

Worcestershire

ISSUE 472 MAY 2026

# What's On

FILM | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

worcestershirewhatson.co.uk



## LIVE THEATRE AT



### ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

WEDNESDAY 29 JULY

Brought to you by This Is My Theatre,  
join Alice as she tumbles down  
the rabbit hole and encounters  
a whirlwind of curious characters...

**FIRST 100  
KIDS GO  
FREE!**

\*T&CS APPLY



SCAN ME TO BOOK



Find out more at  
[worcestercathedral.org.uk](http://worcestercathedral.org.uk)

WorcesterCathedral

A Reg. Charity No.1207427. Reg. Address: The Old Palace, Deansway, Worcester WR1 2JE

## inside:

### STORMING RETURN

Kenneth Branagh back at the RSC to star in *The Tempest*



### JOURNEY TO EGYPT

Tutankhamun immersive exhibition coming to the NEC



### GARDENERS' DELIGHT

RHS Malvern Spring Festival at Three Counties Showground



23 MAY – 31 MAY 2026

# ELGAR FESTIVAL 2026

KENNETH WOODS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR  
JULIAN LLOYD WEBBER PATRON

## FEATURING

ENGLISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
ELGAR FESTIVAL CHORUS  
JULIAN LLOYD WEBBER  
I FAGIOLINI • NICHOLAS DANIEL  
AND MANY MORE...



TICKET HOTLINE   
[WWW.ELGARFESTIVAL.ORG](http://WWW.ELGARFESTIVAL.ORG)  
WORCESTER THEATRES 01905 611427



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND**



HILLTOP FARM

# ZACK'S FEST

**FOOD** **VIEWS** **BOOZE**

FORMERLY KNOWN AS BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

WEEKEND CELEBRATING  
LOCAL FOOD, BOOZE, VIEWS  
LIVE MUSIC, FARM FUN  
KIDS ACTIVITIES AND MORE

15 16 MAY



# HOUSE ON THE HILL

WEEKENDER 5TH-6TH JUNE 2026

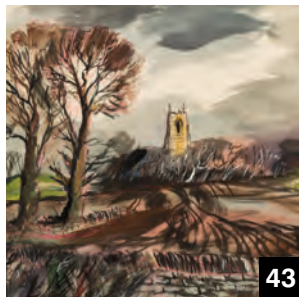
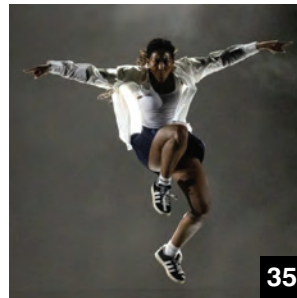
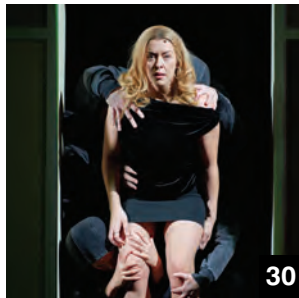
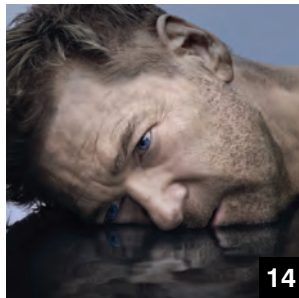
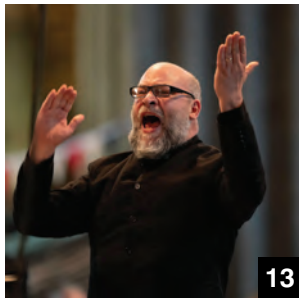
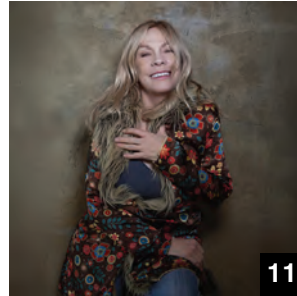
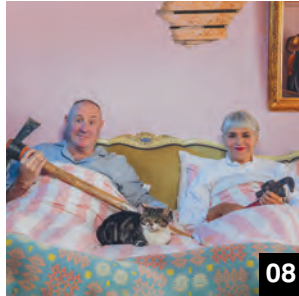
CHARLIE PRICE • TED NILSSON  
SPENCER TAFFS • ANDY ROWLEY • MARK GOZDECKI  
CHAE LOU • MATT ROBINS • JAY REEFER  
DARREN JAMES • KIRSTY LEAHY

Zacks Barn, Hilltop Farm  
Leamington Spa  
CV33 9EL

TICKETS ON SALE NOW: [www.hilltopfarmshop.com](http://www.hilltopfarmshop.com)

HILLTOP FARM

HILLTOP FARM, LEAMINGTON SPA, WARWICKSHIRE, CV33 9EL / TICKETS: HILLTOPFARMSHOP.COM



### INSIDE:

First Word	4
Gigs	11
Comedy	17
Theatre	20
Dance	35
Film	36
Visual Arts	41
Events	45

### What's On

MEDIA GROUP

Managing Director: **Davina Evans** [davina@whatsonlive.co.uk](mailto:davina@whatsonlive.co.uk) 01743 281708  
 Sales & Marketing: [hello@whatsonlive.co.uk](mailto:hello@whatsonlive.co.uk)  
 Editorial: **Lauren Foster** [lauren@whatsonlive.co.uk](mailto:lauren@whatsonlive.co.uk) 01743 281707 : **Brian O'Faolain**  
[brian@whatsonlive.co.uk](mailto:brian@whatsonlive.co.uk) 01743 281701 : **Abi Whitehouse** [abi@whatsonlive.co.uk](mailto:abi@whatsonlive.co.uk) :  
**Jessica Clixby** [jessica@whatsonlive.co.uk](mailto:jessica@whatsonlive.co.uk) Subscriptions: [subscriptions@whatsonlive.co.uk](mailto:subscriptions@whatsonlive.co.uk) 01743 281714  
 Contributors: Graham Bostock, Diane Parkes, Patsy Moss, Steve Adams, Sue Hull, Reggie White, Sue Jones,  
 Liz Day, Chris Eldon Lee, Rachel Smith  
 Publisher and CEO: **Martin Monahan** Accounts Administrator: **Louise Hunter** [louise@21stcd.com](mailto:louise@21stcd.com) 01743 281717

This publication is printed on paper from a sustainable source and is produced without the use of elemental chlorine. We endorse the recycling of our magazine and would encourage you to pass it on to others to read when you have finished with it.

All works appearing in this publication are copyright. It is to be assumed that the copyright for material rests with the magazine unless otherwise stated. No part of this publication may be reproduced, or stored in an electronic system, transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recording or otherwise, without the prior knowledge and consent of the publishers.



### Follow us at:



[whatsonwarwickshire](https://www.facebook.com/whatsonwarwickshire)  
[whatsonworcestershires](https://www.facebook.com/whatsonworcestershires)



[@whatsonwarwicks](https://www.instagram.com/whatsonwarwicks)  
[@whatsonworcs](https://www.instagram.com/whatsonworcs)



## Flower power! Confetti field to open next month

The Confetti Flower Field at Worcestershire's Wyke Manor Estate will be open from Saturday 20 June to Sunday 5 July. New attractions for 2026 include 10 evening sessions - 'allowing visitors to enjoy the flowers in the golden light of early summer evenings' - and three open-air evening concerts: an operatic performance of King Arthur, narrated by Oz Clarke, and performances by Toyah Willcox and Abba tribute band Super Swedes. To find out more and book tickets, visit the website at [confettidirect.co.uk/flowerfields](http://confettidirect.co.uk/flowerfields)

## Flagship classical music festival returns this month

Leamington's flagship four-day music festival makes a return this month, taking place over the Bank Holiday weekend (Friday 1 - Monday 4 May).



The 2026 edition of the much-loved annual event showcases performances by a host of artists, including the Fibonacci String Quartet (pictured), Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective and the Guarneri Piano Trio. The festival also features brand-new exhibition My Favourite Music, created by artist-in-residence Jane Williams. To check out the whole line-up of performers, visit the festival's official website at [leamingtonmusic.org](http://leamingtonmusic.org)

## Electropop play explores queer invisibility in tennis

The subject of queer invisibility in tennis comes under the spotlight in an imaginative electropop musical visiting two Midlands venues across the next few weeks. Titled Fairlight, the production shows at Edgbaston Archery & Lawn Tennis Society on Wednesday 13 May and is being presented as part of the city's annual Flatpack Festival. The musical then returns to the region in the summer to play Leamington Tennis Club on Saturday 11 July. To find out more and book tickets, visit [fairlightmusical.co.uk](http://fairlightmusical.co.uk)

## Sir Derek Jacobi returns to Birmingham theatre

Celebrated veteran actor Sir Derek Jacobi is returning to Birmingham this month for an in-conversation event at the city's Old Rep.

The Station Street theatre was the venue in which a critically acclaimed early-1960s performance in Henry VIII led to Sir Derek becoming a founding member of the newly formed National Theatre.



The 87-year-old actor will be in conversation with his long-term partner, Richard Clifford, on Wednesday 6 May... For further information and to check ticket availability, visit the venue's website at [oldrep.co.uk](http://oldrep.co.uk)

## iFLY opens at the NEC

iFLY, 'the global leader in indoor skydiving', has announced the opening of a new venue at Birmingham's NEC.

The new site is iFLY's fifth UK location and features a newly upgraded 12-foot circular glass wind tunnel.

To find out more about the new attraction, visit the website at [iFLYworld.co.uk](http://iFLYworld.co.uk)



## RAF Museum secures funding for new exhibition

The Royal Air Force Museum Midlands has been given a £1million grant by the Biffa Award - a fund that 'helps to transform lives and build communities'.

The money will support the development of a major new exhibition exploring the story of the RAF from 1980 to the present day. The exhibition's features will include digital interactives, immersive aircraft and object displays, and 'compelling storytelling'.



## Sounds of the 80s coming to Midlands venue

Hit-making 80s pop stars Nik Kershaw, Johnny Hates Jazz and Jaki Graham are teaming up next month to present a Birmingham Symphony Hall show paying tribute to the decade that made them famous... To find out more about the Thursday 11 June get-together and purchase tickets, visit the website at [80sclassical.co.uk](http://80sclassical.co.uk)

## New transport festival heading to the Midlands

A brand-new free-to-attend event is set to take place in Birmingham in the autumn (Friday 18 - Sunday 20 September). Activating key city-centre public sites, Brum Transport Fest is described by its organisers, Birmingham Colmore, as a celebration of the West Midlands' role in the UK's transport story. The festival's full programme of events will be released in due course. To stay up to date with announcements, visit [colmorelife.co.uk](http://colmorelife.co.uk)

## Alfie in Coventry

Alfie Boe is heading to Coventry early this month. The celebrated tenor stops off at the city's Warwick Arts Centre on Thursday 7 May as part of a UK tour in support of new album Facing Myself. He will be joined by singer-songwriter Jessica Sweetman. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at [warwickartscentre.co.uk](http://warwickartscentre.co.uk)

## Lord Of The Rings birthday concert

A concert celebrating the 25th anniversary of hit film The Lord Of The Rings: The Fellowship Of The Ring is coming to Birmingham pre-Christmas. The Saturday 19 December event at the city's bp pulse LIVE venue will see Howard Shore's original scores being performed live to a screening of the Academy Award-winning movie. Tickets for the concert can be purchased by visiting the website [bppulselive.co.uk](http://bppulselive.co.uk)

## Gabrielle to tour her greatest hits

Gabrielle is heading to Birmingham next year as part of a UK 'greatest hits' tour. The multiple award winner will perform at the city's Symphony Hall on Monday 19 April. For further information and tickets, visit [bio.to/Gabrielle](http://bio.to/Gabrielle)



## Acclaimed Tutankhamun exhibition heading to the region

Midlanders will get the chance to take a 'breathtaking journey' into ancient Egypt this summer, when Tutankhamun: The Immersive Exhibition visits Birmingham's NEC from Friday 19 June to Sunday 13 September.

The award-winning show features 360° projections, a seated virtual reality experience, an interactive metaverse room, and authentic replicas and artefacts from Cairo. To find out more, visit [tutankhamunexperience.com](http://tutankhamunexperience.com)

## Jane Austen classic with a difference

Midlands-based fans of Jane Austen who also enjoy having their ribs tickled should bag themselves a ticket to see Lamphouse theatre company's latest production when it visits Worcester's Swan Theatre early next month.

Described as 'a hilarious retelling' of Austen's best-loved story, *Pride And Prejudice... But Funny* shows at the venue on Thursday 4 June. For further information and to purchase tickets, visit the website at [worcestertheatres.co.uk](http://worcestertheatres.co.uk)



## Top comedy at Warwick Castle

Joanne McNally (pictured), Russell Kane, Ed Byrne and Chris McCausland are among the much-loved comedians who will be bringing laughter to this month's Comedy At The Castle festival. The event takes place at Warwick Castle from Friday 22 to Sunday 24 May. To find out more and book tickets, visit [comedyatthecastle.co.uk/warwick](http://comedyatthecastle.co.uk/warwick)

## Epic tale to debut at the Belgrade

Tickets are now on sale for a musical which is having its world premiere at Coventry's Belgrade Theatre next year. Showing at the venue from Friday 18 June to Saturday 3 July 2027, *Nanny Of The Maroons* has been co-created with Coventry's communities. The play tells the epic true story of a legendary 18th-century freedom fighter who became a Jamaican national hero. To find out more and book your seat, visit [belgrade.co.uk](http://belgrade.co.uk)



## Artisan show to make its Maxstoke Castle debut

The Artisan Show returns in the middle of the month - at a new venue and with a brand-new attraction. Taking place at Maxstoke Castle in Warwickshire for the very first time, the popular get-together of talented craftspeople - selling their handmade and heritage wares - on this occasion comes complete with a 14th-century living-history encampment... Live music and artisanal food also feature across the weekend (Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 May). Visit [maxstokecastle.com](http://maxstokecastle.com) for further information.



## Cathedral exhibition celebrates local sculptor

Coventry Cathedral is this month displaying a new exhibition celebrating the six-decade career of locally born sculptor Peter Eugene Ball... Reclaiming Sanctuary highlights Peter's distinctive use of reclaimed materials, transforming overlooked objects into contemplative religious and secular sculptures. The exhibition shows from Friday 1 May to Sunday 7 June.

## University graduate wins prestigious TV award

A Coventry University graduate has won a Royal Television Society (RTS) Midlands Centre award for his short film. Kavinth Kumar, originally from Malaysia, took home the RTS Midlands Centre Student Award for Best Craft Editing for his sci-fi-horror movie Lockdown. Kavinth not only edited the film but also wrote, directed, produced and appeared in it.

## Community group to stage courtroom drama

Coventry community theatre group the Saints Dramatic Society is taking on a powerful thriller for its latest production. The Allesley-based company is tackling Lucy Kirkwood's *The Welkin*, a courtroom drama that offers a feminist twist on Reginald Rose's classic teleplay *Twelve Angry Men*. Set in 18th century Suffolk, the tale focuses on a jury of 12 matrons as they debate the fate of a woman who has been sentenced to hang for the murder of a child. The production runs at Allesley Village Hall from Tuesday 19 to Saturday 23 May.



## A celebration of Oak Apple Day at The Commandery

History will be brought to life at The Commandery on May Bank Holiday (Monday the 25th) when the popular Worcester visitor attraction hosts Oak Apple Day. Commemorating the historic moment in 1660 when King Charles II returned to the throne after the English Civil War, the special event

will feature, among other attractions, musket firing in the gardens, pike and cannon drills for children, history talks, and the chance for youngsters to 'get crafty' and make their own Oak Apple mobile. To find out more about the day, head to the website [visitworcester.co.uk](http://visitworcester.co.uk)

## Bear Pit Theatre looking to Pratchett at Christmas

Stratford-upon-Avon's Bear Pit Theatre Company is turning to Terry Pratchett's *Hogfather* for its Christmas 2026 show. The company's previous festive-season offerings have included adaptations of *The Lion*, *The Witch And The Wardrobe* and *The Railway Children*. For further information, including the show's yet-to-be-announced dates, keep an eye on [thebearpit.org.uk](http://thebearpit.org.uk)

## New Summer Gala event for Severn Valley Railway

The Severn Valley Railway's (SVR) new Summer Gala event will take place on Saturday 18 & Sunday 19 July. Showcasing a mix of steam and heritage diesel traction - with up to four visiting locomotives expected to join the line-up - the gala will see trains operating a busy timetable along the full line between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth. Commenting on the event, Lewis Maddox, visitor engagement manager at SVR, said: "This event is all about celebrating the variety of our fleet and offering something a little different for enthusiasts and families alike, whether that's classic steam, heritage diesel or even miniature live-steam action at Kidderminster." To find out more and book tickets, visit the website at [svr.co.uk](http://svr.co.uk)

## A midsummer's dream for younger audiences

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) has joined forces with children's theatre ensemble Unicorn to produce a version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that's suitable for youngsters aged seven and older. The production runs at RSC venue The Other Place in Stratford-upon-Avon from Friday 19 June to Sunday 30 August. For more information and to book tickets, visit the website at [rsc.org.uk](http://rsc.org.uk)

## Rugby's Festival On The Close to return in June

Comedian Sara Pascoe (pictured) and storyteller Michael Rosen are among the talented performers appearing in next month's Festival On The Close in Rugby.



Featuring on the programme alongside Sara and Michael are Amy Winehouse tribute Absolute Amy, all-girl brass ensemble She's Got Brass and London Festival Opera, performing a programme of arias and duets. To find out more about the festival, which takes place at venues across the town from Saturday 20 to Thursday 25 June, visit [ticketsource.co.uk](http://ticketsource.co.uk) and search for Festival On The Close.

# B:Music

Town Hall & Symphony Hall

Facebook @bmusicltd

Instagram @bmusic\_ltd

Phone 0121 7803333



**Aardman in Concert**  
01 May | Town Hall



**The Rocky Horror Picture Show:  
50th Anniversary Spectacular Tour**  
01 May | Symphony Hall



**Kate Rusby: Springshine**  
06 May | Town Hall

## Great Nights Out start with B:Music!

Live Bands  
Top Comedians  
Family Shows  
World Class Orchestras  
Films with Live Music  
Podcasts Live  
Dance Stars  
& much, MUCH more!



**Cowboy Junkies:  
Celebrating 40 Years & Beyond**  
07 May | Town Hall



**Paul Carrack**  
07 May | Symphony Hall



Pop in & try!

**B:Eats at Symphony Hall:**  
11am-4pm Mon-Sat & pre-show



**Celebrating Meat Loaf  
ft The Neverland Express**  
14 May | Symphony Hall



**Strictly Come Dancing: The  
Professionals**  
15 & 16 May | Symphony Hall



**Warsaw Philharmonic**  
17 May | Symphony Hall



**Max Cooper Live: Feeling is  
Structure**  
18 May | Symphony Hall



**Nashville Sounds in the Round:  
Buckle & Boots Takeover**  
20 May | Symphony Hall

[bmusic.co.uk](http://bmusic.co.uk)



# POTS OF TALK

**Great Pottery Throw Down judge Keith Bryner-Jones and his partner in life and crime, actor & designer Marj Hogarth, take to the road this month with a brand-new show titled *Us, Pots And A Welsh Chapel*. What's On recently caught up with the duo to get the lowdown on what audiences can expect...**

**The title of the show is *Us, Pots And A Welsh Chapel*. Could you elaborate on what each of those three elements represents, and how they weave together to tell your story in this new live format?**

**Keith:** Well, basically, 'us' is us. The algorithm of how we got together, which is quite interesting. And then, obviously, a bit more background, not so much about me but about Marj, because apparently it's not all about me!

Hopefully we can connect with the audience about how people meet. It's quite weird how we all have this sort of path that leads us to the right person. There'll be a lot of self-deprecation, and no doubt Marj will take the mick out of me quite a bit, and I'll probably take the mick out of her. It will be quite light-

hearted banter.

And then the 'pots' really is about, as it says on the tin, pots. It's also about the studio, what our goals are, and what we can do within that. It's also about Marj making other things.

**Marj:** And how we've both at times had to sort of make do and mend. You know, in certain periods of your life, you can't afford the things that you want, so you make them. The chapel really is the umbrella that we both sit under, quite literally. It's at the heart of everything. I don't have children, but sometimes when people have children, all they can think about and talk about is children. We're a bit like that with the chapel, as it's fundamental to everything we do.

