

Birmingham

ISSUE 471 APRIL 2026

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inside:

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Lee Mead stars in hit musical
Barnum at the Hippodrome



JOHNNY & JUNE...

telling the story of country
music's most infamous couple



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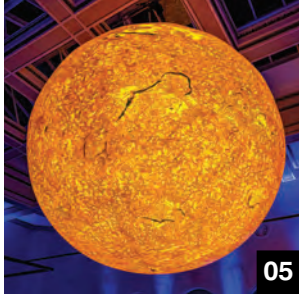


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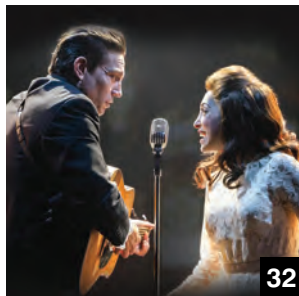
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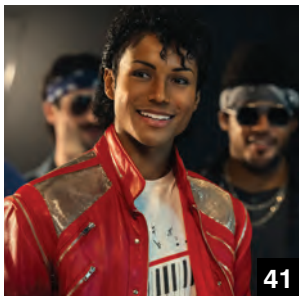
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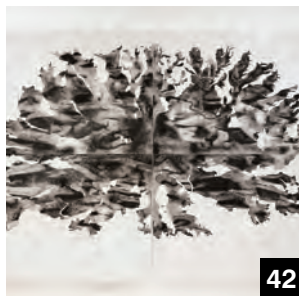
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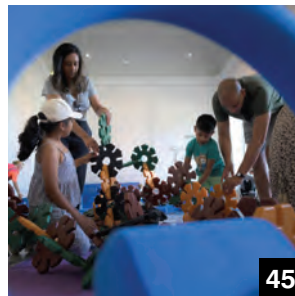
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What's On

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Family open day kicks off celebrations at the Alex

Birmingham theatre The Alexandra is 125 years old next month - and to celebrate, the venue is holding a free-to-attend Open Day on Saturday 2 May. Commenting on the event, Venue Historian Julia Kirby said: "I'm really excited to welcome visitors to our Open Day, to take a close look at programmes and memorabilia from our archives, some of it nearly 100 years old. Backstage tours will offer visitors the chance to find out more about the history of the Alex, as well as providing an insight into how we work our theatre magic!"



Brand-new version of The Snowman at The Rep

A brand-new production of Raymond Briggs' The Snowman will premiere at Birmingham Repertory Theatre later this year. The original Rep production debuted in 1993 and charmed audiences for 32 years, in the process becoming the venue's longest-running show. The new version will run at The Rep from Tuesday 20 October to Sunday 1 November. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit birmingham-rep.co.uk

Midlands premiere for Dog Man: The Musical

A 'hilarious and heartfelt' new theatre show is coming to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre at the end of the summer. Based on a bestselling book series by Dav Pilkey, Dog Man: The Musical shows at the venue on Friday 28 & Saturday 29 August. The production visits the Black Country having played to packed houses in the US, where it enjoyed multiple sell-out off-Broadway seasons and numerous tours. To find out more about the show and book tickets, visit the website grandtheatre.co.uk

Paranormal Activity is heading to the Midlands!

Hit West End Paranormal Activity will tour to the region later this year and next. The critically acclaimed production, which has been inspired by the blockbuster film franchise of the same name, stops off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra from Tuesday 27 to Saturday 31 October; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, from



Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 February 2027; and Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, from Monday 15 to Saturday 20 March. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website of the relevant theatre venue.

Hippodrome festival set to showcase new work

Birmingham Hippodrome's New Work & Artist Development department has



announced the programme for its Origins Festival: Celebrating New Work event. Taking place from Monday 11 to Saturday 16 May, the festival will showcase new work by eight Birmingham-based artists who have been part of the Hippodrome's 18-month Origins residency programme. The event will feature hands-on workshops, input from industry-leading practitioners and organisations, and a scratch night for artists to share works-in-progress. To check out what's happening and when, visit birminghamhippodrome.com

The Piano grand final to be staged in the Midlands

The grand final of hit Channel Four series The Piano will take place at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Tuesday 9 June, bringing together six talented pianists from across the UK for a live finale. For further information and to purchase tickets, visit bmusic.co.uk

Pop-up art show comes to the Hare & Hounds pub

Renowned Sheffield artist Pete McKee is bringing a free-to-view pop-up exhibition to

the Hare & Hounds pub in Kings Heath next month (Sunday 10 May). An exploration of his life and art, The Boy With A Leg Named Brian will be followed by an evening performance from The Everly Pregnant Brothers, the 'comedy ukulele band' of which Pete is a member.

Celebrated restaurant opens a new city outlet

Birmingham food & drink destination Society has a brand-new trader - celebrated local restaurant Asha's. Renowned for its refined approach to Indian cuisine, Asha's has produced a new menu 'designed for a relaxed, street-food-style dining experience while staying true to the brand's roots'... To find out more, visit the website at societybirmingham.com



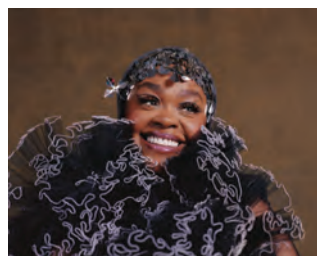
Groundbreaking dinosaur show visiting the region

A groundbreaking live dinosaur production is coming to Birmingham next month, offering families the chance to 'step beneath the skin and bones of one of the most formidable predators in history'. Taking the title Inside The T Rex, and visiting Shirley's Village Hotel from Monday 25 to Sunday 31 May, the show is a 90-minute live interactive experience designed for children aged six-plus. Combining documentary-level Jurassic science with large-scale staging, the production explores how the Tyrannosaurus rex was built for survival. To find out more and book your place, visit insidethetrex.co.uk



Academy show for Grammy star

Three-time Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter & actress Jill Scott will perform at Birmingham's O2 Academy on Tuesday 29 September as part of her epic To Whom This May Concern world tour. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit MissJillScott.com



December date for The Pogues

The Pogues are heading for Birmingham... The legendary Celtic punk band will perform at the city's O2 Academy on Thursday 3 December as part of a 'greatest hits' tour. Tickets for the concert can be purchased at gigsandtours.com

A Christmas gig for Tony Hadley

Tony Hadley will be getting into the festive spirit at Symphony Hall in Birmingham in November (Thursday the 19th) when he brings his Christmas Big Band Tour to the venue. The show will feature classic crooner tracks and Spandau Ballet hits mixed together with some seasonal favourites. To book your seat for a yuletide treat, visit bmusic.co.uk



Back To The Future stage show coming to Birmingham

The stage musical version of Back To The Future is visiting the city next year. The award-winning West End show, based on the much-loved 1985 film of the same name starring Michael J Fox, stops off at Birmingham

Hippodrome - as part of its first-ever UK tour - from Tuesday 9 March to Saturday 10 April 2027. Tickets are available via the venue's website at birminghamhippodrome.com



Tosca role for Sir Bryn Terfel

Sir Bryn Terfel is lending his talents to an early-summer performance of Puccini's Tosca at Birmingham's Symphony Hall (Saturday 27 June).

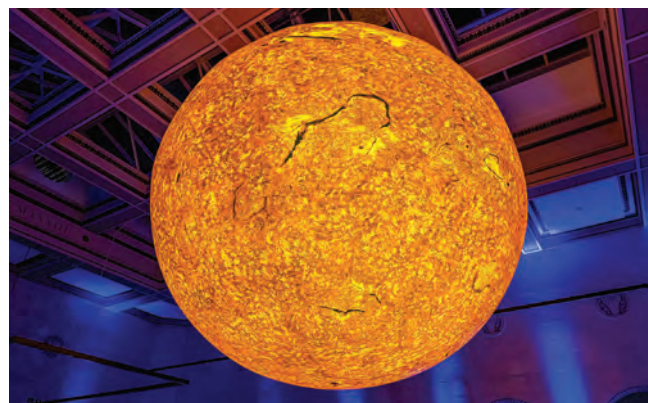
Sir Bryn will be joined by fellow high-profile soloists Anna Patalong and Gwyn Hughes Jones for a concert conducted by City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra Music Director Kazuki Yamada... To check out the full line-up of talent and find out more about the opera itself, visit cbso.co.uk

A new space adventure for Peppa Pig

A brand-new, limited-time seasonal experience for pre-school fans of Peppa Pig is arriving at Birmingham's NEC this spring. Peppa Pig Space Adventure is a walk-through experience blending storytelling and play in a calm, welcoming environment. To find out more, including the dates on which the show will be taking place, visit the website at PeppaPigSpaceAdventure.co.uk

Touring artwork visits Birmingham

British artist Luke Jerram's Helios, a large-scale sculpture of the Sun, is now available to view at Birmingham's The Exchange. The touring artwork, featuring high-resolution NASA imagery that reveals astonishing details of the solar surface, will remain on display at the city centre venue until Saturday 7 November.



New season of shows launched by the Garrick

Hit musical *Blood Brothers* is touring to Lichfield Garrick Theatre next month. The much-loved West End forms part of a line-up of late-spring shows at the venue that also includes John Barrowman's *My Life In Musicals*, Le Navet Bete's *Oh Zeus!* - 'an all-out hilarious ride through Greek mythology' - Midlands legend Bev Bevan on the drums for *Quill*, and the acclaimed touring production of children's favourite *The Tiger Who Came To Tea...* To check out the theatre's complete line-up of shows and to book tickets, visit lichfieldgarrick.com

Stopgap dance at MAC

Integrated dance company Stopgap is visiting Birmingham's Midlands Arts Centre this month to present a show featuring Deaf, Disabled, neurodivergent and non-disabled creatives. Taking the title *Lived Fiction*, the production shows at the venue on Thursday 23 April. To find out more and book tickets, visit the website at macbirmingham.co.uk

Erdington Players on the lookout for new members

Amateur dramatics company Erdington Players are holding a mid-month 'open house' with the aim of attracting new members. Taking place from 2pm to 4pm on Saturday 18 April, the event will give interested parties a chance to take a behind-the-scenes tour of the company's HQ at Erdington's United Reformed Church. Other on-the-day attractions include sound, lighting and set-design demonstrations, showcases of costumes and historic artefacts, showreels of previous productions, and an opportunity to take part in table reads of scripts.

The Coffin Works to host a Peaky Blinders day

Birmingham's award-winning Coffin Works Museum is hosting a special *Peaky Blinders*-themed event on Monday 6 April. Attractions on the day include a guided tour of the venue, blacksmith demonstrations, displays of props and memorabilia connected to the hit television series, and a chance to meet Fiona Bevins, who creates authentic *Peaky Blinders*-style caps. For further information and to book tickets, visit the venue's website at coffinworks.org



New Full Monty tour to stop off at the Hippodrome

Birmingham Hippodrome will next year play host to a new production of *The Full Monty*. Based on the same-named film, the hit stage musical will show at the venue from Monday 28 June to Saturday 3 July 2027.

The production is touring in celebration of the original movie's 30th anniversary. To find out more and book tickets, visit the show's website at fullmontytheplay.com

Bikers taking the lead...

Motorcycle enthusiasts are being given the chance to lead more than 3,500 bikes during one of the biggest and most popular biker events in the region. Midlands Air Ambulance Charity is giving two lucky riders the opportunity to ride at the head of a procession as part of its *Bike4Life Ride Out & Festival* on Sunday 17 May. Bikers who have already booked their place in the ride-out, and anyone who buys a ticket by 5pm on Thursday 9 April, will automatically be entered into the draw. To find out more and purchase a ticket, visit the website at bike4lifest.com

Events to commemorate the Battle of Worcester

Worcestershire is this year commemorating the 375th anniversary of the Battle of Worcester - the conflict that brought the English Civil Wars to a dramatic close. Museums Worcestershire has joined with Visit Worcestershire to create and promote a year of events. Presented under the umbrella title of *English Civil War 375*, the programme of attractions and activities includes exhibitions, creative workshops, and 'spectacular' living-history experiences. Commenting on the initiative, Visit Worcestershire's Lorna Robinson said: "The county played a decisive role in the struggle between monarchy and parliament, and Worcester's place in that journey is

powerful, profound and should be globally recognised. *Civil War 375* gives us the opportunity to tell this story with pride, to attract new audiences, to drive heritage tourism, and to showcase the incredible assets, businesses and experiences we have across the county."

A full list of related events taking place across Worcestershire can be accessed via the website at visitworcestershire.org

Brunch-munching fun...

A global events company is turning Birmingham into a hotbed of brunch-munching fun across the next few months.



The long-established Like It Love It organisation is hosting five themed bottomless brunch get-togethers at the city's Bierkeller venue between now and the end of the summer.

Abba fans get two bites of the cherry, with an Abba-inspired brunch on Saturday 2 May being followed by an Abba Drag brunch on Saturday 1 August.

There are also Saturday brunches themed around the Spice Girls (Drag) on 23rd May, *High School Musical* (6th June) and *Country Superstars* (4th July).

To find out more - including details of other brunches taking place later in the year - visit the company's website at likeit-loveit.com

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Good Friday St John Passion with Ex Cathedra

03 April | Symphony Hall



Thank You For The Music

11 April | Town Hall



Spanish Galicia Symphony Orchestra

11 April | Symphony Hall

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Top Comedians

Family Shows

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Films with Live Music

Podcasts Live

Dance Stars

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David Olusoga: A Gun Through Time

21 April | Town Hall



There's a Monster in your Show

23 & 24 April | Town Hall



Pop in & try!

B:Eats at Symphony Hall:

11am-4pm Mon-Sat & pre-show



Aljaz & Janette: Let's Face the Music & Dance

26 April | Symphony Hall



Yes: The Fragile Tour

27 April | Symphony Hall



(...) What's Not There: A New Perspective on Miles

27 April | Town Hall



Jim Henson's Labyrinth in Concert: Film with Live Band

28 April | Symphony Hall



RuPaul's Drag Race UK Season 7 Tour

28 April | Town Hall

bmusic.co.uk

Ozzy Osbourne's Ozzfest set to make a 2027 return

Heavy metal and hard rock festival Ozzfest will return next year.

Founded by Sharon and Ozzy Osbourne in the mid-1990s, the event will make a comeback at Aston Villa's Villa Park stadium. Dates are yet to be announced. Ozzfest was last held back in 2018.

Gardens in the Gardens

A selection of images from this year's International Garden Photographer of the Year show will go on display at the Botanical Gardens in Birmingham next month. Presented in large format on the venue's outdoor-exhibition structure, the featured images will be available to view from Wednesday 13 May to Monday 29 June.

UncannyCon at the ICC

Fans of Danny Robins' Uncanny podcast and TV show will have the chance to get together later in the year, courtesy of a one-day convention. UncannyCon 2026 takes place at Birmingham's ICC on Saturday 21 November. To book your place, visit the website at buytickets.at/uncanny



Andy Warhol exhibition to open in Wolverhampton

Wolverhampton Art Gallery will next month present Andy Warhol: Art Star - an Artist Rooms exhibition created in partnership with Tate and National Galleries of Scotland.

Opening on Saturday 23 May and running until Sunday 4 October, the display includes both iconic and lesser-known drawings, screenprints, paintings and photographs from the 1950s to the 1980s. Images of Marilyn Monroe, The Beatles, Elizabeth Taylor and Warhol's famous 'Campbell's Soup' all feature.



All for one! Swashbuckling festive fun at the RSC...

The Royal Shakespeare Company will this Christmas team up with critically acclaimed theatre ensemble Told By An Idiot to present a brand-new anarchic production of The Three Musketeers (Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Saturday 28 November - Saturday 9 January). Described by its publicity as 'a theatrical feast full of joy and a raging zest for life', the show is adapted and directed by Told By An

Idiot's co-founder & artistic director, Paul Hunter. Commenting on the production, Paul said: "This raucously funny, romantic adventure yarn has something for everyone. Over the festive period, we look forward to entertaining families in the style that only live theatre can do. 'One for all, and all for one!'" To find out more about the show and book your tickets, visit the website at rsc.org.uk

Great Birmingham Run finishers' medal unveiled

With the AJ Bell Great Birmingham Run returning to the city's streets early next month (Sunday 3 May), organisers have unveiled this year's highly anticipated finishers' medal: 'a bold celebration of Birmingham's architecture, culture and world-changing music scene'.



Commenting on the medal, Paul Foster, CEO of The Great Run Company, which organises the event, said: "This year's design is a tribute to the city's global influence on music and culture. From the heavy riffs that changed rock forever, to Birmingham's unmistakable purple identity, we wanted to create a medal that runners will be proud to wear long after they've crossed the line."

Drone show to light up Alexander Stadium

Classical music will meet cutting-edge technology in a special drone-show event at

Birmingham's Alexander Stadium next month.

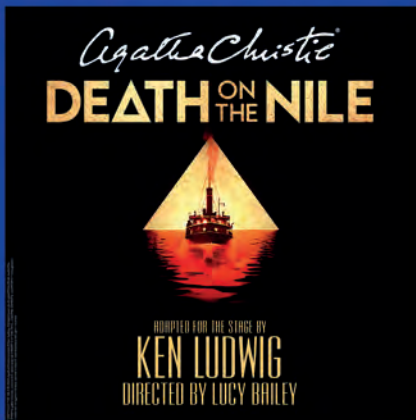
Featuring a talented quartet, DroneArt Show takes place at the venue on Friday 15 & Saturday 16 May. To find out more, visit thedroneartshow.com

Gospel choir celebrates Paul Simon's Graceland

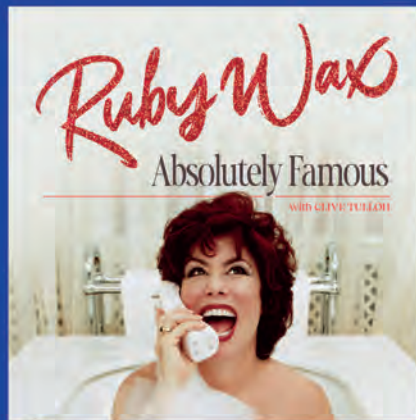
The London African Gospel Choir are visiting Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre in the winter with their highly acclaimed Graceland Reimagined show - a celebration to mark the 40th anniversary of Paul Simon's classic album Graceland. Tickets for the Friday 11 December concert can be purchased by visiting thelagc.com



A SPARKLING SEASON AWAITS



Tue 7 – Sat 11 Apr



Sat 18 Apr



Tue 21 – Sat 25 Apr



Tue 5 – Sat 9 May

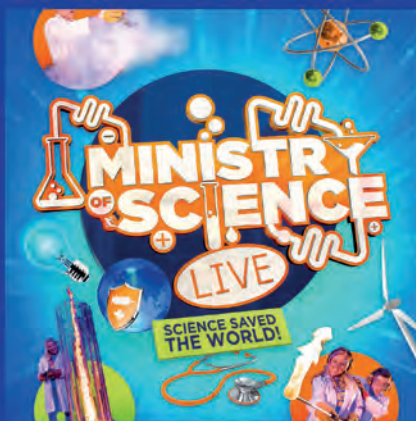


Mon 11 - Sat 16 May

CAP Thu 14 May 7.30pm
AD 16 Sat 16 May 2.30pm



Sat 23 May



Mon 25 May



Tue 26 – Sat 30 May

Thu 28 May 7.30pm



Tue 2 – Sat 6 Jun

Thu 4 Jun 7.30pm

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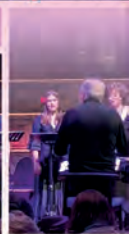
Ex Cathedra

Jeffrey Skidmore Artistic Director

Good Friday: Bach St John Passion

Bach's masterpiece places us at the heart of this profound story, powerfully retold on Good Friday with dramatic choruses, poignant solo arias and achingly beautiful orchestration. Ex Cathedra Choir and Baroque Orchestra are joined by soloists **Sebastian Hill** as the Evangelist, **Thomas Lowen** (Jesus) and **Lawrence White** (Pilate).

Symphony Hall, Birmingham
Fri 3 April, 2pm



The Garden of Love

Love and nature are in full bloom in this programme of evocative imagery and shimmering harmony. Works by Palestrina, Claude Le Jeune and Bobbie-Jane Gardner are performed by Ex Cathedra's talented Scholars Ensemble.

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DYING MATTERS

BrumYODO's annual festival, A Matter Of Life And Death, returns to the city this month as part of Dying Matters Awareness week. Featuring an array of themed activities, the event creates a space for those undergoing experiences of death, dying, loss and care giving...

Birmingham's A Matter Of Life And Death Festival returns this spring with a host of events for people of all ages.

The annual festival, which aims to encourage open and honest conversations about death, dying and grief through arts and activities, includes poetry, walking tours, family-based craft and gardening workshops, visits to a local undertaker and a crematorium, film, comedy, discussions and displays.

Organised by Birmingham-based community-interest company BrumYODO, the actual festival takes place from Saturday 2 to Saturday 16 May, but the programme also features events and installations in April and June.

BrumYODO board member Helen Tomblin says: "This year's festival is absolutely packed with activities which will appeal to very different audiences. We have fun-filled workshops, and we also provide safe discussion spaces where people can ask questions of professionals, explore all aspects of death and dying, and share memories of people they have loved who have died.

"We are delighted to be partnering with so many wonderful local organisations and people to create a festival which we hope will appeal to all."

A Matter Of Life And Death takes over Community Corner in the Made In Birmingham gallery at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG) in April, May and June, presenting a programme of free drop-in activities and changing displays. These include an exploration of how bereaved people are using artificial intelligence.

Kicking off the main weeks of the festival, Birmingham-based Mexican-led arts collective ITZATNA Arts will host creative workshops for children and families inspired by the Mexican Day of the Dead.

A new event for this year is Grief Through Clay at Oddingley Hall in Northfield and BMAG, where community artist Jemma Mellor and Northfield Neighbourhood Network Scheme invite people to decorate small sculptures to honour a loved one who has died.

Striking a humorous note is Comedy At The Museum - Dead Funny, which is being held in BMAG's tearoom, and there's discussion inspired by composting and flower arranging at Northfield Community Garden's Worm Food event.

Both Waseley Hills Crematorium in Rubery and A Natural Undertaking in Kings Heath are holding open events to allow visitors to see behind the scenes and ask questions. And A Natural Undertaking in Hall Green also hosts My Funeral Wishes, an informal workshop with resources available to encourage people to share their funeral choices with their loved ones.

The festival features a handful of walking events. Pictures, Poetry & Memories in the Lickey Hills invites people to a wellbeing walk hosted by former Birmingham Poet Laureate Giovanni Esposito, AKA Spoz, and poet & therapeutic writing practitioner Holly Winter-Hughes. Tour guide Kevin Thomas, meanwhile, is joining forces with the festival for the Discover Birmingham Catacombs walking tour. Then BrumYODO and Birmingham Botanical Gardens host a

Remembrance Walk & Nature Reflection, exploring key 'in memory' places within the gardens.

Other events include a film night at Stirchley Open Cinema and poetry at Thimblemill Library in Smethwick. Muslim healthcare chaplain & author Zamir Hussain will join with grief literacy provider Evolve & Flourish to talk about her work at Sisters, Sabr And Soft Hearts at the Dolphin Centre in Ward End.

There will also be hosted but informal conversations on offer, including a breakfast-time Death Discussion at Dishoom restaurant - led by new partner the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Charity - and Death Cafes at Birmingham Central Library, The Heath Bookshop and Arco Lounge in Harborne.

BrumYODO board member Emma Waterford says: "We're really excited about this year's festival. The programme has so much choice, and we still have events to announce. Many of the activities are free or low cost, to ensure they can be as accessible as possible. Most do need to be booked, and we know from previous years that some of the most popular events fill very quickly, so our advice is to take a look at our website and secure yourself a place as soon as you can."

.....

BrumYODO's A Matter Of Life And Death takes place from Saturday 2 to Saturday 16 May. For further information about the festival, visit brumyodo.org.uk

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Live music from across the city...

Booshle G

The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham,
Thurs 30 April

Keeping his songs simple, honest, and straight from the heart, Booshle G hails from South Africa and admits that finding his place in the sun has been no walk in the park...

"For years, I didn't understand what people saw in me," he explained to Indie Music Center. "My dad used to tell me not to compare myself to anyone... and that maybe I should just give myself a chance. I didn't listen... But at some point, something shifted. Not a big moment with fireworks... Just a quiet voice inside that said, 'Stop waiting. Do it your way. Do it now.'"



Tori Amos

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 10 April

Tori's Symphony Hall concert comes in support of her 18th studio album, *In Times Of Dragons*, due for release on May the 1st.

"[The new album] is a metaphorical story about the fight for democracy over tyranny," says the award-winning singer-songwriter, in expressing her opinions about the current state of politics and society in the US. "[It reflects] the current abhorrent non-accidental burning down of democracy."



Cat Burns

O2 Academy, Birmingham, Fri 10 April

Streatham-born one-time Southbank busker Cat Burns has certainly come a long way in a comparatively short space of time.

Her days spent busking took place pre-Covid, and having then made a lockdown splash on Tik Tok, she was ready to conquer the world by the time the UK reopened after the pandemic. Success came quickly; 2022 saw her song *Go* - a blend of gospel and pop

influences with guitar-led indie music - reach number two in the UK singles chart... Debut album *Early Twenties* followed two years later.

Cat recently came to the attention of a wider audience when she took part in the first-ever series of BBC's *The Celebrity Traitors*. She made it to the final alongside fellow traitor and ultimate winner Alan Carr.

Richard Ashcroft

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Sat 4 April

Acoustic ballads, indie-rock anthems, soulful beats and celebrity admirers abound in the world of Richard Ashcroft, former frontman and sole songwriter for alternative rock band The Verve.

Ashcroft went solo a quarter of a century ago. Since then, he's established himself as a major player on the UK music scene, with Coldplay's Chris Martin hailing him "the best singer in the world".

His Birmingham appearance - following on from supporting his pals Noel and Liam Gallagher on their Oasis tour - comes just a handful of months after the release of his seventh studio album, *Lovin' You*.



nevertheless difficult to pigeonhole. Later albums introduced elements of both art rock and folk rock to their classic sound, always underpinned by lead singer Roddy Woomble's poetic lyrics and consummate gift for melody.

Baskery

Hare & Hounds, Birmingham, Thurs 23 April

Comprising three Swedish sisters - Greta, Stella and Sunniva Bondesson - who've been creating music since they were old enough to hold instruments, Baskery play a combination of classic roots music and Americana. In the process, the self-titled Queens of Banjopunk generate a sound that oozes style and playfulness. The sisters have released six albums to date, most recently *The Young Sessions - Live To Tape* in 2024.



Idlewild

O2 Institute, Birmingham, Fri 10 April

Scottish rock band Idlewild came to prominence with a sound that very much obeyed the conventions of 1990s British indie-punk guitar music, but which was

SINGULARLY SINISTER

**Kym Marsh is starring in a new stage adaptation of
hit 1990s psychological thriller Single White Female...**



A new stage adaptation of 1992 film *Single White Female* tours to the region next month and stars one-time Coronation Street actress Kym Marsh, who flexes her stage-acting muscles in the complex role of Hedy - an outwardly charming character who isn't quite what she seems.

Kym here talks about taking on the iconic role, how the gripping story has been updated, and explains that even for diehard fans of the movie, there will still be a few surprises in store...

"This is my villain era!" says Kym Marsh, with a laugh so warm it's hard to imagine the actress being remotely villainous.

Yet, in her latest role as Hedy, in the world-premiere stage adaptation of the 1992 psychological thriller *Single White Female*, audiences are in for a surprise.

The play is on a six-month tour of the UK, taking in 20-plus venues across the country. It tells the story of recently divorced mum Allie - played by TV presenter, actor & author Lisa Faulkner - who is trying to juggle childcare with starting a new business. When she advertises for a lodger to help make ends meet, along comes the seemingly delightful Hedy - but quickly we see that all is not as it seems, and their new friendship takes a sinister turn.

Kym, perhaps best known for starring as Michelle Connor in *Coronation Street* for 13 years, is no stranger to playing characters with a hidden darker side: "Actually, my last few roles have been pretty villainous - and I love it! It's so easy to play the typical moustache twiddler. But I want to make Hedy a little bit more layered and actually have people be a bit taken aback - unsure if she's good or bad right up to the last minute - and even feel sorry for her, particularly near the end."

