

Staffordshire

ISSUE 429 OCTOBER 2022

What's On

FILM | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS | FOOD staffordshirewhatson.co.uk



15 YEARS
Alton Towers
SCAREFEST

7th - 9th, 14th - 31st October
Book your Scarefest tickets
NOW at altontowers.com

inside:

JIVE TALKIN'

Saturday Night Fever dances into the Potteries



MOON VIEWING

Luke Jerram's Museum Of The Moon at Lichfield Cathedral



SPOOK-TASTIC

Halloween events across the Midlands for half term



gatehouse theatre



A KNIGHT WITH SIR GEOFFREY BOYCOTT

WED 5 OCTOBER
@ 7:30PM



THAT'LL BE THE DAY

THURS 6 & FRI 7 OCTOBER
@ 7.30PM



YOU WIN AGAIN

SAT 8 OCTOBER
@ 7.30PM



AN AUDIENCE WITH WAYNE SLEEP

SUN 9 OCTOBER
@ 3PM



DR RICHARD SHEPHERD 'UNNATURAL CAUSES'

WED 12 OCTOBER
@ 7.30PM



VINCENT SIMONE TANGO PASSIONS

THURS 13 OCTOBER
@ 7.30PM



THE POWER BALLAD SHOW

FRI 14 OCTOBER
@ 7.45PM



TINA LIVE

SAT 15 OCTOBER
@ 7.30PM



HENRY NORMAL - THE ESCAPE PLAN

SAT 15 OCTOBER
@ 7.45PM



THE ADDAMS FAMILY

WED 19 - SAT 22 OCTOBER
VARIOUS TIMES



FIREMAN SAM

TUES 25 OCTOBER
@ 10.30AM & 1PM



RAPUNZEL

WED 26 OCTOBER
@ 2.30PM



I SPY WITH MY LITTLE EYE

THURS 27 OCTOBER
@ 2.30PM



SERIOUSLY COLLINS

FRI 28 OCTOBER
@ 7.30PM



JURASSIC LIVE

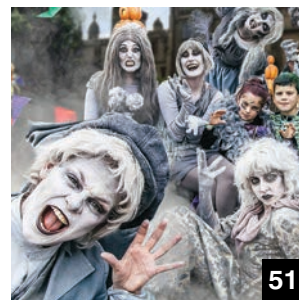
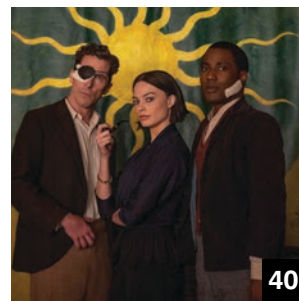
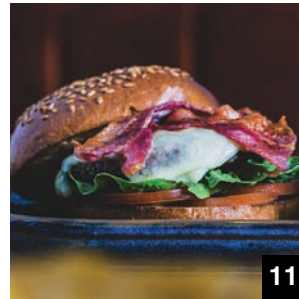
SAT 29 OCTOBER
@ 1PM & 5PM



THE FAIRYTALE OF NEW YORK

MON 31 OCTOBER
@ 7.30PM

CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR FULL LISTINGS



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What's On

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Monster Trucks Live to roll into the Midlands

The world's fastest-growing monster trucks show is heading for the Midlands next spring. Stopping off at Birmingham's Utilita Arena on Saturday 15 & Sunday 16 April, Hot Wheels Monster Trucks Live Glow Party offers audiences the chance to watch their favourite Hot Wheels Monster Trucks 'light up the floor in outrageous competitions and battles'. Performances will also feature 'spectacular laser light shows, exhilarating dance parties, Hot Wheels toy giveaways' and 'a special appearance by the car-eating, fire-breathing transforming robot Megasaurus'. For more information and to book tickets, visit livenation.co.uk

It's a Wolverhampton Christmas for panto stars Zoe and Michael

West End leading lady and singing sensation Zoe Birkett will star alongside Michael Greco (EastEnders' Beppe Di Marco) in this year's Wolverhampton Grand Theatre pantomime production of Aladdin. Zoe, who shot to fame in 2002 when, at the age of 16, she was the highest-placed female contestant on ITV's Pop Idol, will take the role of the Spirit Of The Ring, with Michael playing the part of the villainous Abanazar. Joining them in the show will be CBeebies favourite Ben Cajee (in the title role of Aladdin) and returning favourites Tam Ryan (as Wishee Washee) and Ian Adams (as Widow Twankey). Wolverhampton's own Sofie Anné will play Princess Jasmine. Aladdin runs at the Grand from Saturday 3 December to Saturday 7 January. For more information and to book tickets, visit grandtheatre.co.uk



Spooktacular outdoor cinema visits Shropshire

Adventure Cinema, the UK's largest touring outdoor cinema, is visiting Shropshire this month with a 'spooky special of Halloween entertainment'. Presenting screenings of cult classics The Lost Boys and The Shining, and fantasy film Hocus Pocus, the touring cinema stops off at Shrewsbury's Attingham Park from Wednesday 19 to Friday 21 October. For more details, visit adventurecinema.co.uk

Europe's biggest Halloween megastore opens in the Midlands

Europe's biggest Halloween store, Halloween House, has reopened at Merry Hill Shopping Centre in Dudley. Selling 'everything Halloween', including classic costumes, horror masks, make-up and home décor, the store features an eerie cemetery scene, a sinister-looking Pennywise and a selection of large moving & talking animated props, including a 12ft Towering Reaper. A new collection of merchandise based on popular Netflix series Stranger Things is also available.

Sir Matthew Bourne's Nutcracker! production to make its cinema debut

Choreographer Sir Matthew Bourne's 30th anniversary production of Nutcracker! will next month be screened in more than 220

cinemas across the UK and internationally. The screenings will take place on Tuesday 15 & Sunday 20 November. Commenting on the news, Sir Matthew said: "I'm always delighted when our work is able to reach new audiences... and there is no better or more exciting way than through the 'big screen' experience." To check which cinemas are screening Nutcracker!, visit nutcrackercinema.com

Circus Of Horrors brings The Witch to the Midlands

The ever-entertaining Circus Of Horrors are returning to the Midlands with a brand-new and sure-to-be-spinetingling production this autumn. Titled The Witch, the show comes complete with an original rock score and is described as 'a sensational new phantasmagoria which encompasses amazing & bizarre circus acts'. The production visits The Place in Oakengates, Telford, on Thursday 3 November and KK's Steel Mill in Wolverhampton on Thursday the 17th. For more information and to book tickets, visit circusofhorrors.co.uk



Little Shop Of Horrors to show in Cannock

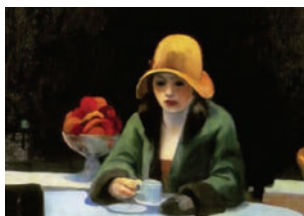
Popular amateur company BrownhillsMTC are taking to the stage early next month to present their production of Little Shop Of Horrors. The show is being performed at the Prince of Wales Theatre in Cannock from Wednesday 2 to Saturday 5 November.

Art exhibition at the New Vic

The New Vic theatre in Newcastle-under-Lyme is this month hosting an exhibition of work by Potteries-born artist Tony Wild. A former lecturer at both Staffordshire and Keele University, 80-year-old Tony last had his artwork displayed at the New Vic 30 years ago. This latest exhibition, titled Landscape Collages, shows at the theatre from Monday 10 October to Saturday 12 November.

Hopper on screen at the Gatehouse

Stafford's Gatehouse Theatre is this month screening a brand-new film celebrating the life and times of legendary American artist Edward Hopper. Exhibition On Screen: Hopper - showing at the venue on Monday 24 October - has been released to coincide with the New York opening of a major exhibition of the artist's work. For more information and to book tickets, visit gatehousetheatre.co.uk



Pre-school family festival aiming to keep kids entertained

Pre-school family festival TOTFest will take place at Wolverhampton Racecourse next summer (11 June). Aimed at children aged one to five, the immersive event focuses on engaging youngsters' imaginations and 'giving families an opportunity to spend precious time together whilst trying out new things and, most

importantly, having fun!' The festival's line-up of attractions includes giant painting canvasses, a baby rave, bubbleologists, three themed stages, crazy golf, storytime sessions, a tots' race track, craft zones, a miniature fairground, a 'bounceland' and live shows. To find out more, visit totfestfestival.com

Chain Stories at Lichfield venue

A documentary about an outdoor, site-specific performance which explored the Black Country's connection with the Commonwealth is being screened at Lichfield's The Hub at St Mary's on Thursday 6 October. The film follows the making of Chain Stories, a Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022 project which saw ME Dance Company work with professional companies and community organisations from across the Midlands, Ghana and Grenada. For more information and to book tickets, visit thehubstmarys.co.uk



Shrewsbury panto run extended due to high demand - oh yes it is!

With tickets for this year's pantomime production of Beauty And The Beast selling 'faster than ever', Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn has announced that the show will now run for an extended period of time, from Wednesday 30 November until Sunday 8 January. Commenting on the news, Marketing Manager Craig Reeves said: "We're really looking forward to welcoming audiences back for another fun-filled panto season. Early booking is highly recommended." To find out more and grab yourself a ticket, visit theatresevern.co.uk

Shropshire Music Trust's 2022/23 season begins

Shropshire Music Trust's 2022/23 season gets under way this month, beginning with a concert by the Carducci String Quartet in Shrewsbury's St Alkmund's Church on Saturday 1 October.

The autumn programme then continues on the 15th of the month at Shrewsbury School with The Marches Songbook: A Shropshire Lass - an evening of new settings of poetry by composers from the Marches.

To check out the complete line-up of concerts, visit shropshiremusictrust.co.uk

Local musician launches Voices From The Cone

A Black Country musician has just released a narrated song cycle about the history and community of the Stourbridge Glassworks. Dan Whitehouse's album, *Voices From The Cones*, was released at the end of September and blends electronica, country, rock, hip-hop, folk and pop. Dan will perform an album-launch gig at Stourbridge's Glasshouse Arts Centre on Friday 21 October. For tickets, visit dan-whitehouse.com/live



Ginny Lemon & Sister Sister at the Garrick

Breakout stars of RuPaul's Drag Race UK Season 2, Ginny Lemon & Sister Sister, are teaming up to present a brand-new stage show.

You Keep Me Hangin' On visits Lichfield Garrick on Saturday 4 February, with the duo claiming that they're aiming to bring audiences 'the most disappointing drag show' they've ever seen! To find out more and book tickets, visit lichfieldgarrick.com



Marti Pellow to play King Rat in Hippodrome panto

Marti Pellow will take the part of King Rat in Birmingham Hippodrome's pantomime production of Dick Whittington this Christmas.

The former Wet Wet Wet frontman will be joined in the no-expense-spared extravaganza by Birmingham panto legend Matt Slack, TV celebrity Dr Ranj, actress,

singer & television personality Suzanne Shaw, and Hippodrome favourites Doreen Tipton and Andrew Ryan.

The production runs at the venue from Saturday 17 December to Sunday 29 January. For more information and to book tickets for the show, visit birminghamhippodrome.com

Parental relationships explored in new play

The subject of parental relationships is placed under the microscope in a new and darkly comic play from Bromfield-based theatre company Pentabus.

Written by Shropshire-raised playwright Tom Wentworth, *Little Bits Of Ruined Beauty* examines the subtle shift from carer-for to carer, and how dignity and independence are maintained in isolated rural areas. The play is performed at Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire on Saturday 15 October and Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, on Sunday 16 October. To find out more, visit pentabus.co.uk

City's big three festive attractions set to make a welcome return

Birmingham's famous Frankfurt Christmas Market will next month return to the city for a 22nd year.

Located in Victoria Square and New Street from 3 November to 23 December, the

popular attraction will feature stalls selling a tempting array of food & drink (think hot gluhwein, schnitzel and spicy sausage), traditional toys, ornaments and gifts. Meanwhile, the Big Wheel and Ice Rink will also be making a return (to Centenary Square) from 3 November to 8 January. To find out more about the three attractions, visit iceskatebirmingham.co.uk

Abbeyfest fundraiser returns in November

Shrewsbury Abbey will once again play host to fundraising drinks event Abbeyfest next month.

Bringing together live entertainment with a selection of food & drink, the festival takes place

in aid of Lingen Davies Cancer Fund on Friday 18 & Saturday 19 November. Tickets are available from the charity's website.



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



An Extra Good Night with Yotam Ottolenghi and Noor Murad
Mon 26 Sep
Town Hall




Halloween Silent Movie Special: Nosferatu
Tue 1 Nov
Town Hall

Jongleurs Legends
Tue 11 Oct
Town Hall



The Australian Pink Floyd
Mon 7 Nov &
Mon 28 Nov
Symphony Hall




Disney's Hocus Pocus: Film plus Orchestra
Tue 25 Oct
Symphony Hall



An Evening with Noel Fitzpatrick
Tue 29 Nov
Town Hall

Marc Almond
Wed 26 Oct
Symphony Hall



The Gruffalo
Tue 27 Dec –
Sun 15 Jan 2023
Town Hall



Symphonic Universe
Fri 28 Oct
Symphony Hall



Paul Simon's 'Graceland' reimaged by The London African Gospel Choir
Fri 14 Apr 2023
Town Hall

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

WINTER WONDERLAND

Venture down the rabbit hole this Christmas as Lewis Carroll's Alice In Wonderland tumbles into the New Vic theatre...



Staffordshire's New Vic theatre is revisiting one of its most popular festive shows this Christmas, presenting an adaptation of Alice In Wonderland that gives the classic story a local twist. Artistic Director Theresa Heskins tells What's On why reviving an old favourite isn't such a mad hatter idea...

Staffordshire's New Vic theatre is reaching back into its past for this year's Christmas production, revisiting - and, according to Artistic Director Theresa Heskins, 'refreshing' - its acclaimed version of Alice In Wonderland, which was first performed 11 years ago.

But while the move might contradict a classic line from the show's titular protagonist ("It's no use going back to yesterday, because I was a different person then"), it makes total sense given how well the original was received - as Theresa explains...

"It's one of the shows we're fondest of. It was nominated for awards, engaged the imaginations of so many young people who are now adults, and we saw that it had so much impact. People still stop me in the street and say 'I saw that show, it's one of the first shows I saw and I want you to know how much I loved it.'

"We're also fond of it because it has great music and it's very lively, funny and witty - it's a much-loved story told in a very dramatic and exciting way."

As well as a new cast, the refreshed version also features new lighting and effects courtesy of advances in equipment and technology. But it's the human element that's key for Theresa, not least because her adaptation brings a more human - and local - touch to a story that doesn't typically elicit much in the way of empathy for its cast of unlikely characters.

"It's kind of unusual because Alice In Wonderland as a book - I love the quirk of it, but it's not big on story. One of the things that we managed to do was give it a story where you really care about the characters and about their journey."

Having grown up on a council estate in London, Theresa admits she found it difficult to relate to "that girl in the blue dress with the blonde hair who grew up in an Oxbridge college and had a governess". She thought audiences, especially youngsters, were likely to feel the same way.

"One in 10 local people come to see our Christmas shows each year, and quite a lot of

those are children, many of which are having their first experience of the theatre. I want them to see people that they understand and can recognise on stage. I want them to see extraordinary people as well, and learn about new ways of thinking and living, but I did think, how are they going to relate to this Victorian girl with this very particular and unusual life?"

The discovery that the book's author, Lewis Carroll (real name Charles Dodgson), was a keen amateur photographer took Theresa down a rabbit hole of her own, ultimately inspiring a new persona and motivation for the lead character.

"One of Lewis Carroll's favourite subjects was the family who lived in the college, one of whom was Alice. He took some photos of her in fancy dress, dressed as a beggar girl, and I thought that was an inspiring image and very different to the child that we know.

"So I've imagined Alice not as a beggar girl but as the child of a boating family, coming into Stoke-on-Trent on one of the canals and going into the marketplace to earn some money to buy herself some food for her tea, failing to do that and spending the whole play trying to get her jam tarts.

"It gives the show a sense of importance, because you really want kids to be fed, and she's loveable and gorgeous, so you support her all the way."

Developing a connection with the audience is always a priority for Theresa. She is given a helping hand in doing so by the fact that the New Vic is the oldest purpose-built, in-the-round theatre in the UK - an arena that lets audiences get up close to the action.

"You're not sitting at the back in row T wondering if you can see people's faces, you're right there feeling part of it. And for comedy, it's great to be able to see other people's faces laughing."

The theatre remains one of only a handful of venues able to stage in-the-round shows, but it's a format that's definitely catching on - which is just as well, as the venue's productions are starting to develop a life beyond Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Around The World In 80 Days went to 42nd Street in New York ("we were in the theatre literally next door to Harry Potter"), a special stage was built in London for Tom, Dick And Harry, and the theatre's acclaimed production of Marvellous is set to be the first production at @sohoplac, the first new-build West End theatre in 50 years, when it opens this autumn.

"What that says to me is that here in Staffordshire we are making world-class theatre and we're making it for Staffordshire audiences. It's great to share it out, because what it's saying to those people in New York, London and across the UK, is that Staffordshire is a place where talent and excellence thrives. There are extraordinary things made here that are world class - just like the pottery industry. We're very proud to be part of that.

"So when making Alice, we're very aware that we're making a show for local people and local children, to inspire them to love theatre, and we're making it knowing that the people creating it are a valued part of the international theatre industry."

As much as Christmas shows are crucial for any local theatre - the revenue from pantomimes helps fund work for the rest of the year - Theresa sees an even greater importance in the annual festive show.

"I think what's most important for us is that it's the start of a lifetime of theatre going. We have such a sense of responsibility when young people come into this building and it's one of their first theatre experiences. We make sure we give them the best theatre we're capable of making. We want them to remember it and tell their grandchildren and great grandchildren about it. And hopefully it will also kick-start them on a lifetime of theatre going. It feels like such a special gift to be able to give at Christmas."

Alice In Wonderland shows at the New Vic theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, from Fri 18 November until Sat 28 January

WORLD CLASS ENTERTAINMENT



THE MULTI AWARD-WINNING PRODUCTION RETURNS!
BLOOD BROTHERS

TUE 27 SEP – SAT 1 OCT
REGENT THEATRE



THE NATIONAL THEATRE'S PRODUCTION OF THE CLASSIC THRILLER RETURNS
AN INSPECTOR CALLS

TUE 4 – SAT 8 OCT
REGENT THEATRE



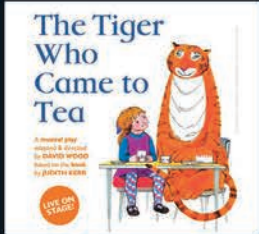
FOR ANY PINK FLOYD FAN, THIS SHOW IS A MUST-SEE
THE AUSTRALIAN PINK FLOYD SHOW

SUN 23 OCT
REGENT THEATRE



EXPERIENCE THE BEST-SELLING BEE GEES SOUNDTRACK LIVE ON STAGE
SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER

TUE 25 – SAT 29 OCT
REGENT THEATRE



THE TEA-GUZZLING TIGER IS BACK ON THE ROAD
THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TEA

TUE 1 & WED 2 NOV
REGENT THEATRE



GATHER LA FAMILIA! IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE
SING-A-LONG-A-ENCANTO

SAT 12 NOV
REGENT THEATRE



DIVORCED. BEHEADED. LIVE!
SIX

TUE 15 – SUN 20 NOV
REGENT THEATRE



A NIGHT OF FUN, FANTASY AND NO HOLDING BACK
DREAMBOYS

FRI 25 NOV
REGENT THEATRE



JOIN US ON A FESTIVE JOURNEY AND LET THE MAGIC BEGIN
RHYTHM OF THE DANCE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

SAT 26 NOV
REGENT THEATRE



THIS CHRISTMAS SET SAIL ON A BRAND NEW ADVENTURE
THE PANTOMIME ADVENTURES OF PETER PAN

FRI 9 – SAT 31 DEC
REGENT THEATRE

A GALA CELEBRATION OF GILBERT AND SULLIVAN
SAT 1 OCT | VICTORIA HALL

10cc
WED 12 OCT | VICTORIA HALL

THE SENSATIONAL 60s EXPERIENCE
THU 13 OCT | VICTORIA HALL

BOYZLIFE
SUN 16 OCT | VICTORIA HALL

THE ROCK ORCHESTRA BY CANDLELIGHT
FRI 21 OCT | VICTORIA HALL

POP PRINCESSES
SAT 22 OCT | VICTORIA HALL

MASSAOKE - HALLOWEEN SPECIAL
FRI 28 OCT | VICTORIA HALL

LEVISON WOOD - THE ART OF EXPLORATION
SUN 30 OCT | VICTORIA HALL

RV REGENT THEATRE
VICTORIA HALL
STOKE-ON-TRENT

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[ATGTICKETS.COM/Stoke*](https://www.atgtickets.com/Stoke)

*Fees apply. Calls cost up to 7p per minute plus your phone company's access charge.

Food news from across the region...

Tamworth Food & Drink Festival is back

After a successful event in 2021, LSD Promotions have announced the return of Tamworth Food & Drink Festival this month.

Top-quality traders will descend on the famous castle grounds on Saturday 22 & Sunday 23 October. The free event will feature a selection of international street food, artisan traders, street entertainment, a DJ and plenty more.

Eatery reopens in a new location

Previously housed on Shrewsbury's Hills Lane, Osteria (once named Osteria de Paolo) has reopened on Mardol. Serving dishes that bring a modern twist to Italian traditions and culture, the restaurant's menu includes pasta, pizza, meat and fish, as well as a selection of typical Italian desserts.

Oktoberfest fun at popular taproom

Tap & Can, Shrewsbury's 'funky' craft beer bar, is this month hosting its third Oktoberfest event.

The only venue in the town to pour five of the six Oktoberfest beers on tap (a rare sight outside of Munich!), Tap & Can is hosting the celebration on Friday 7 & Saturday 8 October.

