andrew Dominik's new feature film was shot during the 2021 lockdown and explores the remarkable creative partnership between Nick Cave and Warren Ellis. Accompanied by singers and a string quartet, the pair make their way through songs from the albums Ghosteen (2019) and Carnage (2021). They are joined for part of the journey by Mick Jagger's one-time girlfriend and muse, Marianne Faithfull (complete with oxygen tube following a challenging encounter with Covid-19). Dominik's movie is the companion piece to his 2016 film, One More Time With Feeling.

#### **Released Wed 11 May**



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#### Firestarter CERT tbc

Starring Zac Efron, Gloria Reuben, Kurtwood Smith, Ryan Kiera Armstrong, Michael Greveyes, Sydney Lemmon Directed by Keith Thomas



This new adaptation of Stephen King's classic thriller follows the story of a girl with extraordinary pyrokinetic powers. For more than a decade, Charlie's parents, Andy and Vicky, have been desperately trying to hide their daughter from a secret government agency that wants to harness her gift for creating fire into a weapon of mass destruction.

Andy has taught Charlie how to defuse her power, which is triggered by anger or pain. But as the youngster grows up, the fire becomes harder and harder to control... This is the second time King's 1980 novel has been adapted for the big screen; a 1984 version starred Drew Barrymore, George C Scott, Heather Locklear and Martin Sheen.

**Released Fri 13 May** 

#### The Quiet Girl CERT 12a (95 mins)

Starring Catherine Clinch, Carrie Crowley, Andrew Bennett, Michael Patric, Kate Nic Chonaonaigh Directed by Colm Bairéad

Based on Claire Keegan's acclaimed novella, Foster, and already a major award winner - it took the grand prize in the Generation Kplus strand of the Berlin International Film Festival - The Quiet Girl is a complex and delicate coming-of-age drama that explores the subjects of family, neglect and loss through the eyes of its young protagonist. When nine-year-old Cáit is sent away from her dysfunctional family to spend the summer with relatives she has never met, she unexpectedly blossoms within their care. But in a home where there are meant to be no secrets, the young girl soon realises that not every subject is readily spoken about...

Released Fri 13 May





#### **Top Gun: Maverick**

CERT 12a (131 mins)

Starring Tom Cruise, Jennifer Connelly, Val Kilmer, Miles Teller, Ed Harris, Jon Hamm Directed by Joseph Kosinski

It's certainly been a long time coming, but fans of Top Gun have finally got the sequel they've been wanting for the last 36 years. There's no Kelly McGillis this time, but Val Kilmer does return, as of course does the main man himself, Tom Cruise, as hotshot test pilot and flight instructor Captain Pete 'Maverick' Mitchell. After more than 30 years of service, Maverick is where he belongs, determinedly dodging the advancement in rank that would see him grounded.

When he finds himself training a detachment of Top Gun graduates for a special mission, he comes into contact not only with the son of his late friend, Lt Nick 'Goose' Bradshaw, but also with his own deepest fears...

Expect breathtaking flight sequences aplenty.

Released Fri 27 May

#### The Road Dance

CERT 15 (116 mins)

Starring David Brooks, Felicity Keenan, Hermione Corfield, Morven Christie, Ali Fumiko Whitney, Tom Byrne Directed by Richie Adams



Director Richie Adams' critically acclaimed grim-slice-of-life period drama is a World War One love story based on the book of the same name by author John MacKay. Telling a story of triumph over tragedy and the realisation of dreams against all odds, the story unfolds on the remote Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, where the young and beautiful Kirsty dreams of a life in America with a local lad named Murdo, who she's secretly courting.

When Murdo and other young men in the rural community are conscripted, the town holds a road dance to bid them farewell. But as the event progresses, something happens to Kirsty that will change her life forever...

**Released Fri 20 May** 

#### Bob's Burgers: The Movie

CERT tbc (100 mins)

With the voices of Stephanie Beatriz, Kristen Schaal, Gary Cole, Zach Galifianakis, Kevin Kline, H Jon Benjamin, Aziz Ansari Directed by Loren Bouchard and Bernard Derriman

When a ruptured water main creates an enormous sinkhole right in front of Bob's Burgers - blocking the entrance indefinitely and ruining the Belchers' plans for a successful summer - Bob and Linda battle to keep the business afloat.

The kids, meanwhile, do their level best to solve a mystery that could well save the family's restaurant...

Bob's Burgers is the big-screen version of the animated TV sitcom of the same title. Debuting on Fox back in 2011, the Emmywinning show has been named one of the greatest television cartoon series of all time.

#### Released Fri 27 May



#### Men CERT tbc

Starring Jessie Buckley, Rory Kinnear, Gayle Rankin, Paapa Essiedu Directed by Alex Garland



Fresh from her Academy Award nomination for The Lost Daughter, Jessie Buckley stars as a woman named Harper who's on the run from a personal tragedy.

Retreating to a holiday house in the beautiful English countryside, in the hope of emotionally healing, she soon realises that someone or something from the surrounding woods appears to be stalking her... This feverish, shape-shifting new horror movie is helmed by visionary English filmmaker Alex Garland, who has previously directed Annihilation and the Baftanominated Ex Machina.

**Released Fri 3 June** 



# **Blood & Fire**

Photographer Vanley Burke is renowned for producing evocative images of the community around him. Many of these will this month go on display in a major exhibition as part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival. Diane Parkes recently caught up with Vanley to find out more...

From this month until the autumn, visitors to Handsworth's Soho House can experience the lives of local people over the past 50 years through a collection of pictures and archive materials from internationally renowned photographer Vanley Burke.

Known as 'the Godfather of Black British history', Birmingham-based Vanley has spent his life documenting the experiences of his community through the lens of his camera, while also collecting items relating to their lives.

Many of these photos and items are this month being brought together in the free-toview exhibition, Blood & Fire: Our Journey Through Vanley Burke's History, which shows at Soho House from 25 May until 30 October.

Born in Jamaica in 1951, Vanley's love of photography began when his mother gave him a Kodak Brownie box camera at the age of 10. Arriving in Birmingham when he was 15, he set about capturing the lives of the people around him - from their everyday experiences to dramatic social events including demonstrations and riots.

"I have been taking photographs and collecting ephemera relating to the African-Caribbean community for a number of years now," says Vanley. "Many of these are in an archive at Birmingham Library, but I also have a number of materials still in my possession.

"I've drawn on that body of work for this exhibition to be representative of the people of my history. And so we have curated a space in which people can engage with the ideas of history, migration, settlement, and all of those issues which are about our lives. They are junctions or individual moments and events of cultural continuity."

The archive includes many personal items which have never been exhibited before - but for Vanley, the emphasis is on how other people will relate to them.

"The objects all have stories connected to them, and it's about extracting these stories for a conversation. There's a paraffin lamp, for example, and there are so many stories associated with that because each person comes with a different story. I've heard quite a few of these stories - someone liked it because it made a pattern on the ceiling, and another hated it because it caused a fire which killed her sister.

"It's about asking the questions - how do we get those stories, how do we interrogate the past, how do we tell our children of the experiences we endured? It's also for me to show the people back to themselves after they've been shown in a negative light for so long. It's important for other communities who are going there to realise how dignified we are in poverty.

"I think the resilience of us as a people shouldn't really go unnoticed. We have had bad press over the years, and I think we weren't always able to represent the pain at the time. We have been extremely creative in the arts, science and education; we are playing our part. Those stories and experiences, all that building, was achieved despite the fact that the background noise was very much one of abuse."

#### And the story continues.

"Our heritage will change over the years, but it's important that a lot of this heritage is passed on. As individuals we need more than ourselves to hold onto, and some of this is cultural. So, for example, you do certain things at Easter, at Christmas, and within the family structure. Those things will happen, and there will be changes along the way. But in terms of some of the culture, it remains. I mean, come on, you can't really change ackee and saltfish that much, can you? We have to hold on to some of these cultural things and talk about them - which is, for me, why the archive is an essential part of that conversation."

Blood & Fire forms part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival, an event which is taking place to coincide with the Commonwealth Games being staged in the city. Vanley believes this is the ideal time to reach new audiences.

"All these people will be travelling to Birmingham because of the Games. We have one of the largest Jamaican communities in the country and one of the largest African-Caribbean communities in the country, and I think there will be a lot of people from the Commonwealth countries and other countries who would like to see themselves or their cousins, let's say - reflected in these lives."

The exhibition's title, Fire & Blood, has interesting origins. In the 1990s Vanley lost part of his collection in a shed fire at home. The 'blood' element of the title, meanwhile, refers to his lifeblood and the lifeblood of his community.

"The blood is everything I do, the blood is signifying us and the struggle. I do a libation for the ancestors. I ask their permission to enter their business. But it's not a libation of blood - it's a libation of a little bit of rum!"

Vanley was keen for Fire & Blood to be staged in Handsworth, the home of the community from whom he takes his inspiration and at whose heart he works.

"I said to myself one day many years ago, how have I assumed this role of photographer of the community? Who appointed me and what community is it that I'm photographing? Who is it for, and do they even know that I'm collecting these photographs? I thought one way to test it would be to put an advert in the paper to say that I was going to be burning my negatives in Handsworth Park on such-and-such a date and time. I was playing around with this idea, not that I would actually do it, but I was walking through Handsworth Park and saw this young man. I was telling him the story. and he said 'they're not yours to burn'. Somehow that answered the question. It showed me that my photography serves its purpose, which is about its relation to people whose history has been tarnished and for them to repair themselves."