So how did Kym come to take on such an interesting and chilling role?

"After I played Alex Forrest in the stage version of *Fatal Attraction*, we started to have discussions about other projects. We came up with the idea of *Single White Female* because it had never been done before. It was also within that kind of genre of those epic, classic films that had a real impact on people at that time. So I've been attached to it from the start and it's really exciting - the character of Hedy is so interesting and challenging to play. Without giving too much away to anyone who hasn't seen the film, the character is very complex, and from an acting point of view, it gives me an opportunity to explore so many different places that you don't necessarily go to normally."

Updated by author, journalist & broadcaster Rebecca Reid, the stage version of *Single*

White Female has a focus on social media and explores themes of ambition, identity and isolation.

"There obviously wasn't social media back in the 90s," says Kym. "But if you know the essence of the plot and what it's about, it works very well..."

"I think the world of social media is a wonderful place, but it's also to be handled with care, because there is always that element of danger about it. And when you have a character like Hedy, and then you put social media into her hands, it can be tricky to the point of dangerous."

Will fans of the original still recognise the film they know and love - and will they be treated to the iconic stiletto moment?

"The essence is very much still the same. But the story is slightly changed. As well as being more up to date, it's based in the UK rather than being in America..."

"So there *are* differences, but the big, important, epic moments are still in there. And it's very much still a thriller with a real shock factor - we want to have people on the edge of their seats. I think people will very much love the story, whether they've seen the film or not. As for the iconic stiletto moment - you'll have to wait and see!"

Kym says that being in several stage productions recently, including Mike Leigh's *Abigail's Party*, has given her a real love of live theatre. She also continues to relish her television career.

"I'm so lucky that I'm able to enjoy both - being in front of the camera and also being on stage. Obviously, on stage you get an instant kind of reaction, which is very rewarding; you know immediately how much people are enjoying what you're doing. Television can be very different from that. There's a real buzz being on stage; you get that atmosphere straight away. And I really like travelling around, seeing different places and some beautiful theatres. It's interesting that everywhere you go, the audience reacts differently to different parts [of the show]. Then again, in front of a camera, you always get to go again!"

So does she get nervous?

"Of course I do! Theatre is way more nerve-

wracking, that's for sure. My dad passed away last year, and I've found myself standing in the wings before I go on stage saying, "Come on Dad, come on Dad," because you want to feel that someone is helping you out when you're out there. You really hope that nothing's going to go wrong, that you give a great performance and people enjoy it."

Mother-of-three Kym hasn't stopped working since she auditioned for TV show *Popstars* 25 years ago, joining the band *Hear'Say*. She says she's grateful that she has such a warm reception from the British public.

"I feel very fortunate and very lucky that I've been allowed to have the career that I've had, and to have been received in the way that I have. I think maybe it's because I come across as a sincere individual. I've never tried to hide anything. I make mistakes and hold my hands up, and I think that gives me a 'girl next door' feel - perhaps everyone knows someone a bit like me."

"I was brought up by a family who are very caring and open. My family means everything to me. I absolutely adore my kids and my grandchildren. I think I try to only ever be caring and open, too, when I'm being interviewed or meeting new people, because, to be honest, I don't know how to be anything else!"

There are many places on the *Single White Female* tour that Kym is excited to visit - but the very last night 'on the road' will be particularly memorable for her: "We will be in Malvern, and it's my 50th birthday. I'm not sure exactly what we'll be doing that night after the final show, but I do know Malvern won't be quite as peaceful as it usually is!"

.....

Single White Female shows at The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Tuesday 5 to Saturday 9 May, the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, from Tuesday 26 to Saturday 30 May, and Malvern's Festival Theatre from Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 June



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/royalbirmcons



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Classical music from across the city...



CBSO: Brahms' German Requiem

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 23 April

It took Johannes Brahms three years to compose this stunning work, a large-scale piece - his longest-ever composition - for chorus, orchestra, a soprano and a baritone soloist. The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra here perform the work with the

assistance of soprano Sophie Bevan (pictured) and baritone Gareth Brynmore John.

The concert programme also features Purcell's Funeral Music For Queen Mary.

Narratio Quartet

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire,
Wed 22 April

Bringing rhetorical flair and expressive depth to Beethoven's string quartets is all in a day's work for the Narratio Quartet, a hugely talented ensemble who've been wowing classical music lovers for the better part of two decades.

Having completed the full Beethoven cycle on multiple occasions, more recent times have seen the quartet taking a dive into different waters, adding works by Brahms, Schubert and Mendelssohn to their impressive repertoire.



Francesca Massey Organ Recital

Birmingham Town Hall, Mon 27 April

Birmingham-born Francesca Massey held several prestigious organ scholarships before becoming assistant director of music at Peterborough Cathedral, sub-organist at Durham Cathedral and director of music at Rochester Cathedral. With four critically acclaimed solo recordings to her name, she here displays her sublime talent by performing a programme that features works by Bach, Dupré, Whitlock, Farrington and Middelschulte.

Ex Cathedra: Good Friday St John Passion

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 3 April

Bach's St John Passion continues to be one of classical music's most profound experiences. Although more modest in its conception than the composer's St Matthew Passion, the work contains some of the most beautiful and lyrical moments of Bach's entire output.

Ex Cathedra's Good Friday performance frames the Passion with chorale preludes, motets, readings and communal hymns... Later in the month (Saturday the 25th), the ensemble head for Wolverhampton's St Peter's Collegiate Church to perform The Garden Of Love, a concert featuring a programme of 'evocative imagery and shimmering harmony'.



Spanish Galicia Symphony Orchestra

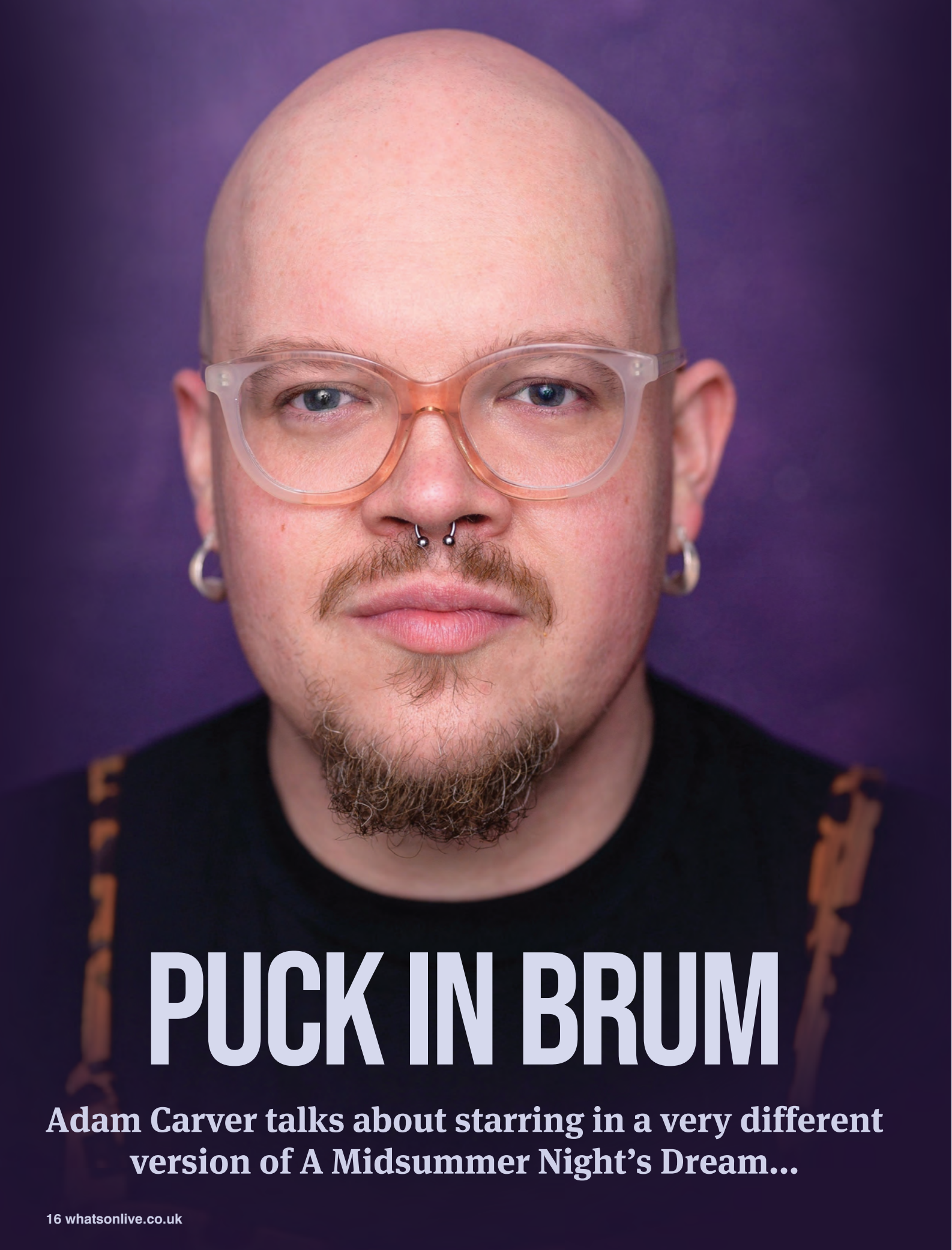
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sat 11 April

In part coming to prominence by virtue of their online videos, the Spanish Galicia Symphony Orchestra are here making their Symphony Hall debut.

Alongside foot-tapping dances and evocative folk melodies, their programme also features Rodrigo's Concierto de Aranjuez and two works by Maurice Ravel: his enchanting fairytale suite Mother Goose and the iconic Boléro...

The orchestra are joined by the brilliant Thibaut Garcia, an award-winning French guitarist whose Spanish origins have significantly influenced his style of play.



A close-up portrait of Adam Carver, a bald man with blue eyes, wearing clear-framed glasses, a nose ring, and hoop earrings. He has a mustache and a goatee. He is wearing a black t-shirt with orange lettering on the shoulders. The background is a solid purple color.

PUCK IN BRUM

Adam Carver talks about starring in a very different version of A Midsummer Night's Dream...

Shakespeare's romantic comedy A Midsummer Night's Dream is being given a Brummie makeover at the city's Rep theatre this month. With the venue's artistic director, Joe Murphy, at the helm, the new production sees cabaret sensation Adam Carver take on the role of Puck - as well as writing some of the show's music. What's On recently caught up with local celebrity Adam to find out more...

Best known as cabaret favourite Fatt Butcher, Adam Carver is this month taking on another guise - as the mischievous fairy Puck in a new production of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream at Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

Having built up a successful career as an actor, director, creator & performer, Adam is not only appearing in the play but also writing some of its music.

"I've been looking for opportunities to be part of a team and to get to work with new people. I'm used to performing on my own and also making or organising. So to be here first and foremost as an actor, and also writing some songs for the show - those are the two things that I've been looking for."

Puck is a lynchpin of both the magic and the comedy of A Midsummer Night's Dream. When four young people escape to the woods in an attempt to realise their belief in true love, Puck is ordered by the fairy king, Oberon, to help them - but manages to cause mayhem instead.

Adam is interested in the traditions around the trickster sprite: "Puck is a fairy but also goes by the name of Robin Goodfellow, who is this kind of folklore creature from British mythology. I've been thinking quite a lot about what it means to be stepping into a character with this cultural mythological status.

"At the time this play was written, for many people sprites and fairies were real and a very credible part of the world and people's understanding of self.

"And the story of the play is less fantastical than it might appear. The characters are in quite a difficult social order at the start of Dream. We all remember the 'fairies in the woods' stuff, but it sits in the context of escapism and needing or relying on moments of transformation, which in this case are magic.

"I'm really excited about the magical power of Puck - it feels very akin to the kind of drag I've been doing. I believe my work has a kind of spiritual element to it; it's about bringing communities together and congregating. The mythical, folklorish, troublesome fairy is very exciting because although it's fantasy, it feels very real to me in that way.

"And the story doesn't really happen without

Puck. He's the instigator throughout all of this. He's a kind of agitator and troublemaker - and I can relate to a lot of those things."

Taking to the stage at The Rep has a particular resonance for Adam: "I grew up watching shows at The Rep. I was very fortunate when I was a teenager to get lots of free tickets for shows through an initiative called A Night Less Ordinary, which was a Government initiative to get young people into the theatre.

"A lot of the shows that I saw were so formative to me in terms of thinking about the kind of work I wanted to make or the things I was interested in, so it's like a full-circle opportunity to come back to that main stage some years later and hopefully be that for someone else."

Adam is keen for other young people to experience the joy of live theatre: "One of the things I'm really pleased about with A Midsummer Night's Dream is that The Rep has made 5,000 tickets for £5 available to under-25s, and that's a real commitment to making theatre accessible for them."

Co-directed by Rep Artistic Director Joe Murphy and the theatre's deputy artistic director, Madeleine Kludje, the new production takes place in a contemporary Brummie setting. The show forms part of the theatre's new 'Made in Birmingham' strand, which has been launched by Joe, who took the helm at the theatre in Spring 2025.

Adam is keen to be part of this localising of theatre. "I fundamentally believe that it's the responsibility of a regional producing venue like The Rep to be in dialogue and reflective and representative of the city that they're in. It feels to me like this is kind of the first big project of a new team at The Rep, and so it's a real statement of intent from them, I think. I feel very privileged to be part of that, and I'm also really pleased to see that that's the direction they're going. It feels important.

"I guess there's a worry it could have been tokenistic, but it feels like it's been so integrated into each part of the decision-making of the project so far. The fact local actors have come in via open calls and some are making their professional debuts is a real statement of The Rep's intentions.

"It's hard being an actor based outside London. There are very few opportunities for

actors living in Birmingham to work where they live. The Rep listened to what people said and made steps towards that."

Performing Shakespeare is both a little daunting but also a real opportunity to try something new.

"The biggest challenge for me is that there's a kind of reverence and responsibility to the language. I've spent so much of the last five or six years doing my own work, being able to say whatever I want and be off-book. So to be tied to this text, which so many people are so familiar with, is something I'm excited about but also a bit trepidatious.

"I'm particularly excited by the fact I've been asked to write music for the show, so I'm turning some of Puck's big speeches into songs. Opportunities like this rarely come along, and it feels like it's really allowing me to sink my teeth into making this role for myself.

"It's been beautiful to take these pieces of verse and turn them into music. I'm figuring out this musical language for magic to happen in."

Adam has turned to some well-known pop bands and artists as a springboard for the songs.

"I've taken inspiration from British 80s and 90s queer dance music, so I'm thinking Bronski Beat, Erasure, the Eurythmics and a bit of Kate Bush. The show is set in a contemporary time and has this magical festival kind of element where you just go off into the woods and strange and wonderful things happen."

Adam is optimistic the production will encourage people to discover A Midsummer Night's Dream afresh: "I hope that people take a sense of something familiar presented in an unexpected way. Maybe they'll find new meaning or ideas in this centuries-old play. I hope they find something new and exciting in our Brummie interpretation. It's going to feel like a quite different take on A Midsummer Night's Dream."

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A Midsummer Night's Dream shows at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Saturday 25 April to Sunday 24 May

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Comedy previews from across the region...

Suzi Ruffell

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 24 April;
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 29 May

Gay, quirky and delightfully self-deprecating, Suzi Ruffell has well and truly made her mark in the challenging world of comedy. Alongside her stand-up shows, she's written books and contributed as a writer to television series including *8 Out Of 10 Cats*, *The Last Leg* and *Stand Up For The Week*. She also co-hosts smash-hit podcasts *Big Kick Energy* with Maisie Adam and *Like Minded Friends* with Tom Allen, as well as having her very own podcast: *OUT With Suzi Ruffell*.

Away from comedy, Suzi lists her 'likes' as 'cooking' and 'those cats with no hair'.



Jonny Cole

Walsall Arena, Fri 10 & Sat 11 April; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 14 - Wed 15 April; The Civic, Stourport, Thurs 23 - Fri 24 April

"It's difficult for me to put my brand of comedy into an industry-standard soundbite," says local comedian Jonny Cole. "There are a lot of people who love Black Country humour and who'd love to go into a rough & ready Black Country pub just to listen to the banter - and that's exactly what I do. I've absorbed Black Country humour the whole of my life. I take it out of that pub - where people wouldn't dare go, in case they got their teeth knocked out - and I put it into a safe, controlled environment where they can enjoy it."



Max Amini

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 13 & Tues 14 April

With publicity that states he's the most-watched comedian on Instagram and has the fastest-growing comedy channel in the US, Iranian-American comedian Max Amini brings together eccentric impressions and novel storytelling to explore a wide range of topics. In the process, he pokes fun at the

quirks of modern society and highlights the challenges of navigating cultural differences. No slouch when it comes to improvisation, Max is promising a joyride of a show 'that will leave you in stitches and rolling in the aisles'.

Josh Widdicombe

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 18 April;
Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 5 May

Peddling a nice line in exasperated humour, Devon-raised funnyman Josh Widdicombe pumps out his cleverly crafted gags at a brisk pace, hitting the mark with the vast majority of his observational material. Widdicombe jokes include: "Hotdogs cause bum cancer - that was the original slogan for McDonald's before 'I'm loving it'."

Josh visits the Midlands this month and next with his new touring show, *Not My Cup Of Tea*. It's an endeavour which he describes as 'shorter and with lower production values than Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, but funnier and with more references to tea'.



aims to 'find positivity in life, despite all the evidence to the contrary in politics and his own health' (Matt was diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer in 2023 but is now disease-free).



Fun! With Barbara Nice

The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire, Fri 24 April; The Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 1 May; Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Fri 5 June

"In these dark days, we need to find fun whenever we piggin' can," says everybody's favourite Kings Heath housewife, the incomparable Mrs Barbara Nice.

Barbara is taking her latest 'laugh-out-loud' offering to venues across the region over the next couple of months.

"Laughter is the noise we make when we make connections," she says. "It's like two live wires meeting; two opposing forces or ideas meet head on, and the energy of the clash between them makes a thunderclap of laughter!"



Matt Forde

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Wed 15 April;
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 4 June;
The Glee Club, Birmingham, Wed 8 July

A one-time advisor to New Labour (he gave up his membership of the party when Jeremy Corbyn became leader), Midlands-born Matt Forde is this month returning to the region with *Defying Calamity*, a show in which he



IN A LEAGUE OF HIS OWN

**Mark Gatiss makes his RSC debut in a role
he's always wanted to play...**

TV star, writer, director and double Olivier Award-winning actor Mark Gatiss is set to make his Royal Shakespeare Company debut as the titular character in Bertolt Brecht's *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*. It's a genuine stars-aligning moment for Mark - not only has he coveted the role of Arturo since he was a teenager, but the play itself has never been more relevant...

When Mark Gatiss received an unexpected message from theatre director Seán Linnen last year, its content could scarcely have been more exciting to the actor, writer, director & producer, who's best known as a member of comedy troupe The League Of Gentlemen and for co-creating BBC TV series *Sherlock*.

"He texted me out of the blue and said 'Have you ever thought about doing Arturo Ui?' I said I've thought of nothing else since I was 15!" he laughs.

Actors often tell you they've 'always wanted' to play their latest role, but in the case of County Durham native Mark, there's evidence to support the claim.

"I saw [the play] at Darlington Civic Theatre [now Hippodrome] with Robin Askwith from the *Confessions* films in the lead role. Every time I tell people that, they go 'honestly, really?' He was so good, and I can still remember parts of it so vividly, as it kind of blew my mind.

"I thought, God this is so powerful - especially the final speech when he says 'Although the world stood up and stopped the bastard, the bitch that bore him is in heat again.' The room went black, and we all sat there in the audience kind of stunned. It was the first show I saw that made me go 'Wow, this is what it can do; this is the power of theatre.'"

Written in 1941 and set in 1930s Chicago, Bertolt Brecht's play - concerning itself with a mobster and small-time crook who will stop at nothing to control the local cauliflower racket - is a satire on Hitler's ascent to power and the rise of the Nazi Party and far right. Just some historic artefact with no significance to the modern world, then...

"No relevance whatsoever! I've always wanted to do the play and thought about it many times over the years, but now it's painfully relevant. The really scary thing is how the playbook is being used again. Mark Twain said 'History doesn't repeat itself but sometimes it rhymes' - it's not exactly the same, but it's coming up a lot at the moment, isn't it?"

The parallels to a world that wakes up every day wondering what Donald Trump has done overnight are almost painful. Mark admits the rehearsal room has been a place for the cast to sound off about what's been going on. "We have a lot of table discussions about the state of the world, and everyone sort of ends up staring into space. The play used to be a warning from history, but now it's the news."

The actor also knows that a production which reflects the horrors of the world can be both a good *and* a bad thing - there's a strong argument that a night at the theatre should be an escape from reality - but says the show is also a lot of fun.

"It's a gangster spectacle, a sort of cartoon of it all, and there's a lot to be enjoyed in that. Brecht loved gangster movies and all the sort of stuff we've become familiar with, so it's quite playful and fantastical. There's something clownish about people like Capone, even the look of him: the white hat and the tommy guns in violin cases - like the Ant Hill Mob in *Wacky Races*!

"I think the great thing is that it's a wonderful way of, as Brecht would have said, showing the message through a very entertaining vehicle. You can instantly make a connection between a small-time gangster and a dictator. The really fascinating thing is Ui, like Hitler, was kind of a joke. He was just one of many agitators, but then found his moment and way in. The terrifying thing is how easily that can happen."

Also terrifying is the incremental way in which taking advantage of that 'moment' can be achieved, without people necessarily noticing until it's too late...

"That's what we're living in. That's the thing with Trump and the sort of hyper normalisation of it, or what Steve Bannon calls flooding the zone. Something that was inconceivable five minutes ago is now the norm."

Erring on the side of caution in terms of giving too much away, Mark admits the show will have a dark carnival atmosphere (shades of *The League Of Gentleman*?). This will be heightened by a 'glitteringly expansive, darkly seductive and deeply theatrical score' (to quote the show's director) by alternative rock band Placebo, which will be performed live every night.

"The music is very key, and they're a perfect fit for the sort of brooding menace of it, but they can also be very playful," suggests Mark, who says he and the cast are revelling in their roles, despite some of the bleaker elements of the show.

"We're having fun as well as all the dark stuff. Having conceived the project with Seán, I don't feel like I'm just strolling in and doing my part - but at the same time, it's also nice to be giving myself over to it."

Mark is also delighted to finally be making his Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) debut,

which has clearly been a long time coming.

"I've been asked before, but it's never been the right thing or the right moment. I've said this elsewhere, but when I was a kid, the RSC was absolutely the gold standard for where we all wanted to head. I always think of having a blue paperback of a play with a black & white picture on the back of someone in jogging trousers and no shoes, listening to a director. It was magical - and it was always an RSC production. It was an extraordinary thing."

An exceptional element to this show is the speed with which it has gone from idea to reality. Following his initial chat with Seán Linnen, Mark says the wheels turned far quicker than either could have imagined, even though they knew they wanted to strike while the play carried such contemporary heft.

"Seán messaged [RSC co-artistic directors] Daniel [Evans] and Tamara [Harvey], and they immediately went for it. That was a year ago, so they've made it possible in theatrical terms very quickly, which is fantastic.

"It was like, how can we do this now? It's not a rapid-response play - it's 80-odd years old - so trying to get it on was difficult. The machinery of theatres and buildings can be so slow, but they've moved heaven and earth to get it on, which is fantastic."

Now Mark can look forward to immersing himself in his character and his new surrounds for the play's relatively short (six-week) run, but with the caveats of a polymath who typically has a number of projects on the go at any given time.

"A funny thing always happens when you do a play. Once it's up and running, you're saying 'Well, obviously I've got all the day free.' But what happens is you transform into a creature of the night. You finish work at 10 o'clock and there's the inevitable social angle. Then the next day is just written off because you're just exhausted."

So he's not juggling his next writing, directing, producing or acting project alongside starring in the show, then?

"I could say, but I'd have to kill you."

.....
The Resistible Rise Of Arturo Ui shows at the RSC's Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, from Saturday 11 April to Saturday 30 May



Waitress

Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 28 April - Sat 2 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 1 - Sat 6 June; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 6 - Sat 11 July

This smash-hit Broadway and West End musical is based on the 2007 movie of the same name and visits the Midlands with West End favourite Carrie Hope Fletcher heading the cast.

Expert pie maker Jenna is trapped in a loveless marriage to a controlling and abusive man. She dreams of a better future. When a baking contest - and the town's new doctor - provide her with the hope of something better, she has to decide whether she can find the

strength and courage to rebuild her life.

The challenge she faces becomes even harder when her husband discovers the cash she's been squirreling away with the intention of leaving him...

Billed as a musical celebration of friendship, motherhood, and the magic of a well-made pie, Waitress co-stars Les Dennis as Old Joe, with Evelyn Hoskins and Sandra Marvin also featuring.

The Choir Of Man

The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 7 - Sat 11 April; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 14 - Sat 18 July; Malvern Theatres, Tues 21 - Sat 25 July; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 20 - Sat 24 October

A smash hit in the West End, with an Olivier Award nomination further proving its credentials, The Choir Of Man is no conventional theatre production. Set in a pub, featuring 'a wildly talented group of incredible instrumentalists, world-class wordsmiths, and sensational singers', it's brimming with hits from artists including Queen, Luther Vandross, Paul Simon, Adele and Katy Perry. There's no story to follow as such - the show maybe feels more like a gig than a play - but there's certainly plenty to enjoy across its near two-hour running time.



The Rocky Horror Show

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 13 - Sat 18 April; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 6 - Sat 11 July

Hook up your fishnets, 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 Damn It Janet, Sweet Transvestite, 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)!







Barnum

Birmingham Hippodrome,
Tues 21 - Sat 25 April

This Watermill Theatre revival might well strike a chord with long-in-the-tooth theatre-goers, calling to mind memories of 40-plus years ago, when the show was the talk of the town. Telling the story of 'America's Greatest Showman', Phineas T Barnum, the musical premiered on Broadway in 1980, with one-time Carry On cast member Jim Dale taking the title role. The West End version opened the following year, and established Some Mothers Do 'ave 'em star Michael Crawford as one of the UK's brightest theatrical talents. Featuring hit numbers Come Follow The Band, The Colours Of My Life and There Is A Sucker Born Ev'ry Minute, this critically acclaimed production stars musical theatre favourite and one-time Joseph star Lee Mead in the title role. Acrobats, circus acts, and an ensemble cast of over 20 actor-musicians - playing 150 instruments between them - further add to the show's appeal.

Black Is The Color Of My Voice

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 20 April;
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 28 April

Inspired by the life of jazz icon Nina Simone, *Black Is The Color Of My Voice* follows a successful singer and civil rights activist seeking redemption after the death of her father. Her grief provides an opportunity to reflect on the journey that took her from a piano prodigy destined for a life in the service of the church, to a renowned jazz vocalist at the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement.



The show features a selection of classic tunes, including Feeling Good, I Put A Spell On You, Mississippi Goddamn, I Love You Porgy and See-Line Woman.

Agatha Christie's Death On The Nile

The Alexandra, Birmingham,
Tues 7 - Sat 11 April

Take a play by the Queen of Crime - Agatha Christie - and a company experienced in producing theatrical adaptations of her work - *Fiery Angel* - and there's every chance you'll end up with an evening of high-quality, brain-teasing drama...

And this new adaptation of *Death On The Nile* promises to be just that.

When a couple's idyllic honeymoon is cut short by a brutal murder, it's time for Belgian detective Hercule Poirot to put his 'little grey cells' to work and uncover the perpetrator of the dastardly crime... Mark Hadfield plays Poirot, with Dempsey & Makepeace star Glynis Barber also featuring in the cast.



Sunny Afternoon

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Tues 7 - Sat 11 April

This clever homage to Swinging '60s supergroup The Kinks has been wowing audiences and critics in equal measure since opening in the West End in 2014 - so much so, in fact, that it won the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Musical.

Adapted from Joe Penhall's book, with an original story by Kinks guitarist, vocalist & songwriter Ray Davies, it features plenty of the band's best-known tunes, including iconic tracks You Really Got Me, Waterloo Sunset, Dedicated Follower Of Fashion, All Day And All Of The Night and Lola.