**You describe your relationship as a creative partnership and yourselves as partners in life and crime. How has working together on a project as ambitious as *Capel Salem* - the chapel - deepened your creative collaboration?**

**Marj:** For me, the project has made me more confident as an individual. My voice in the creative decisions that we've made has gotten louder, I think.

**Keith:** Yeah. And rightly so. We're both people who know what we like and like what we know. We're very definite. I think the builder was a bit blown away by the fact that he would come to us with various options or decisions that had to be made about the building, and literally within five or 10 minutes we'd say, "Yeah, do that one." And

he would say, "Oh. Right. Okay." So there's not really much discussion needed because we know exactly what we want.

**Marj:** We always laugh when, say, we're walking down the street and someone's deciding that they're going to paint their front door and they've got seven different colours to see which one they want. And that always tickles me because I know exactly what I want. I don't need to see a colour matched with another colour on a piece of wood. I know exactly what I want. But having the confidence to say that out loud has been a bit of a journey for me.

**Keith:** Without blowing our own trumpet here, we're both very visually articulate. So we can quite easily envision a certain room in a certain style and a certain look, and then act accordingly.

**Marj:** What we say throughout the programme, and we will say throughout the show, is that our choices are our choices. It doesn't matter if somebody else thinks it's hideous; that's fine. No one's asking you to have it in your house. But we are thrilled with the choices that we've made. And there's nothing that we've done that I look at every day and think, "God, we need to find the money to do that again." Nothing.

**Keith, you're a beloved judge on The Great Pottery Throw Down, and Marj, you're an actor and designer who's championed sustainable craft for decades. How do you combine your distinct creative disciplines on stage for the live show?**

**Keith:** Well, there'll be a wheel on stage. And I'll be throwing a few shapes and talking in a very loose way about my career and how I got to where I got to. But, as I said before, it's not all about me. We're planning on getting someone up from the audience to have a go on the wheel as well. I'll give them a bit of a tutorial in my own inimitable style.

**Marj:** For me, it's more significant to talk about what making does for us as human beings. So it's not about the process of sitting down at the sewing machine or whatever it is you're making. It's about how we grow with everything that we make. And I think as women - I'm a woman of a certain age - it's easy to lose sight of who you are and who you were and who you want to be. I think that's something that we can address.

**Capel Salem is your most ambitious project yet. What initially drew you to take on the restoration of a grade II listed 19th-century chapel in North Wales?**

**Marj:** Wales is very specific, and the Welsh, especially up here, are very protective and proud of their heritage. It felt like the right

place for us.

**Keith:** We looked at other places, and every time we looked at somewhere else, we kept being drawn back to here. It ticked all of our boxes. We've even got massive RSJs underneath the pottery studio, because the building's on a hill, so we live on ground level but the pottery studio is above us. We can have a massive kiln there because the building came with these massive RSJs. We couldn't have planned it, really.

And the way we've divvied up the areas of the chapel just works really well for us. Maybe not for everyone, but they do for us. We've never had our own driveway, and now we've got a car park!

And I have a Welsh background. Welsh ancestry. And you know, if my parents were alive now, I would hope they would be quite blown away by the fact that I've almost returned home in a way. Hiraeth is a Welsh word meaning homecoming; the call to home. And yeah, it's fairly significant. And the fact that I've got the name Jones, as in 'Jones the Potter', does really help with being here.

**Marj, you have a passion for making something beautiful from nothing. You were a champion of sustainable craft long before it became fashionable. Why is sustainable craft so important to you, and what message about making do you hope the audience takes away?**

**Marj:** It's interesting to talk about sustainable craft. It seems to be quite a modern concept, really. Ultimately, I've made things from nothing in the past because I really like things and I've never had a massive budget. So the way my brain works is that I think about something which I would quite like to own, or I see something that's old and discarded.

**What's the significance of incorporating a live pottery demonstration into an evening that's about more than just restoration?**

**Keith:** It works really well visually. It can be funny. And to be perfectly honest, it's where I'm most comfortable. So sitting on a stage throwing a pot is really quite relaxing in a way. And it's also a bit of audience participation; getting someone up just to show people - or describe to people - what I'm doing with my hands as I'm making something. It's very hard to explain or describe, so we'll have a close-up camera right on the wheel, and people will be able to see my hands working with the clay. And it's all about pressure and touch. It's incredibly tactile. And most things, when you're making



anything with any natural material - whether it's fabric, wood, glass, whatever it is - it's all about the touch and the feel of your hands. And that's what I hope to try and get across to people.

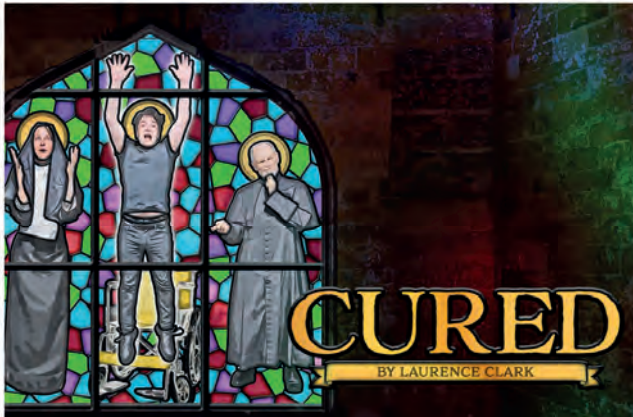
**What would you like audiences to take away from Us, Pots And A Welsh Chapel?**

**Keith:** It's going to be a bit of a laugh. It's going to be quite lighthearted. There'll be a few stories in there that hopefully will hit home. But I hope people go away from the show thinking, "Yeah, I could have a go at doing that." You know, feeling like you can just, go on, feel the fear and do it anyway. You only live once. That's really it. All the cliches, but it's true. Hopefully people will go away feeling slightly more positive about not only their own life but about life in general and about community.

.....

**Keith Brymer Jones and Marj Hogarth bring their Us, Pots And A Welsh Chapel show to Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, on Friday 12 June. The tour also stops off at the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, on Saturday 13 June, and Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, on Monday 15 June**

# BELGRADE



**CURED**  
BY LAURENCE CLARK

11 - 13 JUN

National Theatre  
Arts Council England

Snap up your tickets today

ROALD DAHL'S  
**THE ENORMOUS CROCODILE**  
THE MUSICAL

11 - 14 JUN

LANDMARK THEATRES PRESENTS

**Surinderella**  
BY PRAVESH KUMAR

**INTO THE BOLLY-WOODS**

16 - 19 JUL

THE PURRFECT FAMILY TREAT!

**The Tiger Who Came to Tea**

LIVE ON STAGE!

A musical play adapted & directed by DAVID WOOD based on the book by JUDITH KERR

★★★★★ Daily Express  
★★★★★ The Times  
★★★★★ Sunday Telegraph  
★★★★★ Daily Telegraph

20 - 21 JUL

LANDMARK THEATRES PRESENTS

**95 to**  
**THE MUSICAL**

DOLLY PARTON PATRICIA RESNICK

1 - 5 SEP

**WILKO**  
LOVE AND DEATH AND ROCK 'N' ROLL  
BY PENNYTARA BRITLAND

7 - 9 SEP

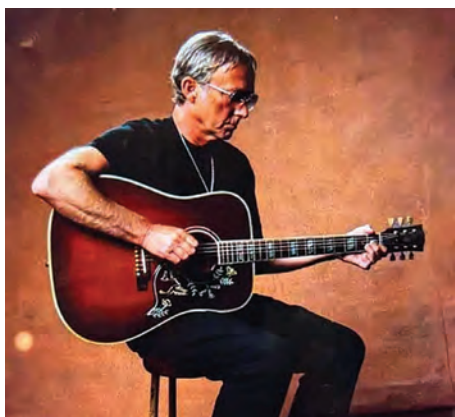
Book now **belgrade.co.uk**

Live music from across the region...

## Steve Cradock

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Sun 17 May

"It's a great time for me to reflect on my career and share the stories and songs of the last 25 years," says Steve Cradock, in talking about Travellers Tunes, the debut solo tour that's bringing him to Huntingdon Hall mid-month... A founding member of local superstars Ocean Colour Scene, Steve's distinctive riffs ignited such classic numbers as The Riverboat Song and The Day We Caught The Train, helping propel the band to the double-platinum glory of their classic 1996 album, Moseley Shoals.



## The Enemy

hmv Empire, Coventry, Fri 8 May

Bursting onto the scene in the mid-noughties with an aggressive and working-class indie sound, Coventry trio The Enemy quickly made a name for themselves, assisted to some considerable degree by NME famously hailing them the act most likely to 'break your windows' in 2007.

A number-one debut album, We'll Live And Die In These Towns, set the band on the road to fame and fortune, but various factors along the way culminated in a 2016 break-up.

Reuniting six years later, they're now back on home territory to celebrate the recent release of fifth studio album Social Disguises.



## Rickie Lee Jones

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 29 May

Veteran singer-songwriter Rickie Lee Jones released her first album the better part of half a century ago and has been making music-industry waves ever since. Once memorably hailed 'the Duchess of Coolsville' by Time magazine, the double Grammy Award winner has recorded in

various musical styles, including rock, R&B, pop, soul and jazz, leaving her indelible mark by virtue of some seriously soulful melodies and evocative storytelling. Her Coventry gig early this month sees her performing a selection of timeless classics and personal favourites.

## Virgil And The Accelerators

The Marris Bar, Worcester, Fri 1 May

Cult blues band Virgil And The Accelerators have a new line-up, are returning to their core identity as a stripped-back, raw-power trio, and will be using their Worcester date to relaunch themselves... Expect a night of high-octane blues-rock, heavy grooves and mesmerising guitar mastery.

## Boyzlife

Worcester Cathedral, Sat 2 May

Take a member of 90s & noughties boyband supergroup Boyzone and a member of 90s & noughties boyband supergroup Westlife, put them together and what do you get?... Keith Duffy and Brian McFadden forming middle-aged-man duo Boyzlife, that's what! The fun-loving fellas first came together a decade ago and are now once again reuniting for a UK tour, including this early-month Worcester Cathedral gig.



The show will see the dynamic Dubliners perform a mixture of hits from those heady boyband days. Think Boyzone's I Love The Way You Love Me, All That I Need and No Matter What, and Westlife's My Love, I Lay My Love On You and Uptown Girl.

## Howling Giant

The Tin Music & Arts, Coventry, Tues 19 May

Nashville-based heavy-jamming psych-wizards Howling Giant have been building up an impressive head of steam for more than a decade now, reaching new heights with last year's massive and mercurial third album, Crucible & Ruin.

Their Coventry visit, coming as part of a European tour, sees them sharing the limelight with Alunah and Tellemahookah.





# BREAKING SWEAT

**Ex-Spice Girl Melanie C visits Birmingham to celebrate the launch of her latest solo album...**

**She might be known as one fifth of the best selling girl group of all time, but for Sporty Spice (also known as Melanie Chisholm and, of course, Melanie C), the Spice Girls were just the beginning... She began a solo career in 1998 and releases her latest album, Sweat, at the start of this month. Ever busy, she visits Birmingham on Thursday 7 May for an album signing, before returning to the city in October to perform as part of a world tour. Here, she reveals that Sweat is custom-made to get the heart pumping - whether at the club or in the gym...**

**Melanie C, let's talk about Sweat, your new album. It feels like your most liberated record - what changed for you creatively this time around?**

So many things have changed. Every album I've ever made, it's really been a reflection of that moment in my life - and over the last eight years I've been DJing. I've been lucky enough to play in so many great festivals all over the world, as well as playing in Ibiza - for the last five years I've been playing at Pacha - and it just really reignited a passion that I have for dance music. I discovered raving when I was about 17... I really got into that scene. It was such an incredible time. I grew up through the 80s, where nightclubs in the UK were, you know, a bit 'cheesy discos', and it was all a little bit 'step touch, step touch' when you were dancing. So to find this incredible movement that was happening with this music that was just so euphoric at times - for people to be dancing all night long, and so many different social backgrounds and communities coming together and socialising together... This kind of felt like 'our movement' as a young person. Then, when I turned 20, I auditioned for the band that became the Spice Girls, and that, of course, took over my life. All of my priorities changed. We were so focused, so determined to succeed. And then, once music was released, our schedule was crazy, so there wasn't much time for going out - I'd almost left that part of me behind. I've just been able to reclaim who I was before I was a Spice Girl. I've had so many influences through my life; I've been so lucky and worked with so many amazing people, and this felt like the time to really put all of those pieces together.

**Having rediscovered this teenage version of yourself, then, did you approach producing this album more like a DJ set than a traditional pop album?**

I definitely approached things differently. The perspective of a DJ is very different to the perspective of an artist - the way I wanted the music to sound, the way I wanted the music to make you feel. And I was also really conscious that as a live performer I'm very energetic. I've got loads of confidence and quite a lot of attitude, but when I'm in the studio I'm a very different beast. But I

thought I really had to create the music that I wanted to bring to life live on stage. So it was really important for me to find that person when I was in the studio.

I also wanted to have some fun. DJing has brought so much joy into my life in the last few years. I've been out there playing live shows and festivals alongside DJing, and I've just been having the best time. And I really wanted that to translate onto this album. I'm so proud to be a Spice Girl, and to be Sporty Spice, and I completely embrace that. It's such a huge part of who I am. And it's funny - in interviews, often they will ask, "How do you feel that you were called Sporty Spice and you had to live up to this sporty persona?" I don't have to live up to anything - you know, I can't. I've tried to not be her, and it's impossible. I'm very energetic, I'm very sporty, and it was just really fun to look at the album in that way as well, and think about it lyrically. A song like Sweat, to me, felt like the perfect introduction to the album - it has that energy, it's a little bit tongue-in-cheek. It's like a fitness banger, and that was a big part of what I wanted to create in the thread of this album.

**When you're making a track, are you imagining how it will land on the dancefloor to all these new listeners?**

Yeah, 100%. [With] this album, I think more than anything I wasn't thinking so much about people sitting at home having a listen - it was about them being on the dancefloor. It was about wanting to motivate and inspire people, either on the dancefloor or in the gym... I think it's a good album to listen to with your mates while you're getting ready for going out.

**You have fans from all walks of life - fans who knew you as a Spice Girl but also as a solo artist. How do you balance giving fans the biggest hits and introducing them to the new Sweat era?**

This is a good question. So, my mind is buzzing right now with tour creative because, like the album, I want to approach this tour differently. I have this whole new perspective, and I'm going to cram in as many hits as I can. I know as a gig-goer I wanna hear the hits, right? I'm not going to leave anybody disappointed. The live shows are a place where I can really

bring this album to life, to celebrate my career to this point. And it's going to be full of everything. It's going to be really energetic, a journey, and when [the audience] leave, I want them to be exhausted but elated - and really sweaty!

**You've had one of the most varied careers in British pop history, and you're still changing it now - what keeps you creatively hungry after all these years?**

I just love what I do. I love performing. I love that feeling of being on stage, releasing music and having that connection with people. As different as we all are, we share so much; we have so much in common. It's really beautiful to be able to express yourself and to connect with other people. And that really, truly is what keeps me going. And other people's music - to hear other artists and bands, and how music changes and evolves.

**How does it feel when you're cited as an influence by the new era of musicians?**

It blows my mind. I think all of us Spice Girls, we're so proud. Obviously, we've left this beautiful legacy behind, and we constantly see people who've been affected by it, and so many artists who would mention the Spice Girls. It's very 'full circle' because there are artists that talk about being inspired by the Spice Girls, that inspire me. So that's really beautiful. And it's lovely to meet them as well - I meet so many artists, and they're very excited to meet a Spice Girl. But I think the most surprising to me are the ones that weren't even born when the Spice Girls first came out. And I'm like, how do you know? But, of course, this is music, and a movement that is passed down through generations, whether it was your older sister or your mum. And that's what we see whenever the Spice Girls get back together; we see this whole generational effect that our music has on people.

.....

**Melanie C will be meeting fans to sign copies of Sweat on Thursday 7 May at hmv Vault, Birmingham. She returns to the city to perform at O2 Institute on Saturday 24 October**



ORCHESTRA OF  
**The Swan**

# Death and the Maiden

Friday 1 May 2026 ..7pm  
Stratford-upon-Avon Town Hall - Sheep Street

An atmospheric evening of music & poetry inspired by the gothic tale *Death and the Maiden*, exploring themes of love and loss, and culminating in a thrilling performance of Schubert's masterpiece for string quartet.

Schubert	String Quartet No. 14 'Death and the Maiden'
Schubert/Le Page	Sleep Softly
Trad./Le Page	Death and the Lady
Trad./Le Page	Scarborough Fair

Violin/Director      **David Le Page**

Tickets:              Members of Friends £25, General public £30, Under 35s £10

[orchestraoftheswan.org](http://orchestraoftheswan.org)

## ARMONICO CONSORT

'PURE PLEASURE' THE GUARDIAN  
★★★★★ THE INDEPENDENT  
★★★★★ BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE  
★★★★★ THE TELEGRAPH  
★★★★★ THE TIMES



Tickets: [www.armonico.org.uk](http://www.armonico.org.uk) Registered Charity no. 1103159



### Purcell - King Arthur

ARMONICO CONSORT & BAROQUE PLAYERS  
DIRECTOR | CHRISTOPHER MONKS  
NARRATOR | OZ CLARKE  
CAST LINE UP | HANNAH FRASER-MACKENZIE, LAURA MORETTO,  
WILLIAM TOWERS, WILLIAM SEARLE, ALEX JONES

**18th June 2026 7.30pm**, Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick  
Box office: 01926 334418 [www.armonico.org.uk](http://www.armonico.org.uk)  
Generously supported by Braunston Marina and Rosemary Holding.

**24th June 2026 7.30pm**, Malvern Theatres, Worcestershire  
Box Office: 01684 892277 [www.malvern-theatres.co.uk](http://www.malvern-theatres.co.uk)

**25th June 2026 7.30pm**, Wyke Manor, Pershore  
Box Office: [www.confettidirect.co.uk](http://www.confettidirect.co.uk)



### 25th Anniversary Celebration Supersize Polyphony 3 - Venetian Blinders!

ARMONICO CONSORT & BAROQUE PLAYERS  
THE ENGLISH CORNETT AND SACKBUT ENSEMBLE  
DIRECTOR | CHRISTOPHER MONKS

**26th September 2026 7.30pm**, Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick  
Box office: 01926 334418 [www.armonico.org.uk](http://www.armonico.org.uk)

Generously co-sponsored by members of Armonico Consort's Conductor's Circle, Mr John Cook and Mr & Mrs J Wynn-Evans.

**6th October 2026 7pm**, Great Malvern Priory  
Box Office: 01684 892277 [www.malvern-theatres.co.uk](http://www.malvern-theatres.co.uk)

Classical music from across the region...



## Orchestra Of The Swan: Red Sky At Sunrise

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 19 May

Inspiration for this patchwork of words & music is provided by author Laurie Lee's much-loved trilogy of novels: Cider With Rosie, As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning and A Moment Of War. Featuring the music of Vaughan Williams, Walton, Holst, Elgar, Britten, Grainger, Albeniz, Turina and Falla, the programme transports the audience from the lush

Gloucestershire countryside of Lee's childhood to the 'dry landscapes of Spain', where he fought against Franco's forces in the Spanish Civil War.

Alongside music by the Orchestra Of The Swan, the production sees actors Anton Lesser and Charlie Hamblett (both pictured above) taking on the role of Lee.

## Hellensmusic

various venues in Much Marcle, Herefordshire, Wed 6 - Sun 10 May

International music festival Hellensmusic returns to Much Marcle in Herefordshire for a 13th year mid-month.

Taking place across three of the village's venues - Hellens Manor, St Bartholomew's Church and The Walwyn Arms - the four-day event presents a programme of chamber music concerts and free-to-observe masterclasses. Highlights include the festival's opening concert, Modes Of Transport - which traces composers 'through their travels, imagined wanderings, and musical evocations of transportation' - and Concert For The Inner Child - an afternoon of music inspired by the dreams, sounds and spirit of childhood.



## Andrey Gugnin

Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa, Mon 4 May

With his mantelpiece no doubt creaking under the weight of the various glittering prizes he's acquired during the course of a stellar career, pianist Andrey Gugnin makes a welcome return to the Leamington Music Festival, seven years after his first-ever performance in the town (a memorable Festival opener with violinist Tamsin Little)... Andrey's Pump Rooms programme features compositions by Tchaikovsky (Nutcracker Suite for solo piano and Sleeping Beauty Suite for solo piano) and Stravinsky (Three Movements from Petrushka, and Infernal Dance, Berceuse and Finale from The Firebird).