Sister company Bird & Beer will be on hand to provide German specials, including schnitzel burgers and its very own take on the bratwurst.

Tickets, which cost £10 and include your first beer, can be bought via eventbrite.co.uk



Brand-new bistro & bar now open for business in Dudley

A new eatery has opened at Dudley Town Hall. Brooke's Bar & Bistro was launched last month and provides show-goers with the opportunity to eat and drink before or after a performance as part of an all-round visitor experience. The venue is also open during the daytime. Menu options at Brooke's include fish & chips,

crispy battered halloumi, gourmet plant-based burger, gourmet dirty burger, spiced sweet potato & coconut curry, chicken & ham pie, rump steak and rotisserie chicken. For more information and to book your table, visit: brookes-bistro.co.uk

Bavarian celebrations at Shrewsbury Castle

Shrewsbury pizza restaurant Dough & Oil (D&O) is this month hosting an Oktoberfest-style event at the town's famous castle. The Bavarian Village - which will be housed under one roof in the castle grounds - will run over four consecutive weekends (every Thursday to Sunday from 1 to 23 October). Thursdays and Fridays will see the event taking place from 4pm to 12am, Saturdays from 12pm to 12am and Sundays from 12pm to 11pm. The free-to-attend get-together will feature DJs, live music and a variety of food from Dough & Oil, Daily Brews and Tutto Bene. The taps, craft cocktails and German beers are being provided by D&O's sister business, Oil. The event is operating on a 'walk-in only' basis, so spaces can't be reserved in advance.



FANTASTICALLY FIERCE

PERFORMANCE
POLITICS
PARTY
POP



The 25th edition of Fierce, one of the UK's most daring contemporary arts festivals, takes place this month. What's On caught up with Fierce's artistic director, Aaron Wright, to find out what audiences can expect...

Fierce celebrates 25 years of bringing new and exciting performances to audiences in and around Birmingham by staging its largest ever festival this month.

Featuring 50 events and artists from 16 countries and six continents, the festival provides an eclectic mix of thought-provoking, fun and entertaining works, including theatre, music, dance, parties and performance art.

With shows featuring scarecrows, a giant latex pig, the chance to become a member of a wolf pack and art made from everyday rubbish, Fierce promises to have it all.

"Our current strapline is 'performance, politics, parties, pop', which I think sort of nails it in terms of our areas of interest," says Artistic Director Aaron Wright.

"We're really going for it this year with our biggest programme ever. There are so many great projects which we've had on the table for so long, and now it's like 'Okay, we can finally do this, so let's make it as impactful as we can.'

Fierce began life in the 1990s as Queerfest, aiming to offer audiences in the city alternative, outsider and unusual shows which they might not otherwise have had the chance to experience.

"Fierce has always had this belief that experimental arts practice is accessible and should be reaching much wider audiences," says Aaron.

"The Fierce brand has always been a bit cheeky, a bit tongue-in-cheek, a bit playful, not taking itself too seriously. We're really interested in the different types of art and performance being made around the world, and particularly work that we're not used to seeing in this country."

With that in mind, the festival brings together live performance in traditional arts venues, party nights, site-specific arts and participatory shows. Fierce will also build on two hugely successful events this year - The Healing Gardens Of Bab, which took gardens as inspiration to create contemplative events, and Key To The City, in which participants received a key that provided access to sites in Birmingham which are usually closed to the general public.

"We like to use the city in unusual ways and help audiences encounter their city in new ways," says Aaron.

This year's festival features Wolf Safari, with Finnish collective Other Spaces teaching the behaviour techniques of wolves and

participants joining a city-centre roaming wolf pack. Meanwhile, Swiss artists Igor Cardellini and Tomas Gonzalez will lead tours of the Bullring, taking a look at its architecture and how it reflects today's society.

Much of the work is also inspired by the desire to encourage audiences to re-think subjects they may believe they are familiar with.

"The most common feedback I got from Key To The City was that people loved the idea. That was a boost of confidence because that's what artists do - they come up with brilliant ideas.

"So, for example, with Farm Fatale by French director Philippe Quesne, which is our big opening night, the premise for the work is that there are five scarecrows who've lost their jobs because of climate change, so they start a pirate radio station instead. People get that premise so can immediately connect to it - and then it's a totally fantastic show.

"And we also have enormousface from near Seattle with Nothing Is Also Possible. They start from a very simple idea that we are the only animal in the world that creates rubbish, which is fascinating and shocking. So they will be in residence over the week, making sculptures and performance from rubbish they find on the streets."

Fierce has always looked to champion alternative and outsider views, and this year's festival is no exception.

"One of the faces of Fierce is incredibly counter-cultural, and we've always wanted to platform voices that perhaps were not being platformed as much as they should be. These outsider perspectives sometimes stop audiences in their tracks and make them think 'Gosh, what are we doing?'

This year the festival is highlighting first nations artists, including SaVAge K'lub's Kolonial Karma, which focuses on history and empire, and Elisa Harkins, who sings in Cherokee to preserve her culture and encourage discussion of colonialism.

Fierce also has a long history of platforming trans artists and has this year worked with Rosana Cade and Ivor MacAskill on The Making Of Pinocchio.

"This takes the story of Pinocchio because Pinocchio wanted to be a real boy. It tells the story of the two artists who are in a relationship, intertwines it with the story of Pinocchio, and also thinks about ideas of gender, transitioning, and other examples of transitioning across the natural world. It's an

incredibly accessible, beautiful and funny performance."

There's lots of fun to be had at this year's Fierce, including Alice Rippoll and Cia REC in Lavagem, which uses buckets, soap and water on stage to explore the art of performance while also making political points.

"Alice and Cia REC live in the favelas in Rio de Janeiro and have become one of the most exciting and acclaimed theatre companies all over the world, but they've never been to the UK before. We're really excited to be bringing these 10 Brazilian dancers to Britain.

"And this year we're also having a birthday party. The Ho Down is a big sort of barn dance affair in Digbeth with a farmyard theme. A latex pig the size of a truck will give birth to six piglets, there will be a bucking bronco and we have a singing operatic cow from Zurich. I think the party will be a highlight - a fun and quite silly night out, but you'll get to see some really good performance as well."

Fierce also has a role to play in showcasing Birmingham-based artists, says Aaron.

"There's a lot of work that Fierce has had a hand in developing, including by local artist Demi Nandhra (The Trauma Show), and Liz Ord's Peaked Too Soon. These are shows that we've been talking to the artists about for a number of years. We're inviting theatres from across the world to see work being made in this country and in Birmingham."

With so much on offer, including a host of world premieres and free performances, Aaron says Fierce audiences will be spoilt for choice.

"People should just pick something they think sounds interesting and come along. Whatever they see, I hope they will see things they've never seen before, experience alternative viewpoints, think about things they may not have thought about before, and have a great time experiencing the performance."

.....
Fierce Festival takes place at various locations across the West Midlands - including Birmingham's Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) and Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry - from Tuesday 11 to Sunday 16 October. Visit wearefierce.org for full details and to book tickets for the festival's shows.

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Classical music from across the region...



BBC Philharmonic Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 7 October

Residing at the Corporation's Manchester home of Media City in Salford Quays, the BBC Philharmonic is no stranger to Stoke-on-Trent, regularly presenting Victoria Hall concert-goers with works from its impressive repertoire. This latest visit to the Potteries sees

Estonian conductor Kristiina Poska leading the orchestra in a programme that features Glinka's Overture to Ruslan And Ludmilla, Brahms' Violin Concerto and Elgar's Enigma Variations. The soloist is Russian-born German violinist Alina Pogostkina (pictured).



Sheku Kanneh-Mason

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 6 October

Exceptionally gifted cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason this month makes a welcome return to Symphony Hall. Twenty-three-year-old Sheku came to prominence back in 2016 when he was named BBC Young Musician, becoming the first Black entrant to win the competition since its launch in 1978.

Sheku's contribution to this City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra concert sees him taking on the challenge of Haydn's Cello Concerto in C. The programme also features Vaughan Williams' Fantasia On A Theme By Thomas Tallis, Elgar's Sospiri, Weinberg's Flute Concerto - performed by Marie-Christine Zupancic - and Britten's The Young Person's Guide To The Orchestra... Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla conducts.

Sir Bryn Terfel: Songs And Arias

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 9 October

Welsh bass-baritone Sir Bryn Terfel has a voice that can fill even the most cavernous of spaces. And with a huge personality to match, he's always certain to wow his ever-appreciative audiences, whether singing Wagner, Mozart, Rodgers & Hammerstein or miniature gems of English song. This Symphony Hall concert sees him bringing together a selection of his signature roles from opera, as well as a number of much-loved tunes from musical theatre and the music hall.



Ex Cathedra: King For A Day...

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 9 October

Jeffrey Skidmore once again takes the baton to conduct Birmingham's highly rated early music ensemble, this time in a concert that kickstarts the 2022/23 season. Presenting 'music for royal occasions', the programme features Handel's celebratory Georgian Coronation Anthems and compositions by Michel-Richard de Lalande - a favourite composer of the Sun King, Louis XIV. Also included is Departure Of The Queen Of Sheba by Alec Roth, the composer of 2009's Earthrise, a work commissioned by Ex Cathedra to mark the 40th anniversary of the Moon landing.



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24 October, 11am & 2pm Tangled Feet & Half Moon: Butterflies Tickets: £5-10	1-4 December, 10.30am, 1.30pm & 4.30pm The Very Hungry Caterpillar Christmas Show Tickets: £12-£16 or £52 family
29 October, Various Halloween Cinema Screenings at Burton Market Hall Tickets: £5-8	4 December, 7.30pm Justin Moorhouse: Stretch & Think Tickets: £15 (£5 unwaged)
29 October, 2pm Box Tale Soup: Wind in the Willows Tickets: £10 or £35 family	8 December, 1pm Neil Sands: Christmas Memories Tickets: £14
5 November, 7.30pm Floyd in the Flesh Tickets: £20	19-21 December, 10.30am, 12pm & 2pm Touched Theatre: The Gift Tickets: £12-14

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Live music from across the region...

Laura Cortese & Friends

The Hive, Shrewsbury, Sat 29 October

“Strings are at the core of what I do,” explains American musician Laura Cortese. “Genre is secondary to that palate.”

Driven by the gravitational pull of human connection, Laura brings her ever-evolving sound to Shrewsbury as part of her collaboration with The Dance Cards, with whom she’s released two albums: California Calling (2017) and Bitter Better (2020).



Vonda Shepard

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 12 October; Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 16 October

American singer-songwriter Vonda Shepard shot to fame when her theme song to US TV series Ally McBeal, Searchin’ My Soul, reached the top 10 in countries across the globe.

She went on to release a number of Ally-inspired albums and has sold over 12 million records worldwide.

Following the success of recent tours - including a joint one with Sharon Corr - 59-year-old Vonda visits the UK to play a set of greatest hits alongside songs from her brand-new album, Red Light, Green Light.



Credit: Göran Petersson

Daniel Karlsson Trio

Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Thurs 20 October

Since the release of their debut album, Das Taxibåt, in September 2013, the Daniel Karlsson Trio have established themselves

as one of the most interesting ensembles in Swedish and European jazz. Penned by Daniel himself, the trio’s music has been described as “distinctive and extrovert, clearly influenced by ’60s jazz, soul & pop, but with a clear Nordic scent.”

Wishbone Ash

The Robin, Bilston, Sat 22 October

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of their hit album, Argus, British rock band Wishbone Ash take their audience on a unique journey through their illustrious history, combining old songs with new in a live show that remains as fresh and in-demand as ever. Classic tracks such as The King Will Come, Throw Down The Sword and Blowin’ Free seem certain to feature.

Hayseed Dixie

The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 5 October

Hayseed Dixie was formed one summer’s day in 2000 when John Wheeler and now ex-member Mike Daly ‘drank roughly enough whiskey to float a battleship from the Florida Coast over to Portugal and back’. They then decided to play around in John’s studio.

Although the band, which has endured multiple line-up changes since their inception, produced some pretty unforgettable and comically crude songs, including I’m Keeping Your Poop In A Jar and She Was Skinny When I Met Her, Hayseed Dixie are probably best known for their rollicking rockgrass covers.

The Little Unsaid

The Hub at St Mary’s, Lichfield, Sun 23 October

Taking in elements of alt-folk, electronica and alt-rock, The Little Unsaid are a diverse four-piece whose expansive songwriting and impassioned performances have earned them a reputation as one of the must-see live acts on the independent music scene. They here embark on a UK tour in support of new album Fable, a first single from which, Vibrant Life, was released last month.



Faith, Family and #fakingit

**An updated version of Tartuffe lands in its spiritual home of
Birmingham this month...**



Moliere's 17th-century play, Tartuffe, has been given a modern-day twist by writing partnership Anil Gupta and Richard Pinto. Directed by Iqbal Khan, the show opens at the Birmingham Rep this month following a highly acclaimed pre-pandemic run at the Royal Shakespeare Company. What's On recently caught up with Iqbal to find out more...

It has been a busy year for Iqbal Khan since he was named associate director of Birmingham Rep.

He directed the 25th anniversary revival of the comedy *East Is East*, which played to full houses both in Birmingham and at the National Theatre in London. He was artistic director of the Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony, which was watched by millions worldwide. And he is currently in rehearsal for a revival of his hit comedy, *Tartuffe* - previously seen at the Royal Shakespeare Company's Swan Theatre in 2019 - which is opening in its spiritual home of Birmingham at The Rep mid-month.

An updated version of the classic 17th-century French comedy by Molière, the play tells the story of fraudster Tartuffe, who inveigles his way into a family, duping them with his false piety. But where the original *Tartuffe* is an apparently good Roman Catholic, in this new adaptation, the story is transferred to a modern Pakistani Muslim family living in Sparkhill in Birmingham.

Adapted by Anil Gupta and Richard Pinto, whose CVs include television's *Goodness Gracious Me*, *The Kumars At No 42*, *Citizen Khan* and *The Office*, the show premiered at Stratford-upon-Avon to critical and audience acclaim.

Iqbal, who directed the Stratford show and returns to the production for Birmingham, says its success lies both in Molière's story and its timely update.

"I think the original play is the first great sitcom, or comedy that has a sitcom structure, because it's the perfect satire of family - all the various tensions within a family, it does that brilliantly.

"But it's quite a dangerous satire because the religious framing of it makes the line that the comedy walks quite edgy. I think what we did when moving it to a modern Islamic community in Birmingham gives it that kind of tension that releases both the danger within the play but also its humour.

"It worked really well in Stratford because it felt like it did speak to the world at that moment. And what was really gratifying about that audience in Stratford was that many of them didn't have the experience we were portraying in the play. They were

international or older white people coming to see it, but they seemed to really identify with the human story of the play.

"This is a family which is fractured, and into that fracture comes this figure, Tartuffe, who exploits everyone's weakness. That's a story which I think anyone from whatever community or heritage can identify with."

The show was scheduled to play The Rep in spring 2020 but was delayed by Covid and lockdown. Now the team are looking forward to finally bringing it to Birmingham, where it forms part of the Birmingham Comedy Festival.

"Anil and Richard wrote it so specifically for Birmingham, and yes, it worked brilliantly at the RSC, but I can't wait to have Birmingham audiences looking at a story that is set here and which is really precisely observed.

"I'm from Birmingham, and we worked really hard to represent this community, not as a homogenous community but as a collection of quite a lot of different voices, so I think there will be lots of recognition here."

As part of the modernisation of the story, the women have been given more prominence.

"Many of the women are a bit functional in the original, but in our version we've shown all the women in this piece as being incredibly strong and complex, having agency, and given them a lot more of the story.

"I'm hoping that those who know Molière's *Tartuffe* will be surprised by the journey we've taken and our take on those characters."

Four years after its premiere, the team are also making some tweaks to the production.

"We were already changing it a little bit last time we were due to stage it at The Rep, just sharpening it for Birmingham, making it tighter and stronger. We will continue to do that and update a few of the lines.

"Unfortunately a lot of the things we were satirising four years ago feel even more pertinent than they did then. *Tartuffe* is a conman exploiting the fractures in terms of identity, how people relate to the media, our relationship to religion, our weaknesses, our scepticism about politics and whether politicians represent us."

Iqbal stresses, though, that it is *Tartuffe*'s duplicity which is under the spotlight, not faith itself.

"We've been very careful not to attack religion. It's those who use religion to manipulate others that is the focus of our satire. In our version, we have lots of different kinds of Islam represented, and I hope respectfully and with real insight."

Iqbal was also keen to represent the city's different communities with authenticity in the Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony at Alexander Stadium in July.

"I wanted to show Birmingham as an extraordinary, vital place that's a meeting place of different kinds of communities and has been enriched by that. The sense that I got was that Brummies who came were overwhelmed by it and really proud that I represented lots of different experiences.

"They felt I had captured something of those experiences and really shouted our qualities to the world - and the world, I think, was dazzled by the vitality of this place."

Iqbal believes the arts - whether it be a huge Games ceremony or a theatre production, can open doors into other communities and break down barriers.

"Any great play comes from a very specific place and looks at a very specific bit of the human experience, but if it's told well, that resonates with so many parallel dynamics in other communities and other families. Ultimately the great gift of theatre is the consoling sense that other people are going through what we are going through. And also that it can enlighten us and educate us about the differences between people, and battle the ignorance. It's when we don't know that we become afraid, and I think theatre really helps bridge the ignorance and shows us consoling similarities in different experiences.

"*Tartuffe*, a play that was written in the 17th century and in a Christian context, can be infinitely interpreted and represented. It's fantastic for us to take the opportunity and give it a Pakistani, modern Birmingham perspective, and help share truths about that experience through this play."

Tartuffe shows at The Rep, Birmingham, from Fri 14 October to Sat 5 November



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Comedy previews from across the region...

Harry Hill

Dudley Town Hall, Sat 8 October; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 26 October; Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Fri 28 October; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sun 6 November

Harry Hill's most high-profile days might well be behind him (long term, it's a tough ask to retain a position at the top of the notoriously greasy comedy pole). He's still a very funny man, though, and will probably be able to wear big collars and a stupid grin for the rest of his career without anybody complaining that it's become boring and old hat.

A one-time doctor, Harry's decision to prescribe comedy as the best medicine is one for which his legion of fans continue to be exceedingly grateful.

His latest show, Pedigree Fun, features baby elephant Sarah, Ian The Information Worm and Stouffer The Cat.



Desi Central Comedy Night

Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Fri 7 October

"We're still in a country where white men dominate many industries," says BBC Asian Network's Noreen Khan, who regularly features on the bill for this ever-popular night, "so it's very important to have visible, diverse role models to help inspire others and to reflect the world we live in."

Desi Central certainly does that, providing a showcase not only for Noreen but plenty of other hugely talented laughter merchants. This particular gig features sets from Tommy Sandhu, Kane Brown, Farhan Solo and Muhsin Yesilada. An evening of high-quality comedy is pretty much a guarantee.



Jongleurs Legends

Malvern Theatres, Thurs 6 October; Birmingham Town Hall, Tues 11 October; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Thurs 27 October

Four top-quality comedians for the price of one is the not-to-be-missed experience on offer when Jongleurs Legends comes to town. Taking his place in a line-up that also includes Jarred Christmas, Ninia Benjamin and Mike Gunn is the Time Out Comedy

Award-winning Paul Tonkinson, who's perhaps best known from The Big Breakfast and The Sunday Show. Regularly booked by the UK Armed Forces, Paul was the first comic to perform in Iraq after the war officially ended, and has used his experiences there as an inspiration for his comedy: "When I told my wife I'd spent much of the time lying on the floor, all I got in response was 'well we all like a lie down, don't we?'"

Dave Gorman

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 6 October; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sat 15 October

Dave Gorman's idea of stand-up comedy seems to be that as long as there's room for him to stand up, he'll do some comedy!



Why else would this intrepid funnyman have made the decision a few years back to play not only 2,000-seater theatres when he headed out on tour but also 30-seat village halls, a barn and even a railway dining car! Dave is still touring, but is now being a bit more selective about the venues! He stops off in the Midlands this month with new show Powerpoint To The People.

COBO Comedy Shutdown

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Sat 22 October

Now here's a show that should keep your spirits up as the temperature drops and the nights draw in. COBO, standing for Comedy Of Black Origin, is making a welcome return with a special Black History Month edition. Taking to the stage on this occasion are Kane Brown, Trixx, Marlon Davis (pictured) and Richard Blackwood.



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Comedy previews from across the region...

Sofie Hagen

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 1 October;
Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, 4
October; Old Rep, Birmingham Fri 28 October

Danish feminist comedian and one-time self-harming Westlife fan Sofie Hagen makes a welcome return to the Midlands with a brand-new show that's positively bursting at the seams with 'big jokes and fat punchlines'.

"This is a collection of fat jokes and unforgettable moments that you can laugh at without feeling like sh*t," explains her publicity. "Come as you are and enjoy an actual fat person at the top of her game." Sofie's gag-bag includes the following two jokes: "I have the confidence to text a man first. And second. And third. And fourth. And fifth. And sixth. And seventh. Basically, until he answers," and "The question you always have to ask yourself is: 'Is my depression back or am I just hungry?'"



Jessica Fostekew

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Fri 7 October

"I exist in real life but am also a comedian, actor and writer," says Jessica Fostekew. "Since 2008 I've been throwing this job around like you would a walnut in a sock." Realising herself to be a feminist "the very first time somebody said: You're really funny for a woman", Jessica gets her comedy inspiration from her life, her family and, er, witchcraft - although reassuringly she reveals that the latter source provides only around one percent of her material! "I'm not a comedian in order to abuse people or to get laid," Jessica wrote in the Huffington Post. "I want to make people laugh. I'm there to be judged on my jokes. I've had everything shouted at me, from 'My tits are better than yours' to 'When's the raffle?' but it's never been meant to hurt me."