Small Island

The Rep, Birmingham, Wed 1 - Sat 18 April

The joyful rhythms of calypso bring life and colour to the harsh realities of post-war Britain in this brand-new stage adaptation of Andrea Levy's multi-award-winning novel of the same name.

Telling a Windrush story about empire and entitlement, the play follows the experiences of Jamaican migrants Hortense and Gilbert. Newly arrived in England, they come into contact with Queenie, a woman defying convention, and her husband Bernard, a reserved and awkward man struggling to come to terms with the changes which are happening around him.

Haunted Shadows

Wolverhampton Arts Centre, Tues 28 April

Although best known for penning classic family-favourite novel *The Railway Children*, Edith Nesbit also wrote stories in the gothic-horror genre - and this critically acclaimed production brings together three of them. In the first tale, *The Shadow*, a repressed housekeeper encounters an abominable entity... *The Pavilion*, meanwhile, sees the shade of a long-dead necromancer envelop a social gathering... The third spine-tingling tale, *A Strange Experience*, focuses on a deranged young woman who harbours a deadly secret. Claire Louise Amias stars in this one-woman show.

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Theatre previews from around the region



Operation Mincemeat

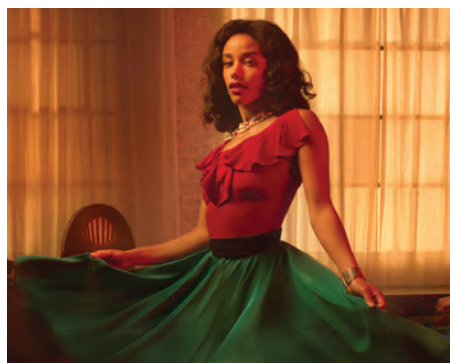
Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 27 April - Sat 2 May; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 11 - Sat 16 May

Hit musical Operation Mincemeat tells the strange-but-true story of a brilliant deception co-ordinated by British intelligence in the Second World War.

Visiting the Midlands as part of a national tour, the show features 50 characters but only five lead actors, who swap roles, genders and costumes before the audience's very eyes.

"It's five people on stage, creating hundreds of different characters

and loads of different places," says Jamie-Rose Monk, who's one of the five. "There's a real sense of fun and creativity. It feels like 'a night at the theatre' that you couldn't do anywhere else. You couldn't watch that on screen; it wouldn't really work. It's about being there with everybody. It also appeals to a lot of different people. It has great music, lots of comedy, high stakes, and is really moving in parts. It just ticks all your boxes."



Driftwood

The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon, Fri 17 April - Sat 30 May

A 'deeply evocative' tale of self-determination, family and belonging, set against the backdrop of a 1950s colonial Trinidad on the edge of political independence, Driftwood is the debut play from Casualty, Holby City and EastEnders actor Martina Laird. The production is helmed by Chichester Festival Theatre's artistic director, Justin Audibert. "The play grew from a deep desire to explore

inherited patterns, the desire for connection and self-determination," explains Martina, "and [also] to place Caribbean voices and histories at the centre of the story. To see these characters brought to life by such a generous and gifted ensemble, and under Justin's direction, feels profoundly moving."

A Midsummer Night's Dream

The Rep, Birmingham, Sat 25 April - Sun 24 May

Accessible language, likeable characters, romantic liaisons, magical creatures and a series of comical caperings with an ass are combined to excellent effect in one of Shakespeare's most popular works...

Lysander and Demetrius both fancy Hermia, Helena's sitting on the shelf, Titania and Oberon are up to no good, and Puck's got his finger in more pies than Mr Kipling. Add into the mix a group of rude mechanicals, and the recipe for success is pretty much complete... Regional talent takes centre stage in this decidedly Brummie production. Adam Carver, best known as cabaret favourite Fatt Butcher, stars as the mischief-making Puck.

The Constant Wife

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 7 - Sat 11 April; Malvern Theatres, Tues 5 - Sat 9 May

W Somerset Maugham's 1927 comedy of manners contemplates the ways in which men, but particularly women, of the era were beginning to rethink their traditional notions of love, marriage and social convention. Constance's friends and sister are well aware that her husband, a successful Harley Street doctor, is being unfaithful to her with her best pal. What they don't realise is that Constance knows about the affair, too - and has her very own deliciously devilish way of dealing with the problem... Kara Tointon takes the title role in this fast-paced and witty production, reimagined for the modern era by the Royal Shakespeare Company.



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Theatre previews from around the region



Henry V

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 25 April

Widely considered to be Shakespeare's greatest and most memorable history play, Henry V tells the story not only of the Battle of Agincourt but also of the warrior king whose visionary leadership inspired the English to a completely unimaginable victory...

Harry Potter actor Alfred Enoch takes the title role, and is enjoying every minute of the experience: "A play of this quality gives you so many possibilities, so many provocations, and so many options and avenues to explore. That's part of its fullness, and the aliveness is what makes it so appealing to me."

The Curious Case Of The Masqued Magician

Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent, Sat 18 April

Holmes and Watson find themselves embroiled in the secret world of Edwardian magic as they attempt to solve the mysterious disappearance of the legendary Masqued Magician...

The Great Baldini is here joined by fellow prestidigitator Peter Clifford for an interactive show that features illusions, escapology, mentalism and cardistry.



I'm Muslamic Don't Panik

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sat 18 April

Bobak is visiting Iran to explore his cultural heritage. While on the journey of self-discovery, he encounters all manner of weird and wonderful characters - from the women defiantly running the first-ever (and last) Tehran marathon, to the participants in an underground breakdance battle... Blending live music, spoken word and comedy (alongside the aforementioned breakdancing!), the show will be followed by a chance to join the cast for traditional Persian tea and biscuits. Those of a more-sensitive disposition should note that the production features characters using racist, Islamophobic and strong language.



Sherlock Holmes & The Sign Of Four

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 22 April; The Core Theatre, Solihull, Thurs 23 April

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's legendary supersleuth makes a welcome return in one of the author's most frequently adapted stories. The Sign Of Four finds Sherlock Holmes embroiled in a murky world of deception and trickery, as he and his faithful companion, Dr John Watson, attempt to locate their client's missing father... Former Dr Who actor Colin Baker stars alongside Terry Molloy in this latest Holmes offering from Crime And Comedy Theatre Company. The production is being presented as a live-on-stage radio play.

Macbeth

Lichfield Garrick, Thurs 16 April

Shakespeare's famous tragedy is one of his most frequently produced plays, and why wouldn't it be? A blood-curdling yarn recounting a cautionary tale of over-ambition, as Macbeth rises meteor-like to the throne of Scotland, the play is not only fast-paced but also appealingly short by the bard's standards. This particular touring version is the work of Flabbergast, a well-established theatre company whose mission statement is to present performances which are vital, engaging and accessible.



Dance previews...

Aljaž and Janette: Let's Face The Music And Dance

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 26 April

Celebrating the hit makers of both yesteryear and today is the name of the dance game when eminently likable Strictly stars - and married couple - Aljaž Škorjanec and Janette Manrara make a welcome return to Birmingham with their brand-new show. Featuring favourites from, among others, Cole Porter, Hans Zimmer, Quincy Jones and George Gershwin, Let's Face The Music And Dance sees Aljaž and Janette being joined on stage by 'an ensemble of great dancers'. Tom Seals and his live band also contribute to an evening of high-energy fun.



Verve

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Fri 24 April

Northern School of Contemporary Dance's award-winning postgraduate touring company, Verve, stop off in the Midlands late this month to present three new works.

The production has a running time of 90 minutes and is part of This Is Dance, an international season of performances presented via a partnership between Fabric, Birmingham Hippodrome, Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Fierce Festival, MAC and Sampad Arts.



BRUCE'S GOT TALENT

**Bruce Herbelin-Earle talks about starring in the
touring production of *The Talented Mr Ripley***

Having played to sold-out houses last year, a touring stage production of *The Talented Mr Ripley* returns to the region this month. Patricia Highsmith's acclaimed novel has previously spawned a movie and TV series, but the theatrical version takes the story to another, more intense level, according to cast member Bruce Herbelin-Earle...

Chances are you've already come across *The Talented Mr Ripley*. Patricia Highsmith's psychological thriller (the first of five books to feature the titular character) is a global bestseller and one of the 100 Novels That Shaped Our World, according to the BBC. It's also been turned into a hugely successful movie (featuring Matt Damon and Jude Law), and a critically acclaimed Netflix TV series starring Andrew Scott.

To top things off, last September saw the British premiere of a stage version adapted & directed by Black Country native Mark Leipacher, followed by a tour which proved so popular that another three months of dates have been added.

Set in the 1950s, the novel/play follows lowly New York conman Tom Ripley, who is hired by a wealthy stranger to track down and bring home his charming but wayward son, Dickie Greenleaf, who is frittering away his time living the high life on the Italian Riviera. Ripley jumps at the opportunity, but quickly becomes seduced by the opulent lifestyle of his target. Deciding that he wants it for himself, he is prepared to do anything to secure it, from manipulation and seduction, to lies, deceit and even murder.

It's a potent mix that makes for a thrilling night at the theatre, according to English-French actor/model Bruce Herbelin-Earle. The star of Netflix drama *Free Rein* is making his professional stage debut as Dickie, and believes Leipacher's adaptation offers a genuinely new take on the source material, whether viewers are familiar with previous incarnations or not.

"Regardless of whether you've read the book or seen the film, this stage adaptation pushes the story's emotional intensity to new heights," he says, admitting he'd seen the film, avoided the TV show once he was cast, and made the novel his "bible" while preparing for the role - not least because the stage version leaves a similarly significant element to the imagination.

"[Theatre is] a different medium, so we play with a lot of elements of naturalism and unnaturalism," he says. "I also didn't want to look at what Jude Law did and try to imitate

it; I wanted to have my own spin on things.

"The Dickie you get in the stage show is a little more unpredictable, a little more dangerous, a touch more aggressive, and a little more boisterous in what he asks for. He can also be the opposite of that - charming and energetic, impulsive and childlike, and very lovely."

All of which makes the character more fun to play - and potentially more of a match for Ripley. Dickie could also be a trickier proposition for the conman in terms of manipulation, not least because of the confidence and privilege afforded him through wealth.

"We've played a lot with the subtext, and once you start really reading between the lines of who Dickie is and what he says, it's really interesting. Especially during that time period in the 50s when class was very much a thing - all the things you had to be conscious about: what people talk about and what they don't; what they do behind closed doors. On top of that, this guy has unlimited money - he doesn't have to prove anything to anyone, blah blah blah. He's a lot of things, and he's so alive, and that's a really fun thing to play."

The production's 10-strong ensemble cast also includes Ed McVey (best known for his role as Prince William in Netflix drama *The Crown*) as Ripley, with Maisie Smith (Tiffany Dean in *EastEnders* and a 2020 finalist in *Strictly Come Dancing*) as his girlfriend, Marge. Bruce says that the entire cast have become firm friends, and that the scenes when they're all on stage at once are especially thrilling. Indeed, the book's famous line - 'We're always being watched' - and themes of voyeurism and surveillance are cleverly depicted on stage by having the main protagonists - particularly Ripley - constantly watched by the rest of the cast.

"Tom Ripley is being haunted by these figures within his mind, and that gives the ensemble such a huge part to play. They're haunting him! We come up from under the platform, from out of it, from the wings. We really intersect. In the bits where the ensemble get involved, it's almost like they're controlling and directing Ripley, much like

on a TV studio or film set."

Speaking of sets, the book (and film, and TV series) jumps about between exotic international locations - so how does the play address that element?

"Through the staging and lighting. We're essentially in this huge light cage, and the lights change corresponding to where we are. We start in New York, and then Tom makes his way over to Italy... it's just about switching it up.

"We're basically on this huge platform with a huge hole in the middle. It's a bright white canvas, and combined with the lights, it makes for a lovely eerie setting when we want it to, and a beautiful Italian summer when we need it. It's really cleverly designed. It makes you sit a little forward in your seat. It's really engaging, and definitely a piece of theatre that keeps you thinking way after you leave."

Bruce also believes *The Talented Mr Ripley* is the perfect show in which to make his professional stage debut ("I'd been holding out for a part such as this"). He is eternally grateful for a tip-off about the role given to him by his "guardian angel" Rob Kelly, his casting director on *Free Rein*. Getting the part meant he had to quickly rekindle the skills developed in theatre work as a youngster, since he has no formal drama training.

"I grew up doing stage, so it became all about tapping back into projection, voice, posture... After that, the acting follows, and I felt like I could let loose a little more and flex that muscle again. It's a huge cliché, but that's what it's like to be on stage - you're constantly flexing those muscles to reach the back wall. I'm blessed, and I'm very, very happy. I definitely hope to follow up this project with more theatre. That's my ideal."

.....

The Talented Mr Ripley shows at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Monday 13 to Saturday 18 April, and then at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 20 to Saturday 25 April



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Fireman Sam Live

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 26 April; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Mon 25 May; Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 20 June

Next year celebrating 40 years spent putting out blazes in Pontypandy and lighting up children's eyes with delight, Fireman Sam finds himself yet again saving the day. This

time he's called into action when perpetual troublemaker Norman Price discovers clues to a pirate treasure and goes exploring deep into the caves...

There's A Monster In Your Show

Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 23 & Fri 24 April

Children's author Tom Fletcher's interactive adventures leap from page to stage, as his critically acclaimed Who's In Your Book? series heads for the region in the form of a well-received stage musical.

The show sees Little Monster being joined by friends Dragon, Alien and Unicorn for 50 minutes of comedy, chaos and high-energy fun, during which the pals will be learning all about the joy of friendship and books.



The Detective Dog

The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 1 & Thurs 2 April

Captivating puppetry, surprising smells and toe-tapping music abound in this Tiny & Tall Productions stage

adaptation of the much-loved 2016 picture book by Julia Donaldson and Sara Ogilvie. The star of this particular show is Nell, a dog whose ever-sniffing nose comes in handy one morning when all of the books at school mysteriously disappear...

An inclusive and accessible production, the show is suitable for children aged between three and seven. It includes British Sign Language and creative captions, and runs for approximately 50 minutes.



'Breathtaking' puppetry, live camera projection, original folk songs and 'earthy' percussion are cleverly combined in this hour-long show created for children aged five and older.

The Sooty Show

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 2 April; The Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 4 April; Malvern Theatres, Sat 25 April

A glove puppet who's not averse to dabbling in the ancient art of magic (casting spells to his catchphrase of 'Izzy wizzy, let's get bizzzy'), Sooty has been around for 78 years, during which time he's entertained generations of youngsters with all manner of laugh-out-loud capers in the company of sidekicks Sweep and Soo.

This latest show also features supporting-cast favourites Butch, Ramsbottom and Scampi, and is followed by the chance to meet Sooty in person.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Saturday 4 & Sunday 5 April

In a career stretching back to the mid-1960s, the late Eric Carle illustrated more than 70 books - writing most of them, too. None have been more famous or



successful than his 1969 story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar.

The popular picture book has been translated into more than 60 languages, selling in excess of 50 million copies.

This interactive stage version of Carle's much-loved tale - presented alongside three more of his stories - features no fewer than 75 handcrafted puppets, is suitable for children aged one-plus to six, has a running time of 55 minutes, and shows twice on each day.

Last Unicorn Airways

The Rep, Birmingham, Sat 18 April; The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield, Sun 19 April

This imaginative, inclusive, and charmingly playful show finds highly regarded ensemble

Half Moon Theatre presenting 'a heartwarming reflection on courage, connection and resilience'. Created for children aged four-plus, including those with complex needs and disabilities, the production revolves around two baggage handlers as they recreate 'a fantastical round-the-world adventure' aboard the final flight of Last Unicorn Airways.

The show directly adapts Hans Christian Andersen's Arabian Nights-inspired fable The Flying Trunk and runs for an interval-free hour, after which audience members will be invited to step into a sensory immersive installation.



Half A String: Tiny Planet

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sat 11 & Sun 12 April

Half A String's latest production follows the fortunes of a character named Alma, whose attempt to deliver goods made

in her cosmic bakery to destinations across the galaxy comes a cropper when she finds herself stranded on a barren planet, seemingly with no hope of escape...





QUESTIONS FOR CASH

Christopher Ryan Grant and Christina Bianco chat about playing country music's most infamous couple - Johnny and June Carter Cash - in a brand-new musical...

A brand-new musical about country music royalty Johnny and June Carter Cash comes to Birmingham this month. As well as being a celebration of their enduring music, The Ballad Of Johnny & June is a warts-and-all account of the couple's often tempestuous love story. What's On caught up with the show's stars, Christopher Ryan Grant and Christina Bianco, to find out more...

The Ballad Of Johnny & June is far from just another musical tribute to legendary country singer Johnny Cash and his wife, June Carter Cash. Rather than being a vehicle to air a multitude of hits, the critically acclaimed production takes audiences on a journey through the highs and lows of fame, covering the controversies that dogged their lives and careers - not least the addiction and substance abuse that affected them both. Created with the support of their family, and told through the eyes of their son, John Carter Cash, the show is effectively based on fact, something which its lead actors are especially excited about. Christopher Ryan Grant reprises the role of Johnny, having starred in the original US version, while Christina Bianco - who has a string of musical credits to her name and a growing side hustle impersonating divas in YouTube videos - plays June.

Chris, you're the only cast member from the American production to appear in the UK version. Has working with a British cast - albeit with an expat American in Christina - changed the dynamic for you?

Christopher: Honestly, it's been so refreshing. That isn't to say anything poor about my previous cast mates, but I've been working on this show for almost four years and almost entirely with the same company. While they are near and dear to my heart and I consider them family, it's so interesting to do a piece that you've been working on for so long with an entirely new company. We're finding new things together - new moments, new beats and new energies.

You're completely new to the show, Christina. What drew you to the part of June?

Christina: I was very interested because I'm a fan of Johnny Cash, June Carter and that genre of music in general. That surprises a lot of people, but I grew up listening to it. When I saw that the script had been put together with the blessing and help of John Carter Cash, I thought, wow, this is the real deal, we're going to get to the nitty gritty of it! And that sets it apart from other tellings on stage and screen. It checks a lot of boxes for me, as I'm such a big fan. It's also odd to be happening to me at this point in my life, living in England and all that; it's like a bunch of wonderful worlds coming together as one!

Despite being a big star, June hardly seems like the sort of diva you've been impersonating on YouTube...

Christina: "No, no, no, not at all! That's one of the things I always loved about June - I've watched a lot of old clips and couldn't believe how quick and witty and funny she was. She's so sweet and bubbly but also fiery. Very often she'd say things that maybe she shouldn't have, but I love that energy of hers.

Chris, you first played Johnny 15 years ago, so clearly know him and his music pretty well by now. Were you a fan prior to starring as him?

Chris: I've been listening to Johnny Cash since I cut out a picture of him from a newspaper when I was about 10 years old - it now lives in my dressing room - and I've been playing his songs since I could make my hands into chords. I made my Broadway debut as Johnny back in 2010, in a show called Million Dollar Quartet. I was understudying, but the actor playing Johnny got lost on his way to the theatre - true story. With about 15 minutes to go, the stage manager was like "Okay, you're on." The show ran for a year, and I got to go on about 30 or 40 times. Then I took over for the national tour.

The Ballad Of Johnny & June seems quite different to a typical musical, with arguably more drama as well as a story arc that effectively puts the 'happy ending' in the middle. Does that make it more satisfying for an actor?

Christina: It truly does. Their relationship is so tumultuous - with all the good came a lot of bad as well. This isn't a story that just takes you through to the, quote unquote, happy ending. What happens after the happy ending? And where does it take these two humans as they grow in their lives together in addition to their careers? It's really beautiful because at the end of Act One, you're going to get a very exciting Act Two.

Chris: I think what's most important for the audience to know is that this isn't a jukebox musical. It's a love story that happens to have iconic music in it, but at the heart of the show there's a kind of love triangle between Johnny, June and addiction. Ultimately the show is about redemption. Obviously people are going to leave tapping their toes, but what's so beautiful is that it also leaves people with a sense of hope; a sense that

even if they're going through some particularly troublesome times in their lives, there's always hope on the other end. That's what's rewarding [and] gratifying about playing these characters.

The show covers Johnny's and June's childhoods and their first meeting, as well as their 47-year relationship (the couple died within months of each other in 2003) - that seems an awful lot to cram in...

Christina: It is, and what's great about this show is that you really do get something for everybody. It sounds so cliché to say that, but there's so much laughter and comedy, so much incredible music, and it's also going to tug at your heart strings. It's gonna break your heart, but it's also going to inspire you. As Chris says, it's a three-way love story between Johnny, June and addiction, but it's not a tragedy; it's still a love story.

Chris: I don't think there's anything wrong with exploring these concepts or depths within the framework of a musical, and it may actually help to lend more credence to it in this artform. When you couch this in the framework of musical theatre, it kind of sneaks in under the skin like a Trojan horse. We've got [the audience's] attention looking this way, and then all of a sudden we drop some pretty heavy material.

And as much as people will be familiar with Johnny's issues, they might not know about June's addiction to prescription narcotics, which was only really revealed in John Carter Cash's biography after both of his parents had died...

Chris: Johnny's addiction was very public, but I don't think a lot of the viewing audience will know that June Carter also had her struggles, and that it ran very deeply in both families. John Carter has been very open about his struggles with addiction, so it's a very personal exploration of these darker themes. The fact that it's wrapped in the framework of a musical makes it all the more palatable and all the more important.

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The Ballad Of Johnny & June shows at The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Tuesday 21 to Saturday 25 April.



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Light entertainment from around the region



Ruby Wax: Absolutely Famous

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sat 18 April; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 12 June; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 13 June

Relatively fresh from her stint in the Australian jungle on last winter's I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out Of Here!, American comedian Ruby Wax makes a welcome return with a show that recalls her much-loved television series Ruby Wax Meets and The Full Wax. Ruby is joined on stage by lifelong friend and producer Clive Tulloh for a nostalgic look back at some of the most famous interviews from the two TV shows. So, if you fancy hearing some scandalous and never-before-told stories about the likes of Donald Trump, OJ Simpson and Madonna, bag yourself a ticket; it should be a fun ride.

Out With The Buckleys

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 16 April; Birmingham Hippodrome, Sun 19 April

Inbetweeners actor James Buckley and wife Clair take their long-running vlog, At Home With The Buckleys, offline and out on the road. Expect plenty of their signature banter, interspersed with never-before-heard stories and the occasional song or two, with James playing his favourite guitar.



As well as revealing the weapons' hidden social histories, David will also be taking questions from the audience on any historical topic.



RuPaul's Drag Race UK Season Seven Tour

Birmingham Town Hall, Tues 28 April

Drag Race UK Season One star Divina De Campo is the host for this latest live tour, which comes complete with the usual acclaimed production values. The show features the full season-seven cast: Bonnie Ann Clyde, Bones, Catrin Feelings, Chai T Grande, Elle Vosque, Nyongbella, Paige Three, Pasty, Sally TM, Sillexa Diction, Tayris Mongardi and Viola.



specials but also as a result of a highly publicised love life and a couple of trips to rehab. Recently married, and the proud father of a one-year-old daughter, John has plenty of new material for this latest show, which visits Wolverhampton this month as part of a short UK tour.



The Big Pants Party

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Fri 10 April; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 11 April; Rother Street Arts Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 25 April; Tamworth Assembly Rooms, Sat 12 December; The Albany Theatre, Coventry, Sat 6 March 2027, Walsall Arena, Fri 12 March 2027

If you're long overdue a carefree night out, then why not grab yourself a ticket for this nostalgia-drenched get-together and dance your socks off in the aisles...

The Big Pants Party is described by its publicity as 'the ultimate ladies night out, celebrating the iconic soundtrack of a lifetime of fun, love and friendship'. Taking the form of a concert, the show has been specially designed to get its audience singing and dancing along. Big pants are optional.



Kate Butch

Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 15 April; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 22 April

Having previously made a splash with touring production Wuthering Sh*t'es, RuPaul's Drag Race UK favourite Kate Butch here invites audiences to take control of the evening, allowing them to select each song, each joke - and maybe even what she wears!



David Olusoga: A Gun Through Time

Birmingham Town Hall, Tues 21 April

Documentary maker and Celebrity Traitor David Olusoga takes to the stage to tell the story of four firearms that changed the world: the Thompson Sub-Machine Gun, the Maxim gun, the Brown Bess flintlock musket, and the Lee Enfield rifle...

John Mulaney: Mister Whatever

The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton, Thurs 23 April

American stand-up comedian John Mulaney has certainly taken up his fair share of column inches in the last few years, courtesy not only of numerous tours and television



PRINCE-LESS

A sassy musical mash-up of favourite fairytales hits the stage in Lichfield this month...

Lichfield Garrick presents a fairytale with a difference this month. Disenchanted! is a musical which has charmed fans off-Broadway, visited five continents, but never found its way around the UK - until now! What's On spoke to Daniel Buckroyd, chief executive & artistic director at the Garrick, to find out more about 'the musical fairytale that bites back'...

Once upon a time... a princess got her own back! Forget damsels in distress, being rescued by handsome princes, or hoodwinked by witches, Lichfield Garrick is this month bringing you Disney's favourite dames as you've never seen them before, courtesy of a sassy musical called *Disenchanted!* that's rewriting *her-story*.

"It's a musical comedy, within which we meet 10 disgruntled Disney princesses," explains Daniel Buckroyd, chief executive & artistic director at the Garrick. "There are a lot of 'disses', hence 'Dis'-enchanted. In the course of the show, those 10 Disney princesses tell us their gripes with the way their stories have been taken and manipulated by Hollywood - and by Walt Disney in particular - and then they try to set the record straight."

The version of the musical showing in Lichfield this month has been produced by the Garrick in collaboration with live theatre and events company The Production Garden. "The show's songs are fantastic, as well as being really witty," says Daniel. "I think for any fans of musical theatre, or people interested in the world of Hollywood filmmaking and Disney - the whole Disney universe - there are masses and masses of points of reference. There are standalone comic songs, there are big ensemble numbers, there are dance numbers, and there are much more thoughtful, poignant, reflective numbers as well."

The new version of *Disenchanted!* is premiering at the Garrick this month, but Daniel explains that the show's Midlands debut is only the beginning of its journey: "It's going to Edinburgh to do a run in one of the Fringe festival's largest venues, so that's its next port of call. And then it's scheduled to tour in Autumn '27 and probably on into Spring '28. We're keen as a theatre not only to be making work - and making work that can feed our audiences and bring rich tones and qualities into our programme here in Lichfield - but also to be part of the way we connect with the wider theatre ecology in the UK. One of the things we struggle to lay our hands on is really good-quality, mid-scale, music theatre... What became clear was that this piece had the potential to do more than just play in Lichfield."

While *Disenchanted!* might have begun its life across the pond, Daniel is confident that the story will resonate just as well with Midlands audiences - after all, it's based on a set of very familiar fairytales.

"It's very American, but only in the sense that it's totally about Disney's take on these princesses. The stories are plucked from all

over the world, from different cultures. That cultural hegemony and appropriation is one of the things that's being talked about within the show. And what that also means is that we have a diverse cast telling this story. We have a cast of six who populate the 10 princesses we meet."

The sassy leading ladies include Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty and Snow White, with references to Aladdin, The Little Mermaid and many more also featuring. The show follows the recent cinematic trend of shaking up classic tales and presenting them in new ways.

"Well, we all love the familiar, don't we? There's a whole strain of human behaviour that pulls towards what we know. But we also like dissent and disruption - more 'disses'! - and things which take on the 'known' and flip it to give us a double point of connection and interest."

Daniel thinks the musical will even land well with audiences who aren't regular theatre-goers. And with an offer of free pre-show prosecco for groups of eight or more (don't hesitate - the deal is valid only on tickets booked before Monday 20 April), the production is promising to offer a great night out.

"If you like Barbie, the movie, you might like this in terms of its humour and its cultural references. [It's for] anyone who loves live entertainment; live music as well - the band is on stage with the show. It's got a very 'live' vibe."