## Elgar Festival

various locations across Worcestershire, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May

"Every year, on the weekend closest to the date of his birth, we celebrate the life and music of Sir Edward Elgar with an immersive, accessible and engaging week of concerts, exhibits, talks, films and more." So says Kenneth Woods (pictured below) in talking about the Elgar Festival, of which he's the artistic director. "Our motto is 'Elgar for everyone'; from relaxed concerts to family events, free performances in iconic buildings and walks on the Malverns, to world-class performances by our resident orchestra - the English Symphony Orchestra - in Worcester Cathedral.

"There's also plenty of opportunity to take part. Come and play Elgar, join the Elgar Festival Chorus, be coached in our Young Strings Masterclass, or enter our renowned Young Composer competition... "The Elgar Festival has something for everybody in our community."



## Worcestershire Symphony Orchestra

Worcester Cathedral, Sat 9 May & Worcester Guildhall, Sat 30 May

Worcestershire Symphony Orchestra get to grips with the challenge of Beethoven's Ninth in their first of two concerts this month. Conducted by Keith Slade, the orchestra will be joined by four soloists and a 100-strong chorus of local singers. The programme also features Brahms' Violin Concerto and Parry's I Was Glad... The orchestra then make a late-month contribution to the Elgar Festival, presenting a free-to-enjoy programme of music featuring works by Bach (Brandenburg Concerto No3), Doreen Carwithen (Lento for Strings), Mozart (Symphony No25) and - as one might expect - Elgar (Salut d'Amour).



# RIDING ON A WAVE

**A new production of The Tempest opens at the RSC**

## Rising star Ruby Stokes makes her Royal Shakespeare Company debut this month, taking on the role of Miranda opposite Sir Kenneth Branagh's Prospero in a new production of *The Tempest*. Not surprisingly, the show is one of this year's hottest tickets, but the former child star is embracing the nerves and enjoying the ride - as she tells *What's On...*

Shakespeare's final play, *The Tempest*, is also one of his most fascinating. Essentially a meditation on art and freedom, it not only reflects elements of the Bard's own life but also features, unlike the bulk of his work, an entirely original plot. Incorporating wild storms, foreign lands and magical spirits, it tells a tale of power and revenge, compassion and hope.

*The Tempest* is a play that actress Ruby Stokes says has been a constant in her life ever since she studied it at school. So she's suitably excited to be taking on the role of Miranda in an all-new production at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), performing alongside Sir Kenneth Branagh as Prospero.

It's another big step on the career ladder for 25-year-old Ruby, who recently starred in Alexander Zeldin's hit play *The Other Place* on Broadway. She also earned rave notices for roles in *The Habits* at Hampstead Theatre and *Till The Stars Come Down* at the National Theatre. All noteworthy roles and stages, but adding Shakespeare at the RSC to her CV is clearly a big deal to the friendly actress.

"Oh my God, yeah - of course I've always wanted to work at the RSC and do a Shakespeare! I've been really keen to do a Shakespeare and learn and grow and be challenged by it. And to make my debut at the RSC, under the helm of [director] Richard Eyre and working alongside Kenneth Branagh and the company, is just incredible. I'm learning heaps, absorbing a lot and having fun as well."

It turns out this isn't actually Ruby's first stab at 'doing a Shakespeare' - she played Regan in a school production of *King Lear* while growing up in East London.

"Not long after, I saw Simon Russell Beale in it at the National Theatre and I was just totally enthralled, enveloped into the world of Shakespeare. When I worked there in 2024 in *Till The Stars Come Down* in the Dorfman Theatre, it took me right back to the time I was sat there [as a child]."

Despite not coming from any sort of arts background, Ruby - whose two brothers are also actors - has been involved with theatre almost all of her life, having started acting at the tender age of six.

"Well, I wasn't professionally acting!" she points out, laughing. "I was a bit shy as a kid, so I went to a local church group that did stuff in the area and I took to it. I then went to a place called the Young Actors Theatre

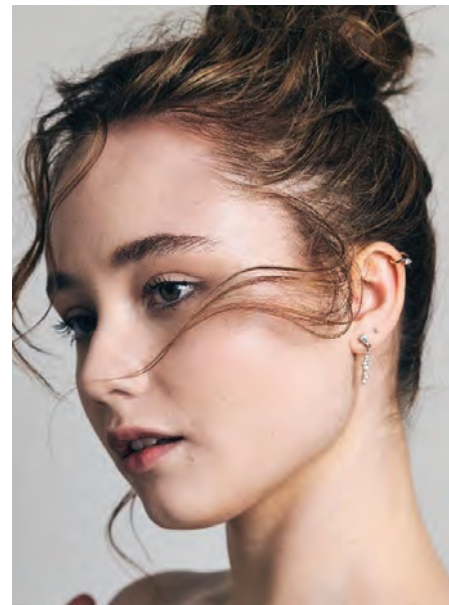
(YATI) in Islington. As cliché as it sounds, I fell in love with it, and it really helped me come out of my shell. So I went to drama groups when I was six and continued throughout the rest of my childhood and teenage years."

That drama journey included going to the BRIT School - a free school in Croydon for the performing and creative arts. "I wouldn't have been able to go if it weren't free," says Ruby. She also became a member of the London Youth Circus (part of the National Centre for Circus Arts) and joined the National Youth Theatre at the age of 14. "[The BRIT School] is a free educational opportunity, and they were incredibly encouraging. That propelled me into the year I did National Youth Theatre - which is also a brilliant organisation that has funding schemes too. I did face painting at my local farmers' market to raise money."

The work - acting as well as face painting - paid off. After a handful of minor television roles, Ruby was cast as the younger version of Rooney Mara's character in the 2016 movie *Una*. Since then, she's worked almost non-stop, appearing in the likes of Netflix period drama *Bridgerton*, *The Burning Girls* - opposite Samantha Morton - and BBC mini-series *The Jetty* with Jenna Coleman. Humble enough to suggest she's been "very fortunate" with the way things have turned out, Ruby says she realised from a fairly early age that she wanted to pursue acting for a living: "I just thought that if this is a viable career option, then I want to do it. I've loved every job I've done, and each one has been very different. I like to think 14-year-old Ruby is pretty chuffed and shocked right now."

As much as things are currently going well, she's not sure she'll ever feel settled, comfortable and "cruising", but believes that's a good thing: "The great fortune is I always like feeling challenged. I had to do an audition tape [for *The Tempest*] and I was just like 'Right I'm going to challenge myself and learn and grow from this moment.' I was so nervous because of what Shakespeare is, but the great thing about that is that I felt challenged. And then I auditioned with Richard and Kenneth on a Zoom call and we were reading back and forth - it's pretty magic to have done that. And then I got the job!"

Which brings her to the much-revered RSC stage, which she admits is another pinch-me moment: "When I was younger and studying



at school, it was mythic and like gold-dust coated when you mentioned the Royal Shakespeare Company. So it's pretty cool to be making my debut as this strong and mysterious character at the RSC, amongst a really cool, wicked company."

But what about the elephant (or multi-award winner) in the room? Had she been intimidated by working opposite such acting royalty as Sir Kenneth Branagh, whose return to the RSC after more than three decades is making the production such a hot ticket?

"Naturally, I was a bit nervous, but more so I was excited to learn from and work with Kenneth and Richard. I've grown up with both their work, so to be in the same room and working with and learning from them is just brilliant. They're both masters at their craft.

"It's [also] great to be working with people who are not only incredibly diligent, hard workers, but kind and fun. It's an honour, and it's cultivating a really brilliant energy within the whole company. We're all getting along really well and working really hard towards creating something special."

.....

**The *Tempest* shows at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, from Wednesday 13 May to Saturday 20 June**


TICKETS SELLING FASTER THAN HOT PIES!

A BIRMINGHAM REP PRODUCTION

# SWEENEY TODD

THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET

A MUSICAL THRILLER



MUSIC AND LYRICS BY  
**STEPHEN SONDHEIM**

BOOK BY  
**HUGH WHEELER**

FROM AN ADAPTATION BY  
**CHRISTOPHER BOND**

DIRECTED BY  
**JOE MURPHY**

SET & COSTUME DESIGN BY  
**ELIN STEELE**

PRESENTED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH  
MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL

**SAT 4 JUL -  
SUN 9 AUG**

[birmingham-rep.co.uk](http://birmingham-rep.co.uk)

**the Rep**

Plus 14 dance bands and shows

- ★ Workshops ★ Craft fair
- ★ Morris & dance teams
- ★ Singarounds & sessions
- ★ Food village
- ★ Camping & glamping
- ★ Real ale, wine & cocktail bars

**SHREWSBURY FOLK FESTIVAL**  
28-29-30-31 AUG 2026

- ✿ Lucinda Willams
- ✿ Talisk x Gardiner Brothers: Unleashed
- ✿ Andy Fairweather Low & The Low Riders
- ✿ Ferocious Dog ft. The Celtic Folk Orchestra
- ✿ Cara Dillon ✿ The Seeger Sessions Revival
- ✿ Slambovian Circus of Dreams ✿ Cut Capers
- ✿ Steve Knightley and The Winter Yards Band
- ✿ Dustbowl Revival ✿ Goitse ✿ Chris Wood
- ✿ Steve Knightley with Daniel Salvatore
- ✿ Katherine Priddy ✿ Natu Camara ✿ The Hunch
- ✿ Man The Lifeboats ✿ Kerr Fagan ✿ Malin Lewis
- ✿ Blowzabella ✿ Edith WeUtonga ✿ Sawol
- ✿ Adriano Adewale and Friends: Rooted and Rising
- ✿ Thunder and Rain ✿ Cable Street Collective
- ✿ Rum Ragged ✿ Kellie Loder ✿ Taff Rapids
- ✿ Sam Carter sings Nic Jones
- ✿ The Lost Notes ✿ Daisy Chute
- ✿ Holly Clarke ✿ Jess Silk
- ✿ The Zydeco Diamonds
- ✿ Pressgang Mutiny
- ✿ Greg Russell & more!

**refolkus**  
Youth Festival

**@ndemonium!**  
Children's Festival

Day & Weekend Tickets

[shrewsburyfolkfestival.co.uk](http://shrewsburyfolkfestival.co.uk)



## Herbert Art Gallery & Museum

# Explore MORE for LESS



## Get Your Herbert Annual Pass!

From £4.20 with a GoCV Card, your Herbert Annual Pass gives you 12 months of **UNLIMITED ACCESS** to:

- 4 stunning permanent gallery installations
- All upcoming temporary exhibitions
- Our amazing children's activities

The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum is Coventry's hub for art, history, and creativity - a place to explore the city's past, celebrate its future, and make memories again and again. With your Annual Pass, you can visit as often as you like, support your local museum, and enjoy unbeatable value.

2026 exhibitions include:

- Unearth the Palaeoverse: Dig into the Dawn of Time
- Curious Creatures, Stones and Bones
- British Art Show 10

Purchase your pass onsite or online at [www.theherbert.org](http://www.theherbert.org)

Go CV discounts available  
Go CV+ Cardholders go FREE



Comedy previews from across the region...

## David Elms

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sat 9 May

A comedian admired by other comedians is a comedian worth checking out - and David Elms is one such comedian.



“David builds a comedy ‘mind palace’ before your very eyes,” explains fellow comic Phil Wang, “and you’ll want to move in for good!” The mind palace to which Phil refers is a key element of David’s currently touring show, which sees him inviting the audience to dream up and describe the room he’s occupying... As appreciative Summer 2025 Edinburgh audiences would surely be happy to confirm, the show is a far more enjoyable experience than it sounds...

## Mark Simmons

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Thurs 7 May; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 8 May; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 17 September; The Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 26 November

Expertly crafted one-liners and off-the-cuff gags based on random suggestions from the audience are a guarantee whenever Mark Simmons hits town.



Alongside touring his critically acclaimed Jest To Impress show, Mark also hosts Jokes With Mark Simmons, a podcast in which he invites fellow comics to discuss gags that they’ve written but which they couldn’t get to work.

## Mark Watson

Stourbridge Town Hall, Fri 15 May; Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Sat 16 May

Well-established on the UK comedy circuit, Mark Watson was born in Bristol to Welsh parents and initially delivered his act with a Welsh accent, claiming he felt “more comfortable talking in a voice that I didn’t quite recognise as my own”.



Mark’s latest visit to the Midlands sees him presenting Before It Overtakes Us, a show in which he’s promising to ponder a wide selection of subjects, including the uncertain future facing humanity and the current state of the UK sausage industry.



## Jarlath Regan

Birmingham Town Hall, Fri 8 May

Although beginning his stand-up career in the early days of the new millennium, Kildare-born comic Jarlath Regan really found his place in the sun a handful of years ago via his Instagram and TikTok videos, since which time he’s been causing a

significant comedy splash in countries across the world. His new show, Gas Man, comprises 90 minutes of jokes and stories never before presented on stage or screen.

## Kane Brown

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 1 May; The Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 14 May; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 16 May; The Core Theatre, Solihull, Wed 23 September; Wulfrun Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton, Sun 27 September; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 9 October

Parenthood, family life, relationships and British culture are among the subjects to which Kane Brown regularly returns during his live shows. The one-time direct-sales executive kickstarted his current career back in 2006 when he enrolled in a two-week course in standup-comedy, since which time he’s honed his rib-tickling talents to excellent effect.

Kane visits the region this month with Crowd Work King, a show which is described as 60 minutes of purely unscripted and unplanned comedy, entirely based around audience participation.



## Daliso Chaponda

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 16 May; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 2 June

Malawian Daliso Chaponda has blended the slick North American style of comedy he learned while working in Canada with a real talent for brevity, ensuring that his gags, although not one-liners, nonetheless come



thick and fast. Like all good comedians, he can adapt his act to suit his audience - on a previous trip to the Midlands, he performed a seriously blue set in a Birmingham strip club, and then headed off to the Greenbelt Christian Festival to regale family audiences! Jokes include “I moved to the UK because of the BNP - they said the immigrants were taking all the best jobs and all the best women, and I thought, ‘Wow, that sounds like a good deal to me!’”

STEP BACK IN TIME TO 1660 FOR A FAMILY-FRIENDLY DAY BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE

THE  
**COMMANDERY**  
WORCESTER  
Civil War Battle HQ & Historic Building

# HAVE FUN AT **OAK APPLE DAY** AT THE COMMANDERY

Bank Holiday Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2026



ENGLISH  
**Civil  
WAR**

1642-1651  
#visitworcestershireshire

375  
YEARS

[museumsworcestershireshire.org.uk/events/oak-apple-day-2026/](https://museumsworcestershireshire.org.uk/events/oak-apple-day-2026/)

Part of a commemorative programme of events for the 375th anniversary of the Battle of Worcester, 1651.



MUSEUMS  
WORCESTERSHIRE  
Art • Heritage • Events

Discover your next family day out  
with Museums Worcestershire!

THE  
**COMMANDERY**  
WORCESTER  
Civil War Battle HQ & Historic Building

Worcester City  
Art Gallery & Museum



Explore your **senses**, expand your **imagination**, and **play** as you **delve into fantastic family fun** at The Commandery and Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

Pick up a brand-new Play Guide and discover something new!

Plan your visit at [www.museumsworcestershireshire.org.uk](https://www.museumsworcestershireshire.org.uk)

MUSEUMS  
WORCESTERSHIRE

Comedy previews from across the region...

## Tom Davis

Birmingham Hippodrome, Sun 10 May

"I've always thought of myself as an underdog," reveals funnyman Tom Davis to [beyondthejoke.com](http://beyondthejoke.com), "though not necessarily in a negative way. I think that's what's made me. The bulk of my humour comes from constantly feeling like someone who's had a little bit of a kicking." Having left school with no qualifications, Tom's road to comedy success proved to be a long and winding one: "I'd been working on building sites for 20-odd years. I just wanted to do something for myself. I tried stand-up, and straight away I just thought "Wow! I feel like I'm actually quite good at something: making other people laugh!" Tom visits Birmingham this month with his current touring show, Spudgun.



## Nick Mohammed

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Fri 22 May

He may have been one of the worst contestants in Taskmaster history, but Nick Mohammed has proved himself a winner in pretty much every other aspect of his showbiz career. His success has been due, in no small measure, to his much-loved alter-ego, Mr Swallow, the attention-seeking man-child who he's been playing for more than a decade now... Nick and Mr S are here making a welcome return in a long-touring show, one which has been described by the latter as "payback for everyone who didn't come to the last tour". Expect magic, music, 'and a whole load of mistakes'.



## Seann Walsh

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 16 May;  
The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon  
Trent, Sat 17 October

With appearances on shows including Mock The Week and Strictly Come Dancing to his name - the latter seeing him hitting the headlines for all the wrong reasons - Seann Walsh has been likened to the legendary Billy Connolly in terms of his gift for storytelling. His jokes aren't bad either. Two examples are as follows... "I don't understand swimming. You don't see fish going for a walk." And "Are city-centre beat officers police who rap?" Fresh from participating in series two of I'm A Celebrity... South Africa - he also featured in the Australian-jungle version of the series back in 2022 - Seann visits the Midlands this month with his latest touring show, This Is Torture.



## Mick Miller

Dudley Town Hall, Thurs 28 May; Kings Hall,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 15 November

It's a toss-up whether veteran comedian Mick Miller is best known for his comedy or his hair, but the good news for his legion of Midlands fans is that he'll be bringing both along with him to these regional gigs.

Tickling ribs for the better part of half a century, Mick is as committed as he's ever been to keeping his stand-up show fresh and funny. Post-interval in Dudley, he'll be sitting down with close friend and fellow funnyman Ryan Gleeson to chat about his career in comedy. A good night is pretty much a guarantee.



## Ivo Graham

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 9 May

Seriously posh and admirably self-deprecating, Ivo Graham won plenty of new fans in 2019 when one of his gags was nominated for the coveted 'best joke of the Edinburgh Fringe' award: "I've got an Eton-themed advent calendar," explained Ivo to his audience, "where all the doors are opened for me by my dad's contacts." The Tokyo-born Oxford alumnus visits the



Midlands with Orange Crush, a show about 'hats, haters and hometown heroes' that also questions whether 'Hare Krishnas are better than Hobnobs'.

## Scott Bennett

Birmingham Town Hall, Fri 22 May; Huntingdon  
Hall, Worcester, Wed 24 June; Theatre Severn,  
Shrewsbury, Thurs 25 June; Foxlowe Arts  
Centre, Leek, Tues 30 June & Wed 1 July;  
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 6 February

The next few months see Scott Bennett offering comedy-loving Midlanders plenty of opportunity to find out exactly why he's such a highly rated (albeit relatively low profile) comedian.

Scott has been referred to as live comedy's best-kept secret, with critics praising him for developing a style that comes complete with flashes of Peter Kay, John Bishop and Jason Manford.

Hugely popular on the corporate circuit, Yorkshire-born Scott is using his latest tour to contemplate the way in which people's liking for 'stuff' sits at odds with the looming environmental crisis.





# COMIC RELIEF

**Paul Hendy's new play, *The Last Laugh*, is a love letter to a golden age in British comedy...**

**Three of the UK's most revered comedians are brought together in a new play visiting the region next month. Featuring an imaginary conversation between Tommy Cooper, Eric Morecambe and Bob Monkhouse, *The Last Laugh* has been written and directed by one-time TV presenter Paul Hendy, who explains to *What's On* why the show has been such a labour of love...**

"I've been obsessed with comedy, and in particular what I call the golden age of British comedy - the 1970s and 80s - ever since I first saw Morecambe & Wise on television. Tommy Cooper, Les Dawson, Frankie Howerd... that's my era."

Paul Hendy, writer, director & producer of new play *The Last Laugh* is nothing if not effusive about comedians and comedy of a certain vintage.

"I've written a play that imagines Eric Morecambe, Tommy Cooper and Bob Monkhouse sitting in a dressing room discussing life, death, comedy, and what it means to be funny; why some people are funny, and why some people aren't funny."