Joanne McNally

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 21 October;
Birmingham Hippodrome, Sun 30 October;
The Place, Telford, Sat 5 November

Now in her late 30s 'with no husband, no kids, no pension and no plan', Joanne McNally is posing a host of burning questions in her new touring show, *The Prosecco Express*: "If I don't birth anything, who will be obligated to watch me die so that I don't have to do it alone? When a man on a dating app identifies as 'spiritual', is it safe to assume he has the personality of a spoon? If you do all your drinking in the bath, can you

write it off as self-care?"

Joanne's overnight success as a stand-up comedian was a long time in the making - almost a decade, in fact. When it arrived, it came in the form of a lucrative book deal, a hugely successful podcast boasting two million downloads every month, and some seriously impressive ticket sales for *The Prosecco Express*, which she's bringing to the above-listed Midlands venues this autumn. "One of the things I love about comedy is that you can see and track your progress. It's like weight loss, but in a healthier way. I used to be addicted to losing weight, but now I'm addicted to progressing in comedy."

Isy Suttie

Old Rep, Birmingham, Sat 22 October

Recognise the face but not the name? If so, chances are you're a fan of cult TV comedy series *Peep Show*, in which Isy Suttie played the character of Dobbie. Or maybe you've seen her as Esther in *Shameless*. Or as Ally in *Man Down*. Or on countless comedian-saturated television shows, including *Would I Lie To You* and *QI*. A writer and musician as well as an actor and comic, Isy is returning to the touring circuit with *Jackpot*, a show in which she contemplates the nature of her never-waning need to get a buzz out of life - even while on a quiet family walk in the woods. Her gags include: "My mate's a really bad actor. He got mugged and then had to audition to play himself in the *Crimewatch* reconstruction. He got *Passer-by Number Two*."



Elf Lyons

Glee Club, Birmingham, Tues 18 October

Elf Lyons is certainly ploughing an interesting comedy furrow. Her latest show, which she's bringing to Birmingham mid-month, has actually been inspired by novelist Stephen King and is described as 'part mad-clown comedy spectacle, part Hammer Horror'. Elf cites King as one of her two favourite people (not including friends, family and fellow comedians), the other being the late Angela Carter, also a novelist - "because they are both there for me when I need to escape."





Rising Star

Award-winning comedian Celya AB talks to What's On as she prepares to return to her adoptive city to appear at the Birmingham Comedy Festival

It's been a whirlwind few years in the young life of comedian Celya AB. Originally from Paris with French-Algerian roots, she's been embraced as an adopted Brummie ever since she moved to the city aged 19. Three years later, she decided to try her hand at comedy, and just two years after that won the Birmingham Breaking Talent Award at the Birmingham Comedy Festival. Since then, she's reached the finals of the Funny Women Awards (2019), and BBC New Comedy Awards (2021) and won the Chortle Award for Best Newcomer (2022). Not bad considering she'd never even contemplated comedy as a career until five years ago.

The friendly comic laughs at the absurdity of it all, but admits there was a definite lightbulb moment - and the kick-start challenge of a friend - that effectively changed her life.

"I've always loved comedy, but I'd never seen stand-up in real life. (In 2017) I was back home, and I saw it in one of the first comedy clubs in Paris. There was this show where I saw acts doing 10-minute sets and I thought 'I could do that.'

"I kept meaning to do it but kept backing out at the last moment and never booked a gig until I bumped into (comedian) Karen Bailey when I was really hungover and pretending to write jokes. She asked me what I was doing, and when she saw I was writing jokes, she said 'you've got three days because I'm putting you on my gig.' So basically it took me being bullied into it!"

After spending the next three days writing material ("I was scribbling like a maniac - I was only doing a five-minute set, but I must've written enough for 25!"), Celya made her stage debut and instantly knew she'd found her calling.

"I was so nervous, but then the first time I got a laugh I couldn't stop thinking about it and just fell in love with it."

She admits that overcoming the hurdle of being able to perform - and be funny - in English was a huge victory in itself.

"I was always funny with my friends in France, but I didn't think I was allowed to be funny in another language, so when I came to England I just stopped being funny!"

Which is not to say she wasn't having fun - in fact, quite the opposite. She'd settled in Birmingham after falling for the city and its people while visiting extended family to celebrate her 19th birthday. She came for three weeks and never went back.

"I just fell in love with the people - everyone is so friendly. I live in London now, and I can see the difference. I wish everyone in the UK would be as friendly as Brummies, but they're not. Starting there was a very soft landing to moving to England."

Birmingham reciprocated that love when Celya won the Breaking Talent Award at the city's Comedy Festival, a prize she hadn't realised she could be nominated for.

"I remember thinking I don't qualify as a Birmingham comedian because I'm French, but I guess I'd been on that circuit since I started, so I must've counted!"

"I didn't expect to win it at all, but it was great because the Birmingham circuit is so good and being among those people meant a lot. The Glee Club in Birmingham is one of my favourite venues around the UK, so it felt very special - and it's always nice to win stuff, isn't it?"

Celya's career has been on an upward curve ever since. In addition to the award recognition mentioned earlier, she's made a host of TV appearances, including Yesterday, Today And The Day Before (Comedy Central) and Festival Of Funny Live (BBC). She's also been a guest on The Guilty Feminist and Global Pillage and is a regular writer for BBC Radio Four's The News Quiz.

Her first full-length show, Swimming, enjoyed a sold-out run at this year's Edinburgh Fringe ("a rite of passage - you have to do it and get it out of the way"). As much as she's looking forward to performing the show at the Birmingham Comedy Festival, she's already desperate to move on to the next one.

"I originally thought Swimming would be a combination of everything I'd written, but it ended up being mostly new material. I'm very excited that it went well, but I'm already thinking about the second one and how I can improve. It's so important to know that this is all a process, and that you get better at it the more you do it."

Even though she's now based in London ("I can get a lot of gigs down there without leaving the city"), she admits she learned a lot from developing and honing her craft in the Midlands.

"When I started, there were expectations that I'd just do jokes about being French, which don't go down too well if you do them too much - that's one thing I learned from being in Birmingham.

"Birmingham audiences tend to be very honest, which I think makes you be a better stand-up. And because it's the middle of the country, you get a microcosm of the whole country in terms of what people like, if that makes sense - like a Venn diagram. If something works in Birmingham, then chances are it'll work in Manchester, Liverpool and London.

"When I'm in London I can do jokes just about being in London, but then I can't take them anywhere, and I'm really interested in jokes being sharp and working everywhere. It makes the writing process a bit slower, but it's super-important, and I learned that from starting off here."

She's also delighted to be back where it all began - both the city and the festival.

"I love the Birmingham Comedy Festival, and (founder) Dave Freak is a wonderful, wonderful man. I recently did a set at the Moseley Folk Festival, and every time I'm in Birmingham I realise I miss it so much, so I'm really glad to be back."

.....
Celya AB plays Cherry Reds, Birmingham, on Sun 9 October



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JIVE TALKIN'

Hit disco-era musical Saturday Night Fever - based on the classic 1977 movie of the same name - returns to the Midlands this month, with Jack Wilcox taking the lead role of Tony Manero. What's On caught up with Jack to talk about the challenge of stepping into John Travolta's iconic white suit and dancing shoes...

Bill Kenwright's production of Saturday Night Fever returns to the Midlands this month with a new leading man. Jack Wilcox, fresh from a run in Anything Goes at The Barbican, will be taking on the role of Tony Manero.

The musical, based on the 1977 movie starring John Travolta, follows Tony's story as he fights his way to dancing success.

"He doesn't really have much in his life to write home about," says Jack. "He's had a difficult upbringing, and his father's lost his job. The whole story is about him reaching out for something more, something better and something to give him fulfilment."

The production is set to offer audiences a fun-filled night of high-energy entertainment - complete with an unforgettable soundtrack by the Bee Gees. Featured classics include How Deep Is Your Love?, Night Fever, Jive Talkin', Disco Inferno and Staying Alive.

"I grew up listening to the Bee Gees in the car because my mum loved them," says Jack. "When you listen to them, you can't help but want to move."

But the production doesn't shy away from showing the darker side of life. "It's more than just a jukebox musical. It's got a very dense and moving script, which is quite gritty at times. It's reflecting real life in 1970s Brooklyn. It tackles some hard subjects that will really make the audience think."

Jack was keen to bring Travolta's Tony to life but also add his own twist to the character. "What's lovely about this role is that I've been able to really develop the character and get that arc throughout the whole show. The audience sees that journey as well, which makes Tony such a satisfying character to play.

"To be honest, it's also a little daunting; John Travolta is so wonderful in the film, and his career really boomed afterwards - and for good reason. But I wanted to find my own truth within the script. We've tried to reach a happy medium of paying tribute to the musical's origins while also making it our own."

Something that will definitely be retained from the film is Travolta's white suit. "I've loved the transformation into Tony, with his iconic suit and the hair. It's been really good fun. One of the most important elements has been the choreography and celebrating this particular period."

The show's dance routines have been created by choreographer Bill Dreamer. "Bill's invested time into looking at the period, researching the film and examining what the popular moves of the time were. He's very clever. Coming from Anything Goes, it's been great to break out into this 1970s period, where the dance is a lot looser and I can let myself go a bit more. I'm really enjoying that shifting of gear."

.....
Saturday Night Fever shows at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, from Tues 4 to Sat 8 October; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 25 to Sat 29 October; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 22 to Sat 26 November



The Commitments Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 11 - Sat 15 October; Birmingham Hippodrome, Mon 24 - Sat 29 April, 2023

Roddy Doyle's smash-hit musical adaptation of his own bestselling novel follows on from the BAFTA-bagging movie version that scored a huge international success way back in the early 1990s. As with book and film, the stage show finds working-class music fan Jimmy Rabbitte inspiring an unlikely bunch of amateur musicians and friends to become the finest soul band Dublin has ever produced.

Along the way, the band treats the audience to more than 20 gold-star soul classics, including: Night Train; Try A Little Tenderness; River Deep, Mountain High; In The Midnight Hour; Papa Was A Rolling Stone; Mustang Sally; and I Heard It Through The Grapevine. One-time Coronation Street favourite Nigel Pivaro stars as 'Da'.

The Osmonds: A New Musical

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 25 - Sat 29 October

"I wrote it from the heart," says Jay Osmond of this new touring stage show. "It was hard. I had to play my drums a lot to get my emotions out, but it all boiled down to this: why did we do what we did? It was because we wanted to help people."

For those who are neither pop-music aficionados nor of a certain vintage... The Osmonds were Mormon brothers who started out as a barbershop quartet. They went on to become one of the most famous pop groups in history, winning dozens of awards and selling millions of albums worldwide. Put simply, this show tells their story...



The Cher Show

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 18 - Sat 22 October



Premiering in Chicago four years ago, The Cher Show is a high-energy celebration of the life and times of the Goddess of Pop. The hit musical tells the story of Cher's meteoric rise to fame, from meeting Sonny Bono and the breakdown of their marriage, to her many musical comebacks and Hollywood successes - all of which is recounted with a generous side-order of glitter and glamour. The show is directed and choreographed by former Strictly stars Arlene Phillips and Oti Mabuse respectively.

Strictly Ballroom

Birmingham Hippodrome, Mon 31 October - Sat 5 November; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 13 - Sat 18 February, 2023

Strictly Come Dancing favourites Kevin Clifton and Maisie Smith star in this brand-new Craig Revel Horwood-directed musical, based on Baz Luhrmann's iconic 1992 film of the same name.

"This show introduces people to the backstage world," says Craig. "Everyone who watches Strictly Come Dancing is seeing the glossy side of it, but Strictly Ballroom delves into the hearts and minds of the people doing the dance - the trials and tribulations they have to go through in order to get to that competition standard. It's about the fight and struggle, and all the animosity that's involved in it to win the day and become a gold medallist. It's about dancing with your heart rather than just dancing the steps."



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Sat 8 Oct

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Coppélia

Wed 26 - Sat 29 Oct

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Sun 30 Oct

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THE MUSICAL

Mon 31 Oct - Sat 5 Nov

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Fri 4 Nov

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Puccini

Wed 9 - Fri 11 Nov

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Sir Peter Wright's

The Nutcracker

Sat 19 Nov - Sat 10 Dec

MARTI PELLOW MATT SLACK DR SUZANNE SHAW

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THE PANTOMIME PRINCE WITH GOLD

DOREEN TIPTON ANDREW RYAN

Sat 17 Dec - Sun 29 Jan



Tartuffe

The Rep, Birmingham, Fri 14 October - Sat 5 November

Described as a wicked comedy about faith, family and #fakingit, this critically acclaimed version of a 17th-century masterpiece brings events bang up to date.

The story centres around the wealthy Pervaiz family. Living in modern-day Birmingham, they have in their midst the charismatic and devout Tahir Taufiq Arsuf - or Tartuffe to the sceptical. But is Tartuffe all that he seems - and will family life ever be the same again?... Transferring the play's action from the 17th century to the 21st, Anil Gupta and Richard Pinto, the writing team who updated Tartuffe, made the title character a Muslim cleric - and then braced themselves for a backlash that by and large didn't happen. Updating the play in the particular way that they chose - by turning the full glare of the spotlight on the contemporary British Muslim experience - was certainly a bold move, as director Iqbal Khan has acknowledged, but it's one that they've pulled off with real style.

An Inspector Calls

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 4 - Sat 8 October; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 29 November - Sat 3 December; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 28 Feb - Sat 4 March

Anybody who's been fortunate enough to catch a production of JB Priestley's classic work will have no trouble whatsoever understanding why it's been such a worldwide hit.



When Inspector Goole calls unexpectedly on the prosperous Birling family, his startling revelations not only shatter the foundations of their lives but also challenge them to examine their consciences...

Unknown

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 13 & Fri 14 October; Vesta Tilley Studio, Worcester, Tues 25 & Wed 26 October

Filmmaker Ken Loach - perhaps best known for his 1966 television play about homelessness, Cathy Come Home - has described the stories recounted in Unknown as harrowing, shocking but eloquently told. It's an assessment which speaks volumes for the quality of the play, both in terms of its raw power and profound articulacy. Supported by the Arts Council and The Big

Issue, Unknown is a verbatim piece that dramatises the tragic but true story of one young person's journey from an abusive childhood to a life on the streets of Bath - one of the UK's most affluent cities. The play is presented against the backdrop of a sobering statistic: in just two years, from 2017 to 2019, more than 800 people died while living and sleeping rough on the streets of Great Britain. Unknown has been written with the assistance of six people who have recent experience of homelessness.

Twopence To Cross The Mersey

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Wed 19 - Fri 21 October; Lichfield Garrick, Sat 22 - Sun 23 October

Helen Forrester's autobiographical play is set in the 1930s and catches up with the teenage Helen as she fights a bitter battle with her parents for the right to educate herself and go out to work. Following her family's fall from grace and a move from the more affluent south up to Merseyside, Helen is used by her parents as an 'unpaid slave' to look after her siblings. But with Britain on the brink of war, the teenage girl finally finds the chink of light for which she's been searching...



Austentatious

Old Rep, Birmingham, Sat 8 & Sun 9 October

Austentatious visits the Midlands having garnered plenty of praise when it debuted at the Edinburgh Fringe. Lighthearted and delightfully throwaway, it finds the performers utilising audience suggestions to develop a play that not only pays homage to Jane Austen but also generates plenty of laughter along the way.



Shakers

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Tues 25 - Sat 29 October

Welcome to Shakers, for service with a smile - even if the waitresses are not only shaken but probably stirred as well! Underpaid, overworked and rushed off their feet, they share their experiences of the variety of characters who're propping up the bar or visiting the venue for a night on the tiles... John Godber & Jane Thornton's hit 1985 play is here presented in a revamped version which puts women's lives front and centre.

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SHE'S ROYAL



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The Mousetrap

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 31 October - Sat 5 November; Malvern Theatres, Mon 30 January - Sat 4 February; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 13 - Sat 18 February; Lichfield Garrick, Mon 27 March - Sat 1 April; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 3 - Sat 8 April

Not only has everybody heard of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*, everybody's also actually seen the show... haven't they? Okay, maybe not, but as the play debuted some 70 years ago and has been running non-stop in the West End ever since (Covid disruption aside, of course), it's fair to say its capacity to put bums on seats is absolutely beyond question. Not surprisingly it's the world's longest-running show, and has been performed almost 30,000 times. Its touring version is here making a welcome return to the Midlands and stars Todd Carty and Gwyneth Strong (pictured) alongside John Altman.



The Death Of King Arthur

The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield, Thurs 20 October

If you enjoy a good yarn about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, be sure to catch this brand-new version of a very old story. The production comes complete with an interactive twist that allows the audience to influence the performance.

A Study In Scarlet

Blue Orange Theatre, Fri 28 October - Sat 5 November

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes is one of literature's most enduring characters, so it's little wonder that theatre companies the length and breadth of the country continue to present stage adaptations of the legendary sleuth's most famous adventures. On this occasion it's the ever-reliable Blue Orange Arts who are taking their audience on a journey back to Victorian England, to tell the tale of how Dr John Watson first encountered Holmes - and suddenly found himself plunged into a baffling case of murder most foul...

Family Album

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Tues 11 - Sat 22 October

Chronicling the trials, tribulations and temptations of three generations of one family across 70 years in the same home,

Alan Ayckbourn's *Family Album* catches up with characters in 1952, 1992 and 2022.

In the early '50s, RAF veteran John and housewife Peggy move into the first home they can really call their own...

Forty years later, their daughter, Sandra, frantically negotiates the challenges of a 10-year-old's birthday party without her AWOL husband...

And in 2022, granddaughter Alison finally manages to escape the house she has somewhat unwillingly inherited...

Mention of Alan Ayckbourn and a list of brilliant observational comedies springs readily to mind. *Family Album* looks set to become the latest addition to that impressive roll of honour. Ayckbourn himself directs.

The Second Best Bed

Palace Theatre, Redditch, Fri 7 October

This one-woman show, starring Liz Grand as Shakespeare's widow Anne Hathaway, has reviewed extremely well since debuting at Worcester's Swan Theatre 10 years ago...

Left alone on the night of her husband's funeral, Anne takes a poignant stroll down memory lane as she recalls the life and times of England's greatest playwright...

A Christmas Carol

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Wed 26 October - Sun 1 January

Of all Dickens' festive stories, *A Christmas*

Carol reigns supreme. The covetous sinning of the miserly Scrooge, the eternal hope offered by Tiny Tim, and the eerie visions of redemption - visiting Ebenezer in the shape of three yuletide ghosts (four if you count the chain-clanking Jacob Marley) - all combine to give the tale a real olde worlde charm...

Adrian Edmondson stars as Scrooge in this David Edgar-penned adaptation, which debuted at the RSC five years ago. And as an extra-special treat, the ghostly tale is opening in time for Halloween!

The Rocky Horror Show

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 4 - Sat 8 October; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 6 - Sun 11 March; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 27 March - Sat 1 April

Tighten your corsets and prepare to 'do The Time Warp again' - *The Rocky Horror Show* is returning to the Midlands!

Richard O'Brien's cult production tells the tale of the straight-laced Brad and the deliciously corruptible Janet, who arrive at the castle of the alien transvestite Frank N Furter and witness the birth of the monster, Rocky.

Along the way, they take the audience through a selection of love-'em-or-loathe-'em musical numbers, including *Sweet Transvestite*, *Damn It Janet* and *The Time Warp*. Great fun's a guarantee - particularly if you get into the spirit of things and attend the show dressed in your very best stockings & suspenders (as many patrons do)! Strictly Come Dancing's Ore Oduba stars as Brad.



DAILY TELEGRAPH



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NICK HELM
WEDNESDAY 26 OCTOBER



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Something a little different - events popping up across the region...



Cirque Du Soleil: Corteo

Utilita Arena, Birmingham,
Wed 19 - Sun 23 October

Easily the ensemble which has done most to restore people's view of the circus as a valid and desirable form of mass entertainment, Cirque du Soleil (or Circus of the Sun) was founded in Quebec, Canada, in 1984, and has since gone on to present some of the most successful and groundbreaking theatrical extravaganzas of all time.

A massive hit wherever it erects its big top tent, the company blends circus styles from around the world, with each show having its own central theme and storyline.

This latest offering brings together 'the passion of the actor with the grace and power of the acrobat, to plunge the audience into a theatrical world of fun, comedy and spontaneity, situated in a mysterious space between heaven and earth'.

Dr Richard Shepherd: Unnatural Causes

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Wed 12 October; The Roses, Tewkesbury, Sun 23 October; Birmingham Town Hall, Tues 25 October; Lichfield Garrick, Thurs 27 October

People's ongoing fascination with malevolent murder, psychotic serial killers and all manner of other grim and gruesome topics means that forensic pathologist Dr Richard Shepherd now has a hugely successful *second* career - touring shows such as this one to theatres and venues across the country. With more than 23,000 autopsies behind him, and having leant his expertise to numerous high-profile cases - including the Hungerford Massacre and the Princess Diana inquiry - Dr Shepherd has many a tale to tell. Expect an absorbing and utterly fascinating journey into the gripping world of forensic pathology...

Suggs: What A King Cnut - A Life In The Realm Of Madness

Malvern Theatres, Fri 7 October; The Place, Telford, Wed 19 October; Walsall Arena & Arts Centre, Thurs 20 October

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

The Noise Next Door: Hometown Heroes

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 7 October; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Tues 25 October

Praised for presenting their audiences with 'a superior kind of chaos', The Noise Next Door is a quartet of improvising comedians who've been garnering critical praise for a good few years now. Big in Edinburgh at festival time, they pride themselves on their originality and quick-wittedness (the latter being pretty much essential in the world of improvisational comedy).