Another place where you're likely to see a lovingly disrupted fairytale is, of course, in pantomime - which is a real mainstay of Lichfield's theatrical calendar. And although next Christmas might currently seem like little more than a twinkle of tinsel on the distant horizon, the Garrick's 2026/27 panto offering - Robin Hood - is already on sale. But Daniel is looking even further ahead: "We're just starting to think about plans for Panto '27 into '28. By the time we get to March, we sometimes find ourselves going, 'It feels like Christmas already,' because there are so many panto conversations. We're looking forward to Robin Hood this year. I think it's the first time this theatre has done that panto title - we've got a great team coming together to prep that."

Daniel is particularly proud that the theatre is holding its own as a producing house: "I've really enjoyed those opportunities to get into a rehearsal room and make a show. There are so many moments along the way that are challenging - but also delightful moments, where something just fantastically clicks. In the panto we've just done,



Cinderella, during the end-of-Act One transformation, a horse and coach comes out and ends up flying out over the audience to some degree. It's such a complicated technical sequence! So the actors and the technical team all worked together to achieve precisely the right kind of sequence. [I loved] seeing that come together and land with an audience.

"I really enjoy leading a creative, cultural organisation. It's great fun and a great privilege. There was one particular moment, just over a year ago, where as an entire team we pulled together to undertake a huge refurbishment to the Front of House area of the theatre. And I think it was pivotal. The signal there wasn't just 'these seats are tired, we need to tidy it up'; it was also about wanting to signal a welcome, and a valuing of our audience."

And there's no better way to value an audience than by programming some really appealing shows. Daniel is confident that the Garrick's line-up of 2026 productions will tick plenty of boxes for Midlands theatre-goers: "We're producing a couple of times a year, but we're wall-to-wall with other shows. And our studio is much busier than it's ever been. We've got big, crowd-pleasing productions happening in the main house, but we've got a much more quirky, niche programme of drama, comedy, music and other events happening in our studio."

Exciting times, then, at Lichfield Garrick. And with Daniel's sights firmly fixed on the future, and with plenty to entertain in the meantime, it seems there's precious little chance of local theatre-goers ever becoming, er, *Disenchanted!*

Disenchanted! shows at Lichfield Garrick Theatre from Friday 24 April to Saturday 2 May

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Film highlights in April...



The Drama CERT 15 (106 mins)

Starring **Zendaya, Robert Pattinson, Mamoudou Athie, Alana Haim, Hailey Gates, Zoë Winters** Directed by **Kristoffer Borgli**

At the time of writing, The Drama's producers are keeping their cards pretty close to their chest when it comes to their film's storyline... The official synopsis is short and sweet: A happily engaged couple is put to the test when an unexpected turn sends their wedding week off the rails.

That 'unexpected turn' is a disclosure of some kind by Zendaya's character, Emma. Film fans have been busy online speculating about its nature. Theories include that she's maybe transgender or possibly a psychopath; or that she'd once planned a school shooting but didn't go through with it.

Publicity for the film has been interesting, with the producers posting an official RSVP for the couple's wedding. They've also taken the step of uploading a wedding website - charlieandemmaforever.com - which explains how the pair met, features a helpful FAQ section about their forthcoming wedding, and even includes some handy information about 'things to do in Boston' while you're in town for the big day.

Zendaya and Robert Pattinson are two of Hollywood's hottest properties right now, so it's fair to assume that The Drama is set to do some serious business at the box office. **Released Fri 3 April**



The Super Mario Galaxy Movie CERT PG (98 mins)

With the voices of **Chris Pratt, Anya Taylor-Joy, Jack Black, Benny Safdie, Brie Larson, Keegan-Michael Key** Directed by **Aaron Horvath and Michael Jelenic**

This second Super Mario Bros cinematic outing has been inspired by the 2007 space-themed Nintendo Wii game Super Mario Galaxy and its 2010 sequel.

And if the success of the first Super Mario Bros film, in 2023, is anything to go by, Galaxy Movie is set for a spectacular payday at the box office - the previous release earned a staggering \$1.36billion worldwide. Having last time helped to save the Mushroom Kingdom from dragon-turtle arch-nemesis Bowser, lead characters Mario, Luigi, Princess Peach and Toad now head into space and find themselves in conflict with Bowser's son. Guardians Of The Galaxy and Jurassic World star Chris Pratt returns to voice Mario.

Released Wed 1 April

Fuze CERT 15 (98 mins)

Starring **Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Theo James, Sam Worthington, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Naveed Khan, Luke Mably** Directed by **David Mackenzie**

Fresh from a modest critical success (but box-office bomb-out) with Relay - a clever riff on the paranoid thrillers of the 1970s - Scottish director David Mackenzie turns his attention to the heist-movie genre.

When London construction workers discover an unexploded World War Two bomb - leading to thousands of local residents being forced to evacuate for fear of its detonation - a team of military experts led by Major Will Tranter (Aaron Taylor-Johnson) are sent in to bring the situation under control. In the prevailing chaos, a band of ne'er-do-wells set about the business of pulling off an elaborate precision heist. But not everything is quite as it seems...

Released Fri 3 April



Father Mother Sister Brother CERT 12a (110 mins)

Starring **Tom Waits, Adam Driver, Mayim Bialik, Charlotte Rampling, Cate Blanchett, Vicky Krieps** Directed by **Jim Jarmusch**

Veteran indie director Jim Jarmusch makes a welcome return with a movie that won the prestigious Golden Lion award at the 82nd Venice Film Festival.

Presented in the form of a triptych, Father Mother Sister Brother focuses on the relationships between adult children, their somewhat distant parents, and one another. "I was trying to accumulate things that would build to something without you noticing," Jarmusch told Indiewire, in talking about the film. "So that the third story, it would reach a kind of emotional - not a dramatically emotional thing - but reach a kind of emotional moment."

Reviews have generally been favourable.

Released Fri 10 April



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Film highlights in April...

Michael CERT tbc (130 mins)

Starring **Jaafar Jackson, Julianio Valdi, Colman Domingo, Nia Long, Miles Teller, Kendrick Sampson** Directed by **Antoine Fuqua**

Jaafar Jackson takes on the role of his late superstar uncle in this biographical drama, widely believed to be the first of two movies recounting the singer's life and career.

The film is being produced by Graham King, whose previous projects include *Bohemian Rhapsody*.

"Michael's life was complicated," King told *Variety*. "As a filmmaker, I look to humanise but not sanitise, present the most compelling, unbiased story I can capture in a single feature film, and let the audience decide how they feel after watching it."

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the controversies that swirl around the Michael Jackson story, not everybody is of the opinion that the movie is unsanitised - including Jackson's own daughter, Paris.

Taking to her Instagram Stories to comment on both the film and Hollywood biopics in general, she wrote: "The narrative is being controlled, and there's a lot of inaccuracy, and there's a lot of just full-blown lies. At the end of the day, that doesn't really fly with me. I don't really like dishonesty. I spoke up. I wasn't heard. I f*cked off. That's it. Y'all are gonna like the f*cking movie. So just go watch it. Go enjoy it. Do whatever. Leave me out of it."

Released Wed 22 April



You, Me & Tuscany

CERT 12a (104 mins)

Starring **Regé-Jean Page, Halle Bailey, Marco Calvani, Aziza Scott, Isabella Ferrari, Stefania Casinij** Directed by **Kat Coiro**

One little lie, one large Italian villa, and two people getting lost in the sauce of love. That's the line with which the producers of *You, Me & Tuscany* are aiming to tempt romantic-comedy lovers to check out their movie.

Halle Bailey stars as Anna, a young woman down on her luck - until, that is, she has a chance encounter with Matteo, a handsome Italian who happens to have a villa sitting empty in Tuscany. Inspired to jet off to Italy, Anna's plan to crash at Matteo's villa, without permission, falls apart when his mother unexpectedly shows up at the house. In a panic, Anna allows her to believe that she is Matteo's fiancée...

Her little lie becomes a big problem, though, when Matteo's cousin Michael shows up, and Anna discovers that the heat between them may ignite a fire that will transform her life...

Released Fri 10 April



Rebuilding CERT tbc (96 mins)

Starring **Josh O'Connor, Meghann Fahy, Amy Madigan, Lily LaTorre, Kali Reis, Zeilyanna Martinez** Directed by **Max Walker-Silverman**

A ruminative and moving exploration of resilience and human connection in the wake of loss, *Rebuilding* follows the fortunes of the downtrodden Dusty, a divorced father whose ranch has burned down in a wildfire. Now living in a trailer community on a government-run campsite - and finding solace with his neighbours, who have also lost everything - he quietly sets about the task of reassembling his life, gradually reconnecting with his former wife and estranged daughter... Released in the US pre-Christmas, *Rebuilding* has met with a broadly positive response from the critics, with Josh O'Connor's performance as Dusty being widely praised.

Released Fri 17 April

The Wizard Of The Kremlin

CERT tbc (152 mins)

Starring **Paul Dano, Jude Law, Alicia Vikander, Tom Sturridge, Will Keen, Jeffrey Wright** Directed by **Olivier Assayas**

For a certain generation of cinemagoers, Jude Law will always be the heartthrob star of movies like *The Holiday* and *Alfie*. So if



you're among those who best remember him that way, it might be a little tricky to imagine him not only playing Vladimir Putin but by all accounts being pretty impressive at it. Law's performance garnered plenty of critical acclaim when *The Wizard Of The Kremlin* showed at the Venice Film Festival - which is more than can be said for the actual movie itself. Indeed, reaction was so lukewarm that its producers subsequently struggled to secure US distribution, the film's bacon eventually being saved by Vertical Entertainment. Still, if you want positive proof that Jude has plenty more to offer than a pretty face, check it out. Telling the story of Putin's rise to power, it runs for 150 minutes and also stars Paul Dano, who, like Jude, emerges from proceedings with his reputation intact.

Released Fri 17 April



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A GRAND DAY OUT

By Jessica Clixby



The University of Warwick's Resonate Summer Festival offers visitors the opportunity to get curious and creative - for free! - late next month. With performances, crafts and much more on offer, the festival showcases the University's research through interactive activities and demonstrations suitable for all ages. Kerry Baker, associate director of Warwick Institute of Engagement, chatted to What's On about what's in store at this year's get-together...

Resonate Summer Festival makes a welcome return at the University of Warwick late next month, with staff and students facilitating a free-to-attend, hands-on day of interactive activities, exciting performances and fascinating demonstrations for people of all ages to enjoy.

Resonate is the title of the University's public events programme. Its aim is to provide interested members of the public with an insight into the work of the University. The annual festival, taking place on a single day, offers visitors the chance to get involved in an inclusive, family-friendly way.

"The Summer Festival is designed for everyone," explains Kerry Baker, associate director of Warwick Institute of Engagement. "It has quite a strong family focus, whatever your family makeup is, and it's designed for people of all ages to get hands-on with different topics and different ideas."

At last year's festival, visitors could learn about everything from pottery to archiving, and from maths crafts to multilingual storytime, with staff and students from different departments invited to share their research.

"The festival itself is designed to be very 'young person'-friendly," says Kerry, "so we get a lot of families coming. [This year] we've added extra under-fives programming. It's a lovely day out and a great way to keep your young people entertained, but we also work with and support the academics - the researchers, teachers, staff and students - to have those engagements in a way that allows everyone to benefit. The adults who come along also get to participate, ask questions and find out new stuff."

The festival's events and activities take place in three neighbouring buildings on the University campus - Warwick Arts Centre, The Oculus and the Faculty of Arts building.

"We have exciting drop in activities, games and workshops spread out over campus"

says Kerry. "The physics team have a load of things that are happening, [including] ice cutting with diamonds... We'll have a whole host of activities from the School of Modern Languages & Cultures including bookmark making."

Resonate also collaborates with other Midlands-based organisations to bring a variety of entertainment to the festival. "We're working with an external organisation called House of MASH, who are developing a bespoke show based on research undertaken at the University - a mix of nature, science and engineering. They've been involved in Resonate Festival from the start."

For the first time, the festival will also distribute activity books to visitors, with a digital version available for those who can't make it on the day.

"The Resonate Activity Book is going to be crosswords, puzzles, 'break the code' and 'spot the difference'-type activities, all related to research at the University. It will be given away for free to anyone who comes to the festival. It's just another way for people to interact with the research."

Kerry's involvement in the festival begins long in advance of the day itself, but she also takes a hands-on role to make sure everything runs smoothly - which means she gets to see visitors enjoy the festival.

"Every festival, I'm a roadie. I'm moving kit, I'm doing the physical labour - and it means that I get to chat to people. We always have a quiet space with books, colouring in, things like that, so if someone feels overwhelmed, they know exactly where that room is. I remember being at one festival where a parent came up to us - their child got really anxious with crowds, but the quiet room made all the difference. They hung out in the quiet room and really appreciated that there was a staff member in there as well - so they still felt like they were having an engaged experience."

The festival also partners with Eatwise, the University's on-campus food provider, which offers tasty snacks and drinks for visitors.

"Eatwise make everything fresh, on campus. They make it from carefully sourced, seasonal ingredients. Everyone who comes gets a voucher. They can go and get an ice cream from the ice cream van, or visit the Eatwise street food van for a drink and some food - and that's free. It's not a whole lunch, but it's enough to keep you going, and people are welcome to bring their own food. We get a lot of commentary about what a safe space it is, what an inclusive space it is, and all of that is really down to my team, who put so much effort into every tiny little decision."

The Summer Festival is a big day in Resonate's calendar, with staff, researchers and students mucking in and volunteering their time, expertise and resources to ensure that there's plenty in store for all the festival's attendees. But it's also a valuable experience for those at the University.

"[The University volunteers] come back more and more. They really enjoy that opportunity to engage with members of the public who have an interest in their subject - or don't know anything about the subject but want to find out more."

"It feels like we've created something that's wanted and something that's needed - it's just a day of positivity."

To book tickets, read about last year's events, and explore the Resonate calendar, visit the website (see below) and make a commitment to unleashing your curiosity. Who knows what you'll discover?

.....

Resonate Summer Festival takes place on Saturday 30 May at the University of Warwick. To find out more, visit the website at resonatefestival.co.uk

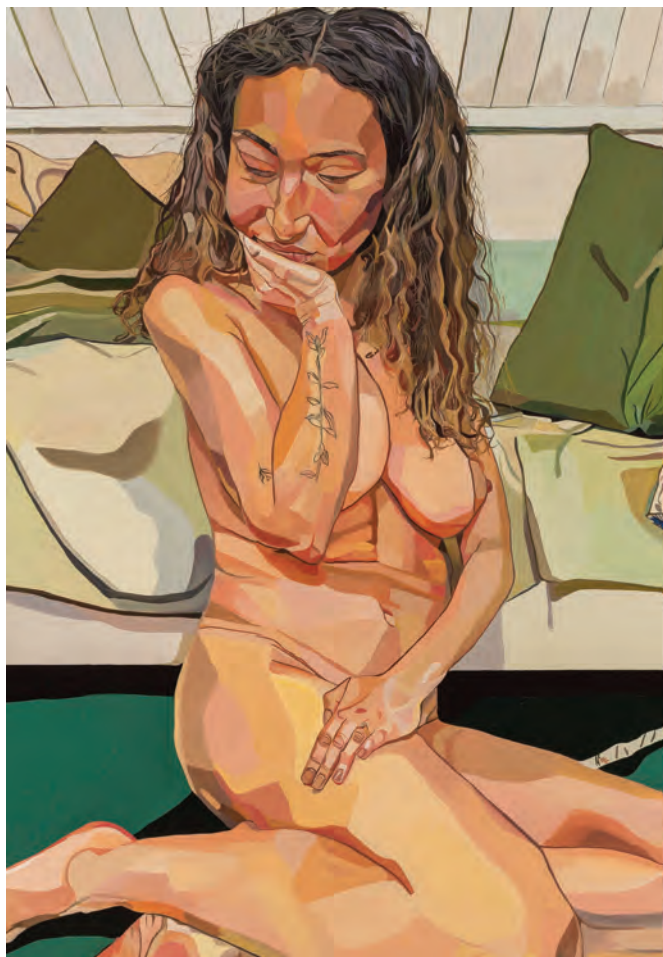


Genevieve Robertson

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC),
Birmingham, Sat 25 April - Sun 5 July

Working at the intersection of visual art and environmental studies, Canadian artist Genevieve Robertson produces work which is powerfully informed by a personal and intergenerational history of forestry labour in remote locations across British Columbia. Genevieve's practice is grounded in drawing and painting but also extends to video, installation and various forms of collective work and collaboration. Her exhibition in Birmingham will explore the interconnection between natural and industrial histories, vegetal intelligence and ecological trauma.

The display examines two forested sites separated by 310 million years and 7,000 kilometres: the ancient swamps of the Black Country and a recently fire and logging-affected slope in British Columbia, Canada.



Joy Labinjo

A Place of Our Own
Wolverhampton Art Gallery

7 February - 4 May 2026

Free admission

An exhibition of large-scale figurative paintings depicting intimate scenes of contemporary life, both real and imagined, by British Nigerian artist Joy Labinjo.

Joy Labinjo, Untitled, 2025, courtesy the artist

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Bruegel To Rembrandt: Drawing Life, Sketching Wonder

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, until Sun 28 June

More than 60 works on loan from the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium sit at the heart of this historically informative exhibition.

Showcasing artists from across the 16th and 17th centuries - and artworks created using charcoal, ink and chalk - the show explores the magic of drawing, both as an artistic tool and as a means of storytelling during what was a period of significant

social, political and religious change. The exhibition includes Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Prudence* (1559/60) - a rare work from his celebrated *Seven Virtues* series - as well as pieces by Rembrandt, Rubens and Jordaens.

Complementary loans of paintings, prints and drawings from numerous UK-located collections, including London's National Gallery, also feature.

Wildlife Photographer Of The Year Exhibition

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery, Sat 25 April - Sat 20 June

"We are facing urgent biodiversity and climate crises, and photography is a powerful catalyst for change."

So says Dr Doug Gurr, director of the Natural History Museum, which has developed and produced this prestigious competition.

Now in its 61st year, the show features a host of awe-inspiring images capturing fascinating animal behaviour and breathtaking landscapes.



Image credit: Parham Pourahmud

The Churchill Screen: Dudley's Lost Masterpiece

Stourbridge Glass Museum, opens Sat 25 April

This fascinating exhibition, exploring The Churchill Screen, opens just a handful of months after the unveiling of one of the artwork's conserved original panels.

Produced by artist Edward Bainbridge-Copnall for Dudley's Churchill Shopping Precinct, the Screen was a 40-foot-long appliqué glass mosaic weighing five and a half tonnes and consisting of 17 panels.

The new exhibition explores its complex history - from Bainbridge-Copnall's creation of it in 1969, through to the impact of vandalism in the 1980s and its removal from public view in the 1990s. Archival photographs, conservation documentation, surviving fragments of the destroyed portrait, and public responses all feature in the exhibition.

Space Vault Exhibition

Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum, Millennium Point, until Sun 17 May

Immersive visuals and unique artefacts tell 12 stories of human space exploration in this illuminating exhibition.

Highlights of the display include the mission checklists that saved the crew of Apollo 13 when its oxygen tank exploded, lunar dust from the Hadley Rille landing site of Apollo 15, a rare Soviet pressure suit, and part of the nose cone of the first starship to reach space.

Joy Labinjo: A Place Of Our Own

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until Mon 4 May

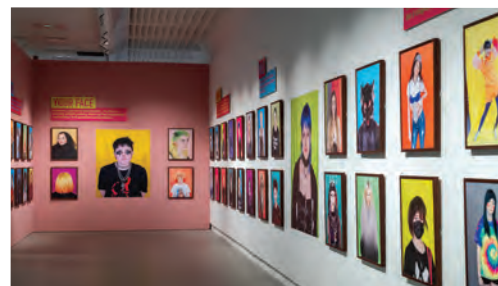
British Nigerian artist Joy Labinjo is clear about her purpose with new exhibition *A Place Of Our Own*; she is reclaiming the nude, and celebrating identity, belonging, and Black womanhood through the presentation of bold, intimate portraits. Marked by muted tones and simplified backgrounds, the paintings are explorations of the complexities of sexuality, reflecting on how Black women's bodies are often hypersexualised in mainstream media.



Saturday Town

Herbert Museum & Art Gallery, Coventry, until Mon 4 May

Saturday Town is an award-winning photographic project celebrating youth style, fashion and self-expression. The exhibition showcases the work of Casey Orr, who has travelled the length and breadth of the UK to photograph young people in towns and cities on Saturday afternoons.





IN THE SLAMMER!

The Shawshank Redemption visits The Alex next month

A story of hope and humanity in an unlikely setting - a tough state penitentiary - is the subject of *The Shawshank Redemption*. Based on a 1982 novella by Stephen King and made famous by a big-screen adaptation in 1994, the story follows the character of the incarcerated Andy Dufresne and his unlikely friendship with fellow inmate Ellis 'Red' Redding. A hit stage adaptation is now touring the UK and visiting Birmingham next month. Here, three of the production's actors - Joe McFadden, Ben Onwukwe and Bill Ward - talk about bringing new life to a classic tale...

Playing Andy Dufresne in the national tour of *The Shawshank Redemption*, Joe McFadden ponders: "It's such a well-known story and he's such an iconic character, and some might say that's foolish to take on. But it feels like a really good challenge for me as an actor, and I do like a challenge."

Written by Owen O'Neill and Dave Johns, the play is based on Stephen King's 1982 novella, *Rita Hayworth And Shawshank Redemption*, which featured in King's *Different Seasons* collection and was adapted into the beloved 1994 film starring Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman.

McFadden is a huge fan of both the book and film, saying that there will be surprises in store for theatregoers who are only familiar with the big-screen version: "There's lots in it that they'll know from the movie, but it delves deeper into the novella and offers something extra. It's a brilliant script, so saying yes to it was a no-brainer for me."

The story starts in the late-1940s, when - despite protesting his innocence - Andy is incarcerated at the notorious Shawshank facility and soon learns that no one can survive alone. So he strikes up an unlikely friendship with prison fixer Red but is bullied into subservience by Warden Stammas, who exploits his talent for accountancy.

"At first, Andy ostracises himself from the other inmates, then realises he has to adapt," says Joe. "But he keeps his core values and retains his moral fibre in an immoral, dark and dangerous place. He's a really intelligent guy who uses his brains to work the system. 'I'm probably not as clever as he is, but I do have a moral compass. He uses his skills for the benefit of the other prisoners, not just for himself, and he's someone we can all aspire to be like. It's a story about hope in the darkest of places, and we could all do with a bit more hope and optimism in our lives.'"

Glasgow-born Joe came to fame on TV in *Sex, Chips & Rock 'n' Roll*, as PC Joe Mason in *Heartbeat* and Raf in *Holby City*. The latter was a particular highlight...

"I got to really explore a character for four years. I love it when you're with a company of actors and you get to know each other well. It was the same with the cast and crew on *Heartbeat*."

Then there was the 2017 series of *Strictly Come Dancing*, which saw Joe and his professional partner Katya Jones take the *Glitterball* Trophy.

"Looking back, it was a really intense, rewarding, challenging and brilliant time. I'm not sure I would want to do it ever again, but I'm really glad I took part."

McFadden has also done lots of theatre, including recent tours of *The Rocky Horror Show* and *The Mirror Crack'd*.

"Good theatre shouldn't only be in London. There are so many beautiful theatres around the country, and audiences are different wherever you go. And with *The Shawshank Redemption*, it's important to spread that message of hope and optimism around the UK."

Elder inmate Red is played by Ben Onwukwe, whose 30-year stage career has seen him playing leading roles with the RSC and the Royal Court. He's best known to television audiences as Recall McKenzie from London's *Burning*.

First appearing in the role of Red during the production's 2016 tour, he was originally drawn to the play because, like Joe, he sees it as a story about hope.

"The word 'redemption' is right there in the title," Ben notes. "Most prison dramas are pretty grim, but this one is also about humanity; in this morass of misery, we find two people who have some goodness within them."

"With Red, he made the most disastrous mistake in his young life - a mistake that was so brutal that it led to three deaths - but he's made his peace with his crime and the fact that he's having to pay the price for what he did. He's a fascinating character, and I love that I now have the challenge of playing him again, with an entirely different cast."

Ben recalls his time on London's *Burning* with a grin: "When I auditioned for it, I thought it was something to do with *The Clash* and their song of the same name! Then, when I landed it, people were going 'It's the most exciting show on TV' - and for me, it was. You got a two-week training course, then you were immersed in this world you didn't have a clue about before. It was wonderful to be able to pay homage to these people who are honourable, dutiful and full of goodness."

The film of *The Shawshank Redemption* has been hailed as one of the greatest movies of all time - an opinion shared by Bill Ward, who plays Warden Stammas in the stage version.

"It was one of my favourite films growing

up," Bill says, adding of the theatrical adaptation, "It's a beautifully written play about hope emerging from darkness. It has so many other compelling themes, like brotherhood, love and resilience."

Stammas is an amalgamation of three characters from the novella.

"So he's a really multi-faceted personality," Bill continues. "He's ruthless at his core, but he has ways, means and tactics for getting what he wants. He can be very charming and charismatic. He's not a one-note, nasty piece of work who you can see through immediately. A lot of the time, on the surface, he appears to be quite reasonable, but actually what he's doing is being extremely manipulative."

As a fan of the film, Bill maintains that the stage play offers something new.

"You get to meet these characters in the flesh, and to walk in Andy's shoes as he makes this very moving journey, which is a very uplifting one but which has some massively tricky road bumps along the way."

Ward's numerous TV credits include stints as Charlie Stubbs in *Coronation Street* and James Barton in *Emmerdale*. Of the former, he laughs: "It seems so long ago now, and I've done so much since then, but people remember Charlie because he was such a foul individual."

On stage he's been in *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*, *The Full Monty* and *Spamalot*. "It's so different to doing telly, where you do up to 15 scenes a day. In theatre, you follow the arc all the way through, and I especially love the rehearsal period, where you're trying all sorts of different things. Then, when you're up and running, there's the camaraderie between the cast and the crew, and nothing beats being in front of a live audience. Getting to take a show like *The Shawshank Redemption* around the country is a joy because it's a wonderful story - and theatre is really just one great big shared experience of storytelling."

The *Shawshank Redemption* shows at The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Tuesday 26 to Saturday 30 May

EVERY VISIT
is a NEW
ADVENTURE

COMPTON VERNEYS



Photo by Andrew Moore

Spring into Lego
Until 12 April



Photo by Jamie Gray

Big Blue Blocks
Until 12 April



The Sketching Studio
1 & 6 April



Photo by Andrew Moore

Get Mucky Get Making
2 & 9 April



Kinton RAF: Painting with Sphero Robots
1 & 8 April



Tegen Kimbley

Artist Play Day
3 & 10 April

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AROUND THE
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OBSERVE
NATURE
FROM THE
BIRD HIDE

ADVENTURE
PLAYGROUND

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*Children 18 and under go free when accompanied by an adult with a day ticket or membership. Some activities extra.

Events previews from around the region



Easter Holidays at Compton Verney

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, until Sun 12 April

Compton Verney is hosting a selection of workshops and events for visitors of all ages this Easter.

The popular Kineton RAF STEM are back with their super sphero robots (Wednesday 1 & Wednesday 8 April), younger children can celebrate spring at the family forest school with Get Mucky Get Making sessions (Thursday the 2nd & Thursday the 9th), and older children can enjoy an intensive four-day Animation Camp (Tuesday the 7th to

Friday the 10th).

Compton Verney's creative learning team are on hand for Artist Play Days (Friday the 3rd & Friday the 10th), while brick and block fans can get creative with the Spring Into Lego and Big Blue Blocks sessions (both until Sunday the 12th).

The venue's Sketching Studio will be open, too, providing creative visitors with the chance to cover the walls, floor and tables with drawings and doodles.

Easter Holiday Fun

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, until Sun 12 April

Easter at the Black Country Living Museum (BCLM) sees characters going about the task of spring cleaning - and sharing some old-fashioned tips and techniques along the way. Visitors can meet the rag & bone man, explore blooming gardens and charming shop displays, and enjoy a number of hands-on activities, from breadmaking to taking on the challenge of traditional laundry with a dolly tub and washboard.

The chance to try out at the Easter choir practice, play traditional street games, follow a family discovery trail, and learn the global story of chocolate further add to BCLM's Easter holiday line-up of attractions.