The TV presenter turned writer/producer arguably has an inside track on the debate, and even has something in common with Monkhouse, having hosted game shows such as *Don't Try This At Home* (with Davina McCall), *Stash The Cash* and *Wheel Of Fortune*. Paul was the kiss of death for the latter - it was cancelled after his single year in the hot seat, having been on air for 23 years prior to that - but the bulk of his work has been rather more successful. CBBC show *Dear Mr Barker*, which he hosted, was nominated for a BAFTA, a 2023 play he directed about child star Lena Zavaroni earned major critical acclaim, and the production company he runs with his wife has won *Pantomime of the Year* at the UK *Pantomime Awards* on four occasions.

*The Last Laugh* has already earned rave notices in Edinburgh and London, and a short film version, which Paul wrote, directed and produced, scooped several awards. These included *Best Comedy Drama* at the *Los Angeles Independent Film Festival* and *Best Film* at the *Manchester Film Festival*.

"The success was great, but I always thought there was more in it, because that was just a 20-minute film," he recalls of the 2016 movie. "There was so much more to be explored about these three legends of comedy and what they'd talk about."

The film was written with specific actors in mind, to the extent that Steve Royle (Morecambe), Damian Williams (Cooper) and Simon Cartwright (Monkhouse) dictated which three comics would feature, not the other way around.

"They are all brilliant," says Paul of the actors, two of whom (Williams and Cartwright) reprise their roles in the stage version, "and I'm not just saying that. They're not just doing impressions; it's about more than that. It's about the spirit of those comedians, and that's what seems to touch people."

Having developed the film into a play during lockdown ("we all had a bit of time on our hands"), Paul took the show to the Edinburgh Fringe, where it proved a big hit. A West End run followed, and it's also recently been performed, somewhat surprisingly given its quintessentially British content, in New York.

"It's fascinating to see [the reaction of] the Americans, who don't know [the stars] at all. Eric and Tommy appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in the 1960s, but none of the audience would remember. So it plays not quite as a straight play, but they really have to listen to get who each of the characters are, whereas in Britain there's already a love and nostalgic warmth for them.

"What we found in the West End was that people who like that style of comedy really love it because it brings back memories of watching with their mum and dad or grandparents and so on.

"It's funny, but it's also poignant and very nostalgic. I think if anybody remembers and loves these comedians, they'll get a lot from it, because it's my love letter to the golden age of television comedy."

But as much as he thinks it will appeal to people who remember that time ("over-50s is the sweet spot"), Paul believes the show goes beyond being a nostalgia trip and has something for younger audiences too.

"Anybody who likes comedy and has an interest in the history of comedy - or, to be honest, just wants a good laugh - will enjoy this, because ultimately it explores what it means to be funny, even if you don't know these actual comedians. Last year at Edinburgh, we had a lot of comedians come to see it, and they responded so positively because it was all so relevant to them."

Comedy and comedians have always been fertile ground for drama and pathos - from the 'tears of a clown' cliché to a need to be validated, accepted, lauded, or even loved,

that borders on obsessive.

"Bob Monkhouse was originally in a double act in the 1950s and early 60s, and his comedy partner [Denis Goodwin] committed suicide. He also had a son who was severely disabled, so he had quite a life of tragedy. He was also rejected by both his parents.

"In the play, the characters discuss what drives somebody to be funny, and Bob Monkhouse really analyses that. Is it maternal or paternal rejection? Or both, in his case? What makes them continually search for the next laugh?"

Monkhouse's sparring partners in the play also had their crosses to bear. Eric Morecambe was an only child constantly looking for a brother figure - a role eventually filled by Ernie Wise, who he bonded with for nearly 50 years - while Tommy Cooper was a natural clown ultimately burdened by people never taking him seriously.

"In the play, Tommy tells a true story of when he was upset and sitting down on a pavement, crying. A group of people saw him and started laughing at him. So Tommy Cooper crying was actually funny... it was like a curse to him.

"He couldn't help being funny, which I imagine was great 90 per cent of the time but not the other 10, when you want to be taken seriously."

Although *The Last Laugh* is a split between humour and drama, it errs very much on the side of the former - as well as being a celebration of the three much-loved icons featured in the show: "It's in no way an exposé of these comedians' lives - it's a love letter. It's joyous. When we played in the West End, there was so much love and warmth; you could feel it in the theatre, which was great. We live in difficult times, with everything that's going on in the world, and I think we need that at the moment."

.....

**The Last Laugh shows at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury from Wed 13 - Sat 16 May and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Wed 9 - Sat 12 September**



**Mamma Mia!** Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 12 - Sat 30 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 27 October - Sat 7 November

This legendary show is of course a nicely contrived vehicle for the chart-topping music of 1970s Super Troupers Abba. Back in the day, the Swedish Fab Four scored mega-hit after mega-hit with catchy numbers including Waterloo, Dancing Queen, The Name Of The Game, The Winner Takes It All and Take A Chance On Me (all of which are present and correct in this blockbuster offering). Set in a Greek-island paradise, Mamma Mia! tells the story of single mum Donna and her 20-year-old daughter, Sophie, who's soon to get married. Formerly the lead singer of a three-piece girl group called

The Dynamos, Donna led something of a crazy, carefree existence when she was a younger woman. As a result, Sophie's never known who her father is... and if truth be told, Donna's not entirely sure either. After stealing a sly glimpse at her mum's old diary, sneaky Sophie identifies three possible candidates. Masquerading as Donna, she sends messages inviting each of the men to attend her wedding. Hijinks, chaos and confusion inevitably ensue, all of which are best experienced to a pulsating Abba soundtrack, of course...

**Single White Female**

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 5 - Sat 9 May; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 26 - Sat 30 May; Malvern Theatres, Tues 9 - Sat 13 June

Recently divorced mum Allie is trying to juggle childcare with the challenges of starting a new business. When she advertises for a lodger to help make ends meet, along comes the seemingly delightful Hedy. But all is not as it seems - and it isn't too long before their new friendship takes a decidedly sinister turn...



Adapted from the hit 1992 film of the same name starring Bridget Fonda and Jennifer Jason Leigh, this brand-new touring production brings together familiar television faces Kym Marsh and Lisa Faulkner. "The essence of the show is very much still the same [as the movie], but the story is slightly changed," says Kym, who plays Hedi. "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 audiences will very much love the story, whether they've seen the film or not."

**Blood Brothers**

Lichfield Garrick, Tues 19 - Sat 23 May; Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 20 - Sat 24 October; Malvern Theatres, Tues 17 - Sat 21 November

You know what you're going to get with a Willy Russell production. From Educating Rita to Shirley Valentine, his work is always sharp, refreshing, poignant and funny. And Blood Brothers doesn't buck the trend.



It's effectively a class-driven Scouse melodrama, but to simply describe it as such is to vastly underestimate the emotional response it routinely produces within its audience. Running for more than 10,000 performances in London's West End - one of only five musicals ever to achieve that milestone - it tells the story of an unfortunate mother compelled to give away one of her twins. It also has adult actors playing children and boasts a sharp social awareness to counteract the sticky sentimentality. And if the measure of a musical's success is being able to hum the songs when you come out of the theatre - without having known them all that well before you went in - then this is unquestionably one of the best.

**WNO** Welsh National Opera

**The Flying Dutchman**  
Thu 7 & Fri 8 May

**Blaze of Glory!**

**TOM DAVIS**  
**SPUDGUN**  
Sun 10 May

**ORIGINS FESTIVAL**  
Celebrating New Work

Find out more  
birminghamhippodrome.com/origins

Mon 11 - Sat 16 May

BENNY ANDERSON & BÖRNS LUVVETS

**MAMMA MIA!**

THE SMASH HIT MUSICAL  
BASED ON THE SONGS OF ABBA

Tue 12 - Sat 30 May

tall stories  
Where everything is possible

**THE GRUFFALO**  
A TALL STORIES PRODUCTION  
BASED ON THE NATION'S FAVOURITE PICTURE BOOK BY  
**JULIA DONALDSON AND AXEL SCHREFFLER**

★★★★★  
★★★★★  
★★★★★  
★★★★★  
★★★★★

Scotsman  
The List  
Sunday Times  
Sunday Herald  
Whistle & Goats

**LIVE ON STAGE**  
+ 25 YEARS +

Wed 20 - Sun 24 May

**DERREN BROWN**  
**ONLY HUMAN**  
LIVE

Tue 2 - Sat 13 Jun

**BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET**

**Sir Peter Wright Centenary**

Thu 18 Jun

**BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET**

**20th-Century Masterpieces**

Fri 19 & Sat 20 Jun

MICHAEL HARRISON  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
CAMERON MACKINTOSH  
PRESENTS

BOUBLIL & SCHÖNBERG'S

**MISS SAIGON**

THE LEGEND REBORN

Tue 23 - Sat 27 Jun

RSC

ROALD DAHL  
**Matilda**  
THE MUSICAL  
BOOK DENNIS KELLY MUSIC & LYRICS TIM MINCHIN

Wed 1 Jul - Sun 2 Aug

**Helloooo, Birmingham!**

**Mrs Doubtfire**  
The Hit Comedy Musical

Thu 13 Aug - Sat 19 Sep

**BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET**

Sir Peter Wright & Galina Samsova's  
**Swan Lake**

Wed 23 Sep - Sat 3 Oct



## Welsh National Opera

Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 7 & Fri 8 May

Currently celebrating their 80th anniversary, Welsh National Opera stop off in Birmingham this month with a brand-new production - a contemporary reimagining of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* (Thursday the 7th) - and an old favourite - *Blaze Of Glory!*

The former, which was premiered in 1843 with the composer conducting the performance, is based on a centuries-old Dutch legend of a ghost ship and a cursed sailor. Its music, not surprisingly, is stormy and dramatic, evoking the power of the ocean...

*Blaze Of Glory!* (pictured), meanwhile, is set somewhat closer to home. Its story focuses on a group of Welsh miners as they embark on a musical journey to reform their male voice choir after a local mining disaster. Steeped in the Welsh choral tradition, the work combines traditional harmonies and the acapella sounds of the 1950s with operetta, gospel and big band sounds.

## Operation Mincemeat

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, until 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 Potteries 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."



## Around The World In 80 Days

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Sat 23 May - Sat 20 June

It's easy to forget that travelling across the globe used to be a very difficult and long-winded undertaking. Jules Verne's classic adventure story, *Around The World In 80 Days* - here helmed by New Vic Artistic Director Theresa Heskins - offers a fun-filled reminder of a time when exotic climes really were 'a world away'.

Making a welcome return to the Newcastle-under-Lyme theatre's stage, this much-loved and family-friendly production recounts the story of English gentleman Phileas Fogg's attempt to circumnavigate the globe in the aforementioned 80 days on a wager of £20,000, aided and abetted in his endeavour by his trusty valet, Passepartout... Eight actors take on 109 characters, with six trains, five boats, two dances, one storm, a circus act and an elephant also featuring.



## Glorious!

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 19 - Sat 23 May

By virtue of *Glorious!* having premiered some 21 years ago and been followed by a high-profile film starring Meryl Streep and Hugh

Grant, the story of Florence Foster Jenkins is pretty well known.

An inter-war American socialite and amateur coloratura soprano, Florence became famous for her technically incompetent recitals, her dreadful performances gaining her the unwanted title of the world's worst opera singer... Former *Coronation Street* favourite Wendi Peters here takes on the to-die-for role of Florence.



## Bus Stop Goths

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Thurs 7 May

When Viv and Sid, two ethereal-plane angels tasked with watching over Middlesbrough, realise that the city's alt youth are having a grim time of it, they decide to take matters into their own hands...

A surreal modern folktale, *Bus Stop Goths* is the debut show from Queer, non-binary theatre maker Audrey Cook.

"One theme we cover in the show is a young person's fear around taking up space," Audrey told *narc* magazine.com. "Kids aren't daft; they don't want to be alienated. So if they don't learn to be a bit rebellious or a bit playful, they instead learn to shrink themselves and contort themselves to fit into boxes that don't offend or challenge."

WOLVERHAMPTON  
**GRAND**  
THEATRE

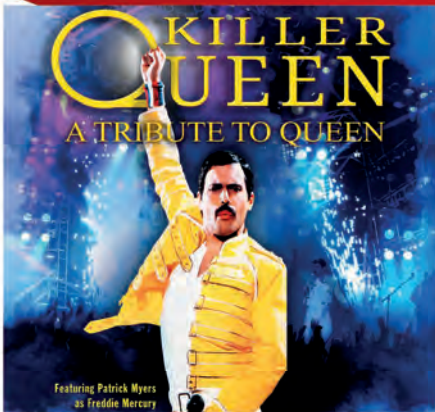
**WHAT  
WILL YOU  
SEE  
NEXT?**



MON 1 - SAT 6 JUN '26  
WAITRESS



SAT 13 JUN '26  
TIM LUCAS -  
WE'RE HAVIN' A PARTY



SUN 14 JUN '26  
KILLER QUEEN:  
A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN



THU 18 - SUN 21 JUN '26  
ROALD DAHL'S THE ENORMOUS  
CROCODILE - THE MUSICAL



TUE 23 - SAT 27 JUN '26  
MEAN GIRLS



SUN 28 JUN '26  
THE LEGEND OF BARRY WHITE  
- LET THE MUSIC PLAY



WED 1 JUL '26  
A COUNTRY NIGHT  
IN NASHVILLE



SUN 5 JUL '26  
EMILIO SANTORO AS ELVIS

BOOK ONLINE AT [GRANDTHEATRE.CO.UK](http://GRANDTHEATRE.CO.UK)  
BOX OFFICE: 01902 42 92 12

# COMING SOON

LICHFIELD  
**GARRICK**  
THEATRE & STUDIO

**MUSICAL**

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY  
RICHARD AL SHEPHERD AND ROBERT S. SHERMAN



JAN FLEMING'S  
**CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG**

This amateur production is presented by amateurgroup international. All authorized performance materials at [www.amigroup.co.uk](http://www.amigroup.co.uk)

**5-9 MAY**

**MUSIC**

**That'll Be The Day!**

50s TO 80s ROCK POP & COMEDY

"THERE'S NOTHING ELSE LIKE IT"



**40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SHOW**

TREVOR'S FAREWELL **11-12 MAY**

**MUSICAL**

★★★★★ "SENSATIONAL"  
★★★★★ "WORLD CLASS"



**THE WEST END TENORS**

DIRECT FROM THEIR EUROPEAN TOUR

**17 MAY**

**DRAMA**

WILLY RUSSELL'S  
**BLOOD Brothers**



**19-23 MAY**

**MUSIC**

**Quill**

featuring  
Bev Bevan (*Muse of Fire*)



[www.quill](http://www.quill.co.uk) **24 MAY**

**COMEDY**

"I NEVER WANTED THIS SHOW TO END...  
**HILARIOUS!**"

LE NAVET BÈTE



**OH ZEUS!**

**26-27 MAY**

**FAMILY**

The Tiger Who Came to Tea



★★★★★ The Times  
★★★★★ Daily Telegraph  
★★★★★ Mail on Sunday  
★★★★★ Daily Express  
★★★★★ Daily Mail

**28-29 MAY**

**DRAMA**

**DIAL 1 FOR UK**



**28 MAY**

**MAGIC**

**TOM BRACE SAWS HIMSELF IN HALF**



**29 MAY**

[lichfieldgarrick.com](http://lichfieldgarrick.com)

box office **01543 412121**

Theatre previews from around the region



**2:22 A Ghost Story**

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 18 - Sat 23 May

Husband & wife Jenny and Sam are divided. Jenny believes their new home is haunted; Sam isn't having any of it. Something certainly feels strange and frightening. Determined to find out the truth once and for all, they decide to stay up until 2:22 - at which time, all will be revealed. Or not... 2:22 premiered in the West End back in 2021, not only becoming a major hit but also providing singers Lily Allen and Cheryl with an opportunity to tread the boards. This currently touring production stars James Bye (EastEnders) and Natalie Casey (Two Pints Of Lager And A Packet Of Crisps).

**The Shawshank Redemption**

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 26 - Sat 30 May

Given that film critics regard The Shawshank Redemption as one of the greatest movies of all time, it's hardly surprising to find



that its stage version is out on the road yet again and doing good business. Based on a 1982 Stephen King novella, the story revolves around the character of Andy Dufresne, a man serving a double life sentence at the notorious Shawshank facility. An unlikely friendship with prison fixer Red makes the experience a little more bearable. But when the warden decides to make Andy's life a living hell, the nothing-to-lose lifer hatches a daring and ingenious plan to escape... Joe McFadden, Ben Onwukwe and Bill Ward star.

**Disenchanted!**

Lichfield Garrick, until Sat 2 May

This new US-made musical comedy - debunking the myth of the 'damsel in distress' - is here making its professional UK theatre debut.



Gemma East, chief operating officer at the Garrick, has high hopes for the 'side-splitting and cheeky' mash-up of much-loved fairytales: "With its riotous musical numbers, laugh-out-loud one-liners and twist on

familiar characters, we're incredibly excited to see how our audiences respond to this smash-hit from across the pond."

**Austentatious**

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 30 May

Taking the subtitle 'an improvised Jane Austen novel', Austentatious visits the Midlands this month having garnered plenty of praise on its previous visits. Lighthearted and delightfully throwaway, the show sees the performers utilising audience suggestions to develop a play that not only pays homage to Austen but also generates plenty of laughter along the way. Performed in period costume with live musical accompaniment, the production is described by its publicity as 'a riotous, razor-sharp show where swooning is guaranteed'. Great fun's a certainty - and who doesn't love a bit of a swoon?



**The Last Laugh**

Malvern Theatres, until Sat 2 May; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 13 - Sat 16 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 9 - Sat 12 September

"I've written a play that imagines Eric Morecambe, Tommy Cooper and Bob Monkhouse sitting in a dressing room discussing life, death, comedy, and what it

means to be funny," explains Paul Hendy, the one-time television presenter who's not only written The Last Laugh but also produced and directed it. "Anybody who likes comedy and has an interest in the history of comedy - or, to be honest, just wants a good laugh - will enjoy this show, because ultimately it explores what it means to be funny, even if you don't know these actual comedians."



**The Beekeeper Of Aleppo**

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 19 - Sat 23 May

Nesrin Alrefaai and Matthew Spangler's stage adaptation of Christy Lefttieri's bestselling novel reflects on the connections that exist between friends, families and strangers. The story follows the characters of beekeeper Nuri and artist Afra, a married couple enjoying a simple life in the beautiful Syrian city of Aleppo. But when war breaks out, the pair flee for their lives, embarking on a journey that sees them not only face the pain of their own unbearable loss but also the challenge of finding each other again.



# Birmingham Classical 2026/27



Martha Argerich | Ingrid Fliter | Marin Alsop  
Opera North | Maria Loudenitch | The Hallé  
NDR Radiophilharmonic Hannover  
Düsseldorf Symphony Orchestra  
& many more!

On Sale Now:  
[bmusic.co.uk/bclassical](https://bmusic.co.uk/bclassical)

**B:Music**  
Town Hall & Symphony Hall

# Cheltenham Music Festival 2026

3-11 July

The world's leading orchestras, musicians and songwriters spanning everything from Mozart and Bach to jazz and folk and so much more

**Free events • Eclectic venues**  
**World premieres • Family events**

No rules, no right way to enjoy.  
Just music, for everyone.

Produced by  
**CHELtenham**  
Festivals

Plan your Festival at  
[cheltenhamfestivals.org/music](https://cheltenhamfestivals.org/music)  
or scan the QR code





## The Resistible Rise Of Arturo Ui

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 30 May

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. "It's a gangster spectacle," says Mark Gatiss, who plays the title character, "a sort of cartoon of it all - and there's a lot to be enjoyed in that. Brecht loved gangster movies..., so it's quite playful and fantastical..."

"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."

## A Midsummer Night's Dream

The Rep, Birmingham, until 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.

## Sisters 360

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 23 May

Stepsisters Fatima and Salima are cool, close, and share a burning ambition - to win the Tiny Is Mighty skateboarding contest. But when they start hearing whispers about their parents planning to live apart - meaning that they too, as stepsisters, will be separated - they



realise that their chances of winning competition gold are set to take a turn for the worse...

Bradford writer Asif Khan is the creative talent behind this inspirational story about 'family, friendship and the importance of following your dreams'.

## Ode To Joyce

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 17 May

Cheryl Knight channels her inner Joyce Grenfell in this one-woman homage to one of the 20th century's greatest British female entertainers. First conceived in honour of Joyce's centenary year and playing to sell-out audiences at the Edinburgh Festival, the critically acclaimed revue show combines a selection of Grenfell's best-known songs and monologues with some of her more rare, delicate and poignant pieces.