Blood & Fire: Our Journey Through Vanley Burke's History shows at Soho House, Birmingham, from 25 May to 30 October. Entrance to the exhibition is free, but to enter Soho House Museum for a guided tour, normal admission charges apply. Visual Arts previews from around the region



### Prophecy

Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 7 May - Sun 26 June

Coventry artist Laura Nyahuye has co-curated this exhibition of work, which takes its inspiration from Nuneaton-born author George Eliot's famous novel, Middlemarch.

Focusing on some of the 150-yearold story's still-relevant themes including the coming of outsiders with different ideas, the fear of a potentially fatal epidemic, and proposals for a new political system that would ensure more people had a voice - the show brings together the work of 14 contemporary artists. Visitors, local groups and communities are also being invited to make a contribution, by creating pieces or leaving comments that respond to the works on display.

#### Black Country Beats Sat 7 May - Sun 4 Sep 2022 Wolverhampton Art Gallery

Celebrating popular music in the Black Country between the 1970s and 2000s.

Free admission

Slade · Aisha · Robert Plant · Goldie Beverley Knight · Babylon Zoo Macka B · Capital Letters · Azaad Ned's Atomic Dustbin Weapon of Peace · Skippy & Lippy Cornershop · The Wonder Stuff Pop Will Eat Itself · The Sahotas The Mighty Lemon Drops and others













#### John Akomfrah: The Unfinished Conversation

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Sat 7 May - Sun 26 June

Visitor discretion is recommended for this show, with the artwork on display containing 'strong and sometimes challenging imagery', including historic depictions of violence and suffering. The presentation showcases the talent of pioneering filmmaker John Akomfrah CBE, an award-winning artist who has spent the last 40 years producing movingimage works reflecting on the culture of black diaspora around the world. MAC is here presenting Akomfrah's The Unfinished Conversation (2012), a moving portrait of the life and work of cultural theorist Stuart Hall, who led the Cultural Studies department at the University of Birmingham from 1964.

Featuring Hall's personal home videos and photographs, the film also includes footage of him talking about his discovery of his personal and ethnic identity. Presented as part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival.

#### Britta Marakatt-Labba: Under The Vast Sky

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, until Sun 29 May

Britta Marakatt-Labba here presents, among other art forms, embroidered panoramas chronicling the history, culture and cosmology of the Sámi, the indigenous population of the northernmost parts of Scandinavia. Britt, who is herself Sámi, is renowned for her ability to tell captivating stories via her artwork, which balances a contemplation of the domestic and the intimacy of daily life, with a focus on urgent issues impacting the modern world such as climate change and terrorism.



#### **Black Country Beats**

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Sat 7 May - Sun 4 September



The Black Country music scene falls under the spotlight in this brand-new exhibition, running across the summer to coincide with the cultural activities taking place around the Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

From glam rock giants Slade through to the rise of bhangra in Wolverhampton, the display explores the way in which the region's music has been shaped and influenced by social and political change since the mid-20th century. The show also celebrates the imminent reopening of Wolverhampton's Civic Hall, one of the UK's best-known live-music venues.

#### Found Cities, Lost Objects: Women In The City

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Sat 14 May - Wed 4 September

"Found Cities, Lost Objects challenges the status quo by encouraging viewers to discover the city through the eyes of female artists," explains cultural activist and Turner Prize winner Lubaina Himid CBE, who has curated this national touring exhibition of more than 60 artworks. "Women generally inhabit cities via retail and healthcare venues - but how can we expand our presence beyond this for everyone's benefit, now that these spaces are under pressure to perform differently? "The exhibition explores the contradictory experiences of women across the city; free to roam the streets, while always considering the boundaries within which that freedom is contained."



#### Portraits From The National Portrait Gallery

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Sat 28 May - Sun 4 September

Which people might we choose to immortalise in a contemporary portraiture collection? That's the question being posed by this thought-provoking exhibition, which aims to explore the role of modern Britain via 10 loans from the National Portrait Gallery and



numerous artworks from Compton's own historic collection.

The pieces on show include portraits of dub poet & writer Benjamin Zephaniah, Turner Prizewinning artist Gillian Wearing, the late former politician Mo Mowlam, Olympian Denise Lewis and artist Sonia Boyce, all of whom have connections of one sort or another to the Midlands region.



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Events previews from around the region





#### Müller Birmingham Diamond League

Alexander Stadium, Birmingham, Sat 21 May

Taking place in the new-look Alexander Stadium, the Müller Birmingham Diamond League is the second event in the prestigious Wanda Diamond League calendar and sees the world's greatest track & field athletes competing for glory.

Star names taking part include world champion sprinter Dina Asher-Smith, British record-holding pole vaulter Holly Bradshaw and Olympic high jump champion Gianmarco Tamberi.



#### The Baby Show

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 13 - Sun 15 May

This three-day show is the UK's largest onestop shop for all things baby. Visitors can compare, try, buy - and enjoy exclusive deals on - hundreds of brands from a wide range of show exhibitors, including boutiques, online stores and well-known names such as Maxi-Cosi, Cybex, MAM, Tommee Tippee, BabyBjörn and Mamas & Papas. There's also the opportunity to pick up handy hints and tips from the UK's leading baby & parenting experts, on everything from preparing for birth and weaning, to breastfeeding and first aid.

#### **Spring Diesel Festival**

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster, Thurs 19 - Sun 22 May

A variety of classes and traction types will be roaring through the Shropshire and Worcestershire countryside this month in the Spring Diesel Festival.

Attendees can ride behind the best of the diesel home fleet alongside a number of special guests, including guest traction Class 44 'Great Gable' 44004 (D4) and Class 46 46046 (D182).

Visitors can swap trains as they wish and stop off at a variety of stations at their leisure.



### The Big Bark

Trentham Estate, Staffordshire, Sat 21 & Sun 22 May

The Big Bark offers two 'fun-packed days of adventure and excitement' for you, your dog and all the family to enjoy. Whether on two legs



or four, there's plenty to see and do. Activities and attractions include have-a-go agility, canine Olympics, Paws Got Talent, a seminar zone and a doggy photo booth. An array of dog-centric small business traders, from whom you can purchase products and services, further adds to the show's appeal.

#### **Ludlow Spring Festival**

Ludlow Castle, South Shropshire, Fri 13 - Sun 15 May

One of Ludlow's biggest events of the year, the Spring Festival features more than 60 food & drink providers, 200 real ales, tons of free talks & demonstrations by local producers and live music across the weekend.

The Marches Transport Festival, running at the same time, showcases in excess of 100 vintage and classic vehicles, including tractors, small commercials and motorcycles.



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#### **Shrewsbury Krazy Races**

The Quarry Park, Shrewsbury, Sun 29 May Shrewsbury Krazy Races makes a welcome return to the town's Quarry Park this month, with participants launching their carefully hand-crafted karts down a 300m track that comes complete with chicanes and obstacles.

Competitors will work their way through a knockout-style competition, with the fastest 10 cars making it through to the final.



#### The Open Arms Weekender

Warwick Castle, Fri 27 - Sun 29 May

Warwick Castle has once again joined forces with Digbeth Dining Club (DDC) to bring The Open Arms beer garden back to life. And this month sees the debut of a festivalstyle edition of the event on the castle's historic courtyard...

The Open Arms Weekender features live music from House Gospel Choir (on the Friday), Symphony Ibiza (Saturday) and Norman Jay MBE (Sunday). There's entertainment for all the family to enjoy at the Dungeon Disco, as well as a top-notch DDC street-food menu to sample.

## Vintage And Handmade Festival

RAF Museum, Cosford, Sat 7 & Sun 8 May

Celebrating music, fashion, design and style through the decades, the Vintage And Handmade Festival brings together retailers and craft stalls with a programme of live music and entertainment.

Visitors can get their hands on a wide range of vintage products, check out local craft exhibitors in the Handmade Marquee, get glammed up in the beauty parlour and marvel at a selection of classic vehicles. Performers representing numerous eras take to the festival stage, while reenactment groups across the site bring history to life.



### Dog Fest

Ragley Hall, Warwickshire, Sat 28 & Sun 29 May

Created *by* dog lovers *for* dog lovers, Dog Fest provides families and their beloved pooches with the opportunity to try their hand/paw at a variety of have-a-go activities. Highlights include the Fun Dog Show offering visitors the chance to win Best In Show - and the Big Dog Walk, a fundraiser for Dogs Trust.

Dog displays take place all day in the main arena, animal experts provide advice on the Live Stage, and there's a special Dog School offering a host of top training tips. All in all, then, a show with plenty to bark about...



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Events previews from around the region



#### **Lifestyle Show**

Telford International Centre, Fri 6 - Sun 8 May

The Lifestyle Show is packed with inspiration for visitors wanting to make the most of the great outdoors. Exhibits cover a diverse range of products -

from holiday homes, motorhomes, caravans

and camping, to garden & outdoor accessories and lifestyle activities. Celebrities and industry experts - including gardener David Domoney, chef Rosemary Shrager and interior designer Linda Barker will be sharing their knowledge and expertise throughout the weekend.



#### Flatpack Festival

Various venues in Birmingham, Tues 17 - Sun 22 May

The much-loved BAFTA-qualifying short film festival returns with 40 movies from 17 countries and numerous live audiovisual performances.

Based in Digbeth, Flatpack Festival is known for its eclectic and surprising programming of live performances alongside archive shorts and feature films.

This year's highlights include Japanese oneman-band ICHI's Anime show, Joe Lycett & Shaun Keaveny discussing short filmmaking, a Some Like It Hot cocktails night and new interactive film/rave show Tattered Earth.

## Gaydon Land Rover Show

British Motor Museum, Warwickshire, Sat 7 & Sun 8 May

The two-day celebration of all things Land Rover is back...