Spring Into St George's

Telford Town Park, Shropshire, Sat 25 April

Telford's St George's Day event makes a welcome return this month, complete with a wide range of attractions and hands-on activities to enjoy, including birds of prey flying demonstrations, archery and axe throwing, and wood carving demos. Creative activities are available for children across the site, with younger visitors also having the opportunity to meet some friendly donkeys.

Arena entertainment comes in the form of some high-energy jousting displays from the ever-impressive Knights of Nottingham.

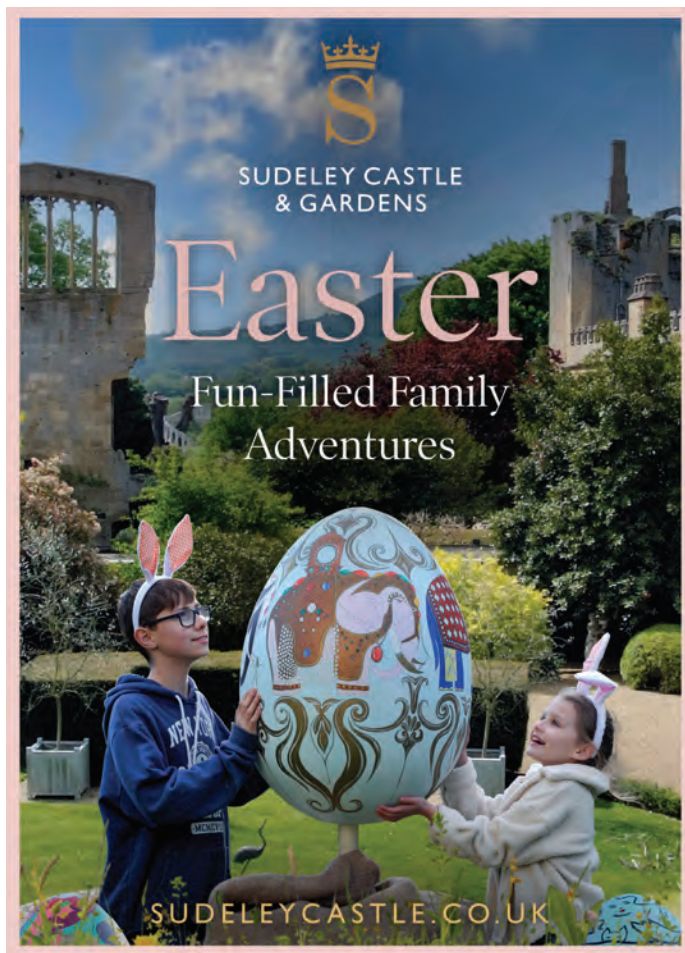


CountryTastic Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Thurs 2 April

Family-friendly countryside and farming event CountryTastic returns this Easter. This year's theme, Hold Your Horses, celebrates all things equestrian and features the brand-new Hobby Horse Arena. Young visitors can learn how to care for horses, enjoy pony rides, and take part in interactive activities.

Alongside the horse & pony theme, the show offers a selection of hands-on farming and rural-life experiences.

Three entertainment rings deliver non-stop action throughout the day with displays, demonstrations, including a lively mock livestock auction in the Livestock Ring.



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Titanic Exhibition Birmingham

NEC, Birmingham, Sun 19 April - Tues 26 May

The renowned Titanic Exhibition docks at Birmingham's NEC this month. Visitors can step back in time and follow Titanic's extraordinary journey, from its construction at the Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast, through its ill-fated maiden voyage, to its rediscovery on the ocean floor and its legacy more than a century later. The exhibition showcases a collection of

authentic Titanic artefacts, including personal items recovered from the sea in the aftermath of the disaster and objects discovered on the seabed decades later. Through compelling storytelling and real belongings, visitors encounter first, second and third-class passengers, as well as the crew members whose lives and work shaped the ship's story.

Spring Steam Gala

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, nr Kidderminster, Thurs 16 - Sun 19 April

Severn Valley Railway's popular four-day festival of steam will feature both guest and home-fleet locomotives operating a busy timetable between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth. Guests can ride behind every locomotive, visit The Engine House at Highley, and sample real ales in pubs along the line. Guest locomotives for this year's event include BR 71000 'Duke of Gloucester', Port of Par 'Judy' (pictured) and LMS Pug 11243.



Giffords Circus: Waterfield

Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham, Thurs 23 April - Tues 5 May

Giffords Circus first visited Sudeley Castle in 2014 with Greek tragedy The Thunders and has returned to the venue every year since. This spring sees the troupe performing Waterfield, a show inspired by the English countryside and the creatures that inhabit it. Presented in Giffords Circus' 600-seat big-top tent, the production features handmade costumes, hand-painted sets, catchy songs, and performances by acrobats, magicians, aerial artists, entertainers and clowns (including local favourite Tweedy!).

Earth Day Weekend

Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum, Sat 25 & Sun 26 April

Thinktank is celebrating Earth Day with a weekend of hands-on activities, creative workshops and inspiring demonstrations. This year's theme, Planet vs Plastic, invites visitors of all ages 'to explore our relationship with the environment and imagine a cleaner, more resilient future'. Featuring eco-crafting, science experiments, music and expert talks, the action-packed weekend has been designed 'to spark curiosity, creativity, and climate-conscious thinking'.



Living History Festival

Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove, Sat 25 & Sun 26 April

Avoncroft Museum's Living History Festival returns for a fifth year late this month. The 300-plus reenactors taking part will be showcasing over a thousand years of history, from the Bronze Age to the Cold War. Both military and domestic history will be on show, including Roman gladiators battling it out in the arena, Ancient Britons, Vikings, Napoleonic troops and soldiers from the

First and Second World Wars. Depictions of agricultural life, including cooking, traditional crafts and pastimes, also feature. Meanwhile, New Guesten Hall will host the Stream Of Sound choir and historical dance group Gloriana... Bromsgrove Society of Model Engineers will be running their miniature trains throughout the weekend.

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The National Motorhome, Campervan & Camping Exhibition

NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, Fri 17 - Sun 19 April

If you're looking to buy your first motorhome or campervan, upgrade your current vehicle, or explore the latest camping gear and accessories, The National Motorhome, Campervan & Camping Exhibition has everything you need under one roof. Spread across four indoor halls, the show features 40-plus dealers, 350-plus vehicles

and 170-plus exhibitors. There's also a packed schedule of demonstrations and live sessions to enjoy. Meanwhile, the Out & About Live Advice Centre offers free expert talks covering a wide range of topics, from buying advice, touring guidance and off-grid living, to accessories, industry trends and wellness on the road.

Classic Antique Fairs

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 24 - Sun 26 April

Classic Antique Fairs returns to the NEC with its prestigious Antique & Arts Fair at the end of the month.

A wide range of specialist dealers will be in attendance, covering fields including art, glass, furniture, silver, porcelain, pottery, jewellery, sculpture, Art Nouveau, Art Deco and 20th-century art.

The show features works of art from China, Japan, Europe, Scandinavia and the UK, with all budgets catered for.

Returning dealers include Hickmet Fine Arts, Mark Rowles Fine Art, Plaza Jewellery, Garret & Hurst and Shapiro & Co.



Easter Motor Show

Weston Park, Shropshire / Staffordshire border, Sun 5 & Mon 6 April

This popular two-day event has been running for more than a quarter of a century and regularly attracts over 1,000 display cars and motorcycles, among them a wide selection of club vehicles.

Other Motor Show attractions include a large autojumble, all-day commentary and judging, live music, and numerous food & drink options...

All car and motorcycle owners and visitors will have full access to the entire Weston Park site across the two days.



Cheltenham Jazz Festival

various venues across Cheltenham, Wed 29 April - Mon 4 May

Cheltenham Jazz Festival celebrates all genres of jazz and features international icons, up-and-coming artists and unique festival performances. This year's line-up includes Jack Savoretti, Jessie J, Nigel Kennedy, Joss Stone and Van Morrison.

As usual, the event is hosting a free live music stage in the Festival Village, with pop-up live music performances taking place at venues across the town.

Tunnel Tours

Stourbridge Glass Museum, Sat 18 April

Delve into the rich history of the Stuart crystal factory - which once stood on the site of Stourbridge Glass Museum - by taking advantage of this unique opportunity to explore the tunnels that lie beneath. Led by knowledgeable tour guides, visitors can journey back in time to discover the secrets and stories of the historic location, along the way gaining a deeper appreciation of the people, processes and products that made the area famous.



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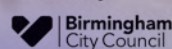
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*Your week-
by-week
listings guide*
April 2026

thelist



Verve at Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham - Fri 24 April

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

What's On

Wed 1 - Sun 5 April



Brooke Combe -
O2 Academy, Birmingham

Fri 3 April

Mon 6 - Sun 12 April



Lucy Darling: Simply Darling
Birmingham Town Hall

Sun 12 April

Mon 13 - Sun 19 April



Alastair McGowan -
St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

Tues 14 April

Mon 20 - Thurs 30 April



Waitress -
Birmingham Hippodrome

Tues 28 April - Sat 2 May

VISUAL ARTS ACROSS THE MIDLANDS

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

CHRISTOPHER SAMUEL: WATCH US LEAD Through 9 newly recorded interviews, Watch Us Lead highlights the experiences of disabled people of colour in Birmingham, combining these stories with stained glass and drawings by the artist.

OZZY OSBOURNE: WORKING CLASS

HERO A celebration of the solo achievements and global awards of rock icon Ozzy Osbourne, and the album art of the original Black Sabbath line-up to coincide with their historic homecoming concert, until Sun 27 Sept

Compton Verney, Warwickshire

TROUBLEMAKERS AND PROPHETS: ELIZABETH ALLEN AND OTHER VISIONARY ARTISTS A bold, immersive exhibition exploring art, isolation and extraordinary vision, through Allen's creations - absurd, darkly funny, and strikingly prophetic, until Mon 31 Aug

MODERN MASTERPIECES: PAINTINGS FROM THE BARBER INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS An intimate display of six exceptional paintings by major modern artists, including Vincent van Gogh, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Édouard Vuillard and Pierre Bonnard, until Sun 6 Sept

Coventry Music Museum

WE'LL LIVE AND DIE IN THESE TOWNS A temporary exhibition, partially based on the anthem song recorded by Coventry trio The Enemy, but also exploring how football, music and Coventry all combine.

OUR TOWN A tribute to This Town through the eyes of a supporting artist, including memorabilia and costumes. The museum also features a tributes to The Specials' Terry Hall and Roddy 'Radiation' Byers.

BEING HAZEL Exhibition celebrating Coventry-born legend Hazel O'Connor's life and career through memorabilia, displays and clips.

The Exchange, Centenary Square, Birmingham

HELIOS BY LUKE JERRAM A stunning illuminated sculpture by acclaimed British artist Luke Jerram. An immersive and rare opportunity to gaze at our closest star, until Sun 1 Nov

SEEING THE SUN Inspired by artist Luke Jerram's illuminated sculpture, Helios, The Exchange presents a new exhibition - discover the Sun like never before through the lens of University of Birmingham research, until Sun 1 Nov

Herbert Museum & Art Gallery, Coventry

CASE: COVENTRY ART SOCIETIES EXHIBITION A 'diverse and inspiring' collection of artworks created by members of art societies and art groups across Coventry & Warwickshire, until Sun 19 April

STORIES THAT MADE US: ROOTS, RESILIENCE, REPRESENTATION Dynamic new exhibition showcasing the lived experiences of a South Asian family in Coventry from 1968 to 2010, drawing on Coventry Archives' Virk Collection and curator & artist Hardish Virk's Stories That Made Us collection, until Mon 25 May

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham

ANGELA DE LA CRUZ: UPRIGHT Major exhibition of rarely seen works by the acclaimed contemporary artist, presented alongside a new commission developed in collaboration with Birmingham Royal Ballet, until Sun 6 Sept

BREAK THE MOULD The final exhibition in a trilogy exploring craft, art school pedagogies and contemporary art practice, until Sun 6 Sept

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

LEAMINGTON OPEN 2026 Exhibition of shortlisted works by West Midlands artists, until Sun 3 May

Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston, Birmingham

MADE IN THE MIDDLE: A CRAFTSPACE TOURING EXHIBITION A showcase of exceptional contemporary crafts - including ceramics, textiles, jewellery, metalwork and sculptural works - being made currently across the Midlands, until Sun 12 April

CRAFTSPACE: 40 OBJECTS FOR 40 YEARS Graphic storyteller Stewart Francis Easton's new textile mural invites you to explore Craftspace's 40-year story through 40 objects, until Sun 12 April

HOSPITAL ROOMS: BALANCING ACTS A special project by arts and mental health charity Hospital Rooms, exploring how artists, young people and NHS staff have worked together to re-imagine what a mental health hospital can look and feel like, until Sun 26 April

CLARE HEWITT: EVERYTHING IN THE FOREST IS THE FOREST New work, produced from a studio within a circle of twelve oak trees, which celebrates trees and their remarkable ability to nurture and communicate, Sat 18 April - Mon 31 Aug

New Art Gallery, Walsall

JASKIRT DHALIWAL-BOORA: FRACTURED LANDSCAPES AND HOW WE HEAL Exhibition focusing on the role that

nature and creativity can play in healing from trauma, particularly in the context of male violence and abuse against women and girls, until Sun 21 June

BILLY DOSANJH: PATHS YOU WALK

Billy's artistic practice, uncovering silenced histories of migration, displacement and industrial exploitation, is rooted in his upbringing and the de-industrialised landscapes of the Black Country, until Sun 21 July

Nuneaton Museum & Art Gallery

NUNEATON FESTIVAL OF ARTS Annual returning showcase featuring art produced by adults and children. Trophies, cups and prizes will be awarded for those achieving top marks in the various categories, until Sat 18 April

RBSA Gallery, Birmingham

SIGMA: PRIME EXAMPLES Six photographers from various genres have produced five images at their chosen focal length, creating distinct bodies of work, Tues 31 Mar - Sat 11 April

RBSA CANDIDATES EXHIBITION 2026

Featuring work from artists wishing to be elected to the Society. The current membership will vote for the artists they would like to see elected, Thurs 16 April - Sat 2 May

Rugby Art Gallery

STRIKE A LIGHT - THE ART AND SCIENCE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY Exhibition exploring how creativity and science come together to transform lives, promising to spark curiosity, connection and conversation, Tues 14 April - Sat 16 May

100 YEARS OF RUGBY RADIO Exhibition marking the 100th anniversary of Rugby Radio Station, looking back at the station's history, charting its early transatlantic communications and its heyday in the 1950s, Wed 15 April - Sat 3 Oct

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

GRAYSON PERRY: THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE VIRGIN DEAL A four-metre-long tapestry - part of The Vanity Of Small Differences series - telling the story of Tim Rakewell, a fictional 21st-century software developer who climbs the social and economic ladder from his working-class roots, until Sun 12 April

SHAQUELLE WHYTE: SHATTERED

DREAMS The first institutional solo exhibition by the Wolverhampton-born artist. Bringing together six dynamic largescale paintings, the exhibition showcases Shaquella's bold figurative painting style, Sat 18 April - Mon 31 Aug

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

DAVID BIRTWHISTLE: A RETROSPECTIVE Celebration of one of Worcester's most respected artists, whose paintings explore historic buildings and the landscapes around them, until Sun 31 May

JOHN SINGER SARGENT: AN AMERICAN

IN WORCESTERSHIRE Showcase of works by one of the most celebrated portrait painters of his time. Sargent's summers spent in the county saw the American artist break free from the conventions of Salon-style studio painting, to experiment with Impressionism and work 'en plein air', until Sun 14 June

Elsewhere:

THE ART OF (NOT) FORGETTING: OLGA BUBICH Exhibition asking how art can help us resist the manipulation of memory and rebuild shared realities across borders, cultures and lived experiences..., until Sat 25 April, Centrala, Birmingham

FROM THE FRAGMENT TO THE WHOLE

Exhibition of works created by survivors of domestic abuse, all created from fragments of glass - a material and a process that mirrors the participants' lived experience, until Sun 26 April, Coventry Cathedral

IMAGINING INDIA A spotlight exhibition featuring historic objects from Attingham's collection, including a rare panoramic artwork, prints, ceramics, books, clocks, militaria and miniatures, all inspired by India, until Sat 27 Jun, Attingham Park, Shrops

GEORGE: AN AMBASSADOR FOR ART

Explore how one man - Sir George Laboucher - believed art could cross borders, spark dialogue and change the way people see the world, until Thurs 29 Oct, Dudmaston, nr Bridgnorth, Shropshire

THE ROSSETTIS: SIBLINGS AND SPOUSES

Discover the remarkable and creative world of one of Victorian Britain's most talented families. The exhibition features new acquisitions, rediscoveries and rarely seen works from the Rossetti circle, until Sun 8 Nov, Wightwick Manor & Gardens, Wolverhampton

ARTISTS OF WORCESTERSHIRE

EXHIBITION A group of professional artists, using a variety of media, present work in an exhibition entitled Nature's Force - 'a celebration of the wonderful, colourful and mystical world around us', Sun 5 - Wed 15 April, Hanbury Hall, Worcestershire

ENGLISH BRIDGE STUDIOS SHOWCASE

Exhibition bringing together a variety of work created by resident artists, Mon 13 April - Wed 27 May, The Gateway Gallery, Shrewsbury

Gigs

LUCIANO Wed 1 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

GABRIELA EVA + KATE B'MAND + GENEVIEVE MILES Wed 1 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

WARD XVI + PULVERISE Wed 1 Apr, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

EMILY MAGUIRE + JODY PREWETT Wed 1 Apr, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

KEVIN GRENFELL'S ALL STARS WITH PAUL HARRISON Wed 1 Apr, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

GNOME + WALL Wed 1 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, W'hampton

THE SHOOP SHOOP SHOW - THE CHER COLLECTION Wed 1 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

PROLAPSE + THE COURTESY GROUP + GIMI Thurs 2 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

RICHIE CULTURE AND THE VISIONARIES Thurs 2 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DAN SEALEY Thurs 2 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

THE NEW ROMANTICS 80S EXPERIENCE Thurs 2 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

DINO BAPTISTE Thurs 2 Apr, Actress & Bishop, B'ham



SMOOTH CRIMINAL - MICHAEL JACKSON TRIBUTE Thurs 2 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE BOOJUMS + LUXURY NAN SMELL + KOUNTOURS Thurs 2 Apr, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

MATT WOOSEY + JOHN PARKER Thurs 2 Apr, Marrs Bar, Worcester

STEVE CRADOCK Thurs 2 Apr, Palace Theatre, Redditch

HEADWIRED Thurs 2 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

CATLEA + TOM PENNY + MARIANNE LEIGH Thurs 2 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE LEGEND OF MEAT LOAF Thurs 2 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

REMI HARRIS HOT CLUB TRIO Thurs 2 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

MOLOKA + FREYA GAMBLIN +

CHEAPSIDE Fri 3 Apr, The Dark Horse, Birmingham

BROOKE COMBE Fri 3 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MATT WOOSEY + JOHN PARKER Fri 3 Apr, Jo Jo Jims, B'ham

B.D LENZ Fri 3 Apr, Tower of Song, Birmingham

THE LAINEY WILSON EXPERIENCE + ZAK ZACH Fri 3 Apr, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

LETTERS TO LIONS Fri 3 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, B'ham

CAPTAIN'S BEARD + THE ROVING CROWS Fri 3 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

ABBA-SOLUTE DREAMS! Fri 3 Apr, The Victoria, B'ham

JAMES + DOVES Fri 3 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

R&B ORCHESTRA Fri 3 Apr, XOYO, Digbeth, Birmingham

A FOREIGNERS JOURNEY Fri 3 Apr, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

SUPERSONIC QUEEN Fri 3 Apr, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

SPOON SPEAKER MAN + TV PINS Fri 3 Apr, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

THE TOTAL STONE ROSES Fri 3 Apr, hmv Empire, Coventry

MORETALICA Fri 3 Apr, Arches Venue, Coventry

MELVIN HANCOX BAND Fri 3 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

VEHICLE Fri 3 Apr, Marrs Bar, Worcester

DS:UK Fri 3 Apr, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE BIG FOUR TRIBUTE BAND Fri 3 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

ROY G HEMMINGS - THE HITS OF MOTOWN Fri 3 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

FACE UP! + CAUSE A RIOT + MISGENDERED + COVID 21 Fri 3 Apr, Dive, Wolverhampton

SWEET CAROLINE - NEIL DIAMOND TRIBUTE Fri 3 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE JAM'D Fri 3 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ALTARA + SOUTH WALK + HALF COURT + RAT BIRD Fri 3 Apr, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

MILES HUNT Fri 3 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

DIRTY DC Fri 3 Apr, The Station, Cannock

THE RESIDENTS Fri 3 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE GUILTY MEN Fri 3 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

THE PAUL AUSTIN BAND + KINSTRIFF + JAMIE PORTER BAND Fri 3 Apr, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE Fri 3 - Sat 4 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

DAVID ONIONS Sat 4 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SAMBROSO ALLSTARS PERFORM THE BUENA VISTA Sat 4 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LIAM C Sat 4 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

SIMON BOSWELL Sat 4 Apr, Actress & Bishop, B'ham

WALTER SMITTY AND THE UNVIABLES Sat 4 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

THE JACKETS Sat 4 Apr, The Night Owl, Birmingham

HAPPY MONDAYS + THE FARM + NORTHSIDE Sat 4 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

VINCENT FLATTS FINAL DRIVE Sat 4 Apr, Jo Jo Jims, B'ham

ALMOST FREE Sat 4 Apr, Tower of Song, Birmingham

SYSTEM 7 + ROB BONG Sat 4 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

FORWARD LIVE FESTIVAL Sat 4 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

RICHARD ASHCROFT + THE ROYSTON CLUB Sat 4 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

BEATLES COMPLETE Sat 4 Apr, Old Rep, Birmingham

QUILL Sat 4 Apr, The Core Theatre, Solihull

ELECTRIK LIVE ORCHESTRA Sat 4 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

SIGNING OFF UB40 Sat 4 Apr, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE BLACK CHARADE Sat 4 Apr, Arches Venue, Coventry

THE REBELS Sat 4 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

TAYLOR SWIFT AND SABRINA CARPENTER TRIBUTE Sat 4 Apr, The Benn Hall, Rugby

WIZARDS OF OZ + PRIEST UNLEASHED Sat 4 Apr, Marrs Bar, Worcester

MILES HUNT Sat 4 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

TRIBUTE TO OLIVIA RODRIGO AND SABRINA CARPENTER Sat 4 Apr, Palace Theatre, Redditch

STEVE CRADOCK Sat 4 Apr,



Brooke Combe - O2 Academy, Birmingham

Kidderminster Town Hall

THE EMINEM SHOW Sat 4 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

SPOON SPEAKER MAN + TV PINS Sat 4 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

NIN UK + SPOUKY KIDS + KORN AGAIN Sat 4 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

SAMANTICS Sat 4 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

THE BILLY JOEL SONGBOOK Sat 4 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE LILACS Sat 4 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent



HYBRID THEORY - LINKIN PARK TRIBUTE Sat 4 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

TRIBUTE TO ROBBIE WILLIAMS Sat 4 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ALANIS MOREORLESS + BEEP BEEP YEAH! Sat 4 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

SERGEANT THUNDERHOOF + DUNES + SYNCOLIMA + SON OF BOAR Sat 4 Apr, The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

KILL LINCOLN + OMNIGONE Sat 4 Apr, Redrum, Stafford

MEGADETH UK Sat 4 Apr, The Station, Cannock

HAMMERED Sat 4 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE R&B ORCHESTRA Sat 4 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

GO WEST Sat 4 Apr, Edge Arts

Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

CRACK THE FLAGS + ARMY OF SKANKS + DECAY 87 Sun 5 Apr, The Dark Horse, B'ham

THE GARRY ALLCOCK TRIO Sun 5 Apr, Tower of Song, B'ham

THE YEAR GRUNGE BROKE Sun 5 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

BAD ACTRESS + VAZON + THE HOME GROWN + ILLUMINAL + LAUREN MARIE Sun 5 Apr, Subside Bar, Birmingham

THE EMINEM EXPERIENCE Sun 5 Apr, hmv Empire, Coventry

SUNNY SIDE DOWN + CHEAP DIRTY HORSE + TRUST CLUB Sun 5 Apr, Just Dropped In, Coventry

KEROZONE Sun 5 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

JUNCTION 77 Sun 5 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

BARE JAMS Sun 5 Apr, Marrs Bar, Worcester

MANIAC STREET PREACHERS + STEREOIRONICS Sun 5 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

UNDERCOVER HIPPIE Sun 5 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge



THE SHOOP SHOOP SHOW - THE CHER COLLECTION Sun 5 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

WEST COAST EAGLES Sun 5 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

Classical Music

PERGOLESI: STABAT MATER Featuring Oliver Hancock (conductor) & the Girl Choristers of The Collegiate Church of St Mary, Wed 1 Apr, St Mary's Church, Warwick

BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: VOICES UNDER GLASS Featuring Eleonore Cockerham (soprano), Darragh Morgan (violin) & Jack Sheen (conductor). Programme includes works by Sciarrino, Sheen & Saunders, Thurs 2 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: GOOD FRIDAY ST JOHN PASSION Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Sebastian Hill (Evangelist), Thomas Lowen (Jesus), Lawrence White (Pilate), Imogen Russell & Kate Trethewey (soprano), Martha McLorinan (alto) & Daniel Marles (tenor), Fri 3 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS: THE CRUCIFIXION Featuring Liam Condon (conductor). Programme comprises music by Stainer, Fri 3 Apr, Coventry Cathedral

Comedy

RED RICHARDSON, STEVE HALL, GAVIN WEBSTER & FREDDY QUINNE Wed 1 Apr, Herbert's Yard, Birmingham

GARY DELANEY Wed 1 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

REGINALD D HUNTER, STEVE ROYLE, TOM WRIGGLESWORTH & WAYNE BEESE Wed 1 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, NATHAN CATON & TOM LAWRIERSON Thurs 2 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KEMAH BOB & HANNAH PLATT Thurs 2 Apr, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

REGINALD D HUNTER, STEVE ROYLE, PRESIDENT OBONJO & WAYNE BEESE Thurs 2 Apr, The Rose Theatre, Rugeley

MANDY MUDEN, ALUN COCHRANE, JACK KELLY, KIE CARSON & CARL JONES Thurs 2 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

ADAM ROWE, MATT RICHARDSON, LAURA SMYTH & FREDDY QUINNE Thurs 2 Apr, Rother Street Arts House, Stratford-upon-Avon

ARIES SPEARS Fri 3 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall



HASAN AL-HABIB Fri 3 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ANGELA BARNES, WAYNE BEESE & COMICS TBS Fri 3 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

JOHN FOTHERGILL, SAM PICONE, NATHAN CATON & RACHEL FAIRBURN Fri 3 - Sat 4 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

JOHN ROBERTSON, DARIUS DAVIES, TOM TOAL & COMIC TBC Sat 4 Apr, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

SARA PASCOE & SPECIAL GUESTS Sat 4 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JAMIE HUTCHINSON Sun 5 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

SIX THE MUSICAL The six wives of Henry VIII take to the mic to tell their tales, remixing 500 years of historical heartbreak into an 80-minute celebration of 21st-century girl power, until Sat 11 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

HENRY V Alfred Enoch takes the title role, until Fri 25 Apr, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE INVISIBLE MAN A 'fast-paced and riotous' stage adaptation of HG Wells' classic story, Mon 30 Mar - Wed 1 Apr, Malvern Theatres

MEAN GIRLS Faye Tozer stars alongside Emily Lane and Vivian Panka in a new version of the smash-hit musical comedy, Mon 30 Mar - Sat 4 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent



NIGHT FALLS Riding Lights Theatre Company present a 'dynamic and contemporary retelling of the Easter story', Tues 31 Mar - Wed 1 Apr, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

LEGALLY BLONDE Strictly runner-up Amber Davies stars as Elle Woods in a new version of the rom-com musical, Tues 31 Mar - Sat 4 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE WOMAN IN BLACK Susan Hill's chilling ghost story, Tues 31 Mar - Sat 4 Apr, Malvern Theatres

OLIVER! JR Amateur version presented by Get Your Wiggle On Juniors, Wed 1 - Thurs 2 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