## Malory Towers

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tue 12 - Sat 16 May

All the 'highs' - jinx, drama and spirits - are very much present and correct in this once-again-touring stage incarnation of Enid Blyton's much-loved novels about the girls' boarding school of the title. Adapted & helmed by former Shakespeare's Globe artistic director Emma Rice, the show is being marketed as the original 'girl power'

story - an ideal night at the theatre for girls, boys and any grown-up children who still dream of midnight feasts and Cornish clifftops. The show has an age recommendation of eight-plus and 'contains themes that some people may find difficult'.

## Oh Zeus!

Lichfield Garrick, Tues 26 & Wed 27 May

Comedy theatre company Le Navet Bete make a welcome return to the region with what they're promising will be a riotous and all-out-hilarious ride through Greek mythology. Featuring three actors playing no fewer than 40 characters, the show is built around a storyline that sees King of the Gods Zeus hatching a plan to thwart his daughter's plans to marry a mere mortal. "It's a non-stop evening of entertainment," proclaim the Exeter ensemble, in waxing lyrical about their latest show. "Expect sensational physical comedy, outrageous jokes, fast-paced chaos, and more togas than you can smash a plate at."





# POP-UP

# FAMILY

# FEST

**Sat 23 May 10am – 4pm**

Come together to play, create, & celebrate summer at Warwick Arts Centre.  
Little ones, teens, parents, and grandparents – everyone's welcome!

### **BABY YOGA: FEEL THE FLOW**

Three free half hour sessions  
starting at 10am, 10.30am & 11am  
Stretch, play, and connect with Family Yoga  
with Rossanna – a joyful, relaxing session.

**FREE**, book online

Age 0-4

### **ZOG**

10.30 (BSL) am & 1.45pm (Relaxed)

Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's classic,  
feel-good story is brought to roaring, soaring  
life in this delightful musical for children.

Theatre Adult £23.50, Child £21.50 Age 3+

### **ARTIST WORKSHOP**

12.30pm – 3pm

Drop-in for a fun, creative workshop,  
where all the family can get involved.

**FREE**

### **SENSORY SCULPTURE TRAIL**

12.30pm – 1pm (BSL)

Discover, touch and explore, a family friendly  
guided tour through our inspiring sculpture trail.

**FREE**

### **TREASURE HUNT**

10am – 4pm

Family-friendly, self-led treasure hunt  
exploring creative clues inspired by Daiga  
Grantina's exhibition. Prizes to be won.

**FREE**

### **SISTERS 360**

1.30pm & 4pm (Relaxed)

Get ready for *Sisters 360* – a funny, high-  
energy play about sisterhood, skateboards,  
and staying strong when life changes.

Studio £18, £16

Age 8 - 12

### **PARENT & BABY FILM SCREENING\***

### **RELAXED STAR WARS SCREENING\* FAMILY SHORT FILMS**

12.30pm – 3pm

Foyer

### **CHILL OUT SPACE**

Available all day

\*Films, times and prices tbc please check the website.



**FOR MORE INFO AND FULL**

**LINE UP SCAN THE QR CODE**

[warwickartscentre.co.uk](http://warwickartscentre.co.uk)

📍 warwick arts centre @warwickarts

Warwick Arts Centre, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7FD

**WARWICK**

**ARTS**

**CENTRE**

Theatre for younger audiences



**The Gruffalo**

Malvern Theatres, Fri 15 - Sun 17 May; Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 21 - Sun 24 May; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 27 - Sat 30 May

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

Tall Stories' stage adaptation follows Mouse as he heads out on a journey through the deep dark wood, scaring away hungry animals with tales of the terrifying Gruffalo. Imagine his surprise, then, when he suddenly finds himself coming face-to-face with the very creature he's been talking

about!

Tall Stories' delicate yet playful approach to their material - and their ability to let whatever story they're telling speak for itself, without flashy gimmicks or over-the-top costumes - places them at the very forefront of family theatre.

An imaginative and engaging musical that comes complete with some good old-fashioned audience participation, The Gruffalo offers truly 'monstrous' fun for children aged three and older.

**Horrible Histories**

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Thurs 28 - Sat 30 May

If you love the Horrible Histories series - and why the heck wouldn't you?! - then Terrible Tudors and Awful Egyptians are two shows well worth catching.

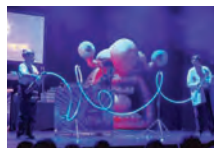
Audience members attending the former will find out all about the fate of Henry's headless wives and his punch-up with the Pope, while families checking out the latter will be asked whether they're ready to rumble with Ramesses and - somewhat more alarmingly - if they dare to enter through 'the gates of the afterlife'!... Both productions show on each of the three days - visit the Grand's website to check starting times.



**The Utterly Revolting Science Show**

Stourbridge Town Hall, Fri 29 May; Kidderminster Town Hall, Mon 26 October

Brace yourselves for the Rude Science team's hilarious, high-tech, highly explosive new journey through the human body, packed with 'burp biology, fart physics and revolting edible chemistry'.



At a very basic level, it's a rollercoaster ride through a series of disgusting experiments built to delight young audiences; but scratch beneath the surface and you'll discover a brilliantly constructed curriculum-driven adventure designed to gift Britain's kids with a lasting fascination for science.

The show is the brainchild of Stefan Gates, high-octane presenter of 20 TV series (five for CBBC), award-winning author of 13 books (including Rude Science) and internationally renowned producer of world-class science stage shows.

**Ministry Of Science Live**

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 25 May; Palace Theatre Redditch, Wed 27 May; Lichfield Garrick, Mon 26 October

A refreshingly anarchic approach to science communication is the name of the game when the Ministry of Science comes to town. As well as taking a look at the inventors and engineers who've shaped and inspired the modern world, the show's presenters will be conducting clever demonstrations aplenty - so brace yourself for the occasional loud bang!

Giant liquid hydrogen clouds, exploding oxygen and hydrogen balloons, fire tornados, hydrogen bottle rockets, ignited methane and even a self-built hovercraft all feature.

**Dino Tales: A Roarsome Adventure**

Walsall Arena, Wed 27 May

The producers of Dino Tales are promising that their show will have your kids jumping with Jurassic joy - which is surely a good thing as long as they've calmed back down again by the time you get them home!

Built around a storyline that finds a baby dinosaur in serious need of a rescue, the production brings sure-to-be-wide-eyed youngsters into the close proximity of 'an entire herd of pre-historic beasts', including Freya the dancing raptor, Dylan the cheeky dilophosaurus, Angie the ankylosaurus, Scar the fearsome, and Roxy the mighty T-Rex.



**The Cat In The Hat**

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 9 & Sun 10 May; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Wed 27 - Thurs 28 May; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 29 May; Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sun 31 May; Stourbridge Town Hall, Sat 6 - Sun 7 June; Worcester Swan Theatre, Fri 26 June

Based on the much-loved book by Dr Seuss, this latest theatrical version of The Cat In The Hat has been designed to engage and (hopefully) delight youngsters aged three and older.

The Cat In The Hat is the funniest, most mischievous cat that Sally and her brother have ever met - and what's more, he's got a fantastic talent for turning the rainiest of afternoons into the most amazing of adventures...



2026 production image - credit Ros Kavanagh

# GOING HER OWN WAY

Katriona O'Sullivan chats about her bestselling memoir, *Poor*, and its stage adaptation, which shows at the Coventry Belgrade Theatre this month...

**Katriona O’Sullivan’s bestselling memoir - telling the story of how she overcame childhood trauma and adversity to become a celebrated university lecturer & author - is now a critically acclaimed play. Although delighted with the way the stage adaptation of Poor has turned out, the West Midlands-born writer will find the show far too painful to watch when it visits Coventry’s Belgrade Theatre early this month... as she explains to What’s On.**

She might not thank me for saying it, but Katriona O’Sullivan is quite a remarkable woman. Born and raised in Hillfields - a deprived inner-city area of Coventry - her childhood was blighted by poverty, drugs, alcohol and sexual abuse, and later teenage pregnancy and homelessness. Her Irish parents both struggled with heroin addiction, and as a youngster she witnessed her father’s overdose and subsequent incarceration, experienced sexual violence, and often went hungry and unwashed.

That she survived at all is an achievement, but miraculously she went on to earn a PhD from Dublin’s Trinity College and is now an award-winning lecturer at Maynooth University in County Kildare.

She chronicled her extraordinary journey in the bestselling memoir *Poor: Grit, Courage, And The Life-Changing Value Of Self-Belief*. The book was adapted for the stage by Sonya Kelly, premiered at Dublin’s Gate Theatre to instant critical acclaim, and arrives at Coventry’s Belgrade Theatre this month.

Katriona is delighted to be bringing the show to the city of her birth, the only other venue she’s so far agreed for it to be performed. But she admits that she finds the play too difficult to watch (“horrible, honestly”), and that you’re more likely to find her in the foyer than the auditorium while it’s on.

“There’s never gonna be a time in my life where it’s gonna be okay to watch myself or read about myself being abused as a child, or think about my mum having to sell her body for drugs,” she says. “It’s painful, and it does come at a cost to me, I’m not going to lie. There are a couple of scenes that always get me, and really hurt my heart. But I also get to witness people learning from the story, being inspired and moved by it. Every night there’s a standing ovation, there’s tears and everybody’s crying. It’s kind of happy but sad as well.

“I just sit in the hallway and read, then sell my merch, get hugs and feel the love of the audience, which is amazing. I love meeting people and having conversations with them, but I won’t watch the show.”

Given the obvious emotional cost, what prompted her to write the book in the first place?

“I was asked to write a chapter for a book Trinity College produces every 20 years called *Trinity Tales*. The chapter was chosen by the Irish Times as their lead and it went viral.” Having initially rejected an offer to write a

full memoir, Katriona came round to the idea after deciding it could be a chance to help others: “One of the hardest things that ever happened to me was nothing to do with my childhood,” she says matter-of-factly. “I had to deal with the fact that when I went to Trinity College, I saw all the privilege that exists in universities and how little they do to help others. I didn’t want to be one of them people. I have a privilege and I should use it to try to make things fairer - that kind of pushed me to make the decision that I would share my life story.”

She claims she found the writing process relatively easy: “I never thought about the audience, and I kept saying to myself ‘I don’t have to release this if I don’t want to.’” Sharing details of her life came naturally, as she’s always been an outgoing person and an open book: “My brothers called me ‘mouth’ when I was aged three, so it’s not surprising that I’ve always wanted to be heard.

“I just thought about how to tell a good story and how to be respectful to my family, because there’s no villains. The villain is society and the lack of support my family got, and the fact that we allow families to flounder in all communities.”

Despite her best efforts to be respectful to family members, one of her siblings is so unhappy at the memoir’s publication that they never talk about it.

“He hasn’t dealt with things in the same way I have, so he prefers not to think about it. It’s hard. I have to acknowledge that I’ve made a decision to hurt my brother in the pursuit of something I think is going to help a lot of people, and that’s been a difficult thing to navigate. But I love my brother and it’s not his story. It’s my story.”

Katriona says the book’s success - it’s been a constant in the Irish top 10 since being published three years ago - has made the associated difficulties worthwhile. But the response of readers has been even more gratifying - from teachers who finally feel seen (she identifies a couple who went above and beyond to pull her “out of the trenches”) to impoverished women and girls inspired to go to college or pursue careers they’d previously thought out of bounds.

“I still get at least 10 messages a day from people who’ve been impacted by the book. I’ve had nothing but amazing responses to it. For the little girl who lives inside of me, the seven-year-old kid that was underserved and unhappy, it’s been a wonderfully loving

experience to share my story. I see the world differently as a result - I see a lot of goodness that I didn’t see before. There’s some really good people, and I think we need to remember that in the dark times that we’re in at the minute.”

That feelgood factor fed into allowing the book to be turned into a play - something she agreed to only as long as she remained in total control, fearing it could “turn into *Shameless* in a heartbeat” if not.

“My story is about the inequalities that exist in society, and my mum and dad are not the villains; they’re not *Shameless* characters. It was also about making sure that poor characters were shown in a positive light. Oftentimes we’re shown as these broken biscuits who are prostitutes or robbers, and I wanted to show that you can be poor but also be excellent and skilled and you can achieve.”

Katriona is thrilled with how the play has turned out. She’s also quick to acknowledge that although it can be a tough watch, there’s plenty of fun and joy - and MOR music - in it too.

“A lot of people read *Poor* and only see the trauma, but when Sonya read the book, she was like ‘I just see Fleetwood Mac; I see Rumours.’ She was one of the people who saw the music and life in it.

“When I lived in Hillfields, we didn’t just sit there as dour, sad, poor people like in *Oliver Twist*. There was joy and vibrancy in my community, and the play highlights some of the love and light that went along with my life. All the traumas are in it, obviously, but there’s also a light which comes through music and connection.”

She also reveals a childhood connection to the Belgrade Theatre which adds “an extra layer of amazingness”: “The only time I ever went to the theatre as a child was when I was in care in Coventry. The care kids used to get taken to the Belgrade to watch the panto. It was also the only time I ever got a Christmas present. So my only experience of going to theatre when I was in England was the Belgrade, and now my show is going to be on the same stage!”

.....  
**Poor shows at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Friday 1 to Saturday 9 May**



# **iFLY INDOOR SKYDIVING HAS LANDED AT BIRMINGHAM'S NEC!**

Get ready to fly at our new indoor skydiving tunnel at the NEC — the ultimate day out for the whole family. Whether you're 3 or 103, our world-class instructors are ready to show you the rush of skydiving in a safe, fully accessible, and state-of-the-art environment.

**Located at the NEC, B40 1NT.**

**READY  
TO BOOK?**



**SCAN THE CODE  
TO BOOK  
YOUR SPOT!**

Comedy and light entertainment from around the region



### ShxtsnGigs

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Fri 29 May

If you've never heard of James Duncan and Fuhad Dawodu, you can enlighten yourself by heading to YouTube and checking out any number of their hundreds and hundreds of ShxtsnGigs comedy podcasts.

Former Coventry University sports & exercise science students James and Fuhad have certainly come a long way in a comparatively short time, building up a massive online following with their video-first approach to finding the humour in all manner of trending topics.

Their visit to Birmingham comes on the back of picking up a Mobo award (in 2024), touring internationally, and selling out the O2 Arena in London.

### Rosalie Minnitt: Clementine

The Rep, Birmingham, Fri 15 & Sat 16 May

Lady Clementine must bag a beau before she turns 27 or all is lost...

That's the premise of Rosalie Minnitt's splendidly demented comedy, a show set 'roughly in the past' which is described by its publicity as a story about sickly sisters, self-love and Sylvanian Families.

If you're a fan of Jane Austen and/or hit Netflix series Bridgerton, this impressively imaginative production is well worth a look.



### Judi Love

Birmingham Hippodrome, Sun 3 May; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 23 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sun 24 May

Hackney-born comic Judi Love believes that laughter is healing. As such, she has every intention of applying a soothing salve to comedy lovers across the region when she brings her new stand-up offering to the West Midlands this month.

Taking the title All About The Love, the show sees Loose Women regular Judi sharing some home truths about the hustle of juggling parenting, work and everyday life.



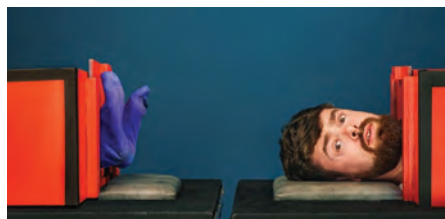
### Tom Brace

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 29 May

Tom Brace is a man on a mission. He's aiming to enter the coveted Magic Hall of Fame by performing the world-first trick of sawing himself in half.

Tom's visit to Lichfield at the end of the month will see him inviting Midlanders to join him on a journey through the history of magic...

Presumably he'll be undertaking that particular part of the show while he's still in one piece...



### Johns' Boys

Dudley Town Hall, Sat 16 May

An evening of soul-stirring harmonies awaits concert-goers when Welsh Male Voice Choir (and former Britain's Got Talent participants) Johns' Boys stop off in the Black Country in the middle of the month.

The only British choir ever to be crowned Choir of the World - and visiting Dudley as part of their 10th-anniversary celebrations - Johns' Boys will be presenting a diverse repertoire featuring classical, pop, and Welsh folk music.



### Bollywood Time Machine

Wulfrun Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton, Sat 30 May

Bollywood fans can revel in an evening of blasts from the past when this high-energy nostalgia show visits



Wolverhampton. Featuring hits from the 1960s onwards, including a selection of contemporary numbers, the production also boasts some 'captivating' choreography from Bollywood dance group 4all2Envy.

### Sue, Matt and Phil LIVE! The Reunion Tour

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Tues 5 May; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 6 May

After many a year spent sharing a BBC studio while filming episodes of A Question Of Sport, one-time tennis star Sue Barker, ex-rugby favourite Matt Dawson and former cricketer Phil Tufnell have reunited for what will be their second live tour.

The much-loved trio's return comes complete with A-list celebrity guests, fan-favourite quiz rounds, brand-new games created specifically for the tour, and behind-the-scenes stories from their on-screen days and stellar sporting careers.



# OPERA FOR ALL

Welsh National Opera return to the region to celebrate their 80th anniversary...



**Welsh National Opera return to Birmingham Hippodrome this month with three very distinct performances: a reimagining of *The Flying Dutchman*, the return of heart-warming adventure *Blaze Of Glory!*, and *Shipwrecked!* - a perfect introduction to opera for younger audiences. What's On recently caught up with director Jack Furness and designer Elin Steele to find out more about what audiences can expect...**

Welsh National Opera (WNO) this month premiere a new production of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* - and its creative team are promising a show which will sweep audiences away.

First staged in 1843, the opera tells the story of the ghostly *Flying Dutchman*, who is cursed to sail the seas until he finds a woman who will be true to him. When the Dutchman meets Norwegian villager Senta, who has long dreamed of releasing the legendary wanderer from his curse, will he finally find love and freedom?

For director Jack Furness, it's the relationship between the Dutchman and Senta, their hopes and desires, which lies at the heart of Wagner's story.

"You see productions of *The Flying Dutchman* which are all about the ship, big set pieces and razzmatazz, but we felt that was the wrong approach to take with this piece," he explains. "It's a human drama. It's about some of the deepest aspects of our relationship with life and death and identity and love and recognition of another person. "It's a really poetic piece of work. It's mythic. We are dealing with mythic characters, which is almost belied by the everyday setting that some of it happens in. But those everyday questions are blown up and put onto a cosmic scale, so we wanted to do a production that embraced those poetic qualities and also embraced the mythic and the cosmic scale of those emotions."

At under three hours long, *The Flying Dutchman* is both one of Wagner's shortest and also most performed operas. Its dramatic score and colourful characters have ensured it remains a production in many company's repertoires. But, says Jack, it can be interpreted in different ways.

"You can see the Dutchman as a projection of Senta's destabilised psyche, or you can think he's a real ghost and this is a supernatural story, or you can think something in-between. There are multiple interpretations because these characters are mythic in that way.

"I feel so excited about this production because it allows for multiple interpretations. We are not trying to close it down and say *The Flying Dutchman* is about 'this and only this'. We want to explore the full range of this piece. We want these characters to be fully human, completely three-dimensional, and see what happens when we put them in a space together and their various needs and desires and dreams interact."

Designer Elin Steele has aimed to strip back the sets to ensure the audience is pulled into the drama.

"From the beginning we've been examining how we can stage this in a way that feels gripping and exciting and interesting for audiences," she says. "And so everything about what we're doing with it becomes about the human aspect rather than making the ghost part of it the focus.

"One of the key choices we made was to try and make our lens through Senta rather than through the Dutchman. This leans into that idea of it being through the human lens."

The team have given Senta more agency than in some productions, where she is portrayed as a naïve village girl.

"We're choosing to portray Senta as someone who is more mature and more autonomous," Elin explains. "She understands what she's getting into. The Dutchman may be charismatic, but he also offers her an escape from her everyday life, and I think that is as romantic a concept to her as falling desperately in love straight away."

Both Jack and Elin grew up in Wales and have taken inspiration from their home country for the production.

"I lived in Pembrokeshire for a year and have spent a lot of time there since I was three," says Jack. "And with Elin growing up on Anglesey, I think we both had a pretty quick connection with the community in this opera, and what the reality of life in a remote coastal community could be like in a non-stereotype way.