Highlights of the show include the Jaguar Land Rover Experience, which sees the participating vehicles showcasing their impressive technology and capabilities as they negotiate a selection of daunting obstacles.

The show also features numerous trade stands, workshop talks by Land Rover journalist Emrys Kirby, and a display of Land Rovers that includes the 'HUE 166' aka Huey, the first Land Rover ever produced.



#### **Shropshire County Show**

West Mid Showground, Shrewsbury, Sat 28 May

The Shropshire County Show is back with its first full programme since 2019.

Main-arena entertainment includes mountain bikers, falconry, the ever-popular Shropshire Young Farmers float parade, and medieval jousting with the Knights of Nottingham.

Livestock classes, children's pony fancy dress and a shire horses qualifier for this year's Horse of the Year Show also feature. Other highlights include a kids' zone, a parade of agricultural machinery, a vintage rally and a Hurricane flypast by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.



#### RHS Malvern Spring Festival

Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Thurs 5 - Sun 8 May

Launching the 2022 RHS flower show season, this year's spring festival celebrates the positive physical and mental benefits that gardening provided during the lockdown period.

The event will also mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with giant eye-catching installations, school gardens to honour her reign and a new permanent feature garden the Jubilee Garden.

Visitors can check out the reimagined Floral Green, which covers all things floristry and comes complete with demonstrations and unique photo opportunities.

Some of the UK's finest nurseries make an appearance in the Floral Marquee and Plant Arcades, while the new Nourish Area features some of the best food & drink in the region and sure-to-be-enlightening demonstrations by TV chefs.

Malvern's Festival Theatre offers plenty for the green-fingered enthusiast to enjoy too, presenting a timetable that's jam-packed with special guests and inspirational speakers. The venue also plays host to Gardeners' Question Time.

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Events previews from around the region





#### Peppa Pig At SEA LIFE

National SEA LIFE Birmingham, until Sun 3 July

Peppa Pig now has her very own Aquarium Adventure - and you and your family are cordially invited to join in the fun! Youngsters can meet Peppa as she makes friends with some of the ocean's most incredible animals.

An interactive trail - on which kids can spot seahorses, count starfish and discover how fast sharks can swim - also features, as does a variety of hands-on activities, from bracelet making to making jigsaws.



#### **Adult Night**

LEGOLAND Discovery Centre, Birmingham, Sat 20 May

Ever fancied visiting Legoland Discovery Centre but didn't have any little ones to take along? Well, not to worry, because now you can justifiably 'go it alone', courtesy of the venue's once-a-month adults-only event. Experience the 4D cinema, challenge your crew on the Kingdom Quest ride, and have some fun in Lego brick pits. There are speed build challenges to enjoy too, while the Miniland scavenger hunt offers participants the chance to bag themselves an 'awesome' prize to take away. Being a grown-up has never been so much fun!

#### Mardi Gras At Alton Towers

Alton Towers Resort, Staffordshire, Sat 21 May - Sun 19 June

It's time to get into the carnival spirit as Mardi Gras returns for a second year at Alton Towers Resort.

Every day will see the park host a big street party, complete with music, street performers and themed food from the Deep South and around the world. Visitors can also enjoy the venue's numerous family attractions and whiteknuckle-ride rollercoasters.



#### Weston's Spring Fling

Weston Park, Staffordshire, Sat 28 & Sun 29 May

Grab your picnic baskets and blankets for Weston Park's popular Spring Fling. The whole estate is open across the weekend for visitors to explore and enjoy, from taking long walks around the parkland and relaxing in the formal gardens, to running wild in the Woodland Adventure Playground and journeying around Temple Wood on the miniature railway.

The event's line-up of attractions also features local artisan food producers, unique crafts, street food and fairground rides. Live music comes from the Dirty Rockin Scoundrels.

#### The Betfred British Masters

The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, Thurs 5 - Sun 8 May

The Belfry Hotel & Resort, renowned for its spectacular golf courses, has once again been chosen as the venue for the Betfred British Masters. The popular tournament, hosted by former Masters champion Danny Willett, takes place on the world-class Brabazon, an 18-hole, Par 72 course which has previously played host to the Ryder Cup.



#### Funtopia

Arrow Valley Country Park, Redditch, Sun 1 May; Ellesmere Rangers FC, Shropshire, Sun 22 May; Tamworth Castle, Staffordshire, Sun 29 May; Coombe Abbey Park, Coventry, Wed 1 June

Hailed as 'the ultimate travelling children's festival', Funtopia stops off at several Midlands venues this month. Specially designed for youngsters up to the age of 10, the jam-packed event features inflatable slides, bouncy castles, nerf wars, circus skills, obstacle courses, a driving school, a bungee run, human wrecking ball, space hopper races and a 'crafty' corner. A dedicated area for the under-fives includes soft play, ride-ons and giant piano mats.



**Events** 

Jubilee events happening across the region in June



#### **Birmingham Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

Victoria Square, Birmingham, Thurs 2 - Sun 5 June

Victoria Square will host a free four-day celebration to mark the jubilee weekend. The festivities start on Thursday the 2nd with a DJ and street entertainment, followed by live music.

Beacons will be lit after 9pm as part of a

#### nationwide initiative. There's further music and street entertainment on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with a jubilee concert being broadcast live from Buckingham Palace on Saturday.

#### Jubilee Weekend at Blakesley Hall

Blakesley Hall, Birmingham, Wed 1 - Sun 5 June



There's a royally good time awaiting young visitors to Blakesley Hall over the long jubilee weekend.

Kids can create their very own crown in a daily crafting workshop and also test out their circus skills by having a go at juggling, diabolo, hula hoops and plate spinning. Also from 1 to 5 June, visitors can explore Blakesley Hall's Tudor house and gardens between midday and 4pm. **Midlands Air Festival** 

Ragley Hall, Warwickshire, Thurs 2 - Sat 4 June Back for a fourth year, the Midlands Air

Festival sees over 100 hot-air balloons take to the skies above Ragley Hall for twice-daily mass ascents at dawn and dusk. The show also features flying displays from World War Two Warbirds, World War One air displays, fast jets, helicopters, gyroplanes, high-energy aerobatic displays, aerial ballet & flying circus acts and parachute and formation display teams. A musical firework grand finale rounds off

the fun.



#### Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster, Thurs 2 - Sun 5 June

The Severn Valley Railway is putting on a celebration fit for a Queen to mark Her Majesty's platinum jubilee.

Crowning the first day of the event will be the unveiling of locomotive 34027, complete with its new name - Elizabeth II - new number - 70 - and purple livery, specially commissioned to mark the jubilee.

In a nod to the 1953 coronation, there will be 1950s-themed entertainment at each station, including a pop-up milk bar and juke box at The Engine House, a vintage fairground ride at Bridgnorth and live music at Kidderminster.

The Engine House will also be hosting a hand-built Paddington-themed exhibition, presented courtesy of BrickLive, and a display of work by photographer Jack Boskett, showcased under the title From Railways To Royalty.



## CBSO 2021/22: Queen's Platinum Jubilee Concert

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 2 June

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra here pays its own tribute to Her Majesty with a special concert featuring a selection of works from throughout her 70-year reign. The repertoire for the evening includes music from the coronation, works dedicated to The Queen and HRH The Princess Margaret, compositions from across the Commonwealth, personal favourites of Her Majesty and even bagpipes, in former Master of the Queen's Music Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' An Orkney

Wedding, With Sunrise. The concert is presented by Classic FM's former ITN newscaster, John Suchet.

# 

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Music I Comedy I Theatre I Dance I Events I Visual Arts I and more!

## What's On

Sun 1 - Sun 8 May



Daliso Chaponda at The Glee Club **Wed 4 May** 





Mark Watson at The Old Rep Theatre Sun 15 May

Mon 16 - Sun 22 May



Sandi Toksvig at Symphony Hall **Thurs 19 May** 

#### Mon 23 - Tues 31 May



Lorde at O2 Academy
Mon 30 May

# **thelist**

### THROUGHOUT MAY

## **Visual Arts**

### Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

IN THE QUE: CELEBRATING THE QUE CLUB Sensory celebration of one of the UK's greatest music venues, featuring personal artefacts, photographs, film footage, flyers, posters and more... until Sun 30 Oct

WE ARE BIRMINGHAM Exhibition cocurated by Birmingham Museums and six members of Don't Settle - an initiative empowering young people of colour from Birmingham and the Black Country 'to change the voice of heritage through the arts, research and governance', until Sun 30 Oct

#### BLACKLASH: RACISM AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DEFENCE Mukhtar Dar's extensive archive of photographic, video and political

photographic, video and political ephemera showcases the street & state racism faced by Asian and African Caribbean communities, until Sun 30 Oct

SAVAGE K'LUB: VA TAMATEA An installation that reclaims the gentleman's clubs of the same name which were first established in London in the 19th century, until Sun 30 Oct

UNPRECEDENTED TIMES Exploring themes of hope and loss through historic artwork from Birmingham's collection alongside loans and new acquisitions from Birmingham-based artists, until Sun 30 Oct

#### WONDERLAND: BIRMINGHAM'S CINEMA STORIES Featuring unseen photographs and cinema memorabilia, alongside historic magic lanterns and optical toys from Birmingham's Collection, until Sun 30 Oct

**COLLECTION STORIES** Featuring internationally important

showstoppers and everyday items as well as objects from around the world and some made in Birmingham, until Sun 30 Oct

#### Midlands Arts Centre (MAC)

SHARON WALTERS: SEEING OURSELVES Sharon Walter's first solo exhibition features intricate paper cut pieces which 'unapologetically celebrate and uplift' Black women beyond the monolith, until Sun 26 June