I'M EVERY WOMAN: THE CHAKA KHAN MUSICAL Alexandra Burke takes the lead in a new production telling the life story of global icon Chaka Khan, Wed 1 - Sat 4 Apr, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Wymysical Theatre present an amateur version

of the Disney musical, Wed 1 - Sat 4 Apr, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich Spa

SMALL ISLAND Andrea Levy's award-winning Windrush story is brought to life in a new production by Helen Edmundson, Wed 1 - Sat 18 Apr, The Rep, Birmingham

ALICE IN WONDERLAND Fun-filled family pantomime promising toe-tapping songs and a bucketload of laughter, Thurs 2 Apr, Halesowen Town Hall

HAY! A highly accessible show filled with music, clowning, song and dance, Thurs 2 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

KRAPP'S LAST TAPE Samuel Beckett's classic play journeys through an old man's life as he reflects on memories, hopes, the mourning of lost love and unfulfilled ambition, Thurs 2 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE MYSTERIES CYCLE An epic theatrical journey through Creation, Passion and Doomsday, told through bold visual storytelling, music, movement, and ensemble performance, Thurs 2 - Sat 4 Apr, Playbox Theatre, The Dream Factory, Warwick

DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT Engaging first theatre experience based on the much-loved classic, Fri 3 - Sat 4 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

HADESTOWN TEEN EDITION Amateur version presented by Get Your Wiggle On Teens, Fri 3 - Sat 4 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Family panto for Easter, Fri 3 - Sun 12 Apr, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

HAMLET New version of Shakespeare's tragedy. George Ormerod stars as Hamlet, with Phil Leach as Polonius, Fri 3 - Sun 26 Apr, Cox's Yard, Stratford-upon-Avon

SPONGEBOB THE MUSICAL: YOUTH EDITION Hour-long edition of the hit musical performed by Birmingham Hippodrome Youth Theatres, Sat 4 Apr, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

GOOD GOLLY MISS MOLLY Music-fuelled feelgood drama charting the history of a local community against a backdrop of social turmoil, societal changes and tumultuous friendships, Sat 4 Apr - Sat 2 May, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

Kids Theatre

TOM GATES: THE SHOW New stage show bringing Liz Pichon's bestselling book to life via performance, illustrations and music, Wed 1 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THE UTTERLY REVOLTING SCIENCE SHOW This 'highly explosive' science stunt show takes audiences on a journey

through the human body via burp biology, fart physics and revolting edible chemistry, Wed 1 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE ULTIMATE BUBBLE SHOW Join international bubbleologist and Guinness World Record holder Ray Bubbles as he showcases the art of bubblemaking, Wed 1 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

THE DETECTIVE DOG Theatre for younger audiences based on Julia Donaldson & Sara Ogilvie's much-loved story, Wed 1 & Thurs 2 Apr, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE SOOTY SHOW Popular children's entertainment featuring juggling, magic and singalong favourites, Thurs 2 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

RAPUNZEL Immersion Theatre present a hair-raising adventure complete with magic and mayhem, Thurs 2 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

THREE BILLY GOATS A 'trip-trapping musical adventure' from Lost The Plot Theatrical, Sat 4 Apr, Halesowen Town Hall

THE LITTLEST YAK Puppetry and catchy tunes feature in a heartwarming children's tale of self-acceptance, Sat 4 Apr, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE SOOTY SHOW Popular children's entertainment featuring juggling, magic and singalong favourites, Sat 4 Apr, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR Critically acclaimed show based on Eric Carle's timeless children's stories, Sat 4 - Sun 5 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham



YOU CHOOSE Interactive musical show for all the family, based on Pippa Goodhart & Nick Sharratt's well-known picture book, Sat 4 - Sun 5 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Light Entertainment

EIGHT - THE ONE WOMAN DRAG KING MUSICAL PARODY Expect singing, dancing and podcasting (maybe) as Henry VIII returns to the land of the living to try and clear his name, Thurs 2 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE CAVERN CLUB Journey through the history of the legendary venue in a

show featuring original footage and a cast of leading West End performers, Fri 3 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

MASTERS OF DECEPTION Featuring three magic & illusion acts: Richard Jones 'the military mindreader', Matricks Illusion and The Oberson, Fri 3 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

ELVIS LESLEY: BURNIN' LOVE BINGO Expect an evening of musical comedy, bingo chaos, reworked hits 'and a whole lotta fun', Sat 4 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

GIRL POWER LIVE Celebration of female musical icons, Sat 4 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

CALLING PLANET EARTH A show recreating the energy of the 80s, with music from Duran Duran, Spandau Ballet, Depeche Mode, Ultravox and more..., Sat 4 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

K-POP ALL STARS High-energy tribute featuring numbers inspired by the smash-hit film K-pop Demon Hunters, Sun 5 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

WHAM! - THE SHOW 'Ultimate party tribute' featuring X Factor star Jake Quickenden, Sun 5 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

Events

EASTER ADVENTURES Featuring activities for all the family to enjoy, until Mon 6 Apr, Packwood House, Warwickshire

ALDERFORD'S EASTER EGG HUNT A hunt for eggs in the great outdoors, until Mon 6 Apr, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

EASTER 2026 Featuring hands-on activities and springtime surprises, until Fri 10 Apr, RAF Museum Midlands, Cosford

ELECTRIFYING SCIENCE LIVE Packed with live demonstrations and plenty of audience participation, until Fri 10 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum



EASTER 2026 Featuring hands-on activities and springtime surprises, until Fri 10 Apr, RAF Museum Midlands, Cosford

EASTER SPRING TRAIL Hunt for hidden treasures, learn fascinating facts and complete fun challenges, until Sat 11 Apr, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

EASTER TRAIL Join craft workshops, try lawn games and check out a trail with different clues to find along the way, until Sat 11 Apr, Middleton Hall

& Gardens, Tamworth

EASTER ON THE FARM Celebrate the arrival of over 600 lambs and goat kids, until Sun 12 Apr, Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham

SECRET GARDENS FAMILY TRAIL Find all kinds of characters and match them up with their hiding places on the map, until Sun 12 Apr, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE EASTER TRAIL A woodland trail featuring 'enchanted poems and wonderfully odd characters', until Sun 12 Apr, Weston Park, Shropshire

BAGS OF FUN: SECRET GARDENS Featuring activities related to secret gardens, until Sun 12 Apr, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

SKY GARDEN: AN EASTER FAMILY FUN DAY Step into a giant open-air 'studio of the imagination', until Sun 12 Apr, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

EASTER HOLIDAY FUN Wander through the historic town as characters go about the task of spring cleaning, until Sun 12 Apr, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

AI BUSKING Dive into the world of artificial intelligence through hands-on activities, until Sun 12 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

EASTER ADVENTURES Enjoy Easter-themed activities, until Sun 12 Apr, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

EASTER AT THE BUTTERFLY FARM Discover freshly laid eggs from tropical butterflies, the caterpillars that have hatched out of them, and the pupae they turn into, until Sun 12 Apr, Stratford-upon-Avon Butterfly Farm

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA Meet Bramble Bunny and Chirpy Chick, take part in a quest to earn a chocolatey treat, and enjoy a range of themed activities, until Sun 12 Apr, West Midlands Safari Park, Bewdley

EASTER ADVENTURES Featuring activities for all the family to enjoy, until Sun 12 Apr, Attingham Park, Shropshire

EASTER TRAIL Make your way along the trail and check out a selection of Spring-inspired family-friendly activities, until Sun 12 Apr, Dudmaston Estate, nr Bridgnorth, Shropshire; Powis Castle, Welshpool & Shugborough Estate, nr Stafford

TIME TRAVEL RESCUE Take an epic race through time and help reunite the dino parent with their missing egg, until Sun 12 Apr, Dudley Canal & Caverns

DRAGON EGG HUNT Young dragon-spotters are needed to search the castle and reunite Ruby with her precious eggs, until Sun 12 Apr, Tamworth Castle

EASTER QUEST Follow the Easter trail,



Easter Quest at Kenilworth Castle, Stokesay Castle & Witley Court

hunt for eggs and answer questions along the way, until Sun 19 Apr, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire; Stokesay Castle, Shropshire & Witley Court & Gardens, Worcestershire

MEET THE EASTER BUNNIES Join Benji & Honey Bunny as they search for Easter eggs, Wed 1 Apr, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

FIND THE EGGS! - EASTER TRAIL Find all the eggs in the garden to complete the trail, Wed 1 - Fri 3 Apr, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

COUNTRYTASTIC Much-loved countryside & farming event, Thurs 2 Apr, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

TALL TALES: GOLDSILLOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS Interactive telling of the famous story, Thurs 2 Apr, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

GET MUCKY, GET MAKING Little explorers can splatter and squish, search for animal eggs and wiggly woodland treasures, and mix mud potions, Thurs 2 Apr, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY Immerse yourself in Lewis Carroll's beloved book series, Thurs 2 - Sat 4 Apr, Churnet Valley Railway, Staffordshire

EASTER HOLIDAY CHOCOLATE FUN Featuring an egg hunt and the chance to learn about chocolate, Thurs 2 - Sat 11 Apr, Tudor House Museum, Worcester

EASTER EGG HUNT Search high and low for hidden eggs in the galleries, Fri 3 Apr, Stourbridge Glass Museum

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA! See how many eggs you can find as you inveggstigate the grounds, then get a chocolate prize as a tasty reward! Fri 3 - Mon 6 Apr, Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire

WORLD CIVET DAY Discover fun facts about civets and their relatives, Sat 4 Apr, Hoo Zoo & Dinosaur World, Telford

STUART CRYSTAL SITE WALKING TOUR Explore the former site of the Stuart Crystal factory, Sat 4 Apr, Stourbridge Glass Museum

OSWESTRY STREET CIRCUS Featuring circus acts and walkabout performers, Sat 4 Apr, Bailey Head, Oswestry, North Shropshire

COVENTRY BRICK FESTIVAL Featuring lots to see and do, including speed-building competitions, large-scale displays, activities and traders, Sat 4 Apr, Coventry Building Society Arena

YOUR WORCESTER: GALLERY TOUR Enjoy a guided tour of permanent display Your Worcester, Sat 4 Apr, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

PITBULL BRUNCH Packed with tribute performances, big beats, and all the hits, from Fireball to Give Me Everything, Sat 4 Apr, The Bierkeller Birmingham

HERITAGE TOURS AT THE EXCHANGE Discover 'the rich history and fascinating stories' behind The Exchange's walls, Sat 4 Apr, The Exchange, Centenary Square, B'ham

THAMES TICA Featuring 150 cats of all breeds, Sat 4 - Sun 5 Apr, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

COLONEL PICKERINGS: REGIMENT OF FOOT Step back 350 years to the English Civil War and experience life on the road for soldiers and their families, Sat 4 - Sun 5 Apr, Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens

CHICK HANDLING Join the farming team in the hatchery for a hands-on experience, Sat 4 - Mon 6 Apr, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

EASTER EGG HUNT Search the railway for 10 hidden eggs, Sun 5 - Mon 6 Apr, Telford Steam Railway, Shrops

EASTER MOTOR SHOW Featuring over 1,000 display cars and motorcycles, Sun 5 - Mon 6 Apr, Weston Park, Shropshire

Gigs

FELIX RABIN BAND Mon 6 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

WALKING ALONE Mon 6 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

JIM JONES ALL STARS Tues 7 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

OLIVE JONES Tues 7 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

BASHT. Tues 7 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE AWAKENING + BLACK LAKES Tues 7 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

HANNAH MICHELL Tues 7 Apr, The Victoria, Birmingham

BOSS CASS Tues 7 Apr, The Victoria, B'ham

JESSIE J Tues 7 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

FLUOXETINE + STRUGGLES END + STUCK ON VIOLET + VEE Tues 7 Apr, The Rainbow, Birmingham

QUEST MASTER + BRETWALDA Tues 7 Apr, Just Dropped In, Coventry

THE JACKETS + THE FRIENDLY CAMPAIGN Tues 7 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE MARRAKESH EXPRESS Wed 8 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

SUMAC Wed 8 Apr, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

THE SLATES Wed 8 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

FEMUR Wed 8 Apr, The Victoria, Birmingham

CLARA LA SAN Wed 8 Apr, XOYO, Digbeth, Birmingham

THE SWAPS + GREG BRICE + TREVOR BABAJACK STEGER Wed 8 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SWING KINGS Wed 8 Apr, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

THE DAVIDSON TRIO Wed 8 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

FEET + CHARLIE VAUGHAN + PASSION PARADE Thurs 9 Apr,

Hare & Hounds, B'ham

BLACK DOLDRUMS Thurs 9 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BIRDBROTHER Thurs 9 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

NEW ORLEANS BRASS BAND Thurs 9 Apr, The Jam House, B'ham

THE ROLLING PEOPLE Thurs 9 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

BLACKTOP MOJO Thurs 9 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

TWO TRAINS LEFT Thurs 9 Apr, Dead Wax, Birmingham

DAN MCKINNON Thurs 9 Apr, Catshill Social Club, Bromsgrove

JESSIE WARE Thurs 9 Apr, hmv Empire, Coventry

PHILIP CLOUTS QUARTET Thurs 9 Apr, Marrs Bar, Worcester

THE BILLY JOEL COLLECTION Thurs 9 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

THE SOUND OF SPRINGSTEEN Thurs 9 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

KILL THE LIGHTS + LEAVE NO WITNESS Thurs 9 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

SKATE PUNX + SKINT LILLY Thurs 9 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE ORCHESTRA (FOR NOW) + LITTLE GRANDAD Fri 10 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LUCA SIMIAN Fri 10 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

BLACK FOXES Fri 10 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

FAYE Fri 10 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

LINKAI + STEP NO 1 + JIMMY IN THE WOODS + NECKLACE Fri 10 Apr, The Dark Horse, B'ham

THE KAIROS + FLORENTINES Fri 10 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

IDLEWILD Fri 10 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CAT BURNS + NXDIA Fri 10 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE CORE BAND Fri 10 Apr, Jo Jo Jims, B'ham

VEE JAY KING AND HIS DUKES Fri 10 Apr, Tower of Song, Birmingham

SLEEPING MOUNTAIN + VOIDLURKER + GOAT MAJOR Fri 10 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

IMELDA MAY Fri 10 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

TORI AMOS Fri 10 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

ANDY BENNETT Fri 10 Apr, The Victoria, Birmingham

SOFT MACHINE + PHIL MILLER LEGACY BAND Fri 10 Apr, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

THE ROSADOCs Fri 10 Apr, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

THE RADIOHEAD PROJECT Fri 10 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

XANDER AND THE PEACE PIRATES Fri 10 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

DUKE KEATS + REIGN THE GIRL BAND + SHANADE + DANE-O Fri 10 Apr, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

THE CLAUSE Fri 10 Apr, hmv Empire, Coventry

BUICK Fri 10 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

FRANKIE'S GUYS Fri 10 Apr, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THINK FLOYD Fri 10 Apr, Swan Theatre, Worcester

LEGENDS OF MOTOWN Fri 10 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

MOTORPACE + BLIZZARD OF OZZ UK Fri 10 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

MALT LOAF - A TRIBUTE TO MEAT LOAF Fri 10 Apr, Civic, Stourport

INTEROBANG Fri 10 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

THE LUKE COMBS EXPERIENCE Fri 10 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

STRICTLY UB40 Fri 10 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

BEN ROBERTSON Fri 10 Apr, Fenton Town Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

TAYLOR SWIFT TRIBUTE BY XENNA Fri 10 Apr,

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

DAN OWEN Fri 10 Apr, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

THE WESTLIFE EXPERIENCE Fri 10 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

ABI K Sat 11 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TOTAL LUCK + SHAKING HAND + MORE Sat 11 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE FLINTS Sat 11 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

DUNEBUG + KING ATOMIC + SKINT LILLY + AMPHIBIOUS PRIESTS Sat 11 Apr, The Dark Horse, Birmingham

ARIES Sat 11 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PROTOJE Sat 11 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MOVING PICTURES Sat 11 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE DOSS REUNION Sat 11 Apr, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

FULL OF HELL Sat 11 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

ROLLA Sat 11 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, B'ham

VASANT Sat 11 Apr, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, B'ham

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC Sat 11 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

SHREYA GHOSHAL Sat 11 Apr, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

THE BIG YELLOW TAMBOURINE MAN BAND Sat 11 Apr, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE STORY OF SWING Sat 11 Apr, The Core Theatre, Solihull

YOURTHMICS Sat 11 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

AC/DC UK Sat 11 Apr, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

DAVE MCCABE + JAMES JAY LEWIS Sat 11 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SYNTH Sat 11 Apr, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

SPANDESQUE + INXS GB + CLOSE TO TEARS Sat

11 Apr, hmv Empire, Coventry

GUNS 'N' YORKSHIRE ROSES Sat 11 Apr, Arches Venue, Coventry

EMILIO SANTORO AS ELVIS Sat 11 Apr, Bedworth Civic Hall

THE HOME GROWN Sat 11 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

JUSTIN DAISH IS HANK MARVIN Sat 11 Apr, The Market Theatre, Ledbury

CELINE - MY HEART WILL GO ON Sat 11 Apr, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE OLIVER WAKEMAN BAND Sat 11 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

FAIRPORT CONVENTION Sat 11 Apr, Kidderminster Town Hall

NOW I'M HERE - QUEEN TRIBUTE Sat 11 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

JASON CHARLES MILLER + MENA HARDY Sat 11 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

SOUTH OF SALEM + INME + APRIORI + BLACK LAKES + DOOMSDAY OUTLAW Sat 11 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

QUEEN OF THE NIGHT - A TRIBUTE TO WHITNEY HOUSTON Sat 11 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

UTAH SAINTS Sat 11 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

VOLBEATEN + AIRBOURNE UK Sat 11 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

NEGATIVE FRAME + BIND + HOUR OF REPRISAL + GUTTERSCUM + CLAYMORE Sat 11 Apr, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

SLOW GHERKIN + FAINTEST IDEA Sat 11 Apr, Redrum, Stafford

LET SPIN Sat 11 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

THE EMO FEST Sat 11 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE ENDINGS Sat 11 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

HATS OFF TO LED ZEPPELIN Sat 11 Apr, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

CATLEA + TOM PENNY + MARIANNE LEIGH Sat 11 Apr, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

ZOI! + TALL BLACK GUY (FEAT. DEBORAH BOND) Sun 12 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

HOWLIN' MAT Sun 12 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

SKYE NEWMAN Sun 12 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

REGGAE FEST BIRMINGHAM Sun 12 Apr, Tower of Song, Birmingham

NOCNY KOCHANER Sun 12 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

BLUE Sun 12 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

SHANIA LIVE Sun 12 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

FAIRPORT CONVENTION Sun 12 Apr, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

JOHN POWER Sun 12 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

TAYLOR SWIFT TRIBUTE BY XENNA Sun 12 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

ANT-TROUBLE Sun 12 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

THE BOOTLEG BEATLES Sun 12 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THE GUS GLYNN BAND Sun 12 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

LEGEND: THE MUSIC OF BOB MARLEY Sun 12 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THE NICK DEWHURST BAND Sun 12 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

STEVE CRADOCK Sun 12 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury



Classical Music

JINSHUO ZHANG PIANO CONCERT Tues 7 Apr, St Andrew's Church, Rugby

JAMES CARRICK-BUCHANAN PIANO CONCERT Tues 7 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBSO: KAZUKI CONDUCTS RACHMANINOFF & BARTÓK Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Nelson Goerner (piano). Programme also includes Hindemith's *Metamorphosis*, Thurs 9 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JINHE HUANG (VIOLA) & JIAYI CHEN (PIANO) IN CONCERT Fri 10 Apr, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

ALEX WYATT PIANO CONCERT Fri 10 Apr, Holy Trinity Church, Leamington Spa

ALEXANDRA WOODROW ORGAN CONCERT Fri 10 Apr, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

LUDLOW ENGLISH SONG WEEKEND Featuring Roderick Williams (baritone - pictured), Iain Burnside & Ian Tindale (piano), Ailish Tynan (soprano), Matthew Rose (bass). Programme includes works by Britten, Finzi, Schubert, Gershwin, Poulenc & more..., Fri 10 - Sun 12 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire



LIVE AT THE CBSO CENTRE: CELEBRATING POHELA BOISHAKH Featuring Sohini Alam (vocalist) & Khiyo Band, Sat 11 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

SPANISH GALICIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Roberto González-Monjas (conductor) & Thibaut Garcia (guitar). Programme includes works by Falla, Rodrigo, Ravel & Turina, Sat 11 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SPIRES SPRING CONCERT: SOUNDS AND SWEET AIRS Featuring Spires Music Coventry Philharmonic Orchestra & Chorus. Programme includes Shakespeare-inspired works by Mendelssohn, Prokofiev & Shearing, Sat 11 Apr, Burgess Hall, King Henry VIII School, Coventry

ST PETER'S SINGERS Featuring Alexander Woodrow (director). Programme includes works by Josquin, Brahms, Bruckner & more..., Sat 11 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

ECHO RISING STARS: ÁRON HORVÁTH

(CIMBALOM) Programme includes works by JS Bach, G Kurtág, CPE Bach & more..., Sun 12 Apr, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

NATIONAL YOUTH CHOIR: PAPER BOATS Featuring Coco Sato (paper artist). Programme includes works by Runestad, Papoulis, Sondheim & more..., Sun 12 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Comedy

JAMIE HUTCHINSON Tues 7 - Wed 8 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

STUART MCPHERSON Wed 8 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, JAY LAFFERTY & COMIC TBC Thurs 9 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

LOZ DODD & MIKEY BLYTH-SMITH Thurs 9 Apr, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

ROBIN MORGAN, JAY LAFFERTY, MC HAMMERSMITH, FARHAN SOLO & JAMES O'DONOGHUE Fri 10 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PHIL GREEN Fri 10 Apr, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

NICK PAGE, PHILIP SIMON, ANTHONY KING & PAUL REVIL Fri 10 Apr, The Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

JONNY COLE Fri 10 - Sat 11 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

PETER RETHINASAMY, DON BISWAS, EDDY BRIMSON & BARRY DODDS Sat 11 Apr, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

ROBIN MORGAN, JAY LAFFERTY, MC HAMMERSMITH & COMIC TBC Sat 11 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PERNILLE HAALAND Sat 11 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROB AUTON Sat 11 Apr, The Rep, Birmingham

TOM LUCY Sat 11 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DAN NIGHTINGALE, WAYNE BEESE & COMICS TBC Sun 12 Apr, The Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

GREGOR FISHER Sun 12 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham



The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged) - Lichfield Garrick

Theatre

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S DEATH ON THE NILE Join world-famous detective Hercule Poirot as he untangles a web of lies to solve yet another crime. Mark Hadfield (Belfast, *Outlander*, *Wallander*), Glynis Barber (*Dempsey & Makepeace*, *EastEnders*) and Bob Barrett (*Murder On The Orient Express*, *Holby City*) star, Tues 7 - Sat 11 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE CONSTANT WIFE Kara Tointon stars in Laura Wade's staging of W Somerset Maugham's famous comedy. An RSC production, Tues 7 - Sat 11 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

GLORIOUS! Wendi Peters stars alongside Matthew James Morrison in the true story of Florence Foster Jenkins, an American socialite who became infamous for her dreadful singing, Tues 7 - Sat 11 Apr, Malvern Theatres

COME FROM AWAY Amateur version of the smash-hit musical, based on the real-life story of the 7,000 air passengers who were grounded in Canada in the wake of 9/11, Tues 7 - Sat 11 Apr, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

SUNNY AFTERNOON Award-winning musical telling a story of friendship, fame and rock history, Tues 7 - Sat 11 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE CHOIR OF MAN Debut tour of the smash-hit show celebrating community and friendship, Tues 7 - Sat 11 Apr, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED) The Reduced Shakespeare Company take audiences on a rollercoaster ride through the Bard's plays, Wed 8 - Sat 11 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

COME FROM AWAY Amateur version of

the smash-hit musical, based on the real-life story of the 7,000 air passengers who were grounded in Canada in the wake of 9/11, Wed 8 - Sat 18 Apr, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

THE INVISIBLE MAN Our Star Theatre Company present a comic retelling of HG Wells' classic story, Thurs 9 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

STEVE STEINMAN'S VAMPIRES ROCK ETERNAL LOVE - THE MUSICAL Journey into a 'fantastical, dark and thrilling world' as the Vampire Baron goes in search of eternal love, Thurs 9 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

A MONSTER CALLS Stage2 present an amateur version of Patrick Ness' dark fantasy, Thurs 9 - Fri 11 Apr, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE INVISIBLE MAN A 'fast-paced and riotous' stage adaptation of HG Wells' classic story, Fri 10 Apr, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

THE COTTINGLEY FAIRIES British Youth Musical Theatre present a new musical inspired by the true story of two girls who convinced the world they had photographed real fairies, Fri 10 - Sun 12 Apr, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

YOU ARE AFRICAN FIRST BEFORE ANYTHING Semi-autobiographical one-woman show exploring the complexities of the African mother-daughter bond, Sat 11 Apr, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE CRUCIBLE Amateur version of Arthur Miller's classic play, based on the true events of the Salem witch trials of 1692, Sat 11 - Sat 18 Apr, Rugby Theatre

THE RESISTABLE RISE OF ARTURO UI Mark Gatiss makes his RSC debut in Stephen Sharkey's translation of Bertholt Brecht's satire on Hitler's rise to power, Sat 11 Apr - Sat 30 May, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

NORTHERN LIVE: DO I LOVE YOU

Featuring original sounds from the underground movement that started on dancefloors in the north and eventually swept the nation, Sun 12 Apr, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

Kids Theatre

GABBY'S DOLLHOUSE LIVE An original story for children, featuring puppetry, song and plenty of audience participation, Tues 7 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

THREE LITTLE PIGS Family-friendly musical in which the classic story is told using 'catchy songs, clever rhymes and heaps of humour', Tues 7 - Wed 8 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE ULTIMATE BUBBLE SHOW Join international bubbleologist and Guinness World Record holder Ray Bubbles as he showcases the art of bubblemaking, Tues 7 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

PUFFLING PERCY Puppetry and live music combine in an uplifting tale about overcoming fear and finding true friendship, Wed 8 Apr, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

EXCITING SCIENCE Fun and facts come together in a new educational show full of 'wiz, bang and pop'. Suitable for audience members aged four-plus, Wed 8 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT LOL Theatre Company present a family-friendly show based on Beatrix Potter's short story, Wed 8 Apr, Macready Theatre, Rugby

CLAYTIME Indefinite Articles present a play with clay. Audiences are invited to participate, Thurs 9 Apr, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

WONDERLAND Join the Hatter as he brings Alice's adventure to life with charming puppets, vibrant painted scenery, lively music - and hats! Thurs 9 Apr, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

PERFECT SHOW FOR RACHEL Fast-paced show featuring physical comedy, live music, home movies, dancing and more..., Fri 10 - Sat 11 Apr, The Rep, Birmingham

RAPUNZEL Immersion Theatre present a hair-raising adventure complete with magic and mayhem, Sat 11 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

CLAYTIME Indefinite Articles present a

play with clay. Audiences are invited to participate, Sat 11 Apr, The Rep, Birmingham

HALF A STRING: TINY PLANET A unique piece of puppet theatre in which audiences embark on 'a journey to explore how we can all sometimes feel impossibly small and infinitely gigantic', Sat 11 - Sun 12 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham



Light Entertainment

BOX OF FROGS 'Birmingham's premiere improv group' present an evening of high-octane improvised comedy nonsense based entirely on audience suggestions, Wed 8 Apr, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

THE MUSIC MAN & THE MIMIC SHOW

Featuring singer Keith Slater and TV comedy impressionist Christopher Gee, Wed 8 Apr, The Core Theatre, Solihull

WIFI WARS Show in which the audience competes (both as teams and individually) in a series of games, quizzes and more - all beamed onto smartphones and tablets using WiFi Wars' Guinness World Record-Breaking tech, Thurs 9 Apr, The Hub at St Marys, Lichfield

CELTIC NIGHTS Join the MacDonald Brothers for a celebration of Scotland's greatest artists and Celtic music, Thurs 9 Apr, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

WHAM! - THE SHOW 'Ultimate party tribute' featuring X Factor star Jake Quickenden, Thurs 9 Apr, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE MUSIC OF LUTHER VANDROS BY CANDLELIGHT Thurs 9 Apr, Worcester Cathedral