Previous on-stage endeavours have included a mini-musical embracing the uncomfortable bedfellows of pantomime, folk music and death-metal, and a surreal adventure in which the Magic Roundabout's Zebedee leads the forces of good against Darth Vader, who's holed up in Worcester Cathedral.

This latest show sees them taking 'the best, worst and downright weirdest things about where they're performing and transforming them into a cavalcade of hilarious songs, scenes and characters'.

Last Podcast On The Left

Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 22 October

With its title referencing 1972 horror movie *The Last House On The Left*, Ben Kissel, Marcus Parks & Henry Zebrowski's hit podcast has taken to the road with its usual consignment of 'cults, killers and cryptid encounters'. Long-term friends Ben, Marcus and Henry launched Last Podcast On The Left back in 2011 and have been talking about serial killers, conspiracy theories, UFO

sightings, ghosts, ghouls and the occult ever since.

Subjects under discussion in this touring version of the podcast include Jeffrey Dahmer, werewolves, Jonestown, iconic hauntings and the history of war crimes.

The Black Blues Brothers

Lichfield Garrick, Thurs 13 October

Imagine an evening spent enjoying hit songs from cult 1980s movie *The Blues Brothers*. Then imagine doing so while watching 'jaw-dropping balancing acts, acrobatics with fire and human pyramids'.

That's pretty much the winning combination on offer when The Black Blues Brothers visit Lichfield this month, with the performers 'using every chair, table and coat rack as part of their breathtaking routines'.

Brown Girls Do It Too: Mama Told Me Not To Come

The Rep, Birmingham, Fri 28 & Sat 29 October

Songs, sketches and graphic content aplenty await Birmingham Rep audiences when Poppy Jay and Rubina Pabani take to the stage to present this, er, 'genital warts and all' celebration of 'brown British women'.

The show is touring on the back of the fun-loving duo's hit podcast, *Brown Girls Do It Too*, an endeavour aimed at lifting the lid on the messy realities of navigating life and relationships as British Asian women.

THE ROSES

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More online: www.rosestheatre.org



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Fri 14 Oct



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Sat 15 Oct 7.30pm



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Fri 21 Oct 7.30pm



Dirty Dusting
Sat 22 Oct 7.30pm



Richard Shepherd: Unnatural Causes
Sun 23 Oct 7.30pm



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- 7/10 An Evening with Clive John *music*
- 8/10 Dire Streets
- 11/10 Keith Slater's 60s Celebration 2pm
- 15/10 COBO Comedy Shutdown *in Studio*
Black History Month special - comedy night
- 21/10 Henry's Bluehouse - The Shufflepack
- 21/10 Dom Joly's Holiday Snaps *travel comedy*
- 22/10 Buddy Holly & The Cricketers
- 28/10 Shark in the Park *family fun at 1pm*
- 28/10 The Indians are Coming! *comedy*
- 29/10 Diwali: Light, Shadows and Neon!
Family friendly creative activities 10am-3pm

FILM

- 5/10 Operation Mincemeat (12A)
- 19/10 West Side Story (12A) *Matinee*

Event Screenings National Theatre Live

- 6/10 Jack Absolute Flies Again
Comedy from the National Theatre set in 1940 stars Caroline Quentin, Kelvin Fletcher & Laurie Davidson.
- 25/11 The Seagull
Chekhov's tale of love and loneliness starring Emilia Clarke (Game of Thrones) in her West End debut.

www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk
Box Office: T: 0121 704 6962 9.30am-2.30pm Mon-Sat

Theatre for younger audiences...



Peppa Pig's Best Day Ever

The Place, Telford, Sat 8 - Sun 9 October; Malvern Theatres, Wed 2 - Thurs 3 November

If you've taken your little ones to any of the previous Peppa Pig stage shows - and enjoyed the experience of watching them having a fantastic time - you'll already know that this currently touring production is well worth catching. Peppa Pig is heading out on a road trip with George, Mummy Pig and Daddy Pig, and there are plenty of adventures waiting to be had - including ones that involve dragons, dinosaurs, ice-creams and muddy puddles...

Justin Live: The Big Tour

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sun 30 October

Mr Tumble is heading for the Midlands! The popular clown - who features in CBeebies' Something Special, a programme for youngsters with delayed learning and communication difficulties - is otherwise known as BAFTA Award-winning children's television presenter Justin Fletcher. Justin is visiting the region this month with a production that he describes as an all-singing, all-dancing extravaganza, complete with well-known songs and plenty of slapstick fun.



Shark In The Park

The Core Theatre, Solihull, Fri 28 October

Nick Sharratt has illustrated over 250 books, around one-sixth of which have been his own. One of these is the hugely successful Shark In The Park!, a children's story about a young lad named Timothy who goes to his local park to try out his new telescope. While there, he thinks he spots a shark - and not just on one occasion either, but several times in several places! The popularity of the book prompted Nick to write and illustrate two follow-ups - Shark In The Dark! and Shark In The Park On A Windy Day!. All three stories are featured in this popular stage show from the highly rated Nonsense

Room theatre company. The production is suitable for children aged two-plus.



Milkshake Live

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 24 October; Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 30 October

Milkshake Monkey's putting on a show - and he's inviting little ones to come along and join in the fun with Paddington, Daisy & Ollie, Milo, Noddy, Pip & Posy and Blue's Clues... If you've watched the TV series and/or been to a previous live production, you'll already know what to expect from a Milkshake! show. If not, get ready for an event that promises lots of laughter, bucketloads of family fun, bags of audience participation and plenty of singing and dancing.



Demon Dentist

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 26 & Sat 27 October; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 30 March - Sun 2 April; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Wed 28 June - Sat 1 July
Birmingham Stage Company (BSC) here

present their brand-new adaptation of David Walliams' popular children's book. Telling a toothy tale of dental disaster, Demon Dentist finds Alfie and his best pal, Gabz, doing their level best to solve a disturbing mystery: why is it that children who leave their teeth for the tooth fairy are then waking up to find horrible things under their pillow? Could it have anything to do with the new dentist in town - the appropriately named Miss Root?... BSC's stage adaptations of Walliams' Gangsta Granny and Billionaire Boy were both nominated for an Olivier Award, so you can bet your wisdom teeth that Demon Dentist will soon be in the running for a glorious gong or several too.

Morgan & West: Unbelievable Science

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 15 October; Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Fri 28 October

Whether you're five or 105, a lover of brain-busting illusion or a fan of good old-fashioned tomfoolery, this brand-new production is definitely the show for you - according to its presenters, Morgan & West. A time-travelling Victorian magic duo, Mr Morgan and Mr West promise to 'unload another boxful of bafflement and impossibility where magic and silliness abound'. 'Captivating chemistry, phenomenal physics and bonkers biology' all feature on this particular occasion.



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GETTING INTO MISCHIEF

Erica Whyman, the Royal Shakespeare Company's acting artistic director, talks about Mischief Festival, which this month sees two innovative new works being showcased at the RSC's studio theatre, The Other Place...

What's the story behind the Mischief festivals - how and why did they come into being?

I introduced them to launch the new The Other Place, our studio theatre, in 2014. They are a way of grouping our most adventurous and playful work and plays together and encouraging audiences to see different perspectives on a theme.

How have they developed and evolved over the years?

They have all been different, but I hope each one has spoken of its time. We have shorter lead times in creating the Mischief season of plays and can make sure the work is really responsive to the moment.

What have you learned from previous Mischief festivals?

I've learnt to trust that Mischief is the perfect framing for both light and dark experimentation. Shakespeare used it both ways, mischief to mean violence or injustice as well as to make enjoyable trouble. I think artists need more courage than ever to really express what they think.

What's the process you go through in terms of deciding which plays to perform?

We've used different methods; convening conversations about hot topics, encouraging artists to write fast responses to world events, and commissions with a specific focus. What they all share is a commitment to the present moment, and a desire to reimagine the world.

Is there a theme to this year's festival, and if so, what is it and why was it chosen?

We commissioned and programmed these plays in 2019 in an explicit response to leaving the EU. We wanted to platform stories of small communities dealing with change, with crisis and with division. And we wanted comedies - I was very aware of how few funny writers are given space to develop on significant stages. And our audiences need to laugh.....! But we had no idea how very timely

those instincts would turn out to be. All communities, neighbourhoods and friendship groups thrust into a pandemic together will recognise themselves in these plays.

How about the plays themselves? Can you tell us a little bit about them...

Ivy Tiller: *Vicar's Daughter*, *Squirrel Killer* is about a young woman who has found purpose in a campaign to kill grey squirrels in order to restore red squirrels. But the campaign is over and Ivy can't stop. It's about loneliness and being an outsider but also about the absurdity of human desires and connections... *O, Island!* is about a small community hit by disastrous floods which, once divided by water, reveals fascist tendencies and extreme behaviour. It is truly a parable for our political times!

Mischief is being held in The Other Place. How does the venue impact the festival and the plays?

The building is a creative, festive space. Somewhere full of energy and distinctly rough and ready, unpretentious. I think that has a positive impact on the work; the audience come in expecting to be surprised, ready to share the space with the artists.

If you had to select one play from previous festivals that's really hit the mark and resonated with you, which would it be and why?

#wearearrested by Can Dundar, adapted by Pippa Hill and Sophie Ivatts. It is the story of Can's imprisonment and facing jumped-up charges as a journalist in Turkey taking courageous risks to tell the truth. It felt important, but also poetic and entrancing. There's a moment when Can dances to Adele with great abandon as he dreams of his wife outside the prison walls and it is absurd, delightful and heartbreaking all at once.

When is Mischief Festival at its best? And has there been a time when you felt it failed to meet expectations?



It is at its best when it provokes conversation, and holds a safe but lively space for debate. So no, it has always done that. Some work has caused more or less debate, some has been strong meat for some, but that's exactly the point. It has been a fearless space to play with form and address content that is hard to grapple with.

If the event is still going in, say, a decade's time, in what ways would you hope it had developed?

I would love to see it become ever-more interdisciplinary, working across digital and irl to offer an international experience of Mischief, wherever you are in the world, and celebrating the evolving nature of theatre-making. And perhaps causing even more enjoyable trouble....

O, Island! shows at The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 5 November; Ivy Tiller: Vicar's Daughter, Squirrel Killer, shows at the same venue from Thurs 6 October until Sat 5 November.

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Dance previews from across the region



Birmingham Royal Ballet: Into The Music

Birmingham Hippodrome, Fri 21 & Sat 22 October

Widely considered to be one of Birmingham Royal Ballet's (BRB) 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.

"Forgotten Land is one of Kylián's classics," explains BRB Director

Carlos Acosta, "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, meanwhile, 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.

Ballet Theatre UK: Beauty And The Beast

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 27 October

When a young woman is captured by a hideous beast, she finds herself facing a life of isolation in his mysterious palace. The Beast, too, is trapped - seemingly forever - inside the grotesquery of his



physical appearance, the consequence of a spell cast upon him by an evil witch. Only Beauty's ability to look beyond his ugliness and see the person within can save him... This much-loved fairytale is here being presented by the ever-excellent Ballet Theatre UK, a company with an impressive history of producing bright and colourful shows designed to promote classical dance as an accessible art form.

Jasmin Vardimon: Alice

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 18 & Wed 19 October

Founded in 1997, Jasmin Vardimon Company combines physical theatre and quirky characterisation with innovative technologies, text and dance.

The internationally acclaimed ensemble here presents 'a bold reimagining' of Lewis Carrol's Alice's Adventures In Wonderland. Promising 'a sensory feast of arresting images, powerful performers and striking kinetic scenery', the show explores the themes of time, identity, rules and authority.



Chantry Dance: The Guardian Of The Forest

Swan Theatre, Worcester, Sun 2 October



The importance of preserving natural habitats is the theme behind Chantry Dance's imaginative reworking of Beauty And The Beast.

When the vain Lord Bieth wants to cut down the forest in order to expand his city, the Green Lady intervenes. And not only does she stop his plan, she also turns him into a beast, who is then compelled to guard the forest against destruction by greedy city folk. Years later, the beast's salvation comes in the form of a young maiden named Aille...

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Director Carlos Acosta

Into the Music

Featuring the Royal Ballet Sinfonia playing
Beethoven's Seventh Symphony live with 34 dancers

Forgotten Land

Kylian | Britten

Hotel WORLD PREMIERE
Runacre-Temple | Karlsson

The Seventh Symphony UK PREMIERE
Scholz | Beethoven

21 & 22 October

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The Seventh Symphony: Céline Gittens and Brandon Lawrence. © Drew Tommons. Below, Beatrice Parma as Swanilda. © Manvir Rai and Richard Payne.



 Birmingham City Council  ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Director Carlos Acosta

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
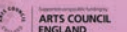
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Birmingham Mail

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Dance previews from across the region



Motionhouse: Starchitects

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 27 - Sun 30 October;
Birmingham Hippodrome, Fri 3 & Sat 4 February

Leamington-based dance company Motionhouse make a welcome return to Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre this month with a brand-new show.

Telling the story of five youngsters who dream of reaching the moon from their bedroom, Starchitects is the company's first ever

production created specifically for children and families.

"Full of thrilling surprises, the show is engaging for audiences of all ages," says the company's executive director, Louise Richards. "It's a visual spectacle using the dance-circus fusion and digital projections that Motionhouse is renowned for, with a fun and imaginative, easy-to-follow storyline - making it a perfect outing for the whole family.

"The theme of the show - space travel - lends itself well to creative educational and participatory activities to stimulate children, supporting their development and encouraging their creativity."

Ballet Cymru: Dream

Stourbridge Town Hall, Sat 29 October

Touring to around 50 venues throughout the UK on an annual basis, Ballet Cymru has garnered a reputation for presenting innovative, challenging and original productions. The company was founded in 1986 and prides itself on presenting 'a high standard of classical ballet in an unpretentious and original way'.

The ensemble visits Stourbridge this month with a 'vibrant, fresh and innovative' full-length ballet based on Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream.



Jaivant Patel Dance: The Festival Of Light

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham,
Sat 29 October

"The root of what we do is very specific in wanting to explore and demonstrate the rich heritage of Indian classical dance," explains Jaivant Patel in talking about his Wolverhampton-founded company. "But what's really important in the work we create is that there is an access point, regardless of your experience and understanding of dance and South Asian art forms."

Having last year celebrated their 15th anniversary, Jaivant Patel Dance here make a welcome return with Deepavali: The Festival Of Light - a 'captivating evening of South Asian dance showcasing Bollywood, Kathak, Bharatanatyam to Bhangara and Dandiya Raas'.

Samsara

Birmingham Hippodrome, Sun 23 October

Aakash Odedra made a significant splash when he first appeared on the scene, quickly racking up collaborations with numerous high-profile choreographers, including Akram Khan, Sidi Larbi and Russell Maliphant.

Now a Hippodrome associate artist, Aakash here joins forces with Chinese dancer Hu Shenyan to explore the notion of samsara, the wheel of life: birth, existence and re-birth. The duet has been inspired by classic Chinese novel Journey To The West and draws on thinking and imagery at the heart of Buddhist philosophy. The piece is one hour in length and is performed without an interval.



Film highlights in October...



The Woman King

CERT 15 (135 mins)

Starring **Viola Davies, John Boyega, Hero Fiennes Tiffin, Lashana Lynch, Jordan Bolger, Sheila Atim**
Directed by **Gina Prince-Bythewood**

A perhaps not surprisingly little-known fact is that in the 1800s, the African kingdom of Dahomey was protected by an all-female unit

of warriors known as the Agojie. Telling their remarkable story, *The Woman King* follows the emotionally epic journey of General Nanisca (here played by Oscar winner Viola Davis) as she trains the next generation of recruits, readying them for battle against an enemy determined to destroy their way of life...

Released Tues 4 October

Amsterdam

CERT tbc (134 mins)

Starring **Anya Taylor-Joy, Robert De Niro, Margot Robbie, Christian Bale, Zoe Saldana, Rami Malek** Directed by **David O Russell**

An original crime epic blending fact with fiction, *Amsterdam* focuses on three close friends who find themselves at the centre of one of the most shocking secret plots in American history.

The film is the latest offering from acclaimed writer & director David O Russell, whose previous movies include *Spanking The Monkey* and *American Hustle*.

Released Fri 7 October



The Lost King

CERT 12 (108 mins)

Starring **Harry Lloyd, Sally Hawkins, Steve Coogan, James Fleet, Jessica Harwick, Sharon Osdin** Directed by **Stephen Frears**



Two-time Academy Award nominee Sally Hawkins takes the lead role of Philippa Langley in a film which tells the remarkable true story of how an amateur British history enthusiast discovered the long-lost remains of King Richard III.

The film, which marks the 10th anniversary of the discovery of Richard's skeleton in a Leicester car park, reunites the BAFTA-winning creative team behind box office and critical hit *Philomena*: director Stephen Frears and writers Steve Coogan and Jeff Pope. Coogan, whose Baby Cow company has produced the film, co-stars in the role of Philippa's husband.

Released Fri 7 October

Emily

CERT tbc (130 mins)

Starring **Emma Mackey, Oliver Jackson-Cohen, Fionn Whitehead, Alexandra Dowling, Sacha Parkinson, Amelia Gething**
Directed by **Frances O'Connor**

Sex Education's Emma Mackey takes the starring role in this imagined life story of one of the world's most famous authors: Emily Brontë. The second youngest of six siblings - among whom, of course, were fellow writers Charlotte and Anne - Emily is best known for her one and only (and classic) novel, *Wuthering Heights*. Frances O'Connor here makes her directorial debut, working from her own original screenplay. The film also stars *Line Of Duty*'s Adrian Dunbar and *Gentleman Jack*'s Gemma Jones.

Released Fri 14 October



Halloween Ends

CERT 18

Starring **Jamie Lee Curtis, Will Patton, Kyle Richards, Andi Matichak, Nick Castle, Rohan Campbell** Directed by **David Gordon Green**

The *Halloween* franchise has certainly found a new lease of life recently, with this latest offering following on from 2018's *Halloween* and last year's *Halloween Kills*. Four years have passed since the events of the previous movie. Spooky serial killer Michael Myers hasn't been seen since. Laurie, meanwhile, is living with her granddaughter, Allyson, and is finishing writing her memoir. After allowing Myers' spectre to determine and drive her reality for decades, Laurie has decided to liberate herself from fear and rage by embracing life. But when a young man is accused of killing a boy he was babysitting, she is forced to confront the evil that lies beyond her control...

Released Fri 14 October



Black Adam CERT tbc

Starring **Dwayne Johnson, Sarah Shahi, Viola Davis, Pierce Brosnan, Aldis Hodge, Noah Centineo** Directed by **Jaume Collet-Serra**

Black Adam has been described as Dwayne Johnson's DC passion project, and it's easy to see why. The character was slated to make his film debut in 2019's *Shazam!*, but Dwayne had other ideas. He felt that Black Adam's impact would be seriously compromised if he were required to share screen space with another superhero (even though the duo have a shared history in the original comic books). According to Johnson, the extra three years Black Adam fans have had to wait to see their hero on the big screen will be well worth it - the actor has repeatedly promised moviegoers that the film will change the DC cinematic universe forever.

Released Fri 21 October



Triangle Of Sadness

CERT tbc (147 mins)

Starring **Harris Dickinson, Charlbi Dean, Woody Harrelson, Dolly De Leon, Zlatko Buric, Iris Berben** Directed by **Ruben Östlund**

The idle rich's hypocrisy, greed and thirst for power is a subject that just keeps on giving in *Triangle Of Sadness*, the latest film from Swedish auteur Ruben Östlund. A satirist, provocateur and two-time winner of the Palme d'Or - the second one being awarded for this very film, which received an eight-minute standing ovation at the Cannes' Film Festival - Östlund is no stranger to controversy. He once joked he was thrilled that Sweden's divorce rate skyrocketed after the release of his 2014 black comedy, *Force Majeure* - a film in which a husband prioritises his own escape over the safety of his family following an apparent avalanche in the French Alps. *Triangle Of Sadness* marks the final appearance of Charlbi Dean, who died unexpectedly in August at the age of just 32. Expect a movie that is provocative, fierce, funny and sharp.

Released Fri 28 October



Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile CERT PG

Starring **Constance Wu, Javier Bardem, Brett Gelman, Scoot McNairy** and the voice of **Shawn Mendes** Directed by **Josh Gordan** and **Will Speck**

Josh Primm is struggling to adapt to his new school and new friends following his family's move to New York City.

Thank heavens, then, for his discovery of a brand-new bestie - a singing crocodile - in the attic of his new home. But this is no ordinary city-dwelling, attic-residing, long-tailed

reptile; this one loves baths, has a real taste for caviar and likes listening to great music. Life is definitely looking up for young Josh - but he's reckoning without the involvement of the evil Mr Grumps, who's failing to see any upside to sharing his neighbourhood with an impressively sophisticated saltwater crocodile...

Columbia Pictures' live-action/animated musical comedy is based on the bestselling 1960s' book series by Bernard Waber.

Released Fri 14 October

Bros CERT tbc (115 mins)

Starring **Billy Eichner, Luke Macfarlane, Debra Messing, Kristin Chenoweth, Monica Raymund, Jim Rash** Directed by **Nicholas Stoller**



Universal Pictures' is shouting from its rooftop the fact that *Bros* marks the first time a major studio has made a gay romantic comedy. It's also the first time an openly gay man - Billy Eichner - has co-written and starred in a film by a major studio...

Times, it would appear, are very much a-changin'...

Featuring an entirely LGBTQ+ principal cast, *Bros* is described as 'a smart, swoony and heartfelt comedy about how hard it is to find another tolerable human-being to go through life with'.

Given that the film has all of the above going for it, finding an audience - and a big one - should prove to be a walk in the park.