#### MIXED RAGE COLLECTIVE:

UNAPOLOGETICALLY OTHER The effect of 'othering', lack of representation, daily micro-aggressions and the sense of displacement felt by people of mixed heritage, are among the subjects being explored in this thought-provoking exhibition by Mixed Rage Collective, until Sun 26 June

#### The Barber Institute

BEYOND REPRESENTATION: RE-DEFINING PERCEPTION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY Drawings, prints and sculpture from the Barber collection are featured in this thought-provoking

exhibition, which reflects the ways in which 20th-century artists constructed new perceptions of the world, until Sun 22 May

### FOUNDING THE BARBER INSTITUTE: AN ARTS CENTRE AHEAD OF ITS TIME

Archive material including rarely seen photographs and architectural blueprints are featured in this fascinating display, put together to mark the 90th anniversary of the foundation of the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, until Sun 12 June

#### Other VISUAL ARTS

JOY STICKS A family friendly, sport and games inspired exhibition where visitors have to work with others through physical activity to win the games, Wed 11 May - Sat 27 August, Birmingham Open Media

THE CITY THAT SPOKE TO ME Photographic portraits, audio interviews, poems and physical artefacts depicting Paul Stringer's personal journey into the world of poetry, until Tues 31 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

PEOPLE, PLACE AND SPORT A collection of photographic portraits and recorded conversations with individuals who take part in everyday sports across the West Midlands, until Wed 31 Aug, Bournville Green, Birmingham Coach Station, Moseley Road Baths, St Pauls Square in the Jewellery Quarter, Haden Hill Leisure Centre, Hadley Stadium,

Wednesbury Leisure Centre and West Bromwich Leisure Centre



**CEREMONY: POP COMES TO CAMPUS** Exploring and celebrating the contribution the University of Birmingham has made to local and international music culture. Featured items on display include posters, photographs and archive material, until Fri 28 Oct, Bramall Music Building, University of Birmingham

JULIAN GERMAIN: GENERATIONS Largescale photographic portrait project based on the aesthetic of the family portrait, Fri 27 May - Fri 30 Sept, outdoor locations across Birmingham & Sandwell



Birmingham

Birmingham

Birmingham

Birmingham

Birmingham

Birmingham

GARY NUMAN Mon 2

**SPIRITUALIZED** Mon 2

May, Symphony Hall,

DANI LARKIN Mon 2

Cafe, Birmingham

LEIF VOLLEBEKK +

May, Kitchen Garden

AARON SMITH Tues 3

May, Hare & Hounds,

WINNIE RAEDER Tues 3

May, Hare & Hounds,

TUYS Tues 3 May, The

Sunflower Lounge,

TINY MOVING PARTS

STONER TICKETS +

PATRON + SLOMOSA

THE ROYSTON CLUB

Tues 3 May, Mama

GNOSS Tues 3 May,

Birmingham

Kitchen Garden Cafe,

Roux's, Birmingham

Tues 3 May, The Mill,

Digbeth, Birmingham

Academy, Birmingham

Tues 3 May, O2

May, O2 Institute,

## Gigs

**BLUE VIOLET** Sun 1 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

LEWIS WATSON + SUNFLOWER THIEVES Sun 1 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

1914 Sun 1 May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**ARIJIT SINGH** Sun 1 May, Utilita Arena, Birmingham



THE WORLD IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE AND I AM NO LONGER AFRAID TO DIE + BENT KNEE + MODERN COLOR + AMENDS Sun 1 May, Mama Roux's, Birmingham SALOON DION Mon 2

May, Hare & Hounds,



Charm Of Finches - Kitchen Garden Cafe

Morcheeba - O2 Academy

JAMES AND THE COLD GUN Wed 4 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**BIG Q FISH** Wed 4 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

DUTTY MOONSHINE BIG BAND + FUNKE AND THE TWO TONE BABY Wed 4 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham OMAH LAY Wed 4 May,





**BONOBO** Wed 4 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MORCHEEBA Wed 4 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DAVID RAMIREZ + KIRBY BROWN Wed 4 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

**BONFIRE RADICALS** Wed 4 May, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

**T00L** Wed 4 May, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

EARTHLESS + MAIDA VALE Wed 4 May, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

CHARM OF FINCHES Wed 4 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham THE FUREYS Wed 4 May, The Core

### Sunday 1 - Sunday 8 May

Theatre, Solihull MATTIEL + LA REN Thurs 5 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham COACH PARTY Thurs 5

May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**THE SHOW BAND** Thurs 5 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

**FEEDER** Thurs 5 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**KAMAL** Thurs 5 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BILLY MITCHELL AND BOB FOX Thurs 5 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

SING, SING, SWING WITH MATT FORD Thurs 5 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

JAMES ANDREW + LOUIS A M + TRANSPORT RESIDENTS Fri 6 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BRETT ELDREDGE + LUCA FOGALE Fri 6 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**TWO YEAR BREAK** Fri 6 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

PARADISE CIRCUS + SECOND TRUTH + SOCIAL FORMAT + EIGHTY EIGHT MILES + OLLIE COOK Fri 6 May, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

**THE REGGULITES** Fri 6 May, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

**JOE MCELDERRY** Fri 6 -Sat 7 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

SUBTERRANEANS Fri 6 -Sat 7 May, The Jam



House, Birmingham JAMES TAYLOR QUARTET Sat 7 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham TOM MEIGHAN Sat 7 May, O2 Institute,

Birmingham THE AC/DC EXPERIENCE Sat 7 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

**FIT FOR AN AUTOPSY** Sat 7 May, The Mill, Digbeth, Birmingham

MAITHILI THAKUR Sat 7 May, Birmingham

Town Hall BLONDIE Sat 7 May, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

**BIG IMAGE** Sat 7 May, Forum, Birmingham



#### CHASERS, SNOWFLAKE GENERATION, OVERCLIFF, ALICE LILY, CALLUM SHAW, OK CANE, THE RESOLUTIONS, RIVER WATER, JINX & ELLA-DIOR Sat 7 May, The Rainbow, Digbeth,

Two Year Break - The Asylum

Birmingham SPRING SING! MADE IN BRITAIN Sat 7 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull RUMER Sun 8 May, Birmingham Town Hall



**GUSTAF** Sun 8 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BROTHERS OSBORNE + STEPHEN WILSON JR. Sun 8 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

WALK RIGHT BACK - THE EVERLY BROTHERS STORY Sun 8 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MINI MILK & THE KRAVES + KODAMA + JAZZCAT + THE VISTA + HIGHLY FLAMMABLE + BLUE BLUE BLUE + THE PITTSTOPS + THE TEALS Sun 8 May, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

VERY PET SHOP BOYS Sun 8 May, Fletchers Bar, Birmingham



Blondie - Utilita Arena

## **Classical Music**

EX CATHEDRA: UNENDING LOVE - THE TRAVELLER Programme comprises Roxanna Panufnik's Child of Heaven and Unending Love plus Alec Roth's Earth and Sky and The Traveller, Sun 1 May, Birmingham Town Hall

CBS0: MENDELSSOHN'S SCOTTISH SYMPHONY Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Daishin Kashimoto (violin). Programme includes works by Prokofiev, Bruch & Mendelssohn, Wed 4 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBS0 CENTRE STAGE Featuring Jonathan Martindale & Jane Wright (violins), Christopher Yates (viola) & Helen Edgar (cello). Programme includes works by Beethoven & Schumann, Fri 6 May, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

**OPERA BOYS** Fri 6 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

JAMES LISNEY PIANO CONCERT Programme includes works by Chopin and Beethoven, Sun 8 May, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

## Comedy

DALISO CHAPONDA Wed 4 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham



JOHN SHUTTLEWORTH Wed 4 May, Birmingham Town Hall

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, KRYSTAL EVANS & GARRETT MILLERICK Thurs 5 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DAVE JOHNS, DARIUS DAVIES, KRYSTAL EVANS, GARRETT MILLERICK & ANIA MAGLIANO Fri 6 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JASON MANFORD Fri 6 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**GARY DELANEY** Fri 6 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

DAVE JOHNS, DARIUS DAVIES, KRYSTAL EVANS & GARRETT MILLERICK Sat 7 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham FOOLS ON TOUR Sat 7 May, The Glee

Club, Birmingham TOM TAYLOR, DAISY EARL, JULIAN DEANE, JO ENRIGHT Sat 7 May, Rosies

Nightclub, Birmingham DANNY MCLOUGHLIN Sun 8 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

#### Theatre LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS The Crescent presents an ameter

Crescent presents an amateur staging of the smash-hit rock musical, until Sat 7 May, The Crescent, Birmingham

HENRY VI: REBELLION Owen Horsley directs the RSC's new take on Henry VI: Part Two, until Sat 28 May, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratfordupon-Avon



WARS OF THE ROSES The climax to Shakespeare's three-part Henry VI saga of nationhood and power. Owen Horsley directs, until Sat 4 June, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

JOHN HEGLEY: DRAWINGS OF DROMEDARIES (AND OTHER CREATURES) An hour-long performance from the celebrated poet and musician in which he showcases a selection of his crayoned creatures and a number of newly composed pieces, Sun 1 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

CLUEDO Michelle Collins (EastEnders/Coronation Street) stars as Miss Scarlett in a new comedy-

thriller based on the hit 1985 film, Clue, Mon 2 - Sat 7 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MAMMA MIA! This much acclaimed feel-good musical transports audiences to an idyllic Greek island where a romantic story unfolds against a backdrop of ABBA's greatest hits, Tues 3 - Sat 14 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