"Actually, there's a lot about the coastline of Wales which speaks quite clearly to this work. Wagner had originally set the story in Scotland, and just before the premiere he moved it to Norway, so the story does feel like it could happen in Wales."

And Elin says there's a visionary element to this: "There's something about the environment of these coastal towns that has this extreme romance to it. These are beautiful places in terms of the landscape and the horizons and the textures you get. WNO's scenic and props department, who are based at Cardiff Theatrical Services, have really done an incredible job to encompass the romance, the beauty and the cosmic element of these landscapes alongside the kind of harsh reality of living there."

For both Elin and Jack, one of the attractions of being involved in the production was the chance to work with Welsh National Opera. Elin moved to Cardiff to study Design for

Performance at Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama and has since worked with a host of companies, including Theatr Cymru, Scottish Ballet, New English Ballet Theatre, Matthew Bourne's *New Adventures* and Cardiff's Sherman Theatre.

"WNO would tour to Llandudno when I was little," she recalls, "and that was really my first introduction to opera. It feels really exciting to be working in the Wales Millennium Centre and with everyone at the company. The expertise there is incredible. "Because I have worked more in the ballet world than the world of opera, I think I'm less driven by how things are 'normally' done. I'm used to being led by music, and Wagner's music is so sweeping it does take you there emotionally. In stripping the design back, I hope that audiences are genuinely invested and interested in the characters' journeys, and I hope people are moved by it."

Jack, who is artistic director of Shadwell Opera and has worked with companies including Scottish Opera, Royal Opera House, London Handel Festival and the Royal Academy of Music, first discovered his love for opera seeing WNO performances while growing up in Cardiff.

"It means everything to me to be working with WNO. Welsh National Opera has been a part of my musical life for a really long time. I saw my first operas from when I was about 13. I assisted at WNO in 2016 on *The Merchant Of Venice*, but this is my first time directing a WNO production."

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the founding of Welsh National Opera, and, Jack says, the company has been a powerhouse of the arts throughout those decades: "The *Flying Dutchman* is the perfect work for this anniversary. It's a big chorus opera, and you've got this big symphony orchestra and the amazing scenic work of WNO's technical teams and all the amazing expertise which goes into this show. I really hope that it gives people in all of the cities which this show goes to an impression of the excellence of WNO and the importance of the company as a creative force and public institution."

.....  
**Welsh National Opera perform *The Flying Dutchman* at Birmingham Hippodrome on Thursday 7 May alongside *Blaze Of Glory!* (Friday the 8th) and family show *Play Opera LIVE - Shipwrecked!* on Saturday the 9th.**

# BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Moniko Hirata-Johan Persson.  
Illustration © Beth Ingleton.

Director Carlos Acosta

## 20th-Century Masterpieces

Three ballets from three choreographic giants

19 & 20 June

Frederick Ashton  
**Birthday Offering**

Kurt Jooss

**The Green Table**

George Balanchine

**Theme and Variations**

*20th-Century Masterpieces* is supported by donors to the Caroline Miller Fund. *The Green Table* is supported by Stuart Sweeney and Fern & Clive Potter. *Birthday Offering* is supported by The Frederick Ashton Foundation and The Rick Mather David Scrase Foundation.

**H** BIRMINGHAM  
HIPPODROME

[birminghamhippodrome.com](http://birminghamhippodrome.com)



Supported by public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

Dance showing in the region



**Strictly The Professionals** Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 15 & Sat 16 May

Claudia Winkleman and Tess Daly may have departed, but in every other way it's very much a case of 'business as usual' for Strictly Come Dancing. And that includes the welcome return of this annual extravaganza, in which the hit BBC television series' professional dancers strut their always impressive stuff to a fabulous soundtrack. Previous incarnations of the production have gone down a real treat

with Strictly fans, and there's every reason to suppose the 2026 edition will follow suit.

The 10 participating dancers are: Julian Caillon, Vito Coppola, Neil Jones, Gorka Márquez, Luba Mushtuk, Lauren Oakley, Jowita Przystal, Alexis Warr, Kai Widdrington and Nancy Xu.

**Breakin' Convention**

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 20 May

Breakin' Convention has been celebrating the global hip-hop theatre movement for more than 20 years and is this month bringing the party to Coventry.

High-energy performances from celebrated poppers, lockers, b-boys and b-girls abound, while stand-out offerings include the Olivier Award-winning Traplord. Created by Beyoncé choreographer Ivan Michael Blackstock, the production fuses movement and storytelling to explore the subjects of masculinity and mental health, while also



challenging racial stereotypes of Black men... Other festival highlights include appearances by Femme Fatale - an international female trio known for their musicality, precision and technique - and members of the trailblazing ILL-Abilities, a Dutch/Brazilian crew of differently abled b-boys. Local talent from Loco Academy, Danceforce Studios and Dance Nuvo also contribute to proceedings.



**Phoenix Dance: Interplay**

Malvern Theatres, Tues 12 & Wed 13 May

Leeds-based Phoenix Dance Theatre is the longest-standing contemporary dance company outside London, annually reaching up to 20,000 people with its critically acclaimed touring shows. The latest of these, visiting the Midlands mid-month, is Interplay, a mixed-bill offering which explores 'themes of duality and the fusion of distinct artistic voices'.

Featuring duet and ensemble works - and offering a dynamic interplay between contrasting perspectives - the production aims to celebrate 'the beauty of shared vision and artistic exchange'.



## The Devil Wears Prada 2

CERT 12a (120 mins)

Starring **Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, Emily Blunt, Stanley Tucci, Simone Ashley, Justin Theroux**  
Directed by **David Frankel**

Twenty years after the first film, Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, Emily Blunt and Stanley Tucci return to the fashionable streets of New York City and the sleek offices of Runway Magazine for this eagerly awaited sequel movie.

The film's storyline finds Streep's character, Miranda Priestly, confronting the challenge of navigating a new media landscape and Runway's position within it.

"Come to it looking for fun," says Streep, in talking about the long-awaited sequel. "You can look for the underpinnings of some very serious issues that we are confronting today, of course, but you can also just take from it what you want. Everybody in the family will have a different idea about it."

The returning cast are joined by, among other familiar faces, Kenneth Branagh, Justin Theroux and Lucy Liu.

**Released Fri 1 May**



## Iron Maiden: Burning Ambition

CERT 15 (106 mins)

Starring **Steve Harris, Bruce Dickinson, Nicko McBrain, Adrian Smith, Dave Murray, Janick Gers** Directed by **Malcolm Venville**

As iconic journeys in music history go, Iron Maiden's, as with many a heavy metal band, is strewn with drama and controversy. Spanning five decades-worth of ferocious musicmaking, and charting the group's rise from the pubs of East London to the world's biggest stadiums, *Burning Ambition* benefits from unprecedented access to the official archives and exclusive interviews with the band. The likes of actor Javier Bardem, Metallica's Lars Ulrich and Public Enemy's Chuck D also make contributions. And there's even some all-new animated sequences of Iron Maiden's legendary mascot, Eddie, to further recommend the film.

**Released Thurs 7 May**

## Mortal Kombat II

CERT tbc (116 mins)

Starring **Karl Urban, Ludi Lin, Jessica McNamee, Joe Taslim, Hiroyuki Sanada, Adeline Rudolph** Directed by **Simon McQuoid**

If the producers can get the *Mortal Kombat* films right, the ongoing box-office potential is huge. After all, the original action video game series on which the movies are based is the world's bestselling fighting-game franchise, so there's certainly no shortage of fans ready and eager to sample some serious cinematic action. This film's 2021 predecessor did okay, but the sequel probably needs to up the ante if the franchise is ever going to appeal to cinemagoers who aren't also devotees of the source material.

The latest high-stakes installment finds the fan favourite champions - now joined by Johnny Cage - pitted against one another in what's being publicised as 'the ultimate, no-holds barred, gory battle'.

Their challenge? To defeat Shao Kahn - the emperor of the lawless realm of Outworld - whose dark rule threatens the very existence of the Earthrealm and its defenders...

**Released Fri 8 May**



## The Sheep Detectives

CERT PG (109 mins)

Starring **Hugh Jackman, Emma Thompson, Nicholas Galitzine** and with the voices of **Regina Hall, Bryan Cranstone, Brett Golstein**  
Directed by **Kyle Balda**

*The Sheep Detectives*. The title says it all, leaving no room for doubt as to what you'll get if you decide Kyle Balda's family-friendly comedy is worth an evening of your time. George (Hugh Jackman) is a shepherd who reads detective novels to his beloved sheep every night, assuming they can't possibly understand. But when George's life is mysteriously brought to an end, the sheep realise it's time to engage in some serious crime-solving...

Jackman was drawn to the project by just how "nutty" he thought it was, describing it as "Knives Out meets Babe". Dame Emma Thompson joins in the fun as George's lawyer, Lydia Harbottle.

**Released Fri 8 May**

## Star Wars: The Mandalorian And Grogu

CERT tbc (140 mins)

Starring **Pedro Pascal, Sigourney Weaver, Steve Blum, Hemky Madera** and with the voices of **Martin Scorsese** and **Jeremy Allen White** Directed by **Jon Favreau**

Included among the creations spawned by George Lucas' original Star Wars film is a television series called The Mandalorian, which has proved popular enough with the franchise's fans to earn itself not only three seasons but also this first cinematic outing.

The Mandalorian is a bounty hunter named Din Djarin, who is helped in his endeavours by a little green friend called Grogu. With the evil Empire having fallen, and Imperial warlords scattered throughout the galaxy, the fledgling New Republic is working to protect everything the Rebellion fought for - which is why they've enlisted the help of our two eponymous heroes... The film is the first Star Wars movie to hit cinemas screens since 2019 and marks the start of a new era, with franchise owners Disney pivoting away from a focus on Star Wars television shows and back towards cinematic releases.

**Released Fri 22 May**



## Finding Emily

CERT tbc

Starring **Angourie Rice, Spike Fearn, Julia Rogers, Toby Rothwell, Minnie Driver, Yali Topol Margalith** Directed by **Alicia MacDonald**

When a hopelessly romantic musician is given the wrong number for a girl he believes could well be 'the one', he teams up with an ambitious psychology student to find her. Together, they spark no small amount of campus chaos, inadvertently testing their own hearts and aspirations along the way... The fact that Finding Emily has been likened to Bridget Jones's Diary and Notting Hill comes as no surprise. Not only does it sit in the same genre as those two classic movies - 'British romantic comedy' - it also comes from the very same stable; namely, Working Title Films.

**Released Fri 22 May**



## Tuner

CERT 15 (109 mins)

Starring **Leo Woodall, Dustin Hoffman, Havana Rose Liu, Lior Raz, Tovah Feldshuh, Nissan Sakira** Directed by **Daniel Roher**

Tuner is a rare beast - a crime thriller that doubles as a romantic comedy. Reviews of the film have been mixed, highlighting the possibility that successfully combining the two genres has maybe proved a gig too far for Academy Award-winning documentary film director Daniel Roher, for whom this is a first foray into the realm of narrative fiction. The story revolves around the character of Niki White (Leo Woodall), a young man apprenticed to veteran piano technician Harry Horowitz (Dustin Hoffman). Together, the pair are the finest piano tuners in town. But when Niki stumbles across an attempted robbery, he accidentally discovers that his incredible piano-tuning skills also happen to make him remarkably adept at cracking safes...

**Released Fri 29 May**

## Power Ballad

CERT 15 (98 mins)

Starring **Paul Rudd, Nick Jonas, Peter McDonald, Marcella Plunkett, Rory Keenan, Keith McErlean** Directed by **John Carney**

When past-his-prime wedding singer Rick (Paul Rudd) encounters fading boyband star Danny (Nick Jonas) during a gig, the two bond over music and a late-night jamming session. But when Danny turns one of Rick's songs into the hit that reignites his career, Rick sets out to reclaim the recognition he believes he deserves - even if it means risking everything he cares about...

A feelgood story about music, self-respect, friendship and the often heavy price of ambition, Power Ballad has been striking all the right chords with the critics since debuting at the Dublin International Film Festival a couple of months back. Paul Rudd in particular has been earning rave reviews.

**Released Fri 29 May**





# POP PARTY

Warhol comes to Wolverhampton! A collection of works by the Pop Art icon will go on display in the city this month...

**Famed for his bold colours, eye-catching portraits of celebrities, and repeated motifs - such as the renowned series depicting Campbell's soup cans - Andy Warhol needs almost no introduction. His work is being celebrated in a solo exhibition opening this month at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, presented in conjunction with the venue's own impressive collection of Pop Art. The exhibition, Andy Warhol: Art Star, throws a spotlight on the nature of celebrity and consumer culture... as the Art Gallery's Senior Curator, Sanna Moore, explained to What's on...**

An exhibition of works by legendary Pop Artist Andy Warhol opens at Wolverhampton Art Gallery this month. The show has been created as part of Artist Rooms - a Tate and National Galleries of Scotland programme - which brings solo exhibitions by famous artists to galleries around the UK.

The resulting show, Andy Warhol: Art Star, explores celebrity, identity, mass production and mortality.

"Wolverhampton Art Gallery has one of the largest Pop Art collections in the UK, which includes two works by Warhol," explains the venue's Senior Curator, Sanna Moore. "So it seemed like a good moment to explore his work again. The project has been in development since 2024. As he's one of the most famous artists from the second half of the 20th century, the exhibition will appeal to a wide range of visitors - most people are aware of his iconic works, like the Campbell's soup can and the Marilyn Monroe portraits." Over 70 artworks will be on display. Decades after their creation, the exhibition maintains a striking modern relevance.

"It highlights the fleeting nature of celebrity and how fake and constructed 'celebrity personas' have become," says Sanna. "When Warhol uttered his most famous quote in 1967 - 'In the future, everyone will be world famous for 15 minutes' - he could never have envisaged how relevant that would be today in relation to the internet and social media, and how obsessed society has become with celebrity endorsements and reality TV stars." The exhibition contains images which will be instantly recognisable to most visitors, as well as works which are perhaps less well known - many featuring the famous faces Warhol is famed for bringing to the canvas.

"There are so many great works in the exhibition, it's difficult to have a favourite," says Sanna. "One of the most interesting works is Grace Being Painted By Keith, 1986, a series of six black & white photographs, stitched together with thread, which show Grace Jones (the model, singer-songwriter and actress) having her body painted by artist Keith Haring. The photoshoot, which lasted 18 hours, was organised by Warhol for artist Robert Mapplethorpe to photograph Jones for the cover of Interview magazine, a magazine Warhol established and produced monthly from 1969 onwards. The magazine

featured celebrities on the cover each month, and a series of the magazines will also feature in the exhibition - including the iconic Grace Jones cover."

Producing the exhibition has allowed Sanna to explore the works and appreciate the scale and variety of Warhol's output: "His work ethic and entrepreneurial approach was impressive. The sheer volume of work that he produced in his lifetime - which was relatively short, given he died aged 58 - is extraordinary: 9,000 paintings & sculptures, 12,000 drawings, and over 19,000 prints, many of which were outsourced, i.e. produced by those working for him. His collaborative approach to working across artforms is also quite remarkable. For example, in the 1960s [he moved] from producing underground films and managing the band The Velvet Underground, to producing Interview magazine from 1969, and acting as executive producer for his TV show, Andy Warhol's TV, in the 1980s."

As previously mentioned, Wolverhampton Art Gallery has two works by Warhol in its permanent Pop Art collection. One of them - Campbell's Soup, 1968 - will be featured in Art Star.

"I felt it was important to include the Soup Can in the exhibition. It's one of the iconic works that visitors will expect to see in a Warhol exhibition, and it's an iconic Pop artwork. The other Warhol in our collection - Jacqueline, 1964 - remains on display in the Pop Art Gallery. This work is a portrait of Jacqueline Kennedy, wife of President John F Kennedy, who was assassinated in 1963. The image of her was taken during the funeral procession and came to symbolise the national sense of loss and bereavement in the US at that time."

Whether gathering works which resonate with visitors, or planning the logistics of an installation, Sanna has much to consider as the art gallery's Senior Curator: "[There's] choosing work that is accessible to our audiences, creating themes and dialogues within the works selected, practical considerations like how the work should or could be hung. For example, there are several large-scale works that will only fit on particular walls. The gallery spaces are unconventional, in that they're not perfect white-box spaces. One gallery is triangular,

one is not quite rectangular, and the third space has some odd angles and alcoves. This makes pulling a show together challenging in terms of creating an exhibition which will showcase the artworks in their best light."

While Andy Warhol: Art Star is well worth a visit in its own right, the gallery will also host events inspired by the exhibition and Warhol himself. These include dance workshops, film screenings, and events which explore the artist's impact on and immersion in mid-20th-century gay culture.

"We have a series of events running throughout the summer. Several of these strands will take place throughout the whole duration of the exhibition, with the focus of activity in June to mark Pride Month. There will be a series of film screenings in collaboration with Lockworks Cinema, which will include films produced by Warhol or that feature him, a number of talks on Warhol in the gallery, a voguing and waacking workshop, a series of Friday Lates - on the last Friday of each month - and family-friendly summer workshops. They're all available to book via our website."

The rich events programme, which brings an additional dimension to the exhibition, is a feature of Wolverhampton Art Gallery's offering all year round.

"We have a changing programme of exhibitions and events that attract many different audiences, from schools to family-friendly events and workshops, weekly art sessions for young and older people, and 'in conversation with' talks with contemporary artists. We also regularly run projects outside the building, working in the community. The programme is continually evolving, so there's always something new to discover."

In the meantime, Andy Warhol: Art Star opens this month at the gallery - a chance to get up-close and personal with the work of one of the most renowned, celebrated and instantly recognisable artists of a generation.

.....

**Andy Warhol: Art Star shows at Wolverhampton Art Gallery from Saturday 23 May until Sunday 4 October**

WOLVERHAMPTON  
ART GALLERY

23 MAY – 4 OCT 2026

ARTIST ROOMS

# ANDY ★ ART WARHOL STAR

Drawings, screenprints and paintings by one of the most influential artists of the 20th century.

Tickets £9

Children and young people aged 20 and under **FREE**

Tickets from  
[wolverhamptonart.org.uk](http://wolverhamptonart.org.uk)



ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

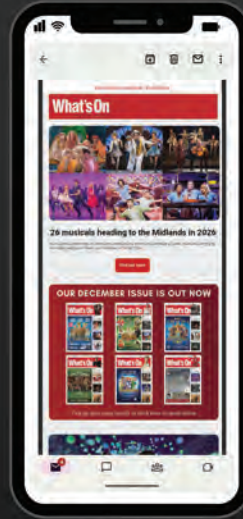


sponsored by

Art Fund



What's On  
MEDIA GROUP



**STAY IN  
THE LOOP!**

SIGN UP TO OUR FORTNIGHTLY  
E-NEWSLETTER TO RECEIVE THE  
**LATEST ENTERTAINMENT NEWS**  
FROM ACROSS THE REGION -  
AS WELL AS **COMPETITIONS**  
AND **OFFERS** FOR THEATRES,  
GIGS, DINING OUT AND MORE...



**SIMPLY SCAN THE QR TO SIGN UP TODAY**

# The Countryside Through Mid-Century Art

Bringing together original works by John Piper, Katharine Church, Elisabeth Frink, Rowland Suddaby, Robert Tavener and other mid-20th-century British artists



16th - 25th May and 5th - 14th June  
Netherwood Estate, Herefordshire, WR15 8RT

 **FIFTIES**  
Art&Design  
[fiftiesart.com](http://fiftiesart.com)

Private visits by appointment 26th May - 4th June • Curator's tours 16th May, 5 - 6.30 pm and 5th June, 6 - 7.30 pm

Visual Arts previews from around the region



**Daiga Grantina - Lilacs**

The Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Fri 1 May - Sun 28 June

Warwick Arts Centre's Mead Gallery is here hosting the first UK solo exhibition by Latvian artist Daiga Grantina. Drawing inspiration from bodies and landscapes, Daiga creates sculptures which explore how materials meet and react to each other in ways that make the viewer look again at their size, form and meaning. The interactions of the materials echo the ways that living systems and environments evolve - shifting, growing and unfolding across multiple dimensions.

For this month's exhibition, Grantina has responded to the Mead Gallery's architecture and natural light with new and existing works, to expand on ideas explored in What Eats Around Itself, her critically acclaimed solo exhibition at the New Museum in New York.

"I am excited to be working with the Mead Gallery team," says Daiga, "and to begin a dialogue with the gallery's generous volumes. I hope my exhibition will offer audiences a sense of light relief during darker times."