Released Fri 28 October

The Devil's Light

CERT 15 (93 mins)

Starring **Virginia Madsen, Colin Salmon, Jacqueline Byers, Ben Cross, Christian Navarro, Nicholas Ralph** Directed by **Daniel Stamm**

In response to a global rise in demonic possessions, the Catholic Church reopens exorcism schools to train priests in the Rite of Exorcism. On this spiritual battlefield, an unlikely warrior rises: a young nun named Sister Ann. Although nuns are forbidden to perform exorcisms, a professor recognises Sister Ann's gifts and agrees to train her. Thrust onto the spiritual frontline with fellow student Father Dante, Sister Ann soon finds herself in a battle for the soul of a young girl - one who she believes is possessed by the same demon that tormented her own mother years earlier...

Released Fri 28 October





PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

Stan's Cafe's Of All The People In All The World returns to the Midlands

Grains of rice representing abstract human statistics form the basis of a unique performance installation created by Birmingham theatre company Stan's Cafe. Of All The People In All The World returns to the Midlands this autumn having visited cities around the globe since debuting in 2003. What's On recently caught up with Artistic Director James Yarker to find out more about this innovative work of art.

Birmingham-based Stan's Cafe have taken their work, *Of All The People In All The World*, around the globe since it was premiered in 2003 - and this autumn it will be re-staged at two West Midlands venues.

The show will be free to visit at Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre from 4 to 9 October (it forms part of Warwick Arts Weekender, taking place from the 6th to the 9th), and then visits Birmingham's Midlands Arts Centre (mac) on various dates between 22 October and 6 November.

Of All The People In All The World uses grains of rice to tell stories of people, communities, individuals and groups. Each grain represents one person, with viewers being invited to see themselves represented in the work.

Stan's Cafe Artistic Director James Yarker explains: "What people will see is piles of rice, all of different sizes - some huge, and some actually down to individual grains of rice - all sat on sheets of white paper. And there's a label on them.

"It looks quite attractive sculpturally, as it's a series of almost sand dunes or hills, but when you get close and you start to read the labels, you realise that each pile of rice represents a pile of human beings. So in a way it's a map of the world, in which one grain of rice equals one human being.

"We've chosen which categories sit by which categories to tell the story. So when people arrive, if they're from the local area, they will see the population of their town or city. But then they might also see the number of schoolchildren or teachers or doctors or nurses in that town or city.

"They'll also see national politics played out there and international events represented. They'll see changes over time. You can tell stories, and even jokes, by what you choose to put side by side."

Premiered at Warwick Arts Centre nearly 20 years ago, *Of All The People In All The World* has been experienced by audiences across Europe, North and South America, Canada, Australia and Japan. And James says people in every community connect with it.

"I think it's effective everywhere because it's incredibly simple and understandable. It connects with people's sense of empathy, so even really small children understand the concept. People see themselves relocated within the show, so it's really personal to them and also surprising.

"Its longevity is also because it's a concept which is constantly made anew. If we performed the original version that we did in 2003, then it would look massively dated because we'd be talking about Guantanamo Bay, Gordon Brown and how Britain has only had one woman prime minister.

"But the joy of it is that it can respond to the architecture or setting in terms of being in a specific place at that time. Something can happen in the morning and we can put it in the show straight away."

One of the other reasons for its popularity is that *Of All The People In All The World* can have different meanings for different visitors.

"People often say, 'what is it - is it a piece of theatre, a performance, an installation, an exhibition?' One of the things that I find reassuring is that people respond with the same level of enthusiasm and empathy and curiosity and passion everywhere we've performed it."

Returning to Warwick Arts Centre is an important milestone for the work.

"That was the first ever venue for the show, but the building has changed since then. It will be strange to be in the same building but with the lay-out being potentially different."

And at mac, the show forms part of the arts centre's 60th birthday celebrations.

"Because of the anniversary, we're looking through their archives to see what's been going on with the history of mac, but we're also taking the opportunity to think about 1962, when it was opened, and what was going on at the time and contrasting that with now.

"Mac brings very high-quality art right into a venue which has a real community feel, so to have a show which is very much based on people is ideal."

Bringing the show back to the Midlands is

always a positive, says James.

"It's really lovely to have it here, to live at home while also having a show. And to spend time researching our own city. We spend a lot of time researching cities we're touring to, so it's nice to be able to focus attention on home territory. And it will be lovely for some of the schools that we work with nearby to be able to come and experience it."

The show will also have a new ingredient - although visitors may not notice the change.

"Tilda Rice are sponsoring the show, and they've given us a fresh ton of rice, which is exciting as we've been using the same ton of rice for UK versions of the show for a decade now! The old rice is going to be given away to a farmer for animal feed, so we will have fresh new rice - and hopefully we will have that for the next decade."

James is confident *Of All The People In All The World* will resonate with local audiences.

"At heart we are a theatre company, and the cliché of a theatre company is 'make them laugh, make them cry'. It seems totally implausible that some grains of rice on a sheet of paper can achieve that task, but it does with lots of people. It's a really fun, engaging thing to spend your time with.

"We've toured with comment books, and people have scribbled down thoughts after they've seen the show. The books are full of comments like 'this is amazing, you've made me see the world in a new light, I feel more empathy with the people around me, it's galvanised me into action to try and change the world around me'. That's a real testament, and we're really proud of the show."

.....

Stan's Cafe's *Of All The People In All The World* is free to visit at Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, from Tues 4 to Sun 9 October. It then shows at Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, on the following dates: Sat 22 & Sun 23 October, Wed 26 to Sun 30 October and Wed 2 to Sun 6 November



Radical Landscapes

Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre,
Coventry, Fri 7 October - Sunday 18
December

Organised in collaboration with Tate Liverpool, Radical Landscapes features more than 100 works by leading modern and contemporary artists, including Turner Prize 2022 nominee Ingrid Pollard and Veronica Ryan.

The exhibition looks beyond the lush green hills most readily associated with landscape art, reflecting instead on the diversity of the British landscape and the communities which inhabit it.

Focusing on a wide range of subjects, including activism, trespass and the climate emergency, the featured works illustrate the ways in which creatives have drawn new meanings from the land, using it to inspire ideas of freedom, experimentation, mysticism and rebellion.



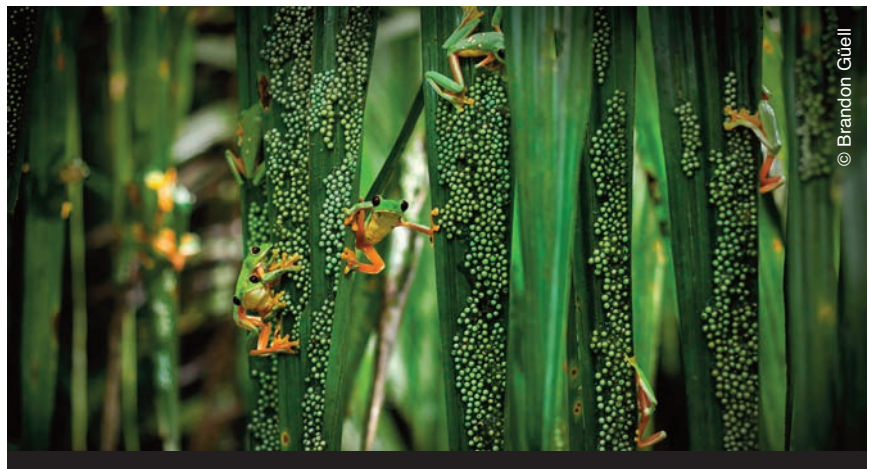
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Wildlife Photographer Of The Year 2022

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Sat 22 October - Sat 24 December

“Captured by some of the best photography talent from around the world, the photographs encourage curiosity, connection and wonder. These inspiring images convey human impact on the natural world in a way that words cannot - from the urgency of declining biodiversity to the inspiring bounce-back of a protected species.”

So says Dr Doug Gurr, director of the Natural History Museum, which has developed & produced the 2022 Wildlife

Photographer Of The Year competition. The hugely prestigious show - visiting Wolverhampton Art Gallery as part of a UK tour - features a host of awe-inspiring images capturing fascinating animal behaviour and breathtaking landscapes. The photos included in the exhibition have been selected from thousands of submissions, with photographers from no fewer than 93 countries taking part. Submissions for the 2023 competition will open on 17 October.

Canaletto: A Venetian's View

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum, Sun 1 October - Sat 7 January

Lauded for the way in which he revolutionised the use of colour and canvas - and for pioneering the technique of painting from life - Giovanni Antonio Canal (better known as Canaletto) not surprisingly had a significant impact on

the generations of artists who followed him.

This world-class collection of artwork - hailed as the most ambitious exhibition in Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum's history - features stunning paintings on loan from the Woburn Abbey Collection. The show also includes artworks from Worcester's Fine Art Collection and loans from Birmingham Museums, Tate and Compton Verney.



Grown Up Britain: 100 Years Of Teenage Kicks

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, until Sun 12 February

The everyday experiences and cultural impact of young people is celebrated in this brand-new exhibition.

Featuring photographs, objects and stories, Grown Up In Britain has been curated by and drawn from the extensive photographic collections of the Museum of Youth Culture, an emerging organisation dedicated to the styles, sounds and social movements innovated by young people over the last 100 years.

The Museum has been gathering together photographs of youth and subculture movements for more than 25 years. Its impressive collection includes everything 'from the bomb-site bicycle racers in post-war 1940s London, to the Acid House ravers of 1980s northern England'.



Your Shakespeare, Your Culture

The Gallery, Library of Birmingham, until Sat 5 November

The People's Shakespeare Library at Library of Birmingham is home to more than 40,000 volumes, 17,000 production photographs, 2,000 music scores, hundreds of British and international production posters, 15,000 performance programmes and 10,000 playbills. And courtesy of this Royal Shakespeare Company-curated exhibition, visitors will be able to immerse themselves in the unique story of the library and all things Shakespeare.

But that's not all... The exhibition also includes Shakespeare's first folio, a specially commissioned short film, a brand-new spoken-word piece by Birmingham Poet Laureate Casey Bailey, and interactive exhibits encouraging visitors 'to share their culture, make their mark and create their own version of a library'.

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Events previews from around the region



Mind Body Spirit Festival

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 28 - Sun 30 October
 Featuring inspirational and motivational speakers, musicians, artists and performers from across the globe, Mind Body Spirit Festival is a three-day event celebrating ‘the ultimate gathering of the tribes’. The festival includes contributions from international workshop leaders and cutting-edge teachers in areas such as feng shui and meditation, and also features a wellbeing studio offering free classes and taster sessions in yoga, dance and movement. For those in need of peace and calm, the Alchemy of Sound provides meditation sessions and immersive sound experiences, whilst the Ceremony Space is a free sanctuary in which to relax and recharge with an array of sacred circles and intimate ceremonial-based experiences. Visitors can also browse a host of health & wellbeing products, organic foods, therapies, jewellery and supplements from a variety of exhibitors.

Grand Designs Live

NEC, Birmingham, Wed 5 - Sun 9 October
 Based on Channel Four’s long-running programme, Grand Designs Live is the best place to access ideas, advice and products to make your own home project a success. The show features over 500 exhibitors and is split into four key sections - Build, Kitchens & Bathrooms, Interiors and Gardens - with designers, planning & finance specialists, architects and project managers all on hand to offer expert advice. New for 2022, the Green Living Live area is a space dedicated to eco-friendly products and sustainability-focused services. Kevin McCloud makes a welcome return too, hosting talks on the live theatre stage.



Horse of the Year Show

NEC, Birmingham, Wed 5 - Sun 9 October
 Equestrian entertainment gallops back into Birmingham this month, courtesy of the 72nd Horse Of The Year Show. Highlights include ‘thrilling competitions and spectacular displays’, while away from the arena, visitors can check out a wide range of treats, gifts and equestrian essentials at the retail village.



The National Snow Show

NEC, Birmingham, Sat 15 & Sun 16 October
 Bringing Après vibes to Birmingham, the two-day National Snow Show features a range of entertainment, shopping, food, drink and tips on how to plan that next trip. Having made its debut in 2021, with more than 10,000 people visiting the inaugural show, the 2022 edition promises to be bigger and better. Highlights include appearances by well-known names from the world of snowsports - including Aimee Fuller, Graham Bell, Chemmy Alcott and Eddie ‘the Eagle’ Edwards - and a host of retailers selling the latest gear, kit and tech. Those wishing to chill can head to the Après Pavilion to enjoy DJ sets and mountain-inspired food & drink.

Museum Of The Moon

Lichfield Cathedral, until Mon 31 October
 Luke Jerram’s critically acclaimed touring artwork, Museum Of The Moon, will remain suspended in the nave of Lichfield Cathedral throughout this month. A fusion of lunar imagery and moonlight, the internally lit installation - which is seven metres in diameter - is enhanced by the addition of a surround-sound composition created by Bafta and Ivor Novello award-winning composer Dan Jones.





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Spooky Science

this Half Term



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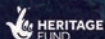
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- Creepy Cameras - Lego Lab Takeover
- Spooky Stay and Play in **minibrum**

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**28
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Spook-tastic events around the region



Spooky Spectacular West Midland Safari Park, Sat 22 - Sun 30 October

West Midland Safari Park is once again hosting its Spooky Spectacular event this month. Hundreds of pumpkins will be available at the pumpkin patch, and prizes can be won with the spooky scratchcard trail. There's

also a spine-tingling virtual-reality ride to enjoy, while Patch the Pumpkin Scarecrow also makes a welcome return for daily interactive magic shows. Opening hours will be extended so that visitors can explore the park after dark.



Gandey's Circus Spooktacular

Trentham Gardens, Staffordshire, Fri 14 - Sun 30 October;
Merry Hill, Brierley Hill, Fri 21 - Sun 30 October

Gandey's Circus pays two visits to the Midlands this month, bringing with them a brand-new action-packed Halloween big-top show for all the family to enjoy. A specially selected cast of skeletons,

vampires, jack-o-lanterns and circus performers will come together in what promises to be 'a sensational extravaganza'. Expect laughs aplenty, spooky thrills and high-quality lighting & sound effects.

Halloween Spook-tacular

National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffordshire, Sat 15, Sun 16 and Sat 22 - Sun 30 October

There's certainly no shortage of seasonal fun to sink your fangs into at the National Forest Adventure Farm during this most spooky of months. Take a tractor ride to pick a pumpkin and have a go at carving a scary jack-o-lantern, learn spells and brew potions as you make your way through the Magical Maize Quest, have a go at balloon modelling, unicycle riding and juggling at a circus skills workshop, and watch as the farm's magician conjures up a variety of tricks in a 'marvellous magic show'. All of the above feature alongside the farm's usual attractions, including indoor and outdoor play areas, animal barns & paddocks and fairground rides.



Ghost Tours

Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, Thurs 27 - Mon 31 October

Grab a torch, don suitable footwear and head to haunted Kenilworth Castle this Halloween, where storytellers recount tales of ghouls and ghosts, supernatural sightings and historical horrors.

After-Dark Tours

The Commandery, Worcester, Thurs 6, Tues 11, Thurs 13, Tues 18, Thurs 20 & Tues 25 October

As one of Worcester's oldest buildings, The Commandery is the perfect place to discover ghostly secrets. Suitable for persons aged 16-plus, the venue's after-dark tours include tales of strange sightings and mysterious rumours, with your guide giving the history of the building a hair-raising Halloween twist. An accessible version of the tour takes place on Thursday 20 October, and there's an under-16s version on Tuesday the 25th. Check out The Commandery's website for further information.

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Ascarium

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Using Life Treats

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Spook-tastic events around the region



Scarefest Alton Towers, Staffordshire, Fri 7 - Sun 9 and Fri 14 - Sun 30 October

Creepy shocks and spooktacular thrills are very much the order of the day as Alton Towers' Scarefest returns this month. Celebrating its 15th anniversary, the ghoulish event features a brand-new scare attraction for thrill seekers, as well as the return of three 'terrifying' mazes. Highlights include... The Attic: Terror Of The Towers - a chilling experience set in the site's Tower ruins; Darkest Depths - a new adventure aboard The Mutiny, a spine-

chilling ghost ship; Altonville Mine Tours - a recently reopened mine holding a deep, dark secret; and Trick O Treat Town, where the residents trick or treat the town's visitors. Garden Lights Walk: Whispering Souls also makes a welcome return in 2022, while more-courageous visitors can test their bravery by trying head-spinning, hair-raising rides and attractions *in darkness* - including the Alton Towers Dungeon.

Brick Or Treat: Monster Party

Legoland Discovery Centre, Birmingham, Sat 15 - Mon 31 October

Little monsters can join in the fun with Legoland Discovery Centre's Monster Party this Halloween. Activities include: a scavenger hunt, where participants can search for pumpkins in Miniland; a chance to build your own Lego pumpkin, to join the centre's ever-growing pumpkin patch; and a meet-and-greet with the spooky scarecrow. Visitors can also watch brand-new Halloween movie The Great Monster Chase! in the onsite 4D cinema (included in the ticket price).



Ascarium: Tricks & Treats

National Sea Life Centre Birmingham, Sat 15 - Mon 31 October



See the aquarium transform into an 'ascarium' this month, as witches and warlocks take over the National Sea Life Centre. Follow the immersive trail to find the missing potions ingredients, along the way meeting spooky creatures from the underwater world. Once you've completed the trail, head to the lair, where you'll receive a special treat, have a creepy photo taken, and get the chance to participate in a selection of ghoulish Halloween games and activities.

Halloween at Thinktank

Thinktank Science Museum, Birmingham, Mon 24 - Sun 30 October

The award-winning science museum this month plays host to an imaginative programme of Halloween events for half term. Young visitors can engage in numerous themed workshops and check out the Monster Munching Trail, where they can (quietly) look for evidence of what the monsters have eaten for lunch. Meanwhile, the Monster Mayhem Family Show features creepy live science demonstrations and promises to offer something for visitors of all ages.

Pumpkin Flotilla

Sarehole Mill, Birmingham, Fri 28 - Sun 30 October

Sarehole's popular Halloween event invites visitors to take along a uniquely decorated pumpkin and watch as it glides (with others) along the venue's millpond. The lit pumpkins will be guarded on their journey by the mysterious and ghostly Ferryman. The flotilla experience lasts for 90 minutes and comes complete with hot chocolate and Vampire's Delight soup to warm your bones. Spooky stories (to entertain you while you wait your turn) and craft activities (including how to make creepy Halloween decorations to take home) also feature.



Halloween Week

Tudor World, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 22 - Mon 31 October

Tudor World is pulling out all the spiningting stops this Halloween with a week of sure-to-be-popular events. Daytime attractions include Halloween quizzes and child-friendly stories, whilst after-dark fun comes in the shape of ghost and haunted-house tours and a 'mini seance' evening.





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22ND-30TH
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MEET PATCH THE SCARECROW

Spook-tastic events around the region



Jump aboard the Ghost Train(s)

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 October

Are you brave enough to ride the Ghost Train at Severn Valley Railway this Halloween? Kickstart your fright night with tricks and treats for the whole family to enjoy at Kidderminster Station, then take your reserved seats and settle back to experience a ride out into the darkness. Scary characters will join you on board, sneaking along the corridors of the train as it passes through haunted stations to Arley.

The Ghost Train experience lasts for approximately 75 minutes and comes complete with a free goodie bag for every child. Severn Valley Railway is also hosting a similar but 'more fearsome' event for older guests. The Scream Train is aimed at visitors aged 18-plus and features 'petrifying ghouls' who will be seeking to scare the life out of commuters as they make their way to Arley.



Pumpkinfest at Park Hall

Park Hall Farm, Oswestry, Shropshire, Various dates between Fri 14 October and Wed 2 November

A pumpkin alley, witches cavern and little scare house are among the Halloween-

themed attractions at Park Hall this month. Youngsters can pass the pumpkin, use toilet roll to transform daddies into mummies, and take part in a fancy dress competition. What's more, each paying child will be able to pick a pumpkin to carve and take home.

Halloween Fun At The Farm

Mary Arden's Farm, Stratford-upon-Avon, Tues 25, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 October

Discover the weird and wonderful Halloween traditions of medieval and Tudor England this October half term.

As well as learning about the customs which people used to follow in order to ward off evil spirits, visitors can also sample a selection of hands-on activities, including making soul cakes, carving pumpkins and crafting a protection charm.

Freddo's Circus Spooktacular

Cadbury World, Birmingham, Sat 15 - Sun 30 October

Promising to host the spookiest circus in town, Cadbury World favourite Freddo this month takes on numerous guises to entertain visitors to the popular Bournville attraction. Expect spinetingling spells from the Great Fredeedo and stunts aplenty from Daredevil Freddo, in an event that Cadbury World say you would be an absolute ghoul to miss out on...

Fireworks Spook-tacular

Drayton Manor Park, Tamworth, Staffordshire, Sun 30 October

A pumpkin smash bash is just one of the attractions at this 'fang-tastic' event. In addition to checking out the park's rides and attractions - including the Castle of Spooks - visitors can enjoy a 10-minute Fireworks Spooktacular display (with soundtrack) and sample some after-dark rides.

Halloween Nights

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, Wed 26 - Sat 29 October

The region's ghostly past comes to life as the Black Country Living Museum gets in the Halloween spirit with a number of themed after-dark activities. Visitors can dance the night away at the Monster Bash, meet creepy creatures along a ghoulish story trail, and take part in a special costume parade.