#### SHERLOCK'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

Spoof featuring four actors, minimal furnishings and a 'ton of jolly-good fun', Tues 3 - Wed 4 May, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE LOVELY BONES Amateur staging of Bryony Lavery's award-winning book, presented by Birmingham Ormiston Academy's Year 13 students, Thurs 5 - Fri 6 May, Old Rep, Birmingham

CHAMBERLAIN: PEACE IN OUR TIME Edinburgh Fringe sell-out which follows Neville Chamberlain in the lead up to his declaration of war speech. The production also features war time songs performed by West End singers, Fri 6 - Sat 7 May, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

ALTERNATIVE ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND A steampunk inspired spectacle featuring pop and musical

### PARKINSON'S<sup>UK</sup>

## WALK FOR PARKINSON'S

Join us on a 3 or 6 mile walk around beautiful Sutton Park in Birmingham Sunday 10 July at 10.30am

events.parkinsons.org.uk/walkbirmingham 0800 138 6593

#WalkforParkinsons



Sat Nav - B73 6BU

Birmingham 2022 Festival Presents



#### **Our Journey Through Vanley Burke's History**

Exhibition curated by Birmingham Museums Trust, Vanley Burke, Candice Nembhard and Paul Goodwin

25 May - 30 October Soho House Museum

Free Entry Donations Welcome



SOHO HOUSE



HERITAGE

PA CH JU

TITUDES.





Birmingham Museums

BM

Partinson's UK is the operating name of the PL Desire Society of the United Kngdom. A chark in England and Wates (258193) and in Social O Pharmonia UK 02(2) (553193).

Registered with FUNDRAISING **REGULATOR** 

## **thelist**

## Sunday 1 - Sunday 8 May

theatre classics with a Wonderland twist - inspired by Lewis Carroll's classic tale, Fri 6 - Sat 7 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

NOTHELLO An absurdist, anarchic, insightful and witty new play exploring the legacy of Shakespeare's Othello, and what it means to be of mixed-heritage, Sat 7 - Sat 21 May, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry



## Dance

STRICTLY COME DANCING: THE PROFESSIONALS 2022 Featuring a lineup of ten dancers and Strictly favourites performing choreographed Ballroom and Latin routines, Sun 8 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WRIGGLE DANCE COMPANY: SQUIDGE A fun interactive dance performance for younger audiences - featuring live music and digital projection, Sun 8 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

#### BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: DANCE TRACK 25 A 25th anniversary

celebration of BRB's landmark talent development programme. Highlights include new works created by Ruth Brill & Kit Holder, Sun 8 May, Birmingham Rep



## Light Entertainment

JASPER CARROTT'S STAND UP AND ROCK Fusion of comedy and music featuring Jasper, the Bev Bevan Band and special guest Andy Bennett, Wed 27 Apr - Sat 7 May, Lichfield Garrick

BARRY HUMPHRIES - THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK An intimate, confessional evening - seasoned with highly personal, sometimes startling, and occasionally outrageous stories, Sun 1 May, Birmingham Rep CLAUDIA WINKLEMAN: BEHIND THE

**FRINGE** Evening of chatter with the film critic and TV & radio presenter, Mon 2 May, Birmingham Town Hall

TRIXIE MATTEL: GROWN UP The standup comedian and musician describes her latest show as an exciting electrofolk reinvention, stating that audiences can 'expect to feel that you've landed in a PeeWee Herman video, with some surf rock and a love for 60's country music.' Thurs 5 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

## Talks & Spoken Word

TABLE MANNERS WITH JESSIE & LENNIE WARE Expect special guests, food and laughter as the smash hit podcast takes to the stage, Thurs 5 May, Birmingham Town Hall



#### BEATFREAKS & B:MUSIC PRESENT: POETRY JAM Featuring poets who are starting out, seasoned veterans, and everyone else with a story to tell... Fri 6 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham WHAT IF THEY LAUGH AT ME? A comic spoken word show by Brummie spoken word artist, comedian and satirist, Clive Oserman, Sun 8 May, Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

## **Events**

DONINGTON HISTORIC FESTIVAL One of Europe's premier celebrations of classic motor racing, Sat 30 Apr -Sun 1 May, Donington Park Racing Circuit

MAKERS CENTRAL Bringing together makers, creators, hobbyists and artists from all over the world, Sat 30 Apr - Sun 1 May, NEC, Birmingham

FESTIVAL OF THRILLS Celebrate the Resort's awesome rollercoasters as they reawaken this spring, until Fri 6 May, Alton Towers, Staffordshire

PEPPA PIG Meet Peppa as she dives into an adventure and makes friends with some of the ocean's most incredible animals, until Sun 3 July, National SEA LIFE Centre Birmingham

FREDDO'S FESTIVAL OF FUN The famous frog goes on a musical journey with his very own festival, until Sun 9 Oct, Cadbury World, Bournville



#### Cluedo

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 2 - Sat 7 May

This new stage play is based on the famous detective board game of the same name, and the hit 1985 movie, Clue. Featuring all of the game's famous characters - Miss Scarlett, Professor Plum, Mrs Peacock, Reverend Green, Mrs White and Colonel Mustard - the show is being helmed by Mark Bell, director of the award-winning The Play That Goes Wrong and A Comedy About A Bank Robbery.

Coronation Street and EastEnders favourite Michelle Collins stars as Miss Scarlett, with Daniel Casey - who played Detective Sergeant Gavin Troy in Midsomer Murders - taking on the role of Professor Plum.

#### ORIGINS OF MIDDLE-EARTH: JRR Tolkien and sarehole guided walk

A guided walk introducing the scenery that inspired JRR Tolkien when he lived near Sarehole Mill as a child, Sun 1 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham



**CELEBRATE EID** Visitors can explore Aston Hall for free, as part of Eid celebrations in Aston Park, Mon 2 May, Aston Hall, Birmingham

GUIDED TOUR OF SAREHOLE MILL Enjoy the sights and sounds of a traditional 18th-century water mill, learn about the life of a miller and check out the scenes that inspired writer JRR Tolkien, Fri 6 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

THE LIFESTYLE SHOW Featuring an array of exhibits covering the many aspects of the leisure lifestyle, Fri 6 -Sun 8 May, Telford International Centre, Shropshire

**EXPLORE SAREHOLE MILL** Explore Sarehole Mill at your leisure, without the need for a guided tour, Sat 7 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

#### GUIDED TOUR OF WEOLEY CASTLE

Explore Weoley Castle with experienced guides, Sat 7 May, Weoley Castle, Birmingham

PUBLIC TOUR Opportunity to explore the stage, backstage areas, dressing rooms and front-of-house whilst learning about some of the theatre's history, Sat 7 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ASTON ARTS CLUB Completely free drop-in club. Make something inspired by Aston Hall and its incredible history, Sat 7 May, Aston Hall, Birmingham

**TOY COLLECTORS FAIR** Featuring more than 500 stalls packed with thousands of collectables for sale, Sun 8 May, NEC, Birmingham

GAIA Measuring seven metres in diameter, Gaia features 120dpi detailed NASA imagery of the Earth's surface, Sun 8 May - Sun 5 June, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield



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# thelist



## Gigs

LLUMINATI HOTTIES+ DUCK LTD. + MAL Mon 9 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**GRACE PETRIE** Mon 9 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham CHIP Mon 9 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham THE BACKSEAT LOVERS Mon 9 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham PVRIS + K.FLAY Mon 9

May, O2 Academy,

Birmingham SCOTT BRADLEE'S POSTMODERN JUKEBOX Mon 9 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham SIOBHAN MILLER Mon 9 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

> NOW BOOKING

THE D-DAY DARLINGS

Friday 6 May (7.30pm) HAYDN'S THE CREATION Saturday 7 May (7.30pm)

THE COUNTERFEIT SIXTIES Saturday 14 May (7.30pm)

OASIS AND THE JAM / PAUL WELLER

Friday 20 May (8.30pm)

BRING THE LAUGHTER Sunday 22 May (7.15pm)

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS Tuesday 31 May - Saturday 4 June

WEST SIDE STORY PRESENTED BY THE TRINITY PLAYERS Tuesday 7 - Saturday 11 June

**TUBULAR BELLS LIVE!** LEBRATING THE MUSIC Sunday 12 June (7.30pm)

NORTHERN LIVE - DO I LOVE YOU

Saturday 2 July (7.30pm) **BIRMINGHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL** Monday 18 July (from 7pm)

Birmingham PILLOW QUEENS Thurs 12 May, Castle &

Falcon, Birmingham THE CHASE Thurs 12 May, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham KIM RICHEY Thurs 12

IIORA + TBC + GABY

KETTLE Tues 10 May.