VICTORIOUS A 'joyful and poignant musical tribute' to the late Victoria Wood, Fri 10 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE BIG PANTS PARTY The 'ultimate ladies night out', celebrating 'the iconic soundtrack of a lifetime of fun,

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love and friendship', Fri 10 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

FRANKIE'S GUYS 2026 Celebrating Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons, Fri 10 Apr, Palace Theatre, Redditch

COPACABANA MAGIC - THE BARRY MANILOW SHOW Featuring acclaimed vocalist Martyn James and his band & dancers, Fri 10 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

NICOLA MILLS: OPERA FOR THE PEOPLE Described as a cross between Victoria Wood and Pavarotti, Nicola showcases a mix of strong opera vocals and witty storytelling, Fri 10 Apr, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

ALEX MCALEER: MIND READER As seen in hit show Champions Of Magic, Fri 10 Apr, Macready Theatre, Rugby

THAT'S LIFE! - A CELEBRATION OF SWING An evening of 'crooning, class and a whole lot of brass', Sat 11 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE BIG PANTS PARTY The 'ultimate ladies night out', celebrating the iconic soundtrack of a lifetime of fun, love and friendship', Sat 11 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

FRANKIE'S GUYS 2026 Celebrating Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons, Sat 11 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

80S ANTHEMS BY CANDLELIGHT Sat 11 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

ANGRY BOATER AKA JOEL SANDERS (CHANNEL 4'S NARROW ESCAPES) Flagship show about dropping out of society to become a nomad on the UK's waterways, Sat 11 Apr, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

WHAM! - THE SHOW 'Ultimate party tribute' featuring X Factor star Jake Quickenden, Sat 11 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

GRAVITY Three West End & Broadway legends - Kerry Ellis, Louise Dearman and Rachel Tucker - come together to perform hits from their back catalogues, Sun 12 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

WHAM! - THE SHOW 'Ultimate party tribute' featuring X Factor star Jake Quickenden, Sun 12 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

LUCY DARLING: SIMPLY DARLING Award-winning performer Carisa Hendrix hosts a touring variety show featuring razor-sharp wit, unquestionable advice and skilful magic, Sun 12 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

WEST END TENORS Featuring powerhouse vocals from leading West End performers, Sun 12 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL! Join The Bluebird Belles for a musical journey through the sounds of the fabulous 50s and swinging 60s, Sun 12 Apr, Kidderminster Town Hall

Talks & Spoken Word

FOR THE LOVE OF RUGBY Ben Youngs and Dan Cole present stories from across their careers. Expect games and surprises, Thurs 9 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

UNDERCOVER DETECTIVE: THE MAKINGS OF A MURDERER A true-crime event. Peter Bleksley reveals the harrowing reality behind solving murders and battling the criminal underworld, Thurs 9 & Fri 10 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HENRY NORMAL & JAN BRIERTON An engaging evening is on the cards as Henry reads poems from his new book, *An Alphabet Of Storms*, whilst Jan's poems reflect on being a wife, mother, daughter, sister and retired raver, Fri 10 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE TRIAL OF LORD LUCAN Join crime historian Adam Wood for an illustrated talk exploring the theories, rumours and unanswered questions surrounding one of Britain's most notorious criminal cases, Sat 11 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

Events

PEAKY BLINDERS DAY Featuring a guided tour of the historic Newman Brothers factory and exclusive demonstrations celebrating the craftsmanship of the period, Mon 6 Apr, Coffin Works Museum, B'ham

HOO-FEST: COMIC-CON ON THE ZOO Meet cosplayers, explore themed props and displays, and enjoy plenty of photo opportunities throughout the zoo, Mon 6 Apr, Hoo Zoo & Dinosaur World, Telford

THE SKETCHING STUDIO Visit the studio and cover the walls, floor and tables with drawings and doodles, Mon 6 Apr, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY Immerse yourself in Lewis Carroll's beloved book series, Mon 6 Apr, Churnet Valley Railway, Staffordshire

OUR STORIES AND HERITAGE INTERACTIVE POP-UP Featuring immersive room settings, oral histories, radio broadcasts, music, video and graphics, Mon 6 - Thurs 9 Apr, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

HOME ED GAMERS MEET UPS Play digital games facilitated by the design tutors, Tues 7 Apr, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

CREATE AND CRAFT CAFÉ Meet like-minded people who enjoy making, crafting and creativity, Tues 7 Apr, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

BUNNY CRAFTS Decorate and



Lucy Darling: Simply Darling - Birmingham Town Hall

construct a wooden bunny acrobat, Tues 7 - Thurs 9 Apr, Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire

TINKER | MAKE | PLAY ENGINEERS: GOING FROM PLAYING GAMES TO POWERFUL INVENTIONS Join in with playful hands-on engineering challenges and explore digital play, Wed 8 Apr, Coventry Transport Museum

FIND THE EGGS! - EASTER TRAIL Find all the eggs in the garden to complete the trail, Wed 8 - Fri 10 Apr, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

GET MUCKY, GET MAKING Little explorers can splatter and squish, search for animal eggs and wiggle woodland treasures, and mix mud potions, Thurs 9 Apr, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

TALL TALES: GOLDBLOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS Interactive version of the famous story, Thurs 9 Apr, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

COMEDY IN FOCUS: STAN & OLLIE Combined exhibition & film experience for fans of Laurel & Hardy, Fri 10 Apr, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

LEGO RELIEF PRINTING WITH STIRCHLEY PRINTWORKS 'A fun, friendly and creative relief printing workshop that's perfect for families', Fri 10 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY Immerse yourself in Lewis Carroll's beloved book series, Fri 10 - Sat 11 Apr, Churnet Valley Railway, Staffordshire

COLLECTIVERSE Buy, sell and trade your favourite cards, Sat 11 Apr, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

EASTER NEEDLE FELTING WORKSHOP Enjoy a relaxed morning of crafting and create your own Easter bunny to take home with you, Sat 11 Apr, The Commandery, Worcester

NEVERLAND: THE PETER PAN DRONE LIGHT SHOW Lumina Drones unveils the world's first-ever Peter Pan drone

light show, Sat 11 Apr, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

LOVELYLAND COMMUNITY GREEN DAY Free drop-in event celebrating sustainability, Sat 11 Apr, Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

HERITAGE GLASS AND CHURCH WALKING TOUR Tour that explores the churches, canals, factories and people that made the Stourbridge glass industry what it is today, Sat 11 Apr, Stourbridge Glass Museum

BIRMINGHAM GIN & RUM FESTIVAL Featuring 120-plus premium gins, rums & tequilas 'to sip, sample and savour', Sat 11 Apr, Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham

SPRING YOUTH TAKEOVER Full-day youth event designed to encourage movement, creativity and wellbeing, Sat 11 Apr, FarGo Village, Coventry

TINKER | MAKE | PLAY ENGINEERS: GOING FROM PLAYING GAMES TO POWERFUL INVENTIONS Join in with playful hands-on engineering challenges and explore digital play, Sat 11 Apr, Coventry Transport Museum

REGGAEROBICS & SOFUNK MASH-UP Special collaboration and mash-up of dance classes, Sat 11 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

HOT WHEELS MONSTER TRUCKS LIVE: GLOW-N-FIRE Event bringing fans' favourite Hot Wheels Monster Trucks to life, Sat 11 - Sun 12 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

COVENTRY PHOENIX FILM FESTIVAL Featuring screenings of curated films, documentaries and animation, Sat 11 - Sun 12 Apr, FarGo Village, Coventry

THE KICKBACK SHOW Event dedicated to custom bikes, vintage gems and hot rods, Sat 11 - Sun 12 Apr, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR Explore more than 500 stalls selling thousands of old and new collectable toys and models, Sun 12 Apr, NEC, B'ham

Gigs

WINTERSLEEP Mon 13 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LEWIS BARFOOT Mon 13 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

HENRY MOODIE Mon 13 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

LIME GARDEN Mon 13 Apr, The Rainbow, Birmingham

JAMES OLIVER BAND Mon 13 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

BLUE Mon 13 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

ROBBIE CAVANAGH Tues 14 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

PACIFIC AVENUE Tues 14 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

MIGUEL Tues 14 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BLACKBRAID + WINTERFYLLETH + NOCTEM Tues 14 Apr, The Asylum, B'ham

COLIN STETSON Tues 14 Apr, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

BALANCING ACT + MATT FELIX + MAIDEN RACES Wed 15 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

HEZRON Wed 15 Apr, The Jam House, B'ham

CALLUM KENWORTHY Wed 15 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

FRANK TURNER + DAVE HAUSE + KATACOMBS Wed 15 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

RANAGRI + ROSEMARY STACEY Wed 15 Apr, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

WARREN JAMES LONESOME TRAVELLERS Wed 15 Apr, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

NIEVE ELLA Wed 15 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

DAVE ZUTON + JAMES JAY LEWIS Wed 15 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

IMAGINE LENNON Wed 15 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

PATTI BOULAYE Wed 15

Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE BURNING HELL + CARSIE BLANTON Thurs 16 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

KIBO Thurs 16 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JESS SILK + MATT JOHNSON Thurs 16 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

WINTER MCQUINN + PYS MELYN + THE FAZELEYS Thurs 16 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SEKOU Thurs 16 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SPEED Thurs 16 Apr, XOYO, Digbeth, B'ham

GRANNY'S ATTIC Thurs 16 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

JOHN BRAMWELL Thurs 16 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

ZONE-B Thurs 16 Apr, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

THE GUEST LIST Thurs 16 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

J D MEATYARD + THE WEAK & THE STRONG + BEARD SNAX Thurs 16 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

PERP WALK + HEAD DENT + WITHERHORDE Thurs 16 Apr, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

HONEY & THE BEAR

Thurs 16 Apr, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

THIS IS ELVIS Thurs 16 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

SAULTS Fri 17 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE JAM'D Fri 17 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

SEAN REEVES Fri 17 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

MS BANKS Fri 17 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE HIGH KINGS Fri 17 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

SMOKIN' ESKIMO + 72HOUSES Fri 17 Apr, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

ALCYONA MICK Fri 17 Apr, 1000 Trades,

Birmingham

THE MONOCHROME SET Fri 17 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

THE MECHANIST + ALEYA Fri 17 Apr, Dead Wax, Birmingham

FEVER DREAM Fri 17 Apr, Dead Wax, Birmingham

MOSHTALGIA Fri 17 Apr, The Flapper, B'ham

TRUEMENDOUS Fri 17 Apr, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, B'ham

THE REMI HARRIS HOT CLUB TRIO Fri 17 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ONE NIGHT OF ADELE Fri 17 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE DUNWELLS Fri 17 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE MIGHTY BOING Fri 17 Apr, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

ASPYRIAN Fri 17 Apr, The Box, FarGo Village, Coventry

REZISTANCE Fri 17 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

NOW I'M HERE - QUEEN TRIBUTE Fri 17 Apr, The Benn Hall, Rugby

GYPSY PISTOLEROS + JAMES KENNEDY & THE UNDERDOGS + RETSECROWS Fri 17 Apr, Marrs Bar, Worcester

CLEARWATER CREEDENCE REVIVAL + TEN YEARS AFTER Fri 17 Apr, Kidderminster Town Hall

KING OF POP Fri 17 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

CHRIS STAPLETON UK Fri 17 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

UB40 TRIBUTE - LABOUR OF LOVE Fri 17 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

SABOTAGE Fri 17 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

WOLVES IN ALCATRAZ + BOUND BY BURDENS + CROOKED HEAD Fri 17 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

RAMMLIED Fri 17 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

HOUSE OF ALL + THE GROVES Fri 17 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

BLACK JOSH & LEE SCOTT

+ PALE RED COLLECTIVE Fri 17 Apr, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

COSMIC QUEEN Fri 17 Apr, The Rigger, Newcastle-under-Lyme

POPESTARS - GHOST TRIBUTE Fri 17 Apr, The Station, Cannock

THE LUKE COMBS COLLECTION Fri 17 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

PETER COX Fri 17 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

UNDERCOVER HEROES Fri 17 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

NICK HARPER Fri 17 Apr, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

MAET LIVE & THE NEVER NEVERLAND EXPRESS Fri 17 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE DIRTY ROCKIN' SCOUNDRELS Fri 17 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

ME AND MY FRIENDS Fri 17 Apr, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

TRANSATLANTIC HOT CLUB Fri 17 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

BANG BANG FIRECRACKER + BLACKWATER + BRING GUNS Fri 17 Apr, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

ELLE-J WALTERS BAND Fri 17 - Sat 18 Apr, The Jam House, B'ham

BOTTLE ROCKETS + CHASING AUGUST Sat 18 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

DEBASE INVADERS Sat 18 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

THE SICKNESS + ZERO SUN + SILENT JACK + BLUE THEORY + BRAINROT Sat 18 Apr, The Dark Horse, B'ham

ERASURED Sat 18 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

LADY PANK Sat 18 Apr, O2 Academy, B'ham

DEFINITELY MIGHTBE + CHANGING MAN Sat 18 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DURAN-UK Sat 18 Apr, Jo Jo Jims, B'ham

CERI JUSTICE & THE JURY Sat 18 Apr, Tower of Song, Birmingham

GOOD FRIEND RIK Sat 18 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

CREEPER + THE HOWLING Sat 18 Apr, The Asylum, B'ham

ROYALS + HARRY JXYE + LUNAR HIJACK Sat 18 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

THE PRODIGY + CARL COX Sat 18 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

THE PRONOUNCED Sat 18 Apr, Bromsgrove Arts @ Fairfield Village Hall, Bromsgrove

PINK BY VICKY JACKSON Sat 18 Apr, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

HOLLIE ROGERS Sat 18 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE STYLE COUNCILLORS Sat 18 Apr, hmv Empire, Coventry

ELTON'S SONG: BEYOND THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD Sat 18 Apr, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

BARRY STEELE'S ROY ORBISON STORY Sat 18 Apr, Bedworth Civic Hall

JOHNNY SEVEN Sat 18 Apr, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

FIDDLEBOP Sat 18 Apr, The Market Theatre, Ledbury

THE BLUE LENA + THE HAUNTED SOULS Sat 18 Apr, Marrs Bar, Worcester

JOHN BRAMWELL + BEN DE LA COUR Sat 18 Apr, West Malvern Social Club

CELINE - MY HEART WILL GO ON Sat 18 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

MICHAEL STARRING BEN Sat 18 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

BEATLES COMPLETE Sat 18 Apr, The Civic, Stourport

THE FLEETWOOD MAC SONGBOOK Sat 18 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THUNDER HAMMER Sat 18 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

THE REALLY HOT CHILI

PEPPERS Sat 18 Apr, The Station, Cannock

JEREMY SASSOON Sat 18 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

CALLING PLANET EARTH Sat 18 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MAMAS GUN Sat 18 Apr, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

THE CLASSIC BLUES SHOW Sat 18 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

GOOD TO GO Sat 18 Apr, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE ENDINGS Sat 18 Apr, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

JOHN POWER Sat 18 Apr, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

SEVEN WONDERS Sat 18 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

JOOSE KESKITALO Sat 18 Apr, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

WORLD NEWS Sun 19 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DANI LARKIN Sun 19 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

MAGGIE LINDEMANN Sun 19 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ASGEIR Sun 19 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SUZI QUATRO Sun 19 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE CHURCHFITTERS Sun 19 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SARAH MCQUAID Sun 19 Apr, Albany Theatre, Coventry

BRAVADO - A TRIBUTE TO RUSH Sun 19 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

MAN IN THE MIRROR Sun 19 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

TOTO UK + TIN MAN Sun 19 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE JOURNEYMEN - ERIC CLAPTON TRIBUTE Sun 19 Apr, The Station, Cannock

JOHN POWER Sun 19 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Also featuring Roger Owens (piano). Programme includes works by Mendelssohn, Dupré, Chopin & Addinsell, Mon 13 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CATHY LAMB ORGAN PROM Programme includes works by Bonnet, JS Bach, Gigout & more..., Tues 14 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ALASTAIR MCGOWAN PIANO CONCERT Tues 14 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury



CBSO: PUCCINI IN ROME Featuring Carlo Rizzi (conductor) & Fleur Barron (mezzo soprano). Programme includes works by Puccini & Respighi, Wed 15 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

YUGEN SAXOPHONE QUARTET Featuring Ewan Wright, Dominic Cotta, Emily Plumb & Alicia Hillman (saxophones). Programme includes works by Lago, Downes & more..., Wed 15 Apr, St. Nicholas Church, Codsall

CBSO: OPERATIC WINDS Programme includes works by Mozart, Donizetti, Verdi & Dvořák, Thurs 16 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

CELEBRITY BRASS RECITAL Featuring Ben Goldscheider (french horn) and Simon Callaghan (piano). Programme includes works by Bax, Dyson, Vaughan Williams & more..., Thurs 16 Apr, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: SWAN SESSIONS - LABYRINTHS Featuring David Le Page (director). Programme includes works by Glass, Pärt, Shostakovich & more..., Thurs 16 Apr, St Nicholas Church, Warwick

CBSO: BEETHOVEN & PUCCINI Featuring Carlo Rizzi (conductor) & Seong-Jin Cho (piano). Programme also includes Rossini's The Thieving Magpie: Overture, Fri 17 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

QUINTUS BRASS QUINTET Featuring Corey Kohut & George Sharman (trumpets), Eleanor Dierckx (french horn), Amber Martyniak (trombone) & Inioluwa Kutu (tuba), Sat 18 Apr, Library of Birmingham

SHREWSBURY CHORAL & SINFONIA Featuring Dr Martin Cook (conductor). Programme includes works by Mendelssohn, Haydn & Brahms, Sat 18 Apr, Shrewsbury Abbey

EUROPEAN DOCTORS ORCHESTRA: SING,

DANCE AND MAKE MERRY Featuring Jack Lovell-Huckle (conductor) & Judith Le Breuilly (soloist). Programme includes works by Handel, Rachmaninoff & Elgar, Sun 19 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

MAX AMINI Mon 13 - Tues 14 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

JOE LYCETT & FRIENDS Tues 14 Apr, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

JONNY COLE Tues 14 - Wed 15 Apr, Artrix, Bromsgrove

JOEL DOMMETT Wed 15 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MIKE WOZNIAC Thurs 16 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

TOM ROSENTHAL Thurs 16 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, PHIL NICHOL & HAYLEY ELLIS Thurs 16 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ERIC RUSHTON Thurs 16 Apr, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

HATTY PRESTON, KARL SPAIN, PHIL NICHOL, HAYLEY ELLIS & ALEX HYLTON Fri 17 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

JUSTIN MOORHOUSE Fri 17 Apr, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

BRIAN CONLEY, PHIL NICHOL, JACK GLEADOW & WAYNE BEESE Fri 17 Apr, The Civic, Brierley Hill

SAMI ABU WARDEH Fri 17 Apr, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

ROGER MONKHOUSE, KENT CAMERON, KAZEEM JAMAL & CARL JONES Sat 18 Apr, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

HATTY PRESTON, KARL SPAIN, PHIL NICHOL & HAYLEY ELLIS Sat 18 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

NATALY AUKAR Sat 18 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham



CRAY CRAY CABARET: AN EVENING OF COMEDY, MUSIC & MORE! Sat 18 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JOSH WIDDICOMBE Sat 18 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

JOSH PUGH, WAYNE BEESE & COMICS TBC Sat 18 Apr, The Lamp Tavern, Dudley

WORLD COMEDY CLASH Sun 19 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DARREN HARRIOTT Sun 19 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

Theatre

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW Richard O'Brien's iconic rock & roll musical, featuring timeless classics Sweet Transvestite, Damn It Janet, and the pelvic-thrusting Time Warp, Mon 13 - Sat 18 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

BACKSTAIRS BILLY Play examining the 50-year relationship between the Queen Mother and her most loyal and outrageous servant, Mon 13 - Sat 18 Apr, Talisman Theatre & Arts Centre, Kenilworth

CABIN PRESSURE The Nonentities perform John Finnemore's radio play, as heard on the BBC, Mon 13 - Sat 18 Apr, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

THE TALENTED MR RIPLEY Ed McVey stars alongside Maisie Smith and Bruce Herbelin-Earle in a stage adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's famous psychological thriller, Mon 13 - Sat 18 Apr, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE RAILWAY CHILDREN Stoke Rep Players present an amateur version of E Nesbit's timeless story, Tues 14 - Sat 18 Apr, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD Aaron Sorkin's award-winning version of Harper Lee's legendary courtroom drama, Tues 14 - Sat 18 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE BEEKEEPER OF ALEPPO Fast-moving and innovative production based on Christy Lefteri's acclaimed novel of the same name, Tues 14 - Sat 18 Apr, Malvern Theatres

WEST SIDE STORY Studley Operatic Society present an amateur version of the iconic story of love, loyalty, loss and revenge, Tues 14 - Sat 18 Apr, Palace Theatre, Redditch

ALL THE HAPPY THINGS A dark comedy about the power of sisterhood and grief, Wed 15 - Thurs 16 Apr, The Rep, Birmingham

CALENDAR GIRLS - THE MUSICAL Shrewsbury Musical Theatre Company present an amateur version of the Tim Firth/Gary Barlow musical, Wed 15 - Sat 18 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MACBETH Flabbergast Theatre fuse puppetry, clowning, physical theatre and live music to bring Shakespeare's blood-soaked tragedy to life, Thurs 16 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

CRUMBS Comedy, clowning and live baking feature in a show penned by Kate Bramley, Thurs 16 Apr, Stoke St Milborough Village Hall, Shropshire

AN IMPROVISED MURDER Join Foghorn Unscripted for a night of 'hilarity, mystery and mayhem', Thurs 16 - Fri 17 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

DON'T DRESS FOR DINNER Amateur version of Marc Camoletti's slapstick comedy, Thurs 16 - Sat 18 Apr, The Little Theatre Donnington, Shropshire

CRUMBS Comedy, clowning and live baking feature in a show penned by Kate Bramley, Fri 17 Apr, Silvester Horne Institute, Church Stretton, South Shropshire

DRIFTWOOD Martina Laird's deeply evocative story of self-determination and the search for family and belonging, Fri 17 Apr - Sat 30 May, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

CRUMBS Comedy, clowning and live baking feature in a show penned by Kate Bramley, Sat 18 Apr, Chapel Lawn Village Hall, Shropshire

PURCELL, THE MUSICAL The Telling present a play with music in which the composer's compositions take on a life of their own, Sat 18 Apr, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

I'M MUSLAMIC DON'T PANIC A 'joyful' afternoon of dance theatre, Sat 18 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

DIANE'S DELI: A TALE OF PARADISE HEIGHTS Joe O'Byrne's acclaimed play, serving up 'mayhem, madness and murder', Sun 19 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

9 TO 5 JR Amateur version presented by Stagecoach Lichfield, Sun 19 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

Kids Theatre

LAST UNICORN AIRWAYS Half Moon Theatre present an adventure story for younger audiences, adapted from Hans Christian Andersen's timeless tale, Sat 18 Apr, The Rep, B'ham & Sun 19 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

Light Entertainment

COUNTERFEIT SIXTIES Afternoon of 60s nostalgia showcasing the music of The Beatles, The Tremeloes, The Small Faces, Manfred Mann, The Move and more..., Tues 14 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

IT'S MY LIFE! Laughter and music combine in Rachel Miller's show, featuring 'cheeky parodies, clever re-writes, original bangers, and the occasion sea shanty', Tues 14 Apr, The Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

THE PARODY OF THE RINGS Expect 'comedy, chaos and utter nonsense' as a team of hapless ushers attempt to create an epic tale of hobbits, elves and orcs, Wed 15 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

BEYOND THE BARRICADE: IN AID OF ACORNS HOSPICE Charity concert



Rustival - British Motor Museum, Gaydon

showcasing some of the greatest songs in musical theatre, Thurs 16 Apr, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY? Immersive theatre experience that delves into one of the most infamous and debated murder cases in British criminal history: The Jeremy Bamber White House Farm Murders, Thurs 16 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

OUT WITH THE BUCKLEYS An unedited and unfiltered show from the husband & wife duo who scored a hit with YouTube channel At Home With The Buckleys, Thurs 16 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE MUSIC OF THE BEATLES BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring a cast of West End singers and a live band, Thurs 16 Apr, Worcester Cathedral

SAMI ABU WARDEH: PALESTINE PEACE DE RESISTANCE Comedy in which silliness collides with survival. Expect 'an open call for mass civil disobedience, equitable distribution of hand puppets, and some of the silliest faces you'll ever see', Fri 17 Apr, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

SEVEN DRUNKEN NIGHTS - THE STORY OF THE DUBLINERS 'Ultimate feelgood Irish show', Fri 17 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Fortieth anniversary show blending rock & roll, pop and comedy, Fri 17 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

RUBY WAX: ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS Join Ruby for an evening of clips from her TV shows and some accompanying scandalous stories, Sat 18 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

WHAM! - THE SHOW 'Ultimate party tribute' featuring X Factor star Jake Quickenden, Sat 18 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

THE BRITPOP SHOW Part nostalgic love letter, part send-up, part rock & roll party, Sat 18 Apr, The Glee Club,

Birmingham

CALLING PLANET EARTH Sing, dance and party to songs of the 80s, Sat 18 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

80S LIVE! Arrive dressed to impress in what promises to be 'the ultimate 80's night out' featuring a fusion of pop and soft-rock hits, Sat 18 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Fortieth anniversary show blending rock & roll, pop and comedy, Sat 18 Apr, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

BOTTOMS UP: BURLESQUE & CABARET The creme de la creme of the cabaret world take to the stage to surprise and delight, Sat 18 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

BOYBAND IN THE BUFF: STARRING GARETH GATES Featuring 90s & noughties boyband hits with the promise of a 'sex twist', Sat 18 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

JOHN POWER - CAST, THE LA'S, AND ME Intimate evening of entertainment combining John's best-loved songs with a selection of 'wild, funny, and tender stories', Sat 18 Apr, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

OUT WITH THE BUCKLEYS An unedited and unfiltered show from the husband & wife duo who scored a hit with YouTube channel At Home With The Buckleys, Sun 19 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

AN ORCHESTRAL TRIBUTE TO TIM BURTON & DARK FANTASY BY MOONLIGHT Concert featuring whimsical and otherworldly dark fantasy film music, 'brought to life by the Illuminated Orchestra beneath the glow of a giant moon', Sun 19 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA Featuring Ray McVay (director), Sun 19 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

SPICE GIRLS - THE THEATRE SHOW Sun

19 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ART OF ANDALUCIA - FLAMENCO New and immersive experience in which Daniel Martinez and Angel Reyes bring the passion and energy of Andalusia to life, Sun 19 Apr, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

PULMAN & STILGOE: HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD Liza Pulman and Joe Stilgoe perform an array of great movie musical songs, Sun 19 Apr, Malvern Theatres

Talks & Spoken Word

DAMIAN HALL - RUNNING FOREVER An evening with the ultra runner, coach, author, climate activist and tea addict, Tues 14 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

STATE OF THE NATION: AN EVENING WITH AKALA Join the award-winning hip-hop artist, bestselling author, historian & social entrepreneur for an evening of 'hard-hitting insights, deeply felt stories, sharp analysis and urgent calls for solidarity', Tues 14 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

DR LOUISE NEWSON - BREAKING THE CYCLE: THE POWER OF HORMONES Expect lightbulb moments, myth busting and real-life stories. An audience Q&A session also features, Tues 14 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

AN EVENING WITH AGGERS & TUFFERS Expect sharp wit and outrageous tales from the cricket legends..., Wed 15 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

DAMIAN HALL - RUNNING FOREVER An evening with the ultra runner, coach, author, climate activist and tea addict, Wed 15 Apr, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

GARTH MARENGHI: THIS BURSTED EARTH TOUR An evening with the fictional horror author, Sat 18 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

HENRY & ELIZABETH: THE MARRIAGE THAT MADE THE TUDORS Author Nathan Amin takes a look at the political marriage that ended the War of the Roses and gave birth to one of the mightiest dynasties to rule the kingdom, Sat 18 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