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Your week-
by-week
listings guide
October 2022

the list



Paul Chowdhry at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre - Tues 25 October

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

What's On

Sat 1 - Sun 9 October



Ignacio Lopez at Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

Thurs 6 October

Mon 10 - Sun 16 October



Witch Hunt at Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

Tues 11 October

Mon 17 - Sun 23 October



The Rock Orchestra at Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

Fri 21 October

Mon 24 - Mon 31 October



Wind In The Willows at Brewhouse Arts Centre

Sat 29 October

THROUGHOUT OCTOBER

Visual Arts

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

WE ARE BIRMINGHAM Exhibition curated 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 October

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 October

BLACKLASH: RACISM AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DEFENCE Mukhtar Dar's extensive archive of 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 October

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

NRITYA: COLLECTING THE STORY OF INDIAN DANCE IN THE BLACK COUNTRY 1960 - 2000 Featuring shared stories, memories, photographs, films and objects collected from pioneer dancers, teachers and choreographers, until Sun 13 Nov

New Art Gallery, Walsall

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON MA (FINE ART) DEGREE SHOW Presenting a variety of works in a wide range of media by full and part-time students, until Sun 30 Oct

The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

LOVELY JUBILEE: THREE CENTURIES OF ROYAL COMMEMORATION POTTERY Display of royal jubilee wares spanning three centuries, until 8 Jan

MAJOLICA MANIA: TRANSATLANTIC POTTERY IN ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES, 1850 - 1915 This first major exhibition of its kind in four decades examines the brightly glazed earthenware made by a variety of British and American potteries, until Sat 29 Oct. The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

COLLABORATIONS A dynamic showcase examining what glass artists can do when brought together for a collaborative experience. The 20 creatives involved have paired across glassmaking disciplines, until Sun 23 Oct

Elsewhere:

ARTIST IN ACTION Featuring works from a range of artists in varying disciplines, until Thurs 27 Oct, The Granary, Weston Park, Shropshire

EROSION AND RESILIENCE A mixed media exhibition by Alternative Strands - Ruth Duffy and Lindsey Fellowes, until Thurs 27 Oct, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

FIRE! Exhibition curated by the Friends of SM&AG looking at all things fire related, until Sun 30 Oct, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

MUSEUM OF THE MOON Touring artwork by UK artist Luke Jerram, until Mon 31 Oct, Lichfield Cathedral

MOMENT TO MOMENT: EDWARD LEAR Featuring approximately 60 works by the prolific nonsense poet, many of which have never been shown in public previously, until Sun 13 Nov, Ikon Gallery

SIKNURE: LET ME LIVE First UK solo exhibition by Ainu artist & musician Mayunkiki. Exhibits include historical family portraits, handwritten observations and video work commissioned by Ikon, until Sun 13 Nov, Ikon Gallery

THE MAGIC OF MIDDLE EARTH New exhibition featuring a treasure trove of more than 200 rare objects and artworks associated with or influenced by the fantasy world of JRR Tolkien, until 11 Dec, The Hub @ St Mary's, Lichfield

THE ANIMATED PUPPETS OF 'HANA'S HELPLINE' Exhibition looking at the stop-motion puppets from the animation series for pre-school children about a duck who runs a telephone helpline for young animals with problems, until Fri 6 Jan, Bantock House Museum, Wolverhampton

BEAR STEPS SOLO EXHIBITION Featuring wildlife and nature photography, Sun 16 - Sat 29 Oct, Bear Steps Gallery, Shrewsbury

PEASANTS AND PROVERBS: PIETER BRUEGHEL THE YOUNGER AS MORALIST AND ENTREPRENEUR Featuring 17 artworks drawn from public and private collections in the UK and Europe. Paintings, drawings, etchings and engravings all feature, Fri 21 Oct - 21 Sat Jan, The Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

Gigs

CORDAE Sat 1 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BOYZLIFE Sat 1 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

THE OFFICIAL LOST LOUNGE REUNION Sat 1 Oct, The Hangar, Wolverhampton

WEST COAST EAGLES Sat 1 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

TAKE THAT - THE SHOW Sat 1 Oct, @ the QUARTER, Stoke-on-Trent

T. REXTASY Sat 1 Oct, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

THE WONDER OF STEVIE Sat 1 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

WREST Sat 1 Oct, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

NORTHERN ECHOES Sat 1 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE SOCIAL IGNITION Sat 1 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

CATRIN FINCH Sat 1 Oct, Herman Arts, Oswestry

THEM VICIOUS JASPERS + TYRANNOSAURUS NEBULOUS + EXIT/OUT Sat 1 Oct, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch

NWOCR LIVEFEST - 17 BANDS OVER TWO DAYS Sat 1 - Sun 2 Oct, KK Steel Mill, W'hampton

RICKY ROSS Sun 2 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

MARTI PELLOW Sun 2 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

COLDPLACE Sun 2 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

CALLING PLANET EARTH Sun 2 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

IAN BROWN Mon 3 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE DAISY CHAINS Mon 3 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

EDDY WHITE Mon 3 Oct, Bill's Kitchen, Ludlow, South Shropshire

CALUM SCOTT Tues 4 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

MACHINE GUN KELLY +



Wrest - The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

IANN DIOR + 44PHANTOM Tues 4 Oct, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

MORRISSEY Wed 5 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

HAYSEED DIXIE Wed 5 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

TOM ROBINSON Wed 5 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

GABBA GABBA HEY! Wed 5 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

MAN & THE ECHO Thurs 6 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

NATHAN CARTER Thurs 6 Oct, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

THE UNDERCOVER HIPPY Thurs 6 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

SINCE SEPTEMBER + DECO Fri 7 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BETH ORTON Fri 7 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE SNUTS + HEIDI CURTIS Fri 7 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

NATHAN CARTER Fri 7 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

THE MUSIC OF BUDDY HOLLY AND CRICKETERS Fri 7 Oct, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

A DIFFERENT THREAD Fri 7 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

KARL PHILLIPS & THE REJECTS Fri 7 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE ENEMY + LITTLE MAN TATE + WIDE EYED BOY Sat 8 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SWEDISH HOUSE MAFIA + ZHU + VINTAGE CULTURE Sat 8 Oct, Utilita Arena, B'ham

CATFISH KEITH Sat 8

Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

SLADY + SLADEST + THE ORIGINAL WANTED + PAUL COOKSON & LES GLOVER +

PANDEMONIUM Sat 8 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, W'hampton

CAMENS + CASCADE Sat 8 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

YOU WIN AGAIN - BEE GEES TRIBUTE Sat 8 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

ELO EXPERIENCE Sat 8 Oct, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

CAROLE - THE MUSIC OF CAROLE KING Sat 8 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

HUGH PASCALL QUARTET Sat 8 Oct, The Hive, Shrewsbury

CHIC TO CHIC - NILE RODGERS TRIBUTE Sat 8 Oct, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

KRACK ON DAFT Sat 8 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

MIGHTY VIPERS + PANDA LASAGNE Sat 8 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

THE MANFREDS Sat 8 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

DAVID RODIGAN + DJ MILO Sun 9 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

THE FOUR TOPS + THE TEMPTATIONS Sun 9 Oct, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

DAVE KELLY + BOB HALL WITH HILARY BLYTHE Sun 9 Oct, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

JESS GIUDICI Sun 9 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

Classical Music

THE EDGE CHAMBER CHOIR Sat 1 Oct, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

CARDUCCI STRING QUARTET

Programme includes works by Mozart, Vaughan Williams & Ravel, Sat 1 Oct, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

MARTYN RAWLES ORGAN RECITAL Tues 4 Oct, Lichfield Cathedral

SENIOR CITIZENS ORCHESTRA Thurs 6 Oct, Walsall Arena

SHEKU KANNEH-MASON AND THE CBSO PLAY HAYDN Featuring Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (conductor) and Marie-Chistine Zupancic (flute). Programme includes works by Vaughan Williams, Haydn, Elgar, Weinberg & Britten, Thurs 6 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BBC PHILHARMONIC: ELGARS ENIGMA Featuring Kristiina Poska (conductor - pictured) & Alina Pogostkina (soloist). Programme includes works by Glinka, Brahms & Elgar, Fri 7 Oct, Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent



MENDELSSOHN STRING OCTET

Programme includes works by Mozart, Alberga & Mendelssohn, Fri 7 Oct, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

NIKITA LUKINOV PIANO RECITAL

Programme includes works by Schumann & Liszt, Sun 9 Oct, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

EX CATHEDRA KING FOR A DAY: MUSIC FOR ROYAL OCCASIONS

Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Programme includes works by Handel, Lalande and Roth, Sun 9 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

SIR BRYN TERFEL: SONGS AND ARIAS

Sun 9 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

Comedy

DARIUS DAVIES, WILSON, TANIA EDWARDS, SOL BERNSTEIN & GEOFF NORCOTT Sat 1 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

SEAN PERCIVAL, JULES O'BRIAN, JON PEARSON & RICKY BALSHAW Mon 3 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

PETER EDGE, MIKE CARTER, DAVE TWENTYMAN, GEORGE ZACH & ANDREW BIRD Thurs 6 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

MARK NELSON, TOM WRIGGLESWORTH, KEVIN DANIEL & PAUL REVILL Thurs 6 Oct, Lichfield Sports Club

IGNACIO LOPEZ Thurs 6 Oct, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge



JACK GLEADOW & COMICS TBC Thurs 6 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

CARL HUTCHINSON Thurs 6 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

GLENN MOORE Fri 7 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOMMY SANDHU, KANE BROWN, FARHAN SOLO & MUHSIN YESILADA Fri 7 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

THE NOISE NEXT DOOR Fri 7 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HENNING WEHN Fri 7 - Sat 8 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

DOM JOLY Sat 8 Oct, Bilston Town Hall

HARRY HILL Sat 8 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

DAN NIGHTINGALE Sat 8 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MARCEL LUCONT Sun 9 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MARK STEEL Sun 9 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Theatre

SOUTH PACIFIC Julian Ovenden and Gina Beck star in Rodgers & Hammerstein's powerful love story, until Sat 1 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Russell's iconic musical tells the story of twins separated at birth who grow up on opposite sides of the tracks, only to meet again with tragic consequences, until Sat 1 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL New production in which director Blanche McIntyre explores the modern resonance of Shakespeare's dark comedy, until Sat 8 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

RICHARD III Gregory Doran directs Arthur Hughes in this climax to Shakespeare's first history cycle, until Sat 8 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG JR Get Your Wigle On present an amateur staging of the fun-filled family classic, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Oct, Theatre Severn,

Shrewsbury

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING Ramps On The Moon present a new production of Shakespeare's raucous comedy. Every performance features the use of integrated creative sign language, audio description and captioning, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Oct, The Rep, B'ham

SHREK THE MUSICAL Amateur staging presented by West Bromwich Operatic Society, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER Must-see musical that follows the story of Tony Manero as he embarks on a reckless yet thrilling road to dancing success... Tues 4 - Sat 8 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

AN INSPECTOR CALLS JB Priestley's classic thriller, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

SISTER ACT Lesley Joseph and Sandra Marvin star in a brand-new production of the smash-hit musical, Tues 4 - Sat 15 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE HEAD GARDENER Brothers Jake and Warren Oldershaw design, draught and bring to life a beautiful garden in this unique show. The duo will also share stories and tell personal tales about why gardening is so important for mental health, Thurs 6 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

WAR OF THE WORLDS (ON A BUDGET) One-man musical comedy action adventure paying homage to HG Wells' classic story, Thurs 6 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

AUSTENTATIUS Improvised comedy play where a brand-new 'lost' Jane Austen novel is created from nothing more than a title suggested by the audience, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Oct, The Old Rep, Birmingham

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL JNR Amateur staging presented by the Pauline Quirk Academy, Sun 9 Oct, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

Kids Shows

PEPPA PIG'S BEST DAY EVER Live theatre for younger audiences, packed with adventure, fun, songs, games and laughter, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Oct, The Place, Telford

Light Entertainment

JUST NAACH Evening celebrating South Asian dance with a variety of entertainment and hosted by BBC Asian Network's Qasa Alom, Sat 1 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

COMEDIASIANs Show championing Asians in comedy and performance,

Sat 1 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

IMPROPERA Opera made up on the spot from audience suggestions - no script, no score, no safety net... Sat 1 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

A GALA CELEBRATION OF GILBERT & SULLIVAN Featuring favourites from The Mikado, The Pirates Of Penzance, HMS Pinafore and others... Sat 1 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

AN EVENING OF BURLESQUE Variety show blending cabaret, comedy, music, circus and burlesque, Sat 1 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

SHELL SUIT CHER: BELIEVE IN BINGO Tracey Collins (aka Tina Turner Tea Lady & Audrey Heartburn) brings her weird and wonderful character to the stage for another game of bingo with a difference... Sat 1 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

MATES Improv inspired by classic sitcoms such as Seinfeld, Frasier and Friends, Sat 1 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

QI (QUEER IMPROV) London's first all-queer improv group, featuring veteran improvisers, stand-up comics, actors and cabaret performers... Sat 1 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

COMEDY STORE PLAYERS The world's longest-running comedy show, Sat 1 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

GRAND THEFT IMPROV Featuring improv-scene veterans Dylan Emery and Phil Whelans, plus a special guest, Sat 1 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

IMPROBOTICS Tech-infused improv & science comedy show. Sun 2 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

FANDCO Combining seasoned players in virtual reality and motion capture with improvisers who are stepping into technology for perhaps the first time ever, Sun 2 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

DOG AND PONY SHOWS Animated show co-created by improvisers and a live audience, Sun 2 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

TRACK 96: THE RAPTURE Unique show in which members of the audience help determine whether the human race survives or is consigned to oblivion. Featuring hip-hop musical numbers based on audience stories and suggestions, Sun 2 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

THE DEAD OF NIGHT Storyteller Maris Reever shares six tales of murder, death and the supernatural, Mon 3 Oct, The Civic, Stourport

THE DREAMBOYS Thurs 6 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

noda
Brownhills Musical Theatre Company
Presents

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

THE PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE
CANNOCK

2ND-5TH NOVEMBER 2022

KERRY ELLIS & LOUISE DEARMAN

Stars of the West End



Don't miss West End Stars **Kerry Ellis** (*Wicked, We Will Rock You, Les Misérables & My Fair Lady*) & **Louise Dearman** (*Wicked, Evita & Guys & Dolls*) singing your favourite musical theatre songs, accompanied by the International Film Orchestra.

Dudley Town Hall
Thursday, 27th October 2022 - 7:30pm

BOROUGH HALLS 01384 812812 boroughhalls.co.uk

Tickets from - www.stars-of-the-west-end.co.uk



Forthcoming Shows 2022



01952 382382
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<p>music</p>  <p>CIRCUS OF HORRORS: THE WITCH Thurs 3 Nov @ 7.30pm</p>	<p>comedy</p>  <p>JOANNE MCNALLY: PROSECCO EXPRESS Sat 5 Nov @ 8pm</p>	<p>comedy</p>  <p>CHRIS MCCAUSLAND: SPEAKY BLINDER Fri 11 Nov @ 8pm</p>
<p>music</p>  <p>JO HARMAN & MIKE FARRIS Sat 12 Nov @ 7.30pm</p>	<p>music</p>  <p>ANYTHING FOR LOVE - THE MEAT LOAF STORY Wed 16 Nov @ 7.30pm</p>	<p>comedy</p>  <p>KEVIN BLOODY WILSON Thurs 17 Nov @ 8pm</p>
<p>music</p>  <p>CHRISTMAS MEMORIES Starring Neil Sands Thurs 24 Nov @ 2pm</p>	<p>music</p>  <p>GORDON HENDRICKS IS ELVIS Fri 25 Nov @ 7.30pm</p>	<p>music</p>  <p>SOUL & MOTOWN CLUB NIGHT WITH BACK 2 MIAMI Sat 26 Nov @ 7pm</p>

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Comedy sketches, impersonations and music combine in this nostalgic show celebrating the golden age of rock'n'roll and pop, from the '50s through to the '80s, Thurs 6 - Fri 7 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

AN EVENING WITH PSYCHIC MEDIUM CRAIG MORRIS Fri 7 Oct, Bilston Town Hall

DAVE ALLEN: A JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE AND DEATH Kieran Cunningham takes audiences on a journey through Irish comedian Dave Allen's stage career... Sat 8 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

SHEILA'S MENTAL HEALTH SHOW 10 - WORK - LIFE BALANCE Fusion of humour, song and dance as Sheila highlights unhelpful patterns of behaviour that can cause our lives to feel out of balance, Sat 8 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE STEPTOE AND SON RADIO SHOW Re-creation of a live radio recording reliving some of Steptoe's finest misadventures, Sat 8 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre



AN AUDIENCE WITH WAYNE SLEEP The renowned dancer and choreographer looks back over a glittering career spanning five decades, 'with a little bit of dance and a Q&A opportunity', Sun 9 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Dance

RAMBERT DANCE IN PEAKY BLINDERS The world premiere of a new dance-theatre event which delves into the back story of Tommy Shelby and the Peaky Blinders, until Sun 2 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

ACE DANCE & MUSIC: UNKNOWNREALMS Double bill in which 'six dancers rise from the ashes with powerful explosive dance that uncovers the rich history of lives lived; memories, human struggle and people letting go...' Thurs 6 - Fri 7 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

Talks & Spoken Word

AN EVENING WITH EMMA KENNY One of the UK's top psychologists talks serial killers, true crime, cancel culture and mental health, Sat 1 Oct,

Stourbridge Town Hall

AN EVENING WITH SIR GEOFF HURST England's 1966 World Cup hero talks about his illustrious career, Sat 1 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

SPOKEN LYRIK A night of spoken word with a focus on unlearning and re-learning the things we thought we knew about life, Tues 4 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

A KNIGHT WITH SIR GEOFFREY BOYCOTT Featuring anecdotes & personal film footage from an incredible career, plus a chance for the audience to ask Sir Geoffrey their own questions, Wed 5 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

POETRY JAM: LIVE! A monthly open-mic platform to jam, perform and click with a community of creatives, Thurs 6 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SIMON PARKER: A NIGHT OF ADVENTURE Join award-winning travel writer and broadcaster Simon Parker as he shares his fascinating story, Thurs 6 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

TALKING OF ADVENTURE: SIMON PARKER Fri 7 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

ADRIAN CHILES: THE GOOD DRINKER Birmingham Literature Festival event, hosted by Sue Beardsmore, Fri 7 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

MY DEAR OLD THINGS - AN EVENING WITH HENRY BLOFELD Hear hilarious tales of Johnnners, Arlott and other larger-than-life characters in the Test Match Special commentary box and on tour with England, Sat 8 Oct, The Roses, Kidderminster

Events

SHROPSHIRE OKTOBERFEST Featuring 150-plus ales, beers & ciders, a gin den, live music, a silent disco, tasty street food, a comedy club and much more, until Sat 1 Oct, Quarry Park, Shrewsbury

OKTOBERFEST See the front lawns transformed into a Bavarian-themed venue, complete with lederhosen-clad hosts and an oompah band, until Sun 2 Oct, Alton Towers, Staffordshire

AUTUMN DIESEL BASH A variety of classes and traction types roar through Shropshire and Worcestershire, until Sun 2 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

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, Birmingham

GANDEYS CIRCUS - ROAR! Thrills, excitement and laughter for the entire family, Fri 21 - Sun 30 Oct,



Shropshire Oktoberfest - The Quarry Park, Shrewsbury

Broadoaks Playing Fields, Telford, Shropshire

MUSEUM OF THE MOON Stunning artwork, suspended in the nave of the cathedral, until Mon 31 Oct, Lichfield Cathedral

RIDE TO THE WALL Thousands of motorcyclists from around the UK come together to remember the names engraved on the walls of the Armed Forces Memorial, Sat 1 Oct, National Memorial Arboretum, Staffs

JAFFA TRAMPOLINE & TUMBLING BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2022 Britain's finest trampoline, tumbling and DMT gymnasts battle it out for a chance to win the prestigious British titles, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Oct, Utilita Arena, B'ham

THE BONSAI SHOW LIVE Selling trees, tools, pots, soils and every manner of bonsai-related goods, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Oct, Telford International Centre

PICK YOUR OWN PUMPKIN Pick the perfect pumpkin from the 20-acre patch, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Oct, Lower Drayton Farm, Staffordshire

MADE IN SHROPSHIRE MARKET Meet and buy from local, independent makers and producers, Sun 2 Oct, Dudmaston Estate, Shropshire

ANTIQUES FAIR Packed with plenty of interesting stalls, Sun 2 Oct, Bantock House Museum, Wolverhampton

HORSE OF THE YEAR SHOW Fine dining, shopping and a wide variety of equestrian entertainment, all under one roof, Wed 5 - Sun 9 Oct, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

GRAND DESIGNS LIVE Based on Channel Four's Grand Designs, the live exhibition is the best place to find ideas, advice and products to make your home project a success, Wed 5 - Sun 9 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

SCAREFEST Celebrating 15 years of Scarefest with creepy scares, shocks and thrills, Fri 7 - Sun 9 Oct, Alton Towers, Staffs

VAPER EXPO A vaping-industry platform for launching new products and services, Fri 7 - Sun 9 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM BATANICAL BAT WALK A guided tour of the Gardens at night, to see what nocturnal species you can discover, Sat 8 Oct, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

PICK YOUR OWN PUMPKIN Pick the perfect pumpkin from the 20-acre patch, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Oct, Lower Drayton Farm, Staffordshire

WNBK UK SUPERNATURALS Chance for bodybuilders from across the world to compete for British titles, World invites and pro status, Sun 9 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham



Ride To The Wall - National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire

Gigs

URIAH HEEP Mon 10 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

COUNTING CROWS Mon 10 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham



PRATEEK KUHAD + VIOLET SKIES Tues 11 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MATT ANDERSEN & LAURA EVANS Tues 11 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

LEVERET Tues 11 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Shropshire



GODSMACK Wed 12 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE THREE DEGREES Wed 12 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

STEELEYE SPAN Wed 12 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

RUSS BALLARD + FUGITIVE Wed 12 Oct, KK Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

10CC Wed 12 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

VONDA SHEPARD Wed 12 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

GILBERT O'SULLIVAN Wed 12 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury
ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOU & THE LOW RIDERS Thurs 13 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



SPORTS TEAM Thurs 13 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CARAVAN Thurs 13 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