LILLA VARGEN + EWAN

MAINWOOD Tues 10

May, The Sunflower

KAE TEMPEST +

Hall

Lounge, Birmingham

SHUNGUDZO Tues 10

SPINN Tues 10 May,

LAUNDRY DAY Wed 11

May, Hare & Hounds,

TOM ROBINSON BAND

Wed 11 May, Hare &

Hounds, Birmingham

Wed 11 May, The

The Jam House,

Wed 11 May, O2

PAUL HANDYSIDE +

FLETCHER + UPSAHL

Institute, Birmingham

PAPERCIRCUS Wed 11

**GREGORY PORTER** Wed

11 May, Resorts World

Arena, Birmingham

**ISLANDMAN** Wed 11

May, The Rainbow,

Birmingham

Digbeth, Birmingham

**KATHERINE PRIDDY** Wed

11 May, The Glee Club,

**REBECCA LOEBE** Wed 11

May, Kitchen Garden

SOME GUYS HAVE ALL

STEWART STORY Wed 11

May, Wolverhampton

JAKI GRAHAM Thurs 12

May, The Jam House,

CRABBI Thurs 12 May,

TOVA Thurs 12 May, The

Sunflower Lounge,

HALF • ALIVE Thurs 12

**RED SNAPPER + THE** 

NATURE CENTRE Thurs

12 May, O2 Academy,

May, O2 Institute,

THE LUCK - THE ROD

Grand Theatre

Birmingham

Birmingham

Birmingham

Birmingham

Hare & Hounds,

Cafe, Birmingham

May, Red Lion Folk

Club, Birmingham

Birmingham

Birmingham

Sunflower Lounge,

WATER FROM YOUR EYES

GABBIDON Wed 11 May,

Mama Roux's,

Birmingham

Birmingham

May, Birmingham Town

Hare & Hounds,

Birmingham

May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

PETE HYDE & THE VIELLARDS Thurs 12 May, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

> LUNAR VACATION Fri 13 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MADAM X + PLURALIST + FRESHTA + KOJAY + JAY CARDER + TRIESTE + EARFUL OF WAX Fri 13 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SLATER + TWO DAY COMA Fri 13 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SIMON JNR AND SHEDDY MARIA Fri 13 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

JOJO + LINDSEY LOMIS Fri 13 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

WILL VARLEY + GUISE + JACK VALERO Fri 13 May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

WHEN RIVERS MEET Fri 13 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

AIDAN MCGUIRE Fri 13 May, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

THE GREY GOOSE BLUES BAND Fri 13 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

LUCAS D AND THE GHETTO GROOVE Fri 13 May, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE ELVIS TRIBUTE ARTIST WORLD TOUR Fri 13 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE** Fri 13 - Sat 14 May, The Jam House. Birmingham

STEEL PULSE Sat 14 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham



**MODERN NATURE** Sat 14 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SNAKE DAVIS TRIO Sat 14 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

JOESEF + THEO BLEAK Sat 14 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TRIDENT WATERS + WHITE RAVEN DOWN Sat 14 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

BRYAN ADAMS Sat 14 May, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

THE COUNTERFEIT SIXTIES SHOW Sat 14 May, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

THE ELVIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE DIXY ROCK N ROLL BAND Sat 14 May, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

SEVEN DRUNKEN NIGHTS Sat 14 May, Wolverhampton Grand

Theatre THE CONSERVATOIRE FOLK ENSEMBLE 25TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION CONCERT Sat 14 May, The Bradshaw Hall, **Royal Birmingham** Conservatoire

**BILLY NOMATES + WU -**LU + HONEYGLAZE + ENUMCLAW + KEG Sun 15 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MADISON CUNNINGHAM

+ ROSIE FRATER-TAYLOR Sun 15 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**GRACIE ABRAMS** Sun 15 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

CHAINSKA BRASSIKA Sun 15 May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

TRAVIS Sun 15 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**BOBBY V + SANTOS** SILVA Sun 15 May, The Mill, Digbeth, Birmingham

JOE HICKS Sun 15 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

A LITTLE RESPECT (ERASURE TRIBUTE) Sun 15 May, Fletchers Bar, Birmingham

JUSTIN ADAMS AND MAURO DURANTE Sun 15 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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Sat 21 May - 7.30pm

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### Monday 9 - Sunday 15 May

## **Classical Music** Theatre

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by Handel, Mozart, Heiller, F Danksagmüller, P Planyavsky, Saint-Saens & J Guridi, Mon 9 May, Birmingham Town Hall

ARMONICO CONSORT: STABAT MATER Also featuring Armonico Baroque Players and Christopher Monks (director), Tues 10 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

GABRIELLA MONTERO: TCHAIKOVSKY'S PIANO CONCERTO Featuring Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (conductor) & Gabriela Montero (piano), Wed 11 - Thurs 12 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

## Comedy

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY **ROBINSON, JACOB HAWLEY & SCOTT** BENNETT Thurs 12 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JEFF DUNHAM Fri 13 May, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

AMY MATTHEWS, JACK CARROLL, JACOB HAWLEY, JOSH WELLER & COMIC TBC Fri 13 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CHRIS ROCK Fri 13 May, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

PHIL CHAPMAN, KAREN BAYLEY & GERRY K Fri 13 May, Aston Villa Football Club, Birmingham

AMY MATTHEWS, JACK CARROLL, JACOB HAWLEY & SCOTT BENNETT Sat 14 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PAUL MCCAFFREY, KELLY CONVEY, NINA GILLIGAN & HARRY STACHINI Sat 14 May, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

MARK WATSON Sun 15 May, Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham



FAMILY COMEDY SHOW WITH GABY TRO. ADA CAMPE & JONNY AWSUM Sun 15 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham KAE KURD. NABIL ABDULRASHID. ESHANN AKBAR & AATIF NAWAZ Sun 15 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham SIMON AMSTELL Sun 15 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

AS BRITISH AS A WATERMELON A messy sensory experience which questions what it means to belong ... Tues 10 -Wed 11 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

PRISCILLA QUEEN OF THE DESERT Amateur staging presented by Solihull Theatre Company, Tues 10 -Sat 14 May, The Core, Solihull

A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE Birmingham Ormiston Academy's Year 13 students present an amateur staging of Arthur Miller's classic tale, Wed 11 - Thurs 12 May, The Old Rep, Birmingham

RIOT ACT A solo verbatim show, created entirely, word for word, out of interviews with three key-players in the history of the LGBTQ+ rights movement, Thurs 12 May, **Birmingham REP** 

A MATTER OF LAW Award-winning show taking the audience into the throws of a courtroom as they become the jury in a challenging trial, Thurs 12 - Sat 14 May, Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

THE THREE MUSKETEERS Awardwinning Le Navet Bete present a comedy adventure that promises to have audiences 'rolling with laughter', Thurs 12 - Sat 14 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

LAVA James Fritz's funny, tender and moving story about friendship and reconnection in the aftermath of catastrophe, Fri 13 - Sat 14 May, Birmingham Rep

THE PITMEN PAINTERS The Crescent Theatre present an amateur staging of Lee Hall's humorous look at art, class and politics, Sat 14 - Sun 22 May, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

## **Kids Shows**

0I FR0G & FRIENDS! Join Frog, Cat and Dog in this action-packed stage adaptation of Kes Gray and Jim Field's bestselling children's books, Fri 13 - Sat 14 May, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

## Dance

**BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: FAMILY** MUSIC AND DANCE Family-friendly performance featuring highlights from Sleeping Beauty and other classic ballets, Fri 13 - Sat 14 May, **Birmingham Rep** 

**BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: AN** EVENING OF MUSIC & DANCE Worldclass dancers join BRB's Royal Ballet Sinfonia for a gala night of classics, Fri 13 - Sat 14 May, Birmingham Rep



#### **Riot Act**

Birmingham Rep, Thurs 12 May

Riot Act is a solo verbatim show consisting of three monologues created entirely from interviews with three men who experienced key moments in the history of the LGBTQ+ rights movement: a Stonewall survivor, a radical drag artist and an AIDS campaigner. The show has been widely praised and is written and performed by Alexis Gregory, who by all accounts does a very fine job of guiding his audience on a no-punches-pulled journey through some of the most dramatic events in the last 60 years of queer history. Rikki Beadle-Blair MBE directs.

## Light Entertainment

THE BARRICADE BOYS BRING HIM HOME TOUR Featuring music from West End and Broadway classics, Thurs 12 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**REMEMBERING LIVE VARIETY** Featuring comedian Billy Pearce, singer Phil Harrison, vocalist Shelley Wormald and theatre regular, Phil Hoyles, Thurs 12 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

HYPROV: IMPROV UNDER HYPNOSIS Two art forms unite for a unique comedy experience, Sun 15 May, Birmingham Town Hall



## **Fvents**

CASTLE KIDS PLAYGROUP A stay & play group for children aged 0 to 5 with their parents or carers, Tues 10 May, Weoley Castle, Birmingham

**GUIDED TOUR OF SAREHOLE MILL Enjoy** the sights and sounds of a traditional 18th-century water mill, learn about the life of a miller and check out the scenes that inspired writer JRR Tolkien, Fri 13 - Sat 14 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

THE BABY SHOW The UK's leading pregnancy, baby and parenting event, providing everything for bump, baby, and you, Fri 13 - Sun 15 May, NEC, Birmingham

BODYPOWER EXPO Featuring 300-plus exhibitors selling fitness-focused brands and products, Fri 13 - Sun 15 May, NEC, Birmingham

**ORIGINS OF MIDDLE-EARTH: JRR** TOLKIEN AND SAREHOLE GUIDED WALK A guided walk introducing the scenery that inspired JRR Tolkien when he lived near Sarehole Mill as a child, Sun 15 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

**CLASSIC MOTOR SHOW** An interactive arena with parades during the day, and live vintage music, Sun 15 - Mon 16 May, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

# thelist



## Gigs

MAN ON MAN Mon 16 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham MILDLIFE Mon 16 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

AVIVA Mon 16 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham DAISY BRAIN Tues 17

JO HARROP Tues 17 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Fatherson - Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SHIRES Tues 17 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CUP O'JOE Tues 17 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

FRANKIE & THE WITCH FINGERS Wed 18 May. Hare & Hounds,



#### Birmingham

DELIGHTS Wed 18 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

HANNAH JOHNSON & THE BROKEN HEARTS Wed 18 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