MEET THE PHOTOGRAPHER: ANDY HOLLINGWORTH IN CONVERSATION Andy shares funny anecdotes, behind-the-scenes stories and candid insights connected to his exhibition, I Photograph Comedians!, Sat 18 Apr, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

Events

CULTURE CLUB: PRINT YOUR MEMORY Create your own unique prints using real leaves and natural textures, Mon 13 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC),

Birmingham

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: CELLARS, STORES, AND STATE ROOMS Join the house & collections team on a behind-the-scenes tour of the mansion, Tues 14 Apr, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

HISTORY OF RAF DEFFORD WALK A walk through Croome Park reveals the way in which RAF Defford changed the 18th-century landscape, Thurs 16 Apr, Croome Park, Worcestershire

SPRING STEAM GALA Featuring both guest- and home-fleet locomotives, Thurs 16 - Sun 19 Apr, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, nr Kidderminster

THE MYTON HOSPICE'S MOONLIGHT WALK 2026 Follow either the 5km or 10km route, Fri 17 Apr, Warwick Town Centre

NATIONAL MOTORHOME, CAMPERVAN AND CAMPING EXHIBITION Featuring 40-plus dealers, 350-plus vehicles and 170-plus exhibitors, Fri 17 - Sun 19 Apr, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

RUSTIVAL A celebration for car, commercial, bus and bike enthusiasts, Sat 18 Apr, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

TUNNEL TOUR Explore the tunnels that lie beneath the museum and learn about their history, Sat 18 Apr, Stourbridge Glass Museum

ST GEORGE'S EXTRAVAGANZA Featuring knights, dragons and more, Sat 18 Apr, Tamworth Castle

CINEMA UNDER THE STARS Enjoy a cinema-style experience in the planetarium, Sat 18 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

YOUR WORCESTER: GALLERY TOUR Enjoy a guided tour of permanent display Your Worcester, Sat 18 Apr, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

SOUNDBATHS WITH THE MANOJ COLLECTIVE Immersive sound journey, Sat 18 Apr, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

RUGELEY COMIC CON Superheroes, retro gamers, comic collectors and curious kids all collide 'in one nerdy day out', Sat 18 Apr, Lea Hall, Rugeley, Staffordshire

TUDOR SATURDAY The Worcester Re-enactors take over Tudor House for a day, representing Tudor and Elizabethan militia, Sat 18 Apr, Tudor House Museum, Worcester

SHROPSHIRE WAY 80K FESTIVAL Popular event attracting hundreds of runners and walkers, Sat 18 - Sun 19 Apr, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms, South Shropshire

THE MACABRE MUSEUM - STORIES OF MURDER AND MAYHEM Hear tales of true crime and horrendous acts, Sun 19 Apr, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

Music

BEN DE LA COUR Mon 20 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

JUST MUSTARD Mon 20 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

THE SOPHS Tues 21 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

JADE HELLIWELL Tues 21 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE RUMPLED Tues 21 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

ORCUTT SHELLEY MILLER Tues 21 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

KRIS DREVER + ANNIE DRESSNER Tues 21 Apr, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

SEB LOWE + THE NORTH + WILL PARKER Tues 21 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

BLOOD WIZARD Wed 22 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CHIP WICKHAM Wed 22 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WAYWARD JANE Wed 22 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

MARK KAVUMA Wed 22 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

DAISY PEACOCK Wed 22 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

AARON ROWE Wed 22 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

SKILLET Wed 22 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SINNR Wed 22 Apr, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

KARNATAKA Wed 22 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

NADAV TABAK Wed 22 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

DOWN IN LAUREL CANYON Thurs 23 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

SHEARLING Thurs 23 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

YUNGBLUD + THE WARNING Thurs 23 Apr, Utilita Arena B'ham

TRUE FOXES Thurs 23 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

POPPY DANIELS Thurs 23 Apr, Marrs Bar,

Worcester

THE BUDAPEST CAFE ORCHESTRA Thurs 23 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

T'PAU Thurs 23 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BARRY STEELE'S ROY ORBISON STORY Thurs 23 - Fri 24 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

FLEETWOOD MAC TRIBUTE: LANDSLIDE Fri 24 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

COOPER ALAN + IAN HARRISON Fri 24 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

SHOWHAWK DUO + BAD TRAFIC Fri 24 Apr, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

HOWLING BELLS Fri 24 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

IT WASN'T A PHASE Fri 24 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

RICK ASTLEY Fri 24 Apr, bp pulse LIVE, B'ham

ALEX WARREN Fri 24 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

STRONG ENOUGH - CHER TRIBUTE Fri 24 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

TOMMY SCOTT DUO Fri 24 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

FURY + KING KRAKEN + RITES TO RUIN Fri 24 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

THE INCUREABLES Fri 24 Apr, The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

DARK SIDE OF THE LEDGE Fri 24 Apr, Lichfield Guildhall

JOHN SMITH Fri 24 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MORETALLICA + GHOST UK Fri 24 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE QUIET MEN Sat 25 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SKASTUDS Sat 25 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

ANT TROUBLE Sat 25 Apr, The Night Owl, Birmingham

GOLDLINK Sat 25 Apr,

O2 Institute, B'ham

THE LANCASHIRE HOTPOTS Sat 25 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ANTISECT + CRESS + DISORDER + DEATHFIEND + SELF SABOTEURS Sat 25 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

TEZ Sat 25 Apr, Dead Wax, Birmingham

LOUIS TOMLINSON + PALE WAVES + ADMT Sat 25 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

BIG WOLF BAND Sat 25 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

ARCHIMANDRITE NIKODIMOS KABARNOS Sat 25 Apr, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE DUALERS Sat 25 Apr, hmv Empire, Coventry

CLAUDE BOURBON Sat 25 Apr, Birchmeadow Centre, Broseley, Shropshire

KAZABIAN VS. ARCTIC MONKEYZ VS. FONTAINES C.D. Sat 25 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

BRIGHOUSE & RASTRICK BAND Sat 25 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MARK HARRISON BAND Sat 25 Apr, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock

THE ENDINGS Sat 25 Apr, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

CHARLOTTE CARPENTER Sun 26 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

KATACOMBS Sun 26 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

TUCKER WETMORE Sun 26 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DANNI NICHOLLS Sun 26 Apr, Temperance, Leamington Spa

IDA WENØE + SAMANTHA WHATES Sun 26 Apr, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

THE BARRY MANILOW SHOW Sun 26 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

BADLY DRAWN BOY Sun 26 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

HANNAH DEVEREUX (SOPRANO) IN CONCERT Mon 20 Apr, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

IVAN HOVORUN PIANO CONCERT Tues 21 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

NARRATIO QUARTET: BEETHOVEN IN CONVERSATION Wed 22 Apr, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: FANDANGO! Featuring Craig Ogden (guitar). Programme includes works by Vivaldi, Piazzolla, Corelli & Boccherini, Wed 22 Apr, The Courtyard, Hereford

CBSO: BRAHMS' GERMAN REQUIEM Featuring Ryan Wigglesworth (conductor), Sophie Bevan (soprano), Gareth Brynmor John (baritone) & CBSO Chorus. A pre-concert piano showcase by musicians from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire also features, Thurs 23 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

OLIVER MATTHEWS PIANO CONCERT Featuring Thurs 23 Apr, St Paul's Church, Birmingham

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: BRAHMS' PIANO QUINTET Featuring Lowri Porter & Bethan Allmand (violins), Chris Yates (viola), Kate Setterfield (cello) & Robert Markham (piano), Fri 24 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

GARY SIELING ORGAN RECITAL Fri 24 Apr, St Mary's Church, Warwick

BUDAPEST CAFÉ ORCHESTRA Fri 24 Apr, Blackburn Theatre, Prestfelde School, Shrewsbury

EX CATHEDRA 2025/2026: THE GARDEN OF LOVE Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Programme includes works by Daniel-Lesur, Gardner, Le Jeune & more..., Sat 25 Apr, St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton

FIVE BEACONS OF LIGHT BY CHERYL FRANCES-HOAD Featuring Neil Ferris (conductor), Michael Higgins (piano), SONORO & Youth Choral Worcs. Programme also includes Chilcott's Five Days that Changed the World, Sat 25 Apr, Worcester Cathedral

WOMBOURNE AND DISTRICT CHORAL SOCIETY: CARMINA BURANA Featuring Edward Caine (conductor), Sat 25 Apr, Church of St John's in the Square, Wolverhampton

SHREWSBURY CANTATA CHOIR: DVOŘÁK'S STABAT MATER Featuring Gemma King (soprano), Bethan Langford (alto), Will Smith (tenor), Piran Legg (bass) & Anthony Coupe (conductor), Sat 25 Apr, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

STAFFORD CHORAL SOCIETY: MENDELSSOHN'S ELIJAH Sat 25 Apr, Rising Brook Community Church, Stafford

Comedy

VIDURA BANDARA RAJAPAKSA Tues 21 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JOSH JONES & JENNY HEART Wed 22 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, JULIAN DEANE & NINA GILLIGAN Thurs 23 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JAIN EDWARDS Thurs 23 Apr, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

JONNY COLE Thurs 23 - Fri 24 Apr, The Civic, Stourport

FINLAY CHRISTIE, WILL OWEN, JULIAN DEANE, NINA GILLIGAN & COMIC TBC Fri 24 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROBIN MORGAN Fri 24 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SUZI RUFFELL Fri 24 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

FUN! WITH BARBARA NICE Fri 24 Apr, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

ED BYRNE, JOE SUTHERLAND & TOM WRIGGLESWORTH Sat 25 Apr, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

TEO Sat 25 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

FINLAY CHRISTIE, WILL OWEN, JULIAN DEANE & NINA GILLIGAN Sat 25 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

GARY DELANEY Sat 25 Apr, Palace Theatre, Redditch

KANE BROWN Sun 26 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

AILSLING BEA Sun 26 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

LOU CONRAN, HAYLEY ELLIS, ALEX

STRINGER, TAL DAVIS & HANNAH BYCZKOWSKI Sun 26 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

Theatre

BLACK IS THE COLOR OF MY VOICE Apphia Campbell's acclaimed play, inspired by the life of Nina Simone and featuring many of her most iconic songs, performed live, Mon 20 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE TALENTED MR RIPLEY Ed McVey stars alongside Maisie Smith and Bruce Herbelin-Earle in a stage adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's famous psychological thriller, Mon 20 - Sat 25 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

BARNUM Lee Mead stars as the World's Greatest Showman in a new musical based on the story of PT Barnum, Tues 21 - Sat 25 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

EVITA Worcester Operatic Society present an amateur version of the Tim Rice/Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, Tues 21 - Sat 25 Apr, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE BALLAD OF JONNY AND JUNE New

musical that take audiences through 'the soaring highs and shattering lows of a love story that defined an era', Tues 21 - Sat 25 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

SISTERS 360 Inspirational story about family, friendship, and the importance of following your dreams, Wed 22 - Thurs 23 Apr, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE SIGN OF FOUR Classic Sir Arthur Conan Doyle adventure featuring Colin Baker and Terry Molloy, Thurs 23 Apr, The Core Theatre, Solihull

GENERAL MEDICAL EMERGENCY WARD 10 A 'pacy, cliché-ridden comic homage' to the intrigues and dramas of every hospital plotline on the big and small screen, Thurs 23 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE Stourbridge Theatre Company present an amateur version of CS Lewis' famous fantasy adventure, Thurs 23 - Sat 25 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

WISH LIST A new musical exploring what it means to be alive, as a disillusioned boy learns the secret of how to live from a girl who's going to die, Thurs 23 Apr - Sat 2 May, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

TITANIA New one-woman show described as 'comical, tragical, poetical and ecological', Fri 24 - Sat 25 Apr, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

DISENCHANTED! UK premiere of the hit off-Broadway musical, featuring a mash-up of favourite fairytales, Fri 24 Apr - Sat 2 May, Lichfield Garrick

THIS NIGHT OF ALL NIGHTS Free Roam Theatre present two supernatural tales of horror, exploring scepticism, murder and the nature of fear itself, Sat 25 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

PIXIEMATOSIS Sqwonky puppets, odd-automata and a slew of charity-shop rejects feature in this story of 'greed and the existential madness of it all', Sat 25 Apr, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Adam Carver stars as Puck in a new Brummie version of Shakespeare's much-loved comedy, Sat 25 Apr - Sun 24 May, The Rep, Birmingham

AT THE RAINBOW'S END Clare Summerskill's new verbatim play shares real stories from older LGBT

people who have experienced homophobia and transphobia in care-home settings, Sun 26 Apr, The Hive, Shrewsbury

Kids Theatre

THERE'S A MONSTER IN YOUR SHOW Tom Fletcher's interactive adventures, live on stage, Thurs 23 - Fri 24 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

FIREMAN SAM LIVE: THE LOST PIRATE TREASURE Swashbuckling adventure for all the family, Sun 26 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Dance

STOPGAP DANCE COMPANY: LIVED FICTION Expect masterful performances from Deaf, Disabled, neurodivergent and non-disabled creatives in a dance work that is 'deep with compassion for the human condition', Thurs 23 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

VERVE The postgraduate touring dance company of Northern School of Contemporary Dance present a mixed bill of original works, Fri 24 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

ALJAZ AND JANETTE: LET'S FACE THE MUSIC AND DANCE Brand-new show in which the Strictly favourites dance their way through music history, Sun 26 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Light Entertainment

THE REMARKABLE BEN HART A brand-new show from 'the master of illusion'. Expect an evening of 'unforgettable, funny, dark and profoundly baffling' entertainment, Mon 20 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

WALSALL MUSIC CENTRE YOUTH WIND BANDS WITH BAND OF THE MERCIAN REGIMENT Tues 21 Apr, Walsall Arena

THE BRITPOP SHOW Part nostalgic love letter, part send-up, part rock & roll party, Tues 21 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

SEVEN DRUNKEN NIGHTS - THE STORY OF THE DUBLINERS 'Ultimate feelgood Irish show', Wed 22 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

KATE BUTCH: CHOOSE YOUR OWN CABARET The star of RuPaul's Drag Race UK presents 'a cabaret show like no other', Wed 22 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

100 YEARS CELEBRATION OF LAUREL & HARDY Silent film score composer Neil Brand offers a unique insight into Stan & Ollie, Thurs 23 Apr, Walsall Arena

JOHN MULANEY: MISTER WHATEVER

Join the actor & award-winning comedian for an evening of monologues, guests, pre-taped sketches, musical segments and more..., Thurs 23 Apr, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

JAMES PARTRIDGE: PRIMARY SCHOOL BANGERS

Take a communal nostalgia trip back to your school days with massive singalongs and 'songs that you somehow remember every word to', Fri 24 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

STRONG ENOUGH - THE ULTIMATE TRIBUTE CONCERT TO CHER

Fri 24 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

BURLESQUE: DIVA'S DEBUT

Local star Bambi Bang Bang hosts an evening of 'tantalising striptease, enticing rock chicks and rip-roaring comedy queens', Sat 25 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

MAGIC OF THE MUSICALS

Featuring four West End stars and the 10-piece CN Live Orchestra. Expect hits from Les Miserables, The Phantom Of The Opera, Mary Poppins and more..., Sat 25 Apr, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

PULMAN & STILGOE: HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD

Liza Pulman and Joe Stilgoe bring an array of movie musical songs to life on stage, Sun 26 Apr, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WHAM! - THE SHOW 'Ultimate party tribute' featuring X Factor star Jake Quickenden, Sun 26 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

COPACABANA MAGIC - THE BARRY MANILOW SHOW

Featuring acclaimed vocalist Martyn James and his band and dancers, Sun 26 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Talks & Spoken Word

CLASH OF EMPIRES: THE FAR EASTERN WAR REVISITED

An illustrated talk by Ian Binnie. Part of a regular series of talks from the Birmingham People's History Archive, Mon 20 Apr, The Birmingham & Midlands Institute

DAVID OLUSOGA: A GUN THROUGH TIME

Join the celebrity historian as he uncovers the story of four firearms that changed the world, Tues 21 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

AN EVENING WITH DUNCAN FERGUSON

The footballing legend shares stories from his life and career, Sat 25 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JOE THOMAS IN CONVERSATION Hear all about Joe's favourite Inbetweeners moments and behind-the-scenes misadventures, Sat 25 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

PAM AYRES: DOGGEDLY ONWARD The

much-loved performance poet shares readings from her latest book, which traces the course of her life, Sun 26 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

MICHAELA STRACHAN: NOT JUST A WILD LIFE

The wildlife TV presenter takes audiences through four decades of conservation and re-invention, Sun 26 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Events

CLASSIC ANTIQUE FAIRS Featuring specialist dealers with a wide variety of high-quality pieces, Fri 24 - Sun 26 Apr, NEC, Birmingham

CINEMA UNDER THE STARS Enjoy a cinema-style experience in the planetarium, Sat 25 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

CRYSTAL MILE WALKING TOUR Explore the history of the iconic glassmaking factories that were once known as the Crystal Mile, Sat 25 Apr, Stourbridge Glass Museum

BED BY 10PM A chance for ravers over 30 to re-live the 80s, 90s and early noughties clubbing scene, Sat 25 Apr, Lab11, Birmingham

SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHDAY PARADE

Colourful procession featuring local schools, performers and community groups, Sat 25 Apr, Stratford-upon-Avon

ST GEORGE'S DAY CELEBRATIONS A full day of free family fun, bringing together entertainment, creativity and community spirit, Sat 25 Apr, Telford Town Park, Shropshire

HYBRID NW The 'true fitness test', featuring a mix of strength training and cardio, Sat 25 Apr, Telford International Centre, Shropshire

EARTH DAY WEEKEND Featuring 'hands-on activities, creative workshops and inspiring demonstrations', Sat 25 - Sun 26 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

ST GEORGE'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

Celebrate the legend of St George in the castle courtyard, Sat 25 - Sun 26 Apr, Dudley Zoo & Castle

DRAWN MAKERS MARKET Hunt out unique gifts made by talented artists, makers and creators, Sat 25 - Sun 26 Apr, Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

LIVING HISTORY FESTIVAL Featuring 40 living-history reenactment groups, Sat 25 - Sun 26 Apr, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

KITCHEN SCIENCE Try a new experiment that can easily be recreated at home, Sun 26 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

LONGTON CARNIVAL & PIG WALK PARADE 'Fun-filled day of free family-friendly entertainment', Sun 26 Apr, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent

Music

CHAPTERHOUSE Mon 27 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

AMBROSE AKINMUSIRE Mon 27 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall



YES Mon 27 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

SUBHUMANS + GRAIL GUARD + ANGRY ITCH Mon 27 Apr, Dive, Wolverhampton

LINDISFARNE Mon 27 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

RUTH NOTMAN Tues 28 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

THE SCRATCH Tues 28 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

THE FUREYS Tues 28 Apr, Palace Theatre, Redditch

LANDSDOWNE + JOE HERMES + PROSPECT HILL Tues 28 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

THE LUKE COMBS COLLECTION Tues 28 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

SORREL NATION Wed 29 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

TYGERS OF PAN TANG + DEMON Wed 29 Apr, The Asylum, B'ham

FUMING MOUTH Wed 29 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

EDWINA HAYES + ROB PETERS Wed 29 Apr, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

DAVE WOOD'S NEW ORLEANS BUMP Wed 29 Apr, Boldmere Sports and Social Club,

Sutton Coldfield

RUMOURS OF FLEETWOOD MAC Wed 29 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

KANGARU + LIFE AQUATIC BAND Wed 29 Apr, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE FUREYS Wed 29 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

IRYNA MUHA Wed 29 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

JOHN SMITH Wed 29 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MONEY FOR NOTHING Wed 29 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KNATS Thurs 30 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MICHAEL MCGOVERN Thurs 30 Apr, Kitchen Garden Cafe, B'ham

BOOSHLE G. Thurs 30 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

PARTY CANNON + INTERNAL BLEEDING Thurs 30 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

HILARY SPENCER Thurs 30 Apr, Catshill Social Club, Bromsgrove

TRISH CLOWES & ROSS STANLEY Thurs 30 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MAMMAL HANDS Thurs 30 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

SPENCER CULLUM COIN COLLECTION + ERIC CHENAUX + RICH RUTH Thurs 30 Apr, Just Dropped In, Coventry

HEAVEN CAN WAIT - THE MUSIC OF MEAT LOAF Thurs 30 Apr, Swan Theatre, Worcester

DOGMA Thurs 30 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

COUNTERFEIT STONES Thurs 30 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DOGMA Thurs 30 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

Classical Music

FRANCESCA MASSEY ORGAN CONCERT Programme includes works by JS Bach, Dupré, Whitlock & more..., Mon 27 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

MARIE-LOUISE TAYLOR PIANO RECITAL Tues 28 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBSO: BRAHMS & RACHMANINOFF Featuring Stanislav Kochanovsky (conductor) & Ning Feng (violin), Wed 29 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EILIDH HARRIS ORGAN RECITAL Wed 29 Apr, Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

CBSO: CLASSIC FM HALL OF FAME Featuring Michael Seal (conductor), John Suchet (presenter) & Suzana Bartal (piano). Programme includes works by Glinka, Beethoven, Rachmaninoff & more..., Thurs 30 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

TRISH CLOWES (SAXOPHONE) & ROSS STANLEY (PIANO) IN CONCERT Thurs 30 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Comedy

JOE LYCETT & FRIENDS Tues 28 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DALISO CHAPONDA Tues 28 Apr, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

MC HAMMERSMITH Thurs 30 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, JACK MCLEAN & STEVE WILLIAMS Thurs 30 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ANDY PARSONS Thurs 30 Apr, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

CLINTON BAPTISTE Thurs 30 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

Theatre

THE HAND OF SARAH NELMES Premiere of a thought-provoking play by Martin Lytton, Mon 27 - Tues 28 Apr, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

OPERATION MINCEMEAT Olivier Award-winning musical, described as 'Singin' In The Rain meets Strangers On A Train', Mon 27 Apr - Sat 2 May, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

HAUNTED SHADOWS: THE GOTHIC TALES OF EDITH NESBIT One-woman show in which Claire Louise Amias gives a 'gripping'

insight into the dark side of the Railway Children author, Tues 28 Apr, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

BLACK IS THE COLOR OF MY VOICE Apphia Campbell's acclaimed play, inspired by the life of Nina Simone and featuring many of her most iconic songs performed live, Tues 28 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL Amateur version presented by Shrewsbury High School, Tues 28 - Thurs 30 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

WAITRESS Carrie Hope Fletcher, Les Dennis, Sandra Marvin and Evelyn Hoskins star in a warm-hearted tale of love and friendship, Tues 28 Apr - Sat 2 May, Birmingham Hippodrome



SISTER ACT Musical Theatre Stafford present an amateur version of the divine musical comedy, Wed 29 Apr - Sat 2 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME Amateur version of Mark Haddon's critically acclaimed story, celebrating difference and the power of the human spirit, Wed 29 Apr - Sat 2 May, The Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

SHEILA'S ISLAND The Lichfield Players present an amateur version of Tim Firth's tragic-comedy concerning four middle-aged women stranded on an island whilst on a team-building exercise in the Lake District, Wed 29 Apr - Sat 2 May, Lichfield Garrick

HANDLE WITH CARE Theatre stripped down to its essence. No actors, no technicians, just a box and the audience, Thurs 30 Apr, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

REDACTED A 'high-octane, darkly comic thriller' about justice, power, and just how deep the truth can be buried, Thurs 30 Apr - Sat 2 May, The Rep, B'ham

Light Entertainment

BOOK READING AND SIGNING: THE BLACK DANCE MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND 1940 - 2000 An evening of 'fun, music and dance' - as

well as words from the recently published book by Bob Ramdhanie, Mon 27 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

JIM HENSON'S LABYRINTH IN CONCERT Be transported to Goblin City via a fusion of film and live music, Tues 28 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE UK SEASON SEVEN TOUR Featuring Bonnie Ann Clyde, Bones, Catrin Feelings, Chai T Grande, Elle Vosque, Nyongbella, Paige Three, Pasty, Sally TM, Sillilexa Diction, Tayris Mongardi and Viola. Divina De Campo hosts, Tues 28 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

BLOCKBUSTERS - THE MUSIC THAT MADE THE MOVIES Showcasing soundtracks from some of the greatest films ever made, Thurs 30 Apr, Halesowen Town Hall

Talks & Spoken Word

TRACEY BORMAN: THE HOUSE OF BOLEYN An evening with the best-selling author, historian & broadcaster, Wed 29 Apr, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

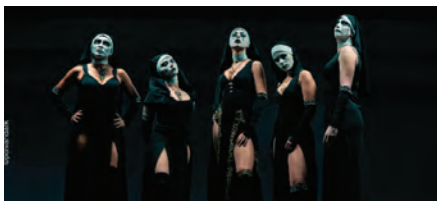
WEST BROM LEGENDS Kevin Phillips and Darren Moore share stories from their action-packed football careers, Wed 29 Apr, Palace Theatre, Redditch

WEST BROM LEGENDS Tales from the dressing room, as told by Andy Johnson, Paul Robinson and Geoff Horsefield. Tom Ross hosts, Thurs 30 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

MICK MCCARTHY AND FRIENDS Special event hosted by Sky Sports broadcaster and lifelong Wolves fan, Johnny Phillips, Thurs 30 Apr, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

Events

CHELTENHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL Featuring James Morrison, Van Morrison, Nigel Kennedy, China Moses & Jessie J (pictured), Wed 29 Apr - Mon 4 May, various venues across Cheltenham



Dogma - KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

Competitions

WIN! with What's On...

Enter now at whatsonlive.co.uk to be in with a chance of bagging one of these fabulous prizes!



Win! A family ticket to see Zog

A roaring, soaring musical for brave little dragons everywhere, Zog flies into Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre (WAC) from Friday 22 to Sunday 24 May.

The smash-hit musical features joyful songs by Joe Stilgoe and beautiful puppets by Little Angel Theatre.

We have a family ticket (four tickets) to give away to see the show at WAC on Saturday 23 May...

Competition closes Friday 15 May



Win! A pair of tickets to see Stephen King's The Shawshank Redemption

Based on a Stephen King novella, The Shawshank Redemption tells a dramatic story of friendship in the claustrophobic environment of a maximum-security facility.

The show visits The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Tuesday 26 to Saturday 30 May. We are offering one lucky reader the chance to win two tickets to the performance on Tuesday the 26th.

Competition closes Monday 18 May



Win! Two tickets to see the RSC's Driftwood

Set in the Caribbean in the 1950s, the Royal Shakespeare Company's Driftwood tells a deeply evocative story of self-determination and the search for family and belonging. The production shows at The Other Place in Stratford-upon-Avon from Friday 17 April to Saturday 30 May. We have two tickets to give away for the matinee performance on Saturday 30 May...

Competition closes Friday 15 May



Win! Two tickets to see The Last Laugh

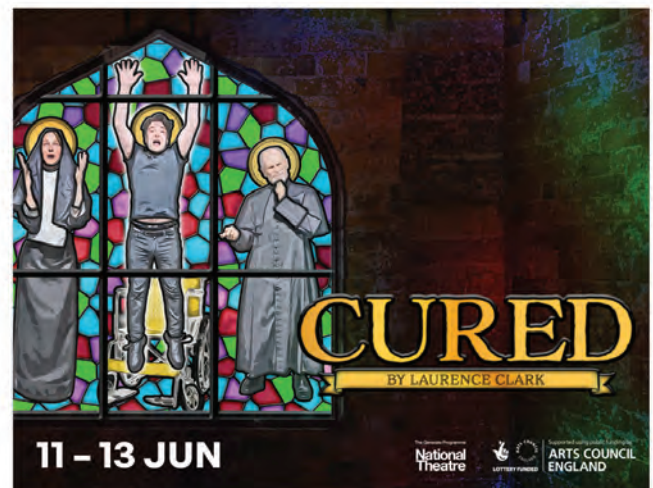
Smash-hit West End play The Last Laugh imagines three of Britain's all-time greatest comedy heroes - Tommy Cooper, Eric Morecambe and Bob Monkhouse - coming together in a dressing room for a no-holds-barred discussion about life, death and the secrets of comedy... The show runs at Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn from Wednesday 13 to Saturday 16 May - and we have two tickets to give away for the Wednesday the 13th performance...

Competition closes Tuesday 5 May

For your chance to WIN! with What's On, visit:

whatsonlive.co.uk

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