THE SENSATIONAL 60S EXPERIENCE Thurs 13 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

AS DECEMBER FALLS + THE TYNE + LED BY LANTERNS Fri 14 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

WELSHLY ARMS Fri 14 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PETE WYLIE & THE MIGHTY WAH Fri 14 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE SUBTERRANEANS Fri 14 Oct, The Rhodouse, Sutton Coldfield

MICHAEL STARRING BEN Fri 14 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Fri 14 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE ELTON JOHN SHOW Fri 14 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

THE LIQUID ENGINEERS - GARY NUMAN TRIBUTE Fri 14 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

SEA POWER Fri 14 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

JAMES TAYLOR Fri 14 Oct, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham



ULTIMATE GREEN DAY Fri 14 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

SOMEONE LIKE YOU - THE ADELE SONGBOOK Fri 14 Oct, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

KATE BUSH SONGBOOK Fri 14 Oct, Lichfield Guildhall

SHAPE OF YOU - ED SHEERAN TRIBUTE Fri 14 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE BUDAPEST CAFE ORCHESTRA Fri 14 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

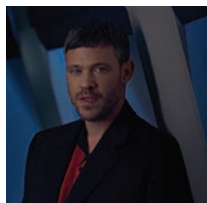
MADLADS Fri 14 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

DOMINO SUGAR Fri 14 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

CHINA CRISIS Fri 14 Oct, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, Shropshire

DEAD OBJECTIVES + DEADLINE 54 (GERMANY) + VENDETTAS Fri 14 Oct, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

WILL YOUNG Sat 15 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham



H.E.A.T + MASON HILL + COLLATERAL Sat 15 Oct, KK Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

THE PITMEN POETS Sat 15 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

HYBRID THEORY Sat 15 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

DARKSIDE - THE PINK FLOYD SHOW Sat 15 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ETERNITY ROAD Sat 15 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE VERTIGO BAND Sat 15 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

ROBBIE WILLIAMS Sat 15 - Sun 16 Oct, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

CHRISTONE 'KINGFISH' INGRAM Sun 16 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

VONDA SHEPARD Sun 16 Oct, Symphony Hall

QUASAR + SOLSTICE Sun 16 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

UNDERCOVER HIPPIE + MATT JOHNSON Sun 16 Oct, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR Sun 16 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

BOYZLIFE Sun 16 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

Classical

MAKI SEKIYA PIANO CONCERT

Programme comprises Bach Goldberg Variations, Wed 12 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

VOICES IN HARMONY: 25TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

Featuring guests Travelling Brass & Hilary Crowhurst, Sat 15 Oct, Halesowen Cornbow Hall, Halesowen

A SHROPSHIRE LASS

Featuring Holly Teague (soprano), William Smith (tenor), Marianne Hayes (violin), Michael Matthews (guitar) & Jean Atkin (narrator). Programme includes works by Patrick Larley, Martin Bussey, Paul Henley, Jean Atkin & Andrew Rudd, Sat 15 Oct, The Maidment Building, Shrewsbury School

BRNO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Featuring Dennis Russell Davies (conductor) & Chloë Hanslip (violin). Programme includes works by Janáček, Korngold & Dvořák, Sun 16 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Featuring Richard Laing (conductor). Programme includes works by Brahms, Hindemith, R. Strauss & Stravinsky, Sun 16 Oct, Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Comedy

JARRED CHRISTMAS, PAUL TONKINSON, NINIA BENJAMIN & MIKE GUNN Tues 11 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

TROY HAWKE Wed 12 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HELEN BAUER Wed 12 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOM ALLEN Wed 12 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

HAL CRUTTENDEN Wed 12 Oct, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

FRANCIS FOSTER Wed 12 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY

ROBINSON & COMICS TBC Thurs 13 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HELEN BAUER Thurs 13 Oct, Henry Tudor House, Shrewsbury



ED GAMBLE Thurs 13 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY

ROBINSON & COMICS TBC Thurs 13 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DAN NIGHTINGALE Thurs 13 - Sat 15 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SAM SERRANO & COMICS TBC Fri 14 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MC HAMMERSMITH, MANDY MUDEN & ANDY WHITE Fri 14 Oct, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

GARY DELANEY Fri 14 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DAVE GORMAN Sat 15 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

DALISO CHAPONDA, JACK CAMPBELL, JAMIE HUTCHINSON & DAMION LARKIN Sat 15 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

AXEL BLAKE Sun 16 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM COMEDY FESTIVAL FREE

HALF-DAYER PT2 WITH ADAM BEARDSMORE AND ELERI MORGAN, JAMES COOK, TOM LITTLE & LOVDEV BARPAGA AND RICKY BALSHAW Sun 16 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM COMEDY FESTIVAL FREE HALF-DAYER PT2 WITH JONATHAN HIPKISS, HANNAH SILVESTER, CRAIG DEELEY & GOOD KIDS Sun 16 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

ALFIE MOORE Sun 16 Oct, The Place, Telford

Theatre

WITCH HUNT A&E Comedy bring humour to a cautionary fairytale for our time - one which celebrates the wisdom of the witch, unpacks the notion of 'predator' and conjures a world of coven-ready weird sisters, Tues 11 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton



THE COMMITMENTS Coronation Street actor Nigel Pivaro stars as Da in this feelgood celebration of soul, based on Roddy Doyle's award-winning novel, Tues 11 - Sat 15 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

CALENDAR GIRLS Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Players present an amateur staging of the Tim Firth musical. All proceeds from the show will be donated to Dougie Mac Hospice, Tues 11 - Sat 15 Oct, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

GOODNIGHT MR TOM Ambient Productions present a staging of Michelle Magorian's endearing story of a World War Two friendship, Wed

Monday 10 - Sunday 16 October

12 - Thurs 13 Oct, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

SHREK THE MUSICAL Amateur staging presented by Curtain Call Productions, Wed 12 - Sun 16 Oct, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

UNKNOWN: A PLAY ABOUT HOMELESSNESS A verbatim play that dramatises the tragic but true story of one young person's journey from an abusive childhood to a life on the streets of Bath, Thurs 13 - Fri 14 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

SPAMALOT Amateur staging of the hit Monty Python musical, lovingly ripped off from the film Monty Python And The Holy Grail, Thurs 13 - Sat 22 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

MISTER SHAKESPEARE - AN INCOMPLETE WORK A new play exploring Shakespeare the man, the father, the actor and the entrepreneur, Fri 14 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

TWELFTH NIGHT The Handlebards reprise their hit production of Shakespeare's classic comedy, Tues 11 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

FAMILY ALBUM Alan Ayckbourn's new play, chronicling the trials, tribulations and temptations of three generations of one family across 70 years in the same home, Tues 11 - Sat 22 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme



TARTUFFE The return of Iqbal Khan's acclaimed production, in which Moliere's classic farce is set in the Sparkhill area of Brum, Fri 14 Oct - Sat 5 Nov, The Rep, Birmingham

CINDERELLA Festive fun in October(!), courtesy of Made To Measure Productions, Sat 15 Oct, The Place, Telford

MORGAN & WEST: UNBELIEVABLE SCIENCE Captivating chemistry, phenomenal physics, and bonkers biology in a fun science extravaganza for younger audiences, Sat 15 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

P*SSED UP PANTO: CINDERELLA One-off performance for older audiences - not for the fainthearted... Sat 15 Oct (7.30pm), The Place, Telford

LITTLE BITS OF RUINED BEAUTY Pentabus Theatre present a darkly comic play examining the subtle shift from cared-for to carer, and how dignity and independence are maintained in isolated rural areas, Sat 15 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

TESTAMENT OF YOOHA One-woman show examining the life of glamorous sitcom legend Yootha Joyce, Sat 15 Oct, Lichfield Garrick



SUNFLOWERS & SHEDS Recreated life-size allotments set the scene for this heart-warming family show, which centres on the friendship between a lonely old man and an Eastern European girl, Sat 15 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

LITTLE BITS OF RUINED BEAUTY Pentabus Theatre present a darkly comic play examining the subtle shift from cared-for to carer, and how dignity and independence are maintained in isolated rural areas, Sun 16 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KINKY BOOTS Amateur staging presented by Stourbridge Operatic Society, Sun 16 - Sat 22 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

Light Entertainment

ANYTHING FOR LOVE: THE MEAT LOAF STORY Wed 12 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

FORBIDDEN NIGHTS Combination of acrobatics, fire acts, aerial artists, circus performers and 'forbidden tease', Wed 12 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

BORED OFF MY TITS Tracey Collins' new comedy follows the life of Flo from Leeds: the most famous woman you've never heard of... Wed 12 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

A NIGHT AT THE MUSICALS Esteem Theatre Academy present the very best of West End and Broadway shows, Wed 12 - Thurs 13 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

THE BLACK BLUES BROTHERS Acrobatic tribute to the legendary cult movie, Thurs 13 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

CROONERS One-liners, laugh-out-loud silliness and musical numbers, in a show that pays homage to the greatest crooners of all time... Fri 14 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ALL STAR SUPERSLAM WRESTLING Fri 14 Oct, The Place, Telford

LES DAWSON: FLYING HIGH Jon Culshaw stars in a celebration of the much-missed comedy legend, Sun 16 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Dance

VINCENT SIMONE: TANGO PASSIONS Featuring Argentine tango specialist Paula Duarte as Vincent's leading lady, Mon 10 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

VINCENT SIMONE: TANGO PASSIONS Featuring Argentine tango specialist Paula Duarte as Vincent's leading lady, Thurs 13 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

LAVAGEM UK premiere in which performers use buckets, water & soap to explore the action of cleaning as a performative and political gesture, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

Talks & Spoken Word

DR RICHARD SHEPHERD: UNNATURAL CAUSES The forensic pathologist talks about the cases and bodies that have haunted him most... Wed 12 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Events

PUMPKINFEST Pick your own pumpkin, walk the giant scarecrow trail and enter the Little Scary House, Fri 14 - Sun 16 Oct, Park Hall Farm, Nr Oswestry, North Shropshire

GANDEYS CIRCUS Gandeys Circus returns with a brand-new action-packed Halloween Spooktacular Big Top show, Fri 14 - Sun 30 Oct, Trentham Gardens, Staffordshire

SCAREFEST Celebrating 15 years of Scarefest with creepy scares, shocks and thrills, Fri 14 - Mon 31 Oct, Alton Towers, Staffordshire

PICK YOUR OWN PUMPKIN Pick the perfect pumpkin from the 20-acre patch, Fri 14 - Mon 31 Oct, Lower Drayton Farm, Staffordshire

PUMPKIN PATCH From small to large and orange to white, there will be plenty of pumpkins to choose from, Fri 14 - Mon 31 Oct, Trentham Gardens, Staffordshire

MURDER MYSTERY EXPERIENCE - ANYTHING FOR A PRICE Be an intrepid detective in an immersive World War Two-themed murder-mystery experience whilst travelling on board a 1930s' heritage carriage for two full line trips, Sat 15 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Kidderminster

TRENTHAM MAKERS MARKET Showcasing award-winning local food & drink, art, craft and vintage artisans, Sat 15 Oct, Trentham Gardens, Staffordshire

HISTORIC RALLY FESTIVAL Featuring up to 80 specially selected cars, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Oct, Weston Park, Shropshire

THE NATIONAL SNOW SHOW Buy the most up-to-date gear, get the latest tips and advice from leading experts, and hear from top celebrities, athletes and Olympians, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

HALLOWEEN SPOOK-TACULAR All the fun of the farm plus a day packed with hair-raising Halloween activities, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Oct, National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffordshire

FREDDO'S CIRCUS SPOOKTACULAR The spookiest circus in town arrives at Cadbury World in this new show, Sat 15 - Sun 30 Oct, Cadbury World, Birmingham

BRICK OR TREAT: MONSTER PARTY The ultimate Halloween party, with many fang-tastic activities, Sat 15 - Mon 31 Oct, Legoland Discovery Centre Birmingham

ASCARIUM: TRICKS & TREATS Follow an immersive trail to help the witches and warlocks find their missing potion ingredients, and discover some of the spookiest creatures of the sea, Sat 15 - Mon 31 Oct, National SEA LIFE Centre B'ham

ORCHARD DAY Autumnal celebration, Sun 16 Oct, Dudmaston Estate, Shropshire



Pumpkinfest - Park Hall Farm, Nr Oswestry, North Shropshire

Gigs

NATALIE IMBRUGLIA Mon 17 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

AITCH Mon 17 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE PROCLAIMERS + JOHN BRAMWELL Mon 17 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CONOR MAYNARD Tues 18 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

AL STEWART WITH HIS BAND THE EMPTY POCKETS Tues 18 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

DAOIRI FARRELL Tues 18 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CASSIA Wed 19 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

WARGASM + SCENE QUEEN + KNIFE BRIDE Wed 19 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

OCEAN GROVE Wed 19 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TALON Wed 19 Oct, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

THE JIM WYNN SWING ORCHESTRA Wed 19 Oct, The Cathedral Hotel, Lichfield

ELLA HENDERSON Thurs 20 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

HOWARD JONES Thurs 20 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall



ABBAMANIA Thurs 20 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

DANIEL KARLSSON TRIO Thurs 20 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, W'hampton

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR Thurs 20 Oct, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

THE DRIFTERS Thurs 20 Oct, The Place, Telford

NIWEL TSUMBU AND EAMON CAGNEY DUO Thurs 20 Oct, SpArC Theatre, Bishops Castle, South

Shropshire

THE FILLERS (THE KILLERS OFFICIAL TRIBUTE BAND) Fri 21 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

RINA SAWAYAMA Fri 21 Oct, O2 Academy,

PULLED APART BY HORSES Fri 21 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

TOM CHAPLIN Fri 21 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BETH NIELSEN CHAPMAN + SCOTT MULVAHILL Fri 21 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

FRED ZEPPLIN Fri 21 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE ROCK ORCHESTRA BY CANDLELIGHT Fri 21 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent



ABBAMANIA Fri 21 Oct, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

MARTIN & ELIZA CARTHY Fri 21 Oct, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

PIGDAZE + DON'T FEED THE GOAT Fri 21 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THOMAS ATLAS Fri 21 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

GOOD HABITS Fri 21 Oct, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

LORRAINE BROWN Fri 21 - Sat 22 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

HAPPY MONDAYS + CAST Sat 22 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

POP WILL EAT ITSELF + SPAIRS Sat 22 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GILBERT O'SULLIVAN Sat 22 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

LUTHER STARRING HARRY CAMBRIDGE Sat 22 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

THE JAM'D Sat 22 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, W'hampton

PINK WITH VICKY

JACKSON & HER BAND Sat 22 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

HENGE Sat 22 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

CAROLE - MUSIC OF CAROLE KING Sat 22 Oct, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

RULE THE WORLD - TAKE THAT TRIBUTE Sat 22 Oct, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

MICROBABY Sat 22 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

RUFFNECKS Sat 22 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

BARRY STEELE AND FRIENDS - THE ROY ORBISON STORY Sat 22 Oct, The Place, Telford

MATT RIDLEY QUINTET + FERGUS MCCREDIE'S TRIO Sat 22 Oct, SpArC Theatre, Bishops Castle, Shropshire

NICK HART Sat 22 Oct, Herman Arts, Oswestry, Shropshire

DEAN LEWIS + ANSON SEABRA Sun 23 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE WOMBATS Sun 23 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ASTON MERRYGOLD Sun 23 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TONY HADLEY Sun 23 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR Sun 23 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

BILLY IDOL + TELEVISION + TOYAH Sun 23 Oct, Resorts World Arena, B'ham

SPACE ELEVATOR Sun 23 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE AUSTRALIAN PINK FLOYD Sun 23 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THEA GILMORE Sun 23 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



Classical

DARIUS BATTIWALLA ORGAN RECITAL Tues 18 Oct, Lichfield Cathedral

DOMINIC INGHAM QUINTET Featuring Dominic Ingham (violin), Jonny Mansfield (vibrphone), Miles Mindlin (guitar), Will Sach (double bass) & Jay Davis (drums), Wed 19 Oct, Westminster Theatre, Keele University

EUROPEAN UNION CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Programme includes works by Bach, Britten, Vaughan Williams & Elgar, Sat 22 Oct, United Reformed Church, Shrewsbury

Comedy

JEN BRISTER & MAUREEN YOUNGER Mon 17 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

ELF LYONS Tues 18 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MILTON JONES Wed 19 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

MAISIE ADAM Wed 19 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON & COMICS TBC Thurs 20 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JOE LYCETT Thurs 20 - Fri 21 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

VICTOR DANIELS & COMICS TBC Fri 21 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JORDAN BROOKES Fri 21 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

IVO GRAHAM Fri 21 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

RICHARD BLACKWOOD, MARLON DAVIS, SHABZ KARIEM & LOVELL SMITH Sat 22 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

ISY SUTTIE Sat 22 Oct, Old Rep, Birmingham

SEAN PERCIVAL, JONNY COLE & SOL BERNSTEIN Sat 22 Oct, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

DOM JOLY Sat 22 Oct, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

AL MURRAY Sat 22 Oct, Crewe Lyceum

HARRIET KEMSLEY Sun 23 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

AURIE STYLA & FRIENDS Sun 23 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

DIRTY DUSTING Crissy Rock, Leah Bell & Vanessa Karon star as three vintage cleaning ladies who chance on an unconventional way of making more cash, Mon 17 Oct, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

MUM'S THE WORD An emotional ride from pregnancy pitfalls to teenage tantrums, Tues 18 Oct, The Place, Telford

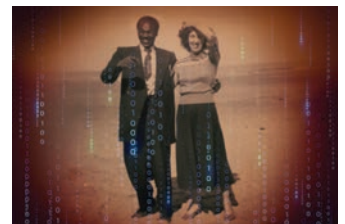
SHE'S ROYAL A brand-new stage production revealing the untold relationship between Her Majesty Queen Victoria and two extraordinary women of colour, Sarah Forbes Bonetta and Sophia Duleep Singh, Tues 18 - Wed 19 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

WE WILL ROCK YOU Sutton Coldfield Musical Youth Theatre present an amateur staging of Ben Elton's futuristic musical, set to a background of Queen's greatest hits, Tues 18 - Sat 22 Oct, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Stoke Repertory Theatre present an amateur staging of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved riverside tales, Tues 18 - Sat 22 Oct, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE CHER SHOW New musical in which three actors - Millie O'Connell, Danielle Steers and Debbie Kurup - tell the story of Cher's meteoric rise to fame, Tues 18 - Sat 22 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

QUIET REBELS Comprising forgotten stories of white working-class women who crossed the colour line to marry men of the Windrush Generation, Wed 19 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton



THE ADDAMS FAMILY Amateur staging presented by Tamworth Musical Theatre, Wed 19 - Fri 21 Oct, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

FALSE ACCOUNTS: EXPOSING THE POST OFFICE COVER UP A dark satire that gives a voice to those impacted by one of the most shameful travesties of injustice in the UK's history, Wed 19 - Sat 22 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE ADDAMS FAMILY Musical Theatre Stafford presents a comical feast that embraces the wackiness in every family, Wed 19 - Sat 22 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL: CORTEO Brand-new show promising 'creative set designs, jaw-dropping stunts and a beautiful storyline', Wed 19 - Sun 23 Oct, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

THE DEATH OF KING ARTHUR Interactive twist on the enduringly popular tales of Arthur and his knights, Thurs 20 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

GHOST THE MUSICAL Presented by Shrewsbury Musical Theatre Company, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 Oct, Theatre, Severn, Shrewsbury

MATILDA THE MUSICAL JR Amateur production based on Roald Dahl's much-loved book, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

THE VICAR OF DIBLEY Presented by Market Drayton Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 Oct, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

DIRTY DUSTING Crissy Rock, Leah Bell & Vanessa Karon star as three vintage cleaning ladies who chance on an unconventional way of making more cash, Sat 22 Oct, The Roses, Kidderminster

TWOPENCE TO CROSS THE MERSEY UK premiere of Helen Forrester's period drama, set in the early 1930s during the Great Depression, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Oct, Lichfield Garrick



Light Entertainment

PSYCHIC SALLY An investigative evening with one of the nation's favourite psychics, Tues 18 Oct, Prince of Wales Centre, Cannock

AN EVENING OF BURLESQUE Variety show blending cabaret, comedy, music, circus and burlesque, Sun 16 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Comedy sketches, impersonations and music combine in this nostalgic show celebrating the golden age of rock'n'roll and pop, from the '50s through to the '80s, Thurs 20 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE CHICAGO BLUES BROTHERS: A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES All-singing, all-dancing show featuring 'the greatest movie anthems of all time', Fri 21 Oct, The Place, Telford



ALL STAR SUPERSLAM WRESTLING Fri 21 Oct, The Place, Telford

AND THE AWARD GOES TO... Walsall Operatic Society present a red-carpet ride through much-loved musical-theatre hits, Fri 21 - Sat 22 Oct, The

Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

SING-A-LONG-A ENCANTO Sing your heart out with the show's live host, who will teach audiences dance moves and how to use the free props bag provided, Sat 22 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

LAST PODCAST ON THE LEFT Hosts Ben Kissel, Marcus Parks and Henry Zebrowski delve headlong into all things horror... Sat 22 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

INFUSION EMPORIUM Performance showcase featuring some of the most innovative choreographers and dancers to have emerged from the fusion scene, Sat 22 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

Dance

JASMIN VARDIMON: ALICE Choreographed re-imagining of Lewis Carroll's classic tale, Tues 18 - Wed 19 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

VINCENT SIMONE: TANGO PASSIONS Featuring Argentine tango specialist Paula Duarte as Vincent's leading lady, Thurs 20 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

SLEEPING BEAUTY Presented by the Classical Ballet & Opera House, Fri 21 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: INTO THE MUSIC Triple bill featuring two UK and one world premiere - all celebrating the marriage of music and movement, Fri 21 - Sat 22 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome



THE NUTCRACKER Presented by the Classical Ballet & Opera House, Sat 22 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Talks & Spoken Word

THE PUNDITS Evening of football chat from a panel comprising Paul Merson, Matt Le Tissier, Phil Thompson & Charlie Nicholas, Mon 17 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

SUGGS: A LIFE IN THE REALM OF MADNESS Join the Madness frontman as he tells his story in words and music, Wed 19 Oct, The Place, Telford

SUGGS: A LIFE IN THE REALM OF MADNESS Join the Madness frontman as he tells his story in words and



Cirque Du Soleil: Corteo - Utilita Arena, Birmingham

music, Thurs 20 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

THE BILLY WRIGHT STORY The captivating story of one of the country's greatest footballing legends, told by his daughter, Vicky, Thurs 20 Oct, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

Events

MOTORHOME AND CARAVAN SHOW 2022 See the new leisure vehicles direct from major manufacturers and dealers in an area larger than 12 football pitches, Tues 18 - Sun 23 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

ADULT NIGHTS The ultimate indoor Lego playground - completely kid-free, Fri 21 Oct, Legoland Discovery Centre Birmingham

GANDEYS CIRCUS Brand-new action-packed Halloween Spooktacular Big Top show for all the family, Fri 21 - Sun 30 Oct, Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Brierley Hill

BODENHAM'S PUMPKIN WALKS Enjoy a walk around the big pool, spotting the pumpkins and trying to work out the hidden word, Fri 21 - Mon 31 Oct, Bodenham Arboretum, Kidderminster

PUMPKINFEST Pick your own pumpkin, walk the giant scarecrow trail and enter the Little Scary House, Fri 21 Oct - Wed 2 Nov, Park Hall Farm, Shropshire

GCCF SUPREME SHOW Cat show organised by the world's oldest cat registry, the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy, Sat 22 Oct, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

AUTUMN FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL Featuring international street food from all over the world, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Oct, Tamworth Castle Grounds

AUTUMN FAIR New seasonal fair celebrating craftsmanship and love of

the handmade, Sat 22 - Mon 24 Oct, Royal Air Force Museum Midlands, Cosford, Nr Wolverhampton

SPOOKY SPECTACULAR Explore the pumpkin patch, enjoy the spooky show and have a go at the scratchard trail to win a special prize, Sat 22 - Sun 30 Oct, West Midland Safari Park, Bewdley

HALLOWEEN SPOOK-TACULAR All the fun of the farm plus a day packed with hair-raising Halloween activities, Sat 22 - Sun 30 Oct, National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffordshire



HALLOWEEN HALF TERM AT STOKESAY CASTLE Follow Dennis, Gnasher and friends to solve creepy clues on a fun family quest around the grounds, Sat 22 - Sun 30 Oct, Stokesay Castle, Shropshire

HAWKSTONE TRAILS & TERRIBLE TALES Meet live characters and follow a family-friendly trail, Sat 22 - Sun 30 Oct, Hawkstone Park Follies, Shropshire

HIDDEN WESTON AUTUMN WALK Join Head Gardener Martin Gee on a seasonal walk, Sun 23 Oct, Weston Park, Shropshire

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTORS FAIR Chance to view and purchase antiques and collectables from a wide variety of stallholders, Sun 23 Oct, Himley Hall, Dudley

RECORD AND CD FAIR Chance to buy and sell record collections and music memorabilia, Sun 23 Oct, Bantock House Museum, Wolverhampton

Gigs

WAGE WAR + THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA + SIAMESE Mon 24 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

SIXTIES GOLD 2022: THE ALL HITS SHOW! Mon 24 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE MAGPIES Tues 25 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MARLON WILLIAMS + REB FOUNTAIN Tues 25 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ALI GATIE Tues 25 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

DEEP PURPLE Tues 25 Oct, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

MARC ALMOND Wed 26 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GRAND SLAM + SONS OF LIBERTY Wed 26 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE PITMEN POETS Wed 26 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE VIRGINMARYS Thurs 27 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THOMAS HEADON Thurs 27 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO Thurs 27 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

MARTI PELLOW Thurs 27 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

STARS OF THE WEST END - KERRY ELLIS & LOUISE DEARMAN Thurs 27 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

SKIDS + I DESTROY Thurs 27 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

CATS IN SPACE Thurs 27 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

CUD Thurs 27 Oct, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

SAMANA Thurs 27 Oct, Herman Arts, Oswestry, Shropshire

THE WANNADIES Fri 28 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PAOLO NUTINI Fri 28 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KUMAR SANU + ALKA YAGNIK + UDIT NARAYAN Fri 28 Oct, Utilita



Reef - KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

Arena, Birmingham

WHITESNAKE UK + PURE PURPLE Fri 28 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

GAZ BROOKFIELD + HEARTWORK Fri 28 Oct, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

FROM THE JAM + BUZZCOCKS Fri 28 Oct, KK Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

MAGIC OF MOTOWN Fri 28 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

SERIOUSLY COLLINS Fri 28 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

STEFAN TAYLOR & THE SIGNATURES + LORRAINE SILVER Fri 28 Oct, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE HISTORY OF ROCK Fri 28 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

BELLA COLLINS Fri 28 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

BEVERLEY CRAVEN, JUDIE TZUKE, JULIA FORDHAM & RUMER Fri 28 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BON GIOVI Fri 28 Oct, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

RUTH & THE ARK Fri 28 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE ENDINGS Fri 28 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

ROXY MAGIC Fri 28 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth

ELKAPATH + DEATH IS A GIRL + COLLARS Fri 28 Oct, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

DIRTY DC - 2 NIGHT AC/DC WEEKENDER Fri 28 - Sat 29 Oct, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE FEELING + ALTAMEDA Sat 29 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

KARAN AUJLA Sat 29 Oct, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

THE DRIFTERS Sat 29 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

THE COUNTERFEIT STONES Sat 29 Oct, The Robin, Bilston

SMOKIN' PILCHARDS Sat 29 Oct, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

REEF Sat 29 Oct, KK Steel Mill, W'hampton

THE SENSATIONAL 60S Sat 29 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LAURA CORTESE & FRIENDS Sat 29 Oct, The Hive, Shrewsbury

THE VERTIGO BAND Sat 29 Oct, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

SKABURST Sat 29 Oct, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

THE UTOPIA STRONG Sat 29 Oct, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

THE SOAPGIRLS + HEALTHY JUNKIES Sat 29 Oct, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

THE DRIFTERS Sun 30 Oct, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE SIMON & GARFUNKEL STORY Sun 30 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE MARY WALLOPERS Mon 31 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

WHITNEY - QUEEN OF THE NIGHT Mon 31 Oct, Utilita Arena, B'ham

ACID NEW YORK CHEESECAKE Mon 31 Oct, The Hive, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Programme includes works by Vaughan Williams, Bach, Karg-Elert, Distler & Widor, Mon 24 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

STEVEN OSBORNE PIANO CONCERT Programme includes works by Beethoven, Schubert, Osborne & Rachmaninov, Thurs 27 Oct, Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

LONDON CONCERT ORCHESTRA: CLASSICAL SPECTACULAR Featuring Robert Emery (conductor), Ilona Domnich (soprano) and Luis Gomes (tenor). Programme features a fusion of classical music, lights and lasers, Fri 29 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

Comedy

PAUL CHOWDHRY Tues 25 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



BARBARA NICE, GARY DELANEY, OLIVIA LEWIS, CAREY MARX & KIMMIU FASHION Wed 26 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

KEVIN BRIDGES Wed 26 Oct, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

NICK HELM Wed 26 Oct, Old Rep, Birmingham

THE ALTER COMEDY CLUB Wed 26 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

HARRY HILL Wed 26 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON & COMICS TBC Thurs 27 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SIMON DAY Thurs 27 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JARRED CHRISTMAS, PAUL TONKINSON, NINIA BENJAMIN & MIKE GUNN Thurs 27 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

JOSH JONES Fri 28 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham



SOFIE HAGEN Fri 28 Oct, Old Rep, Birmingham

DANNY CLIVES & COMICS TBC Fri 28 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

FRANCES KEYTON, ALEX LEAM, STELLA GRAHAM, BENNET KAVANAGH & RACHEL JACKSON Fri 28 Oct, National Brewery Centre, Burton upon Trent

JIM DAVIDSON Fri 28 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

HARRY HILL Fri 28 Oct, Crewe Lyceum

HAL CRUTTENDEN Sat 29 Oct, Old Rep, Birmingham

TOM STADE Sat 29 Oct, Bilston Town Hall

MARK THOMAS Sat 29 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

ANGELOS EPITHEMIU Sun 30 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JOANNE MCNALLY Sun 30 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

SEAN MCLOUGHLIN Sun 30 Oct, Old Rep, Birmingham

Theatre

BUTTERFLIES Tangled Feet & Half Moon Theatre present an uplifting tale of friendship, courage and facing your fears, Mon 24 Oct, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

WOMEN IN CHEMISTRY: WOMEN CAN SAVE THE WORLD Interactive theatre production from the STEM Response Team, focusing on the achievements of three women who have changed the world of science, Mon 24 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

DRACULA'S GUEST Brother Wolf presents a haunting Victorian tale based on the 'bone-chilling' works of Bram Stoker, Tues 25 Oct, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

THE OSMONDS: A NEW MUSICAL Jukebox musical telling the story of the brothers from Utah who took the world by storm... Expect a chart-topping list of anthems, including Crazy Horses, Love Me For A Reason and Puppy Love, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

SHAKERS Revamped version of John Godber & Jane Thornton's iconic play, which puts women's lives front and centre, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER Must-see musical that follows the story of Tony Manero as he embarks on a reckless yet thrilling journey to dancing success... Tues 25 - Sat 29 Oct, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

OLIVER! Manor Musical Theatre present an amateur staging of Lionel Bart's much-loved show, Tues 25 - Sat 29 Oct, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

THE WIZARD OF OZ Amateur production presented by Five Star Theatre, Wed 26 Oct, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

IS THAT A BOLT IN YOUR NECK? Gonzo

Moose present a fast-paced show fusing spooky paranoia, surreal nightmare and frantic farce, Thurs 27 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton



THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME Telford & District Light Operatic Players (TADLOP) present an epic story of love, acceptance, justice and heroism, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 Oct, The Place, Telford

R.A.F AND READY Tower Players present a brand new and original play based around RAF Hednesford during the 1940s & '50s, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 Oct, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

THE ADDAMS FAMILY Amateur production presented by The Phoenix Academy of Film & Theatre Arts Shrewsbury, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LILIES ON THE LAND Letters from and interviews with the original Land Girls provide the basis for this portrait of some of Britain's pluckiest unsung heroes, Sat 29 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

TRULY JACK THE RIPPER Don't Go Into The Cellar present an atmospheric one-man show adapted from classic stories with a Ripper theme, Sun 30 Oct, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

TILL I DIE An exploration of the gender stereotypes of the slasher genre. Expect 'fake blood, that famous phone call scene, and an outspoken feminist', Mon 31 Oct - Tues 1 Nov, The Rep, Birmingham



STRICTLY BALLROOM THE MUSICAL Kevin Clifton and Maisie Smith star in a brand-new musical directed and co-choreographed by Craig Revel Horwood, Mon 31 Oct - Sat 5 Nov, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE MOUSETRAP Agatha Christie's 'genre-defying' murder-mystery - and the world's longest-running play, Mon 31 Oct - Sat 5 Nov, The Alexandra, Birmingham

Kids Theatre

MILKSHAKE! LIVE: MONKEY'S MUSICAL Join children's favourites Paddington, Daisy & Ollie, Milo, Noddy, Pip and Posy for an interactive show promising dance, music and plenty of laughter, Mon 24 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

DISNEY'S HOCUS POCUS: FILM PLUS ORCHESTRA Watch the classic Disney film whilst a full orchestra performs its soundtrack live, Tues 25 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

FIREMAN SAM Join Sam, Penny, Elvis, Station Officer Steele and Norman for an all-singing, all-dancing action-packed show, Tues 25 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE ZOO THAT COMES TO YOU Hour-long show for children in which life-sized puppets are used to give voice to some of the world's most endangered animals, Wed 26 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

WIND IN THE WILLOWS Box Tale Soup use puppetry and an original score in a new production of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved riverside tale, Wed 26 Oct, Crewe Lyceum Theatre



RAPUNZEL Songs, dance routines and plenty of jokes feature in this brand-new adaptation of the popular fairytale, Wed 26 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

I SPY WITH MY LITTLE EYE Children's theatre featuring singalong songs and games, Thurs 27 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

JURASSIC LIVE 2022 A roarsome educational and interactive stage show for younger audiences, Sat 29 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

WIND IN THE WILLOWS Box Tale Soup fuse puppetry and an original score in a new production of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved riverside tale, Sat 29 Oct, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

JUSTIN LIVE: THE BIG TOUR Join Justin Fletcher for a fun-packed family show full of dancing, comedy and slapstick fun, Sun 30 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MILKSHAKE! LIVE: MONKEY'S MUSICAL Join children's favourites Paddington, Daisy & Ollie, Milo, Noddy, Pip and Posy for an interactive show promising dance, music and plenty of laughter, Sun 30 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall



Kerry Ellis and Louise Dearman - Dudley Town Hall

DON'T GO INTO THE CELLAR - TRULY JACK THE RIPPER One-man show adapted from classic stories based around the Ripper theme, Sun 30 Oct, Tamworth Castle

Light Entertainment

THE STEPTOE AND SON RADIO SHOW Re-creation of a live radio recording reliving some of Steptoe's finest misadventures, Wed 26 Oct, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

THE BUGLE 15TH ANNIVERSARY LIVE SHOW Featuring live co-hosts and guests on a big screen delivering 'freshly-hewn' topical satire, Thurs 27 Oct, Old Rep, Birmingham

STARS OF THE WEST END FEAT. KERRY ELLIS & LOUISE DEARMAN Musical extravaganza featuring popular West End and movie hits, Thurs 27 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

SEND IN THE CLOWNS: FROCKY HORROR SHOW! A macabre drag celebration of spooky musical-theatre favourites. Featuring performances from Dahliah Rivers, Blü Romantic and Alanna Boden, Thurs 27 - Mon 31 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

MASSAOKE HALLOWEEN SPECIAL Huge singalong of hairbrush anthems from across the decades, Fri 28 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

BROWN GIRLS DO IT TOO: MAMA TOLD ME NOT TO COME Award-winning podcast exploring the lives and relationships of British Asian women, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

TRES TRES HALLOWEEN A cabaret show promising a 'silly & saucy night to remember', Sat 29 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

QUEENZ: THE SHOW WITH BALLS X Factor and Union J star Jaymi Hensley stars in a sequin-clad pop party featuring reimagined classics

from The Spice Girls, Lady Gaga, Little Mix, Britney, Whitney, and everything in between, Sat 29 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

AN EVENING OF BURLESQUE Variety show blending cabaret, comedy, music, circus and burlesque, Sat 29 Oct, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

STORY BAZAAR Disturbing and abundant feast of storytelling from two of Europe's most accomplished and exciting storytellers. Sun 30 October, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

X-TREME MAGIC Master illusionist Richard Cadell is joined by Richard Jones (Britain's Got Talent winner), John Archer (Penn & Teller: Fool Us), Solange Kardinaly & Arkadio, for a show packed with fire, illusion and death-defying stunts, Mon 31 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE FAIRY TALE OF NEW YORK Irish-inspired Christmas show featuring an international cast of singers, musicians & dancers, Mon 31 Oct, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Dance

SWAN LAKE Moldova-based Crown Ballet presents its version of one of the most romantic ballets of all time, Mon 24 Oct, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: COPPELIA Sir Peter Wright's production of a joyous classic from the golden age of ballet, Wed 26 - Sat 29 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome



FABRIC - FATHERHOOD Bharatanatyam, multilingual spoken text and sign



Half term family fun at Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

language combine in this original work featuring three characters, each revealing different experiences of fatherhood, Thurs 27 - Fri 28 Oct, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

YOUR HEART IS TOO LOUD Sweetshop Revolution present a new dance work about love, loss, memory and resolution, Fri 28 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

JAIVANT PATEL DANCE: DEEPAVALI, THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHT An uplifting family-friendly performance that pays tribute to the late, great Lata Mangeshkar, Sat 29 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham



ACE DANCE & MUSIC: UNKNOWNREALMS Double bill in which 'six dancers rise from the ashes with powerful explosive dance that uncovers the rich history of lives lived; memories, human struggle and people letting go...' Sat 29 Oct, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

DREAM Ballet Cymru presents a new full-length production based on Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, Sat 29 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

Talks & Spoken Word

DR RICHARD SHEPHERD: UNNATURAL CAUSES The forensic pathologist talks about the cases and bodies that have haunted him most... Tues 25 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

AN EVENING WITH LUCY WORSLEY The 'Queen of History' delves into the fascinating life of the Queen of Crime, Agatha Christie, Tues 25 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

AN EVENING WITH EMMA KENNY One of the UK's top psychologists talks about the cases and bodies that have haunted him most... Thurs 27 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DR RICHARD SHEPHERD: UNNATURAL CAUSES The forensic pathologist talks about the cases and bodies that have haunted him most... Thurs 27 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

LEVISON WOOD: THE ART OF EXPLORATION Join the critically acclaimed author and explorer as he shares his experiences and learnings from a lifetime of travel, Fri 28 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

STEVE PARRISH: THE PARRISH TIMES Join the motorcycling hero as he shares the uncut version of his biography, The Parrish Times, Fri 28 Oct, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

FI GLOVER & JANE GARVEY Join the award-winning broadcasters as they chat about their lives, both in front of and behind the microphone, Sun 30 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LEVISON WOOD: THE ART OF EXPLORATION Join the critically acclaimed author and explorer as he shares his experiences and learnings from a lifetime of travel, Sun 30 Oct, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

LEO HOULDRING: CLOSER TO THE EDGE Brand-new show in which one of the world's best climbers brings audiences up to date with his audacious expeditions, Sun 30 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

SIR RANULPH FIENNES: LIVING DANGEROUSLY Join the intrepid explorer as he shares a lighthearted and strikingly poignant journey through his life, Mon 31 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MY DEAR OLD THINGS - AN EVENING

WITH HENRY BLOFELD Hilarious tales of Johnnners, Arlott and other larger-than-life characters in the Test Match Special commentary box and on tour with England, Mon 31 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

Events

HALF TERM FUN AT THE FLAXMILL Free activities for 3 to 9 year olds, Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

OCEAN FILM FESTIVAL Brand-new collection of 'the world's most incredible ocean films', Wed 26 Oct, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE GHOST WALK Explore the ghostly avenues and alleyways of ancient Bridgnorth, where, lurking in the shadows, are 10 ghosts, Wed 26 - Thurs 27 Oct, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth

HALLOWEEN NIGHTS Follow the trick-or-treat stations around the 26-acre site, Wed 26 - Sat 29 Oct, The Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

GHOSTLY TALES: FAMILY FRIENDLY GHOST TOUR Hear well-known Aston ghost stories, Thurs 27 - Fri 28 Oct, Aston Hall, Birmingham

GHOST TRAIN Scary characters sneak through the train's corridors as you pass through haunted stations to Arley - but will you make it back alive? Thurs 27 - Sat 29 Oct, Severn Valley Railway

SCREAM TRAIN 18+ There's something roaming the train under the cover of darkness... Hold on to your handrail and lock your compartment door because they're coming to get you... Thurs 27 - Sat 29 Oct, Severn Valley Railway

THEATRE TOUR A tour of the UK's first purpose-built repertory theatre, The Old Rep, Fri 28 Oct, The Old Rep, Birmingham

MIND BODY SPIRIT WELLBEING FESTIVAL Three day festival of spiritual and inspirational activities, Fri 28 - Sun 30 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

AHOY THERE MATEY! Set sail into the limestone mines and caverns in search of the Dudley pirates, Fri 28 - Mon 31 Oct, Dudley Canal & Caverns



Mind Body Spirit Wellbeing Festival - NEC, Birmingham

OUT OF TIME..MOD NIGHT OCTOBER A 1960s-influenced Mod night, Sat 29 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

TRICK OR TREAT A rare screening of the cult 1986 teen horror/comedy, Sat 29 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

HALLOWEEN GIANT CINEMA SCREENINGS Re-live some cinema classics on a giant screen, Sat 29 Oct, Burton Town Hall, Burton upon Trent

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR Featuring more than 500 stalls packed with thousands of collectables for sale, Sun 30 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

STORY BAZAAR Storytelling for Halloween, Sun 30 Oct, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

SPOOKY MAGIC LESSON Join Paul the Magician as he helps you create your very own spooky magic trick, Sun 30 Oct, Aston Hall, Birmingham

HALLOWEEN PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP A spooktacular workshop with experienced photography lecturer Lee Chapman, Sun 30 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

ARTISAN AND FOOD FESTIVAL Meet makers and artisans with indoor and outdoor stalls, Sun 30 Oct, Himley Hall, Dudley

CONSERVATION CLEANING DEMONSTRATION - FOSSIL CLEANING An opportunity to see some original fossils and learn how the conservation cleaners look after them, Mon 31 Oct, Biddulph Grange Garden, Staffordshire



Dr Richard Shepherd: Unnatural Causes - various venues across the Midlands

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A Tribute to Nile Rodgers and Chic

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SAT 22 OCTOBER




FRIDAY 28 OCTOBER

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FRI 25 NOVEMBER



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SAT 3 DECEMBER

LIVE BAND - GIANT SING-ALONG LYRICS
THE GREATEST SMASH HITS OF ALL TIME



THURS 22 DECEMBER

FLASH

A TRIBUTE TO
QUEEN



ROSES

FRI 30 DECEMBER



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