STATE CHAMPS Wed 18 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CHARLIE SIMPSON Wed 18 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CHARLI XCX + YEULE Wed 18 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

LIZ SIMCOCK + BERNARD HOSKINS Wed 18 May, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

THE ROBERT CRAY BAND Wed 18 May, Birmingham Town Hall

JOHN BARROWMAN Wed 18 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BALMING TIGER Thurs 19 May, Hare & Hounds,

Birmingham

HAK BAKER Thurs 19 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham **ONSIDE** Thurs 19 May, The Jam House,

Birmingham MGLA + IN TWILIGHT'S EMBRACE Thurs 19 May, O2 Institute,

Birmingham TWIN ATLANTIC + **DECLAN WELSH & THE DECADANT WEST + DEAD** PONY Thurs 19 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham **MOTHER VULTURE** Thurs

19 May, The Asylum, Birmingham NIFECO COSTA Thurs 19

May, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, B'ham

EMELI SANDÉ Thurs 19 May, The Mill, Digbeth, Birmingham

DEAN OWENS + JIM MAVING Thurs 19 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe. Birmingham

THE MANFREDS Thurs 19 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

DONNY BENET Fri 20 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ZEO + GENESIS ELIJAH + STANZA DIVAN + LEKKY + WORDSMIFF FLIP Fri 20 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE ROSADOCS + MARSEILLE + THE ASTRAS + FINLAY HATTON Fri 20 May. The Sunflower Lounge. Birmingham

NATASHA WATTS Fri 20 May, Pizza Express Live. Birmingham

TROMBONE SHORTY & **ORLEANS AVENUE** Fri 20 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

FATHERSON Fri 20 Mav. Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

JOHNNY CASH ROADSHOW Fri 20 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

DEFINITELY MIGHTBE + CHANGING MAN Fri 20 May, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

THE COLOUR SIX Fri 20 May, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

MARTIN STEPHENSON Fri 20 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

**GWYN JAY ALLEN Sat 21** May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

KARNIVOOL + THE OCEAN Sat 21 May. O2 Institute, Birmingham

YEARS & YEARS Sat 21 May, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

MYRIAM ADAMS Sat 21 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BOB VYLAN Sat 21 May, O2 Institute, B'ham

**TONY MATTERHORN** Sat 21 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE SMYTHS Sat 21 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MORGANWAY Sat 21 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

TODRICK HALL Sat 21 May, Birmingham Town Hall

THE BOY GEORGE EXPERIENCE + THE U2 EXPERIENCE Sat 21 May. The Rhodehouse. Sutton Coldfield

ELLIE GOWERS Sat 21 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

DHIDALAH Sun 22 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE LAZY EYES Sun 22 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE WANDERING HEARTS Sun 22 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE LUKA STATE Sun 22 May, O2 Academy,

Birmingham TONY CHRISTIE Sun 22 May, Birmingham Town Hall

THE HOLLIES Sun 22 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WHITESNAKE + FOREIGNER + EUROPE Sun 22 May, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

NOT SO YOUNG (NEIL YOUNG INTERPRETED) Sun 22 May, Fletchers Bar, Birmingham

**CHRIS CLEVERLEY** Sun 22 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

JOOLS HOLLAND AND HIS **RHYTHM & BLUES ORCHESTRA WITH GILSON** LAVIS, RUBY TURNER & LOUISE MARSHALL Sun 22 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry



Years & Years - Resorts World Arena

## **Classical Music** Theatre

**BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR: COME AND SING!** Programme comprises Duruflé's Requiem, Sat 21 May, Selly Oak Methodist Church, Birmingham

## Comedy

GUZ KHAN Mon 16 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RUSSELL PETERS Tues 17 May, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

PAUL CHOWDHRY Wed 18 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

SANDI TOKSVIG LIVE! Thurs 19 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY **ROBINSON. CATHERINE BOHART &** CHRISTIAN SCHULTE-LOH Thurs 19 May. The Glee Club, Birmingham

**ROBIN MORGAN, SIMON WOZNIAK, CATHERINE BOHART, CHRISTIAN** SCHULTE-LOH & JESSIE NIXON Fri 20 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham MILTON JONES Fri 20 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ROBIN MORGAN, SIMON WOZNIAK, CATHERINE BOHART & CHRISTIAN** SCHULTE-LOH Sat 21 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JARRED CHRISTMAS. NAOMI COOPER. MARK SIMMONS & PHIL ELLIS Sat 21 May, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham **OMID DJALILI** Sat 21 May. Symphony Hall, Birmingham



THE MUSLIMS ARE COMING Sat 21 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SANDI TOKSVIG Sat 21 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ROUGH WORKS: NEW MATERIAL NIGHT** Sun 22 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PATRICK KIELTY Sun 22 May, Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

STEWART LEE Sun 22 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

WAITRESS Hit West End musical starring Chelsea Halfpenny as a waitress and expert pie-maker in search of happiness. Matt Willis also stars. Mon 16 - Sat 21 May. Birmingham Hippodrome

THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG Mischief's multi award-winning international smash hit comedy, Mon 16 - Sat 12 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE WEDDING SINGER Amateur staging presented by Bournville Musical Theatre Company, Tues 17 - Sat 21 May. The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

ANIMAL FARM Contemporary take on George Orwell's famous fable, Tues 17 - Sat 21 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

PRIVATE PEACEFUL Based on Michael Morpurgo's book, this short play is perfectly pitched for the young audiences at which it's aimed, Tues 17 - Sat 21 May, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

WOULD YOU BET AGAINST US? Brummie and life-time Aston Villa fan Paul Hunter's funny, poignant, and uplifting show about challenging expectations and proving people wrong, Thurs 19 May - Sat 4 June, Birmingham Rep

HOUSEWIVES ON HOLIDAY Join the ladies as they move between holiday heaven and holiday hell with much hilarity, Sat 21 May, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

## **Kids Shows**

0I FROG & FRIENDS! Join Frog, Cat and Dog in this action-packed stage adaptation of Kes Gray and Jim Field's bestselling children's books, Sat 21 - Sun 29 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

FIREMAN SAM Join Sam, Penny, Elvis, Station Officer Steele and Norman in an all-singing, all-dancing, actionpacked show, Sun 22 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

## Dance

**CONFESSIONS OF A COCKNEY TEMPLE** DANCER Solo show in which Shane Shambhu reveals the secret life he

kept from his school friends, growing up in the cultural melting pot of East London, Wed 18 - Thurs 19 May,

Birmingham

Hippodrome

## Talks/Spoken

JOE LYCETT'S CURIOSITIES WITH SHAUN

**KEAVENY** This Flatpack Festival event sees Brummie comedian Joe joined by radio DJ Shaun for an evening of chat about filmmaking, music, classic adverts & comedy, Tues 17 May, Birmingham Town Hall

## Events

CASTLE KIDS PLAYGROUP A stay & play group for children aged 0 to 5 with their parents or carers, Tues 17 May,



initiative encourages 'viewing and doing' - from getting hands-on in workshops led by artists and filmmakers, to watching fabulous family films on the big screen. There are four Colour Box shows to enjoy at MAC on Saturday 21 May: Touch Screen (taking place on Friday the 20th too): Zoetropes Galore; Dream Big; and With Open Arms. There's also

an earlier-month (Sunday the 8th) Colour Box screening of acclaimed Pixar feature Inside Out. The film is being shown as part of Mental Health Month.

To find out more about all five Colour Box presentations, visit macbirmingham.co.uk.

The Flatpack shows at MAC are sandwiched between two other family-friendly productions at the venue in May. John Hegley: Drawings Of Dromedaries (And Other Creatures), takes place on Sunday the 1st, while MAC Makes Music: The Open Mic Show at MAC! rounds off the month on Friday the 27th. Again, check the website for further information about both shows.

## Light Entertainment

**Colour Box** 

Birmingham

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC),

much in evidence at the city's

month, courtesy of a strand of

Titled Colour Box, the Flatpack

specially for children.

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) this

activities and presentations designed

Birmingham's Flatpack Festival is

**ALL OUR YESTERDAYS** Music & choreography combine in this musical journey through the '50's. '60's and '70's, Mon 16 - Tues 17 May, The Core, Solihull

PAUL MERTON: IMPRO CHUMS Paul Merton, Richard Vranch, Suki Webster, Mike McShane and accompanist Kirsty Newton are back with another evening of mind-blowing improvisation, Fri 20 May, Birmingham Town Hall

#### May, Donington Park MARDI GRAS Carnival-inspired takeover featuring 'an explosion of colours, sounds, entertainment, and themed food from the Deep South and around the world'. Sat 21 May -Sun 19 June, Alton Towers,

Mill, Birmingham

Weolev Castle, Birmingham

SPRING DIESEL FESTIVAL 2022 Bide

behind the best of the diesel home

fleet alongside VIP special quests,

Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

Thurs 19 - Sun 22 May, Severn Valley

**GUIDED TOUR OF SAREHOLE MILL Enjoy** 

the sights and sounds of a traditional

18th-century water mill, learn about

the life of a miller and check out the

Tolkien, Fri 20 - Sat 21 May, Sarehole

Donington for 2022, Fri 20 - Sun 22

scenes that inspired writer JRR

**BENNETTS BRITISH SUPERBIKE** 

**CHAMPIONSHIP** Returning to

Staffordshire THEATRE TOUR Behind-the-scenes peek at one of Birmingham's oldest theatres, Sat 21 May, The Old Rep, Birmingham

FREE GUIDED TOUR Visitors can join a free guided tour and view some amazing collections, Sat 21 May, Tamworth Castle

THE BIG BARK Including canine Olympics, dog shows and agility challenges. Sat 21 - Sun 22 May. Trentham Gardens, Stoke-on-Trent



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WIST

THROUGH WONDERLAND SOLVING PUZZLES AND **RIDDLES AND MEET** SOME OF YOUR FAVOURITE CHARACTERS.