**Stories That Made Us**

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, until Mon 25 May

Stories That Made Us is an immersive exhibition which travels through the life of a single South Asian family in Coventry across a period of 40-plus years. Created by Hardish Virk - and his sister Manjinder - from Hardish's personal archives, the exhibition reveals much about their activist father and Punjabi

poet mother, not to mention Hardish himself, whose formative years were shaped by the Coventry of the 1980s. "Often the conversation, particularly around young people, is 'We don't know where we belong,'" says Hardish. "But also we've got people of my parents' generation who feel like their story started in the 1950s and 60s. What I was very keen to say is that our story goes back at least 425 years, and we've contributed to every facet of British life."



**The Rossettis: Siblings And Spouses**

Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton, until Sun 8 November

An exhibition that's being hailed as a must-see for anybody with an interest in Victorian art and poetry, Siblings And Spouses explores the lives and legacy of the Rossetti family, who were central figures in the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Sitting at the heart of the show is a series of recently acquired and previously unseen works by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, included among which are early experiments in lithography, a 19th-century printmaking technique widely used in books and fine art. The exhibition also shines a spotlight on the often-overlooked women who were connected to the Pre-Raphaelite circle. Art by Elizabeth Siddal and Lucy Madox Brown - both artists in their own right and Rossettis by marriage - are displayed alongside key works by Christina Rossetti.

A newly reattributed work by Christina is also included in the exhibition.

**Ten.8 afterimage**

New Art Gallery, Walsall, Fri 1 May - Sun 13 September

The legacy and enduring impact of Ten.8 - a photography journal that emerged from the Midlands' radical cultural and political landscape in the late 1970s - is the subject of this fascinating exhibition.



Engaging with the continued relevance of the concerns that the journal addressed - including Thatcherite neoliberal reforms and struggles against colonialism and state violence - the exhibition brings photographic works produced in the 1980s and 90s into dialogue with more recent artworks.

**Claire Hewitt: Everything In The Forest Is The Forest**

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, until Mon 31 August

Acclaimed photographer Clare Hewitt's latest exhibition - a celebration of trees and their remarkable ability to nurture and communicate - is a direct response to a government report suggesting that loneliness and isolation are on the rise in rural areas of the country. Setting up a studio within a circle of 12 oak trees, Clare documented the forest and its seasonal changes, exploring nature through a range of sustainable photographic techniques.

# TITANIC

—EXHIBITION—

## BIRMINGHAM

OPENS 19TH APRIL 2026



**BOOK NOW**

**nec**  
Birmingham

BOOK YOUR TICKETS AT  
[www.titanicbirmingham.co.uk](http://www.titanicbirmingham.co.uk)

Visual Arts previews from around the region



### The Countryside Through Mid-Century Art

Netherwood Estate, Herefordshire, Sat 16 - Tues 26 May & Fri 5 - Sun 14 June

The Countryside Through Mid-Century Art coincides with a rare opportunity to visit the three-acre Netherwood Manor Gardens, which are open for just a handful of weekends this year as part of the National Garden Scheme.

Growing out of a previously displayed collection of landscape paintings by World War Two war artist John Piper, the exhibition includes work by a number of his contemporaries, offering a compelling exploration of how the British landscape was represented across multiple media in the mid-20th century.

As well as original works by Piper - including a feature collection of fabrics - the show also includes artwork by, among others, Katharine Church, Elisabeth Frink, Rowland Suddaby and Robert Tavener.

The exhibition is curated by Fifties Art & Design - specialists in affordable mid-century art and stockists of a range of original pictures, prints and posters from the period.

### I Photograph Comedians!

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, until Sun 31 May

If you love a laugh, then be sure to catch this Andy Hollingworth exhibition, which remains available to view until the end of the month.

As its title makes clear in a refreshingly straightforward manner, Andy photographs comedians - and it's a selection of his images of some of the UK's best-loved comics that forms the basis of this Gas Hall display. Photographs of Ken Dodd, Sarah Millican, Victoria Wood, Rik Mayall and Rhod Gilbert all feature, as do pictures of such Midlands masters and mistresses of mirth as Jasper Carrott, Stewart Lee, Lenny Henry, Joe Lycett, Jo Enright and Shazia Mirza. The display also features numerous items connected to particular comedians, including a jacket worn by Lenny Henry during his 1984 tour and a signed pair of Rik Mayall's underpants.



### Shaquéelle Whyte: Shattered Dreams

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until Mon 31 August

Growing up in Wolverhampton, Royal College of Art graduate Shaquéelle Whyte has cited visits to the city's art gallery as being pivotal in the development of his creativity. Now - in his mid-20s - Shaquéelle has his very own exhibition at the venue!

What's more, the gallery has recently acquired one of his paintings - the striking and nocturnal Blackbirds Singing In The Dead Of Night - for its permanent collection. The painting takes its place in the Shattered Dreams exhibition alongside five other similarly dynamic and large-scale works, all of which serve to showcase Shaquéelle's bold figurative style and vigorous mark-making.

### Troublemakers And Prophets

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, until Mon 31 August

Described as an exploration of 'art, isolation and extraordinary vision',

Troublemakers And Prophets is primarily a celebration of the output of Elizabeth Allen, a seamstress who lived in a small corrugated-iron



shack in a wood in Kent for many years prior to her death in 1967.

Known by her childhood nickname of 'Queen', Elizabeth created colourful, symbolic and made-from-fabric artworks which focused on a wide variety of subject matter, from biblical prophecies concerning the end of the world, to quirky comments on aspects of modern life.

Alongside Elizabeth's absurd, darkly funny and strikingly prophetic creations, the exhibition also features artworks produced by numerous other 'visionary artists'.



# ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

an electropop musical about queer invisibility in tennis  
is set to visit two Midlands venues...

Birmingham-based composer and theatre maker Michael Wolters was working on a show for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in the city when he first discovered that lawn tennis was invented in Edgbaston. Hearing that the now-international game was devised by Victorians Harry Gem and Augurio Perera, who were close friends and may have been lovers, Michael knew he'd stumbled across a tale worth telling.

So, along with fellow artistic director Alexandra Taylor, Michael researched the story and created the musical *Fairlight*, which was premiered in Birmingham last autumn and is this year undertaking its first UK tour - beginning at the city's historic Edgbaston tennis courts.

*Fairlight* retells the story of the origins of lawn tennis through the lens of a queer love story. Coming complete with an electropop score, the show interweaves the past and present and includes interviews with current LGBTQ+ tennis professionals.

"I was amazed to learn that tennis was invented in Birmingham," Michael recalls, "and that the oldest tennis club in the world is in Birmingham - at Edgbaston. And then we started doing the research and found that the house where Harry and Augurio played, *Fairlight*, still exists and still has the same name."

Harry and Augurio were both married, and yet their friendship sparks speculation that they may have been lovers. Michael and Alex realised that the ambiguous nature of the men's relationship gave them space to explore queer invisibility in sport - and specifically within the world of professional tennis.

"You don't even think about whether tennis was invented by a straight man or a gay man or a straight couple or a gay couple - you don't think about those things, but you automatically assume a straight background. The surprise is when it's not. And it's really fun to think about the fact that tennis as we know it today could have been invented by two gay lovers. What difference does that make? Does it change anything? Does it change anything to the game? Do you look at it differently? In the show, rather than us saying something, we are opening a lot of questions."

For Alex, it's the not knowing which gives the story its resonance: "When Michael told me about Harry and Augurio, I started looking into the history, expecting it to very quickly go 'Okay, they weren't really seeing each other,' and what I found really interesting is that history relates no more than they were both married and one of them had kids. There is nothing in the history that suggests they were anything more than friends. "However, once you're looking at it through

that modern queer lens, there's nothing there that contradicts that reading, and a lot of things that kind of support it. We have no evidence either way, and historically people have assumed that people who appeared straight were straight, but once you start investigating the potential for it being something else, there's a whole other reading you can put on the facts."

Alex's research also revealed more about the lives of gay men in Victorian England.

"We include information about Victorian prosecutions of gay men in the show because very often the only evidence that gay men existed in Victorian times was the evidence of them being arrested and prosecuted. The ones who weren't caught didn't exist."

Once Michael and Alex had their story about gay invisibility in historical tennis, they then decided to explore the issue in terms of the sport today. The show features interviews with former professional tennis player and president of the US Tennis Association, Brian Vahaly, *Pride In Tennis* founder Ian Pearson-Brown, former doubles world number one Gigi Fernandez, five-time Paralympian Lucy Shuker and tennis journalist Nick McCarvel.

"The show also engages with the lack of out gay men in modern tennis," says Alex. "It's like, look, if you're having a problem with us thinking about people in the past possibly being gay, what about all the people in the present?"

The production also brings together past and present by combining the structure of an operetta libretto written by Harry Gem with new music composed by Michael and inspired by the sounds of the *Fairlight* CMI (computer musical instrument). The famous 1980s sampler was used by a host of musicians, including Peter Gabriel, Stevie Wonder, Mike Oldfield and Kate Bush.

"Having been brought up in the 80s, this music is very dear to me," says Michael. "And then there was this great coincidence of the house being called *Fairlight*. We couldn't use the music from the original operetta because we didn't have it, so we had to turn in a different direction and went with the idea of sampling and sample discs from the *Fairlight*."

"A lot of our sounds will be very recognisable. It's not just the samples from the demo discs as used by Kate Bush and the Pet Shop Boys and Peter Gabriel and so on; we also sampled a lot of tennis sounds. So there's a song that's full of grunting, and we have ball sounds and umpire announcements."

The show, which was devised with fellow composer Paul Norman, dramaturg Tanna Chamberlain and filmmaker Oli Clark, has been designed to take place on lawn tennis courts; the tour opens at Edgbaston Archery

& Lawn Tennis Society as part of Flatpack Festival.

The production was staged in Edgbaston last year. The team had hoped the musical would be played on the outdoor courts at the club, but bad weather forced them to stage it indoors instead. Now they're keeping their fingers crossed for mid-May.

"We all felt it was important to come back, because we haven't done the full show at the Edgbaston club, which is where it was meant to be," Alex explains. "We did a work-in-progress - a 20-minute version of the show - there in 2024, and we were meant to come back and do the full version in 2025, but the rain was terrible and we had to go indoors."

"There are so many reasons the venue is important for us. It's partly because it's the oldest tennis club in the world, partly because it's the club that Harry and Augurio played at, and partly because it's less than a mile from the house where they invented tennis. It's also because Oli is club secretary and plays competitively as part of the club."

Alex and Michael are looking forward to sharing *Fairlight* with new audiences.

"It's a show which isn't like a normal musical," Alex says. "It talks about tennis [but] not how you usually talk about tennis. It doesn't take place on a stage; it goes out on a tennis court, where we have to worry about the weather and sound. We've made our lives really difficult because of those factors, but that means the show has a questioning factor and it evokes reactions."

And Michael continues: "I always hope with everything that the audience will respond in a multitude of ways. I don't want to make something that everyone just cheers about. I would really like it if there was some awareness after this show. We can tell from experience now that people have got it - they say 'I didn't know that tennis was invented here, I didn't know that it was that terrible in the Victorian era, I didn't know this or that.' So that comes through, definitely. But also we want people to have a good time. That's why we chose the format of the musical, to contrast these harsh realities of the past and the present with some good tunes. It could have been a super-tragic opera, but I think the contrast here is interesting and will give audiences lots to think about."

.....

**Fairlight shows at Edgbaston Archery & Lawn Tennis Society on Wednesday 13 May and then at Leamington Tennis Club, Leamington Spa, on Saturday 11 July. For further information and to book tickets, visit [fairlightmusical.co.uk](http://fairlightmusical.co.uk)**



Birmingham  
Museums

# DISCOVER DINOSAURS

at Thinktank  
Birmingham Science Museum

- Dino Lab!
- Fossil Fun Weekend
- Dinosaur Junk Modelling with Tat Vision

Plus lots  
more

[birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank](http://birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank)

Funded by:



Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

Events previews from around the region



**Makers Central** NEC, Birmingham, Sat 16 - Sun 17 May

Makers Central is back at the NEC, bringing together creators, hobbyists and artists from all over the world.

Visitors young and old can get involved with a selection of interactive sessions, including drone building with Extreme Fliers and beginner-friendly electronics workshops with MadLab.

Everyone from experienced makers to families and first-time triers can have a go at making things with new technologies, along

the way gaining a better understanding of the science behind how things are put together.

Attendees can also see the stars of Robot Wars up close, as well as have a go at driving a robot for themselves in the Robot Warriors arena. The UK Droidbuilders will also be on hand, showcasing their expertise in building droids from unconventional materials and providing inspiration for aspiring makers. Kids under 12 go free.



**Titanic Exhibition Birmingham** NEC, Birmingham, until Tues 26 May

The renowned Titanic Exhibition remains available to view for much of the month at Birmingham's NEC.

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.

**Railway 200 Exhibition Train**

Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May

Curated in partnership with the National Railway Museum, the Inspiration exhibition train returns to Severn Valley Railway's Kidderminster station for the half-term break.

The touring train debuted last year, marking the 200th anniversary of railways, and has since visited 60 locations across Britain, stopping off at mainline stations, heritage railways and rail freight sites.

**Royal Carriages Family Trail**

The Commandery, Worcester, Fri 22 - Sun 31 May

Celebrate the restoration of the crown this half-term holiday with a trail of colourful royal carriages at The Commandery. From dragons to swans, families can explore the building and find all of the decorated carriages.

Bank Holiday Monday (the 25th) sees the venue recognising Oak Apple Day - a traditional celebration marking King Charles II's return to the throne in 1660.

Over in the craft room, youngsters can make their own Oak Apple mobile to take home.

**Fotofest**

Various venues in Walsall, Sat 9 & Sun 10 May

Taking place across various venues, Fotofest features a full programme of exhibitions, workshops and demonstrations, presented alongside a visual expo that includes some of the biggest names in photography and imaging technology.

The weekend-long festival also features a diverse programme of talks and discussions exploring photography, creativity and storytelling.

Organisations including the Royal Photographic Society, Urban Hax and the UK Black Female Photographers Community will also be involved in the programme.

To find out more about what's happening, visit @FotoFestWalsall on Instagram.



exploring ideas together

# resonate

## A free programme of inspiring and interactive events

Designed for all ages to spark ideas, curiosity, and creativity. Join us across Coventry and Warwickshire for talks, workshops, hands-on activities and more!



For more information visit [www.resonatefestival.co.uk](http://www.resonatefestival.co.uk)



# BBC Gardeners' World Live

18-21 June 2026  
Birmingham NEC

*Join us!*

Expert advice



Shopping



Inspiration

Great day out



Includes entry to the  
goodFOOD  
SHOW SUMMER  
Sponsored by LEXUS

Book in advance to save | [bbcgardenersworldlive.com](http://bbcgardenersworldlive.com)

Transaction fee applies on advance bookings. Details correct at time of print. Not all experts appear on all days. The Gardeners' World logo is a trademark of the BBC. © BBC. Organised and presented by River Street Events at Immediate Media.

Events previews from around the region



**Fossil Fun Weekend**

Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum, Sat 23 - Mon 25 May

Thinktank is hosting a half-term-holiday weekend of family fossil fun to celebrate the birthday of prehistoric pioneer Mary Anning. Mary, who was born on the 25th of May 1799, found the first-ever skeleton of an Ichthyosaur - a giant, fish-like Jurassic creature - when she was just 12 years old. A female scientist whose story is often

overlooked, Mary spent her life collecting, sharing and studying fossils... The museum will be celebrating her legacy with a programme of talks and activities, providing visiting families with the opportunity to make their own dinosaurs, dig for fossils in the Science Garden, and enjoy storytime sessions.



**Heroes Of The Air** RAF Museum Midlands, Cosford, Mon 25 - Fri 29 May

RAF Museum Midlands hosts a family-friendly celebration of courage and adventure this half-term holiday, celebrating 'the remarkable stories of those who took to the skies'. Among the attractions is a special trail allowing youngsters to engage with some of

the heroes of aviation from the past. Other highlights include fascinating exhibitions, the opportunity to uncover inspiring stories, and the chance to watch a powerful BBC documentary series featuring first-hand accounts from those who lived through the Second World War.

**Great Birmingham Run**

Birmingham City Centre, Sun 3 May

The Midlands' biggest mass-participation running event returns early this month as Birmingham welcomes thousands of runners back to its streets.

The hugely popular get-together provides participants with the opportunity to run either a 10k or half marathon. The designated route takes the runners past some of the city's best-loved locations, including the Jewellery Quarter, St Paul's Square, the Mailbox, Grand Central, St Martin's Church, Southside and Digbeth.

A Mini Run, designed specifically for younger participants, takes place at the Alexander Stadium in Perry Barr on Saturday the 2nd.



**Stratford Literary Festival**

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon, Thurs 7 - Sun 10 May

The Stratford Literary Festival makes a welcome return early this month, complete with its usual mouthwatering line-up of bestselling authors and household names from stage & screen.

Featuring more than 80 events, the festival's programme includes a host of talks, workshops, and events for children. Contributors to the four-day programme include Ardal O'Hanlon, Prue Leith, Scrummy Mummies and Mark Gatiss.

**Birmingham Pride**

Birmingham Gay Village, Hurst Street, Birmingham, Sat 23 & Sun 24 May

Celebrating the Midlands' LGBTQIA+ community, Birmingham Pride will once again get the city partying this month. It's expected that more than 40,000 revellers will attend the event across the weekend, with an impressive 75,000-plus people either participating in or watching the annual Pride parade through the city's streets. Headline acts this year include Katy B, Sigala, Danny Beard and Nadine.

**ROYAL THREE COUNTIES SHOW**  
12-14 JUNE 2026

OUTDOOR FAMILY ACTIVITIES  
LIVE ARENA DISPLAYS  
FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL  
OVER 8000 ANIMALS TO SEE  
KIDS GO FREE!

**GREAT CELEBRITY LINE UP INCLUDING**  
HARLOW LUNA WHITE (SAT)  
KELVIN AND LIZ FLETCHER (SAT)  
KALEB COOPER (SUN)  
AND MORE!

**A BUMPER CROP OF FARMING, FOOD & FAMILY FUN**  
For Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and beyond

**BOOK NOW**  
royalthreecounties.co.uk 0344 338 5400  
Advance tickets: Adults £25\* | Under 16s free \* + ticketing fees  
Three Counties Showground, Malvern




**S**  
SUDELEY CASTLE & GARDENS

**Explore**  
10 Unique Gardens

SUDELEYCASTLE.CO.UK

**BIRMINGHAM COCKTAIL WEEKEND**

**SUMMER EDITION**  
9 - 12 July

**WINTER EDITION**  
22 - 25 October

[birminghamcocktailweekend.co.uk](http://birminghamcocktailweekend.co.uk)

Events previews from around the region



**RHS Malvern Spring Festival**

Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Thurs 7 - Sun 10 May

The RHS Malvern Spring Festival makes a welcome return to the town's Three Counties Showground early this month. One of the first major flower shows of the season, the festival's 2026 edition showcases some of the country's best-known television gardeners and horticulturalists. Contributors include Alan Titchmarsh, Monty Don and BBC Gardeners' World regulars Adam Frost, Frances Tophill and Sue Kent. Raymond Blanc is one of a number of

culinary connoisseurs taking part in the festival, while Dame Mary Berry will be talking about her new gardening book. The festival also features the crowning of the very first RHS award-winning show gardens of the year, the latest in horticultural trends, a host of fun family-friendly activities, and a number of brand-new or returning features, including a Blooming Borders category. This year's theme is Roots Of The Future: Honour The Past, Grow The Future.



**POP-UP Family Festival** Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 23 May

Little ones, teenagers, parents and grandparents are invited to join this 'joyful' family festival 'bursting with creativity, curiosity, and fun for all ages'. Families can stretch into the day with yoga sessions; get creative with an artist-led workshop; discover, touch and explore the

Sensory Sculpture Trail; and find a treasure hunt's creative clues. A programme of short films, a relaxed Star Wars screening, and performances of Sisters 360 and Zog (pictured) also feature in the festival's wide-ranging programme of entertainment.

**1960s Evenings**

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, Fri 15 & Sat 16 May

Transport yourself back to the hip and transformational decade of the Swinging 60s at the Black Country Living Museum mid-month, courtesy of two evenings of psychedelic music and far-out fashions. Visitors can twist the night away, dine on a variety of food & drink, or simply soak up the nostalgic atmosphere.