**AKE A MAGICAL JOURNEY** 

**IMMERSE YOURSELF IN** WONDERLAND.

# thelist

## Monday 23 - Tuesday 31 May



## Gigs

MIDLAND Mon 23 May, O2 Institute, B'ham

**NATHANIEL RATELIFF &** THE NIGHT SWEATS Mon 23 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TOPS Mon 23 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LANDMVRKS + RESOLVE + TEN56 + GLASS BONE Mon 23 May, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

LACHLAN BRYAN AND THE WILDES + DAN WEBSTER Mon 23 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

ABSTRACT ORCHESTRA Tues 24 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PEANESS Tues 24 May, Hare & Hounds,



MILES KANE + BROOKE COMBE Tues 24 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JP COOPER + WORRYWORRY Tues 24 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KING PROMISE Tues 24 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

DECO Tues 24 May, The

#### Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham THE OVERTONES Tues 24 May, Symphony Hall,



KUUNATIC Wed 25 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CRYSTAL TIDES Wed 25 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE RAMONAS Wed 25 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

STONE + ELI SMART Wed 25 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MEN WITHOUT HATS Wed 25 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

NICK WATERHOUSE Wed 25 May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

JOHN WARD TRIO + THE LOST NOTES TRIO Wed 25 May, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

MEMORIAL Wed 25 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

THE SIMON AND **GARFUNKEL STORY** Wed 25 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

CELINE DION Wed 25 -

The Unthanks - Birmingham Town Hall Thurs 26 May. Utilita Arena, Birmingham TRIATHALON Thurs 26 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

> **DEL CAMINO** Thurs 26 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

NICOLAS BEARDE Thurs 26 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

BEAR'S DEN Thurs 26 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BLOC PARTY Thurs 26 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DAVID GRAY Thurs 26 May, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

EMILY DUFF Thurs 26 May, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

SPACE Fri 27 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

TOM OLLENDORFF TRIO Fri 27 May, Pizza Express Live, B'ham

**BRIAN FALLON & THE** HOWLING WEATHER + CHRIS FARREN + JESSE

MALIN Fri 27 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ALT-J Fri 27 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

EARL SLICK Fri 27 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

NIRVANA TRIBUTE Fri 27 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

THE UNTHANKS Fri 27 May, Birmingham Town Hall

THUNDER Fri 27 May,

Resorts World Arena, Birmingham JOHNNY MCEVOY Fri 27

May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SOLID SOUL Fri 27 - Sat 28 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

SURGEON + CANDO Sat 28 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LORNA WANT Sat 28 May, Pizza Express Live, Birmingham

THE LUNAR YEAR Sat 28 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE BIG MOON Sat 28 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

PET SHOP BOYS Sat 28 May, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

A-HA Sat 28 May, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

VASELINE Sat 28 May, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

DEEP TAN Sun 29 May. Hare & Hounds, Birmingham





**COASTAL FEVER + PIP** BLOM Sun 29 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KNUCKLE PUCK Sun 29 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SIMON AND OSCAR FROM **OCEAN COLOUR SCENE** Sun 29 May,

**Birmingham Town Hall** MOMENTS OF PLEASURE: THE MUSIC OF KATE BUSH Sun 29 May, Fletchers Bar, Birmingham

DONAE'O Mon 30 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham SWEEPING PROMISES

Mon 30 May, Hare &



EMELI SANDÉ Mon 30 May, Birmingham Town Hall

COOPER + THE CULT Mon 30 May, Resorts World Arena, B'ham

LORDE Mon 30 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

IAN SWEET Tues 31 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham



**DIONNE WARWICK** Tues 31 May, Birmingham Town Hall



CRESCENT

9 June 2022 Crescent Theatre, Birmingham 0121 643 5858 crescent-theatre.co.uk

# **thelist**

## Monday 23 - Tuesday 31 May



The Good, The Bad And The Rugby - The Alexandra

## **Classical Music**

LUNCHTIME CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by MA Charpentier, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Gershwin & L Anderson, Mon 23 May, Birmingham Town Hall

MILOŠ: HOMAGE TO SEGOVIA Featuring classical pianist Miloš Karadaglic. Programme includes works by Sor, Bach, Albeniz & Villa-Lobos, Sat 28 May, Birmingham Town Hall

THE LONDON CONCERTANTE: VIVALDI'S FOUR SEASONS Sat 28 May, Birmingham Cathedral

BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: MUSIC & MATHS Featuring Anna Dennis (soprano) & Gabriella Teychenné (conductor). Programme includes works by Iannis Xenakis, Emily Howard & Samantha Fernando, Sun 29 May (5pm), CBSO Centre, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: ACOUSMATIC CONCERT W/BEAST Programme comprises lannis

Xenakis La Legende d'Eer (1978) 45' and Sergio Luque World Premiere, Sun 29 May (7pm), The Exchange, Birmingham

## Comedy

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON (PICTURED), JO ENRIGHT & IAN COPPINGER Thurs 26 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham



CHLOE PETTS Fri 27 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PAUL TONKINSON, MICHAEL AKADIRI, JO ENRIGHT & IAN COPPINGER Fri 27 - Sat 28 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham JOSH HOWIE, KATE BARRON, JAMIE MACDONALD & LOU CONRAN Sat 28 May, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham WORLD COMEDY CLASH 2022 Sun 29 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham STEVE BUGEJA Sun 29 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

## Theatre

WE WILL ROCK YOU Smash hit musical by Queen & Ben Elton, Mon 23 - Sat 28 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MAGIC GOES WRONG A co-production from award-winning Mischief theatre and magic legends Penn & Teller which promises to raise the bar with dare-devil stunts, jaw-dropping feats and irresistible comedy genius, Tues 24 - Sun 29 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

FRANKENSTEIN: HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER An award-winning gig theatre production, inspired by the original monstrous take of power and persecution, Wed 25 - Sat 28 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

A DOUBLE BILL OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE 440 Theatre present The Bard's Macbeth and A Midsummer Night's Dream in the space of one evening, Thurs 26 May, The Old Rep, Birmingham

HANDBAGGED Moira Buffini's witty, boisterous speculation on what might have taken place at the weekly meetings between Margaret Thatcher and Queen Elizabeth, Sat 28 May -Sat 4 June, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE WIZARD OF OZ Join Dorothy and other familiar characters as they embark on a journey along the Yellow Brick Road to the magical Land of Oz, Sun 29 May, The Old Rep, Birmingham

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS Amateur staging presented by Sutton Coldfield Musical Youth Theatre, Tues 31 May - Sat 4 June, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

## Dance

**CINDERELLA** Presented by Midland Theatre Ballet, Fri 27 - Sun 29 May, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

**OTI: I AM HERE** Expect mesmerising Jives, pumping Sambas and much more in what promises to be an 'explosive night of dance and music that will set your heart racing.' Sun 29 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

## Talks & Spoken Word

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE RUGBY LIVE England heroes James Haskell and Mike Tindall take to the road with the world's most popular rugby podcast. Sky Sports' rugby presenter Alex Payne and special guest, Chris Ashton, also feature, Mon 23 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

TALKSPORT TOURS Featuring the radio show's Alan Brazil & Ray Parlour, Tues 24 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

CRAIG REVEL HORWOOD - THE ALL BALLS AND GLITTER TOUR Join Craig as he talks about his life, from Australia to the West End to Strictly, Thurs 26 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE GUILTY FEMINIST: LIVE Deborah Frances-White will be joined by an array of guests to explore our 'noble goals as 21st century feminists - and our hypocrisies and insecurities that undermine those goals, Fri 27 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

GRAEME HALL: THE DOGFATHER Join the

Master Dog Trainer for a specially crafted 90-minute show full of tricks and surprises - as well as an exclusive Q&A, Sat 28 May, The Old Rep, Birmingham

TWO MR P'S IN A PODCAST Sharing funny stories from the front line of teaching, this live show will see the Two Mr Ps reminiscing on their own school days and looking at the wonderful and hilarious world of education, Mon 30 May, The Old Rep, Birmingham

## **Events**

**CASTLE KIDS PLAYGROUP** A stay & play group for children aged 0 to 5 with their parents or carers, Tues 24 May, Weoley Castle, Birmingham

GUIDED TOUR OF SAREHOLE MILL Enjoy the sights and sounds of a traditional 18th-century water mill, learn about the life of a miller and check out the scenes that inspired writer JRR Tolkien, Fri 27 - Sat 28 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

VAPER EXPO Featuring exhibitors from around the world showcasing their products and innovations, Fri 27 -Sun 29 May, NEC, Birmingham

UK SLOT CAR FESTIVAL A must-attend event for slot car enthusiasts, Sat 28 -Sun 29 May, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

BRITISH GT & GB3 CHAMPIONSHIPS Supercars from many of the world's greatest prestige marques, including Aston Martin, McLaren, Porsche, Bentley and Mercedes-AMG, are expected to star, Sat 28 - Sun 29 May, Donington Park

**D0GFEST** Try your paw at a variety of have-a-go activities, watch dog displays and pick up training tips, Sat 28 - Sun 29 May, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

BCMG: DRAWING SCORING KIDS

**WORKSHOP** A free family-fun morning of composing and digital drawing Sun 29 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



Graeme Hall: The Dogfather - The Old Rep



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**Director Carlos Acosta** 

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