**Soul Revolution**

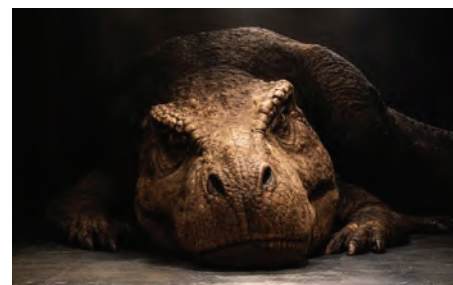
Weston Park, Shropshire, Fri 22 - Tues 26 May

Soul Revolution returns to Weston Park this month, bringing together live music, thought-provoking talks and over 200 workshops, all designed to elevate the mind, body and spirit. Taking place in a safe and family-friendly environment, the festival boasts a diverse programme of events and activities, from sacred ceremonies to immersive healing practices.

**Inside The T Rex**

Village Hotel, Shirley Birmingham, Mon 25 - Sun 31 May

Families can 'step beneath the skin and bones' of one of the most formidable predators in history when world-first live dinosaur show Inside The T Rex pays a visit to Birmingham this month. The 90-minute interactive experience, designed for children aged six-plus and featuring a full-scale, scientifically recreated T-rex, uses expert-led demonstrations and interactive science experiments to explain to visitors how the Tyrannosaurus moved, hunted and functioned.



# TUTANKHAMUN

THE IMMERSIVE EXHIBITION

COMING TO THE NEC CAMPUS, BIRMINGHAM FOR 12 WEEKS ONLY



TICKETS



nec  
axs

PRODUCED BY  
MAD

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

TUTANKHAMUNEXPERIENCE.COM

fever

FXP SCORPIO  
ENTERTAINMENT

Your week-  
by-week  
listings guide  
May 2026

# thelist



Welsh National Opera: *Flying Dutchman* - Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 7 May

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

## What's On

Fri 1 - Sun 10 May



Jamaica Love -  
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre  
**Sat 2 May**

Mon 11 - Sun 17 May



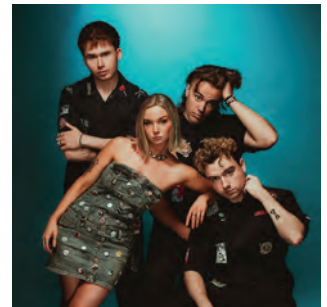
Wesley Joseph - O2 Institute,  
Birmingham  
**Thurs 14 May**

Mon 18 - Sun 24 May



Esther Manito - Comedy at The  
Castle, Warwick Castle  
**Fri 22 - Sun 24 May**

Mon 25 - Sun 31 May



Dead Pony - Mamma Roux's,  
Birmingham  
**Sat 30 May**

## VISUAL ARTS ACROSS THE MIDLANDS

### Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

**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 lineup to coincide with their historic homecoming concert, until Sun 27 Sept

**BIRMINGHAM MEDIA ARCHIVE PROJECT: THE FIRST DECADE 1982-1992** Explore the city's overlooked media heritage through the work of pioneering organisations, until Sun 28 June

### Compton Verney, Warwickshire

**BRUEGEL TO REMBRANDT: DRAWING LIFE, SKETCHING WONDER** Explore the wonders of Dutch and Flemish drawing with over 60 works from the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, many never before seen in the UK, until Sun 28 June

**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

**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

**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

**JANE WILLIAMS: MY FAVOURITE MUSIC** Leamington Music Festival's artist-in-residence exhibits paintings inspired by works by Beethoven, Handel, Haydn and more..., Fri 1 - Sun 31 May, Royal Pump Rooms Conservatory, Leamington Spa

### Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston, Birmingham

**MADE AT MAC: CREATIVE FAMILY SHOWCASE** Mixed-media exhibition showcasing the work created by children, young people and families on MAC's creative courses, until Sun 28 June

**GENEVIEVE ROBERTSON: UNDER THE ORANGE STICKS OF THE SUN** Showcase of work inspired by Genevieve's personal history in the Canadian forestry industry and her interest in ecological systems, until Sun 5 July

### 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

**A SIMPLE LINE: PRINTS AND ENGRAVINGS FROM THE MUSEUM**

**COLLECTION** Featuring a number of prints and engravings which are not usually on display, until Sat 13 June

### RBSA Gallery, Birmingham

**RBSA PORTRAIT PRIZE 2026** Open to established and emerging artists working in any media, including photography and digital art, Tues 5 May - Sat 13 June

**RBSA SMALL WORKS EXHIBITION 2026** A unique show from the Society's membership, intended as a starting point for those visitors wishing to build an art collection, Tues 19 May - Sat 13 June

### Rugby Art Gallery

**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, until Sat 3 Oct

### Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

**WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR** The world's most prestigious wildlife photography exhibition, now in its 61st year, until Sat 20 June

### Wolverhampton Art Gallery

**JOY LABINJO: A PLACE OF OUR OWN** Solo exhibition by the British Nigerian artist, reclaiming the nude and celebrating identity, until Mon 4 May

**HANDLE WITH CARE** Exhibition exploring the city's art collection, from its beginnings in 1887 to the present day, until Sun 16 Aug

### Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**DAVID BIRTWHISTLE: A RETROSPECTIVE** Celebration of one of Worcester's most respected artists, 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

## Gigs

**MAJOR TOMS** Fri 1 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**THE GO90S** Fri 1 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**ANDY BENNETT** Fri 1 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**THE CHARLATANS** Fri 1 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**THE MELVIN HANCOX BAND** Fri 1 May, Tower of Song, Birmingham

**BRIGITTE BERAHA LUCID DREAMERS** Fri 1 May, 1000 Trades, B'ham

**MORETALLICA** Fri 1 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**KASADOR** Fri 1 May, Dead Wax, Birmingham

**DRAGGED INTO SUNLIGHT + VACUOUS + PLAGUE PIT** Fri 1 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

**NEVER EASY** Fri 1 May, Mama Roux's, B'ham

**THE DEAD COLLECTIVE** Fri 1 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**TIM HEIGHTS' SKA ANTHEMS** Fri 1 May, The Victoria, Birmingham

**SKA TRAIN** Fri 1 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**MARK GREEN AS ELVIS** Fri 1 May, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

**THE BOWIE EXP** Fri 1 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**THE DRIFTERS** Fri 1 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**MOVING PICTURES - RUSH TRIBUTE** Fri 1 May, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**VIRGIL & THE ACCELERATORS** Fri 1 May, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**THE STIFFMEISTERS** Fri 1 May, Drummonds, Worcester

**MICHAEL STARRING BEN** Fri 1 May, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**TOYAH** Fri 1 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

**METEORA - LINKIN PARK TRIBUTE** Fri 1 May, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**THE GERRY CINNA-MAN EXPERIENCE** Fri 1 May,

The Robin, Bilston  
**THIRSTY WORK** Fri 1 May, Cafe Metro, Bilston

**EMF + BIS** Fri 1 May, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

**SAM SWEENEY TRIO** Fri 1 May, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

**NORTHERN LIVE - DO I LOVE YOU** Fri 1 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**ELO ENCOUNTER** Fri 1 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**HEY PIXIES!** Fri 1 May, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

**SHADER + SIDEEYE + THE GROVES** Fri 1 May, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

**FAINTEST IDEA + FIGHTING EVIL IS COOL + RHYTHM EATERS** Fri 1 May, The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

**POIZON + ROXXIE RED** Fri 1 May, The Station, Cannock

**ROCK THE 80S** Fri 1 May, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

**UNDER THE COVERS** Sat 2 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**XODUS - TRIBUTE TO BOB MARLEY** Sat 2 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

**LUKE JONES + THE KASTERS + SLOW TALK + FRACTURES + UNDER THE BRIDGE** Sat 2 May, O2 Institute, B'ham

**BALU BRIGADA + WILL SWINTON** Sat 2 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**NINJA SEX PARTY + TWRP + JAZZ EMU** Sat 2 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**WEST COAST EAGLES** Sat 2 May, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

**BRAD HENSHAW** Sat 2 May, Tower of Song, Birmingham

**SLAUGHTERHOUSE FESTIVAL** Sat 2 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**NOFX V RANC1D** Sat 2 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

**THE 900** Sat 2 May, The Flapper, Birmingham  
**GIVE ME THE NIGHT -**

# Friday 1 - Sunday 10 May

**GEORGE BENSON TRIBUTE** Sat 2 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**THE AMY WINEHOUSE CELEBRATION** Sat 2 May, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**RACHEL CROFT BAND** Sat 2 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE FATHER TEDS** Sat 2 May, The Rhodhouse, Sutton Coldfield

**ROTHSHE + DANNY ANSELL MUSIC + LUCY TURNBULL** Sat 2 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**ALCHEMY RELIVED - DIRE STRAITS TRIBUTE** Sat 2 May, Arches Venue, Coventry

**THE BIG INDIE FEST** Sat 2 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**HAIRCUT 100** Sat 2 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**TREEBOY + ARC** Sat 2 May, Just Dropped In, Coventry

**CHOCOLATE STARFISH - LIMP BIZKIT (+ BRAZEN) TRIBUTE** Sat 2 May, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**SHEF LEPPARD + MOTLEY SCREW** Sat 2 May, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**MADE IN TENNESSEE** Sat 2 May, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**THE BOHEMIANS** Sat 2 May, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**THE MANFREDS** Sat 2 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

**UNDER THE COVERS** Sat 2 May, Cafe Metro, Bilston

**JETHRO TULL** Sat 2 May, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**DRESSED TO KILL** Sat 2 May, The Station, Cannock

**GIGABITE** Sat 2 May, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

**THE 80S SHOW** Sat 2 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**NIZLOPI** Sat 2 - Sun 3 May, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**THE BELL BAND** Sun 3 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**DEATH OF YOUTH + MOUNTAIN PEAKS +**

**EYEGLOSS + ANAEMIA** Sun 3 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**SEETHING AKIRA + WATERLINES** Sun 3 May, The Flapper, B'ham

**INFECTED DEAD + PLAGUE FATHER + WARDEN** Sun 3 May, Subside Bar, B'ham

**JETHRO TULL** Sun 3 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**THE MANGOES** Sun 3 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**10CCLO** Sun 3 May, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

**FLASH - A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN** Sun 3 May, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**AMNESIA** Sun 3 May, The Robin, Bilston

**TOM SKEGGS** Sun 3 May, Cafe Metro, Bilston

**CITIZENRY + MUTES** Sun 3 May, Centrala, B'ham

**THE LEISURE SOCIETY** Sun 3 - Mon 4 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**LORELLE MEETS THE OBSOLETE** Mon 4 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**CASSIDY JANSON SINGS CAROLE KING** Mon 4 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**NE-YO + AKON** Mon 4 - Tues 5 May, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**JUTES** Tues 5 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**HYPHEN** Tues 5 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**INDUSTRY STANDARD** Tues 5 May, The Victoria, Birmingham

**STYROFOAM WINOS + CONNEXION MAN + GREEN HANDS** Tues 5 May, Just Dropped In, Coventry

**OYSTERBAND'S JOHN JONES WITH RAY COOPER AND AL SCOTT** Tues 5 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrops

**HATER + KITTY BELLA** Wed 6 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**ROSLOW ROAD + GENEVIEVE RACETTE** Wed 6 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**BILLY LOCKETT** Wed 6 May, Castle & Falcon,

Birmingham

**JUNIPER + CLAIRE BOSWELL** Wed 6 May, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

**KATE RUSBY** Wed 6 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**LAURA SNOWDEN** Wed 6 May, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme



**LEGENDS OF AMERICAN COUNTRY** Wed 6 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**BLEECH 9:3** Thurs 7 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**MIRANDA SYKES + JIM CAUSLEY** Thurs 7 May, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**HEAVY WILD** Thurs 7 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**CLEMENTINE DOUGLAS** Thurs 7 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**VIENNA + CHASING DOLLS + JAZZCAT + HOMBREAD** Thurs 7 May, Centrala, B'ham

**NATE BERGMAN** Thurs 7 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**PREYRS** Thurs 7 May, The Victoria, B'ham

**COWBOY JUNKIES** Thurs 7 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**PAUL CARRACK** Thurs 7 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**CONAN GRAY + ESHA TEWARI** Thurs 7 May, bp pulse LIVE, B'ham

**NADAV TABAK** Thurs 7 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**STEELEYE SPAN** Thurs 7 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ALFIE BOE** Thurs 7 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**NASHVILLE LIVE** Thurs 7 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

**AND FINALLY... PHIL COLLINS** Thurs 7 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**EASY CURE** Fri 8 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**GREAZY ALICE** Fri 8 May, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**TEENAGE JOANS** Fri 8 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**THESE MUDDY BOOTS** Fri 8 May, The Dark Horse, Birmingham

**TIDE LINES** Fri 8 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**NIC CAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE** Fri 8 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**ALFIE BOE** Fri 8 May, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**AND FINALLY PHIL COLLINS** Fri 8 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**JUDGE JULES + FRIENDS** Fri 8 May, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**THE ENEMY** Fri 8 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**FRED ZEPPELIN** Fri 8 May, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**MAJESTY - A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN** Fri 8 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

**THE WORLD FAMOUS ELVIS SHOW - STARRING CHRIS CONNOR** Fri 8 May, The Robin, Bilston

**HIGH SPY** Fri 8 May, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

**DAN WALSH** Fri 8 May, Fenton Town Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**ALBERT LEE** Fri 8 May, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

**DODGY** Fri 8 May, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

**SIMON AND GARFUNKEL THROUGH THE YEARS** Fri 8 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**MOTÖRKILL + ELECTRIC CIRCUS** Fri 8 May, The Station, Cannock

**DON'T STOP QUEEN NOW** Fri 8 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**SALT PEANUTS JAZZ QUARTET** Fri 8 May, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

**KIT HAWES AND AARON CATLOW** Fri 8 May, Ludlow Assembly

Rooms, South Shrops

**POLICE DOG HOGAN** Sat 9 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**JACK CULLEN** Sat 9 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**THE MERCIANS + SUNDAYCLUB + THE ANSELLS** Sat 9 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**GABRIELLE APLIN** Sat 9 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**DAFT FUNK + ANU** Sat 9 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**CHARLOTTE GLASSON** Sat 9 May, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

**JO MARKLAND QUARTET** Sat 9 May, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

**NOASIS** Sat 9 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**METAL TO THE MASSES SEMI FINAL 2** Sat 9 May, The Flapper, B'ham

**KATHERINE PRIDDY** Sat 9 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**TAME IMPALA + RIP MAGIC** Sat 9 May, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**HEERA** Sat 9 May, XOYO, Birmingham

**POLICE DOG HOGAN** Sat 9 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

**OASISH** Sat 9 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**JACK BROADBENT** Sat 9 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**SYSTEM EIGHTIES** Sat 9 May, The Rhodhouse, Sutton Coldfield

**DEREK WARFIELD & THE YOUNG WOLFETONES** Sat 9 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**FLEETWOOD MAD + EDUCATABLEMUSIC** Sat 9 May, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**REPUNK'D** Sat 9 May, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**FOREVER ELTON AND JOEL** Sat 9 May, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**CLIVE JOHN** Sat 9 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**A NIGHT TO REMEMBER - MOTOWN NIGHT** Sat 9 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

**DIRE STREETS** Sat 9 May, Brierley Hill Civic,

Dudley

**WHAT'S LOVE? - TRIBUTE TO TINA TURNER** Sat 9 May, Dudley Town Hall

**ROY ADAMS & FRIENDS** Sat 9 May, Cafe Metro, Bilston

**DAVID LIVE** Sat 9 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE FIRE DOORS** Sat 9 May, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE BLOCKHEADS** Sat 9 May, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

**MAN IN THE MIRROR - A TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL JACKSON** Sat 9 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**THANK ABBA FOR THE MUSIC** Sat 9 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**ALEX HITCHCOCK QUARTET** Sat 9 May, The Hive, Shrewsbury

**FLEETING RUMOURS** Sat 9 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**AUDIO THIEVES** Sat 9 May, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

**THE EVERLY PREGNANT BROTHERS** Sun 10 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**AU/RA** Sun 10 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**REGGAE FEST BIRMINGHAM** Sun 10 May, Tower of Song, Birmingham

**NICOLAS MEIER WORLD GROUP** Sun 10 May, 1000 Trades, B'ham

**FRIENDS** Sun 10 May, 1000 Trades, B'ham

**SPACE PISTOL + GHOZER + PRIMITIVE REASONING + MUFUNTA** Sun 10 May, Subside Bar, Birmingham

**ALPHA MALE TEA PARTY + EVERY HELL + TO THE WALL + AXIOM** Sun 10 May, The Rainbow, Birmingham

**THE PUPPINI SISTERS** Sun 10 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**THE SWAPS** Sun 10 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**GYPSY PISTOLEROS + JAMES KENNEDY AND THE UNDERDOGS** Sun 10 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**whatsonlive.co.uk 53**

## Classical Music

**FIBONACCI STRING QUARTET** Featuring Luna De Mol & Kryštof Kohut (violins), Elliot Kempton (viola) & Findlay Spence (cello). Programme includes works by Bartók & R Schumann, Fri 1 May, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: DEATH AND THE MAIDEN** Programme includes works by Schubert & Le Page, Fri 1 May, Stratford Town Hall

**RICHARD WALKER ORGAN RECITAL** Fri 1 May, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

**LUDOVICO EINAUDI: SOLO PIANO** A special series of intimate solo evenings in Einaudi's favourite concert halls, Sat 2 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**KALEIDOSCOPE CHAMBER COLLECTIVE** Featuring Ben Goldscheider (horn), Elena Urioste (violin) & Tom Poster (piano). Programme includes works by E Smyth & Brahms, Sat 2 May, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**GUARNERI PIANO TRIO** Featuring Čeněk Pavlík (violin), Marek Jerie (cello) & Ivan Klanský (piano). Programme includes works by Beethoven & Dvořák, Sat 2 May, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**JOSEPH JACOB & ADAM HERON (ORGAN)** Programme includes works by Buxtehude, J.S. Bach, Mendelssohn & more..., Sat 2 May, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

**MANCHESTER COLLECTIVE X THICK & TIGHT DANCE: PAPILLONS** Featuring Laura van der Heijden (cello), CHAINES (electronics & visuals) & The Camberwell Incredibles (mixed media), Sun 3 May, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**WILLIAM HOWARD PIANO RECITAL** Programme includes works by R Schumann, Skempton, C Schumann & more..., Sun 3 May, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**SINFONIA OF BIRMINGHAM** Featuring Michael Seal (conductor), Zoë Beyers (violin) & Peter Dixon (cello). Programme includes works by Dvořák, Brahms & Arnold, Sun 3 May, All Saints Church, Leamington Spa

**NATHAN AMARAL (VIOLIN) & JONATHAN WARE (PIANO)** Programme includes works by Miguez & Brahms, Mon 4 May, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**LEAMINGTON MUSIC FESTIVAL: NICKY SPENCE (TENOR) & DYLAN PEREZ (PIANO)** Programme includes works by Howells, Britten, Fauré & more..., Mon 4 May, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**ANDREY GUGNIN (PIANO)** Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky & Stravinsky, Mon 4 May, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**GILL STYLES & RICHARD WALKER (PIANO DUET)** Tues 5 May, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

**CBSO: STRAVINSKY'S PETRUSHKA** Featuring Jac van Steen (conductor) & Benjamin Grosvenor (piano). Programme includes works by Hindemith, Ravel, Honegger & Stravinsky, Wed 6 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**PAUL CARR ORGAN RECITAL** Programme includes works by Hakim, Ayres, Spicer & more..., Thurs 7 May, St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham

**ALEX POSTLETHWAITE (VIOLIN) & JOHN MOORE (PIANO)** Programme includes works by Elgar, Franck & Smetana, Thurs 7 May, The Gateway, Shrewsbury

**IYAD SUGHAYER PIANO RECITAL** Programme includes works by Mozart, Beethoven, Liszt & Khachaturian, Thurs 7 May, Stoke Rep Theatre

**ANGELA SONES ORGAN RECITAL** Fri 8 May, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**CARDUCCI STRING QUARTET** Featuring Matthew Denton & Michelle Fleming (violin), Eoin Schmidt-Martin (viola) & Emma Denton (cello). Programme includes works by Shostakovich, Shaw & R Schumann, Fri 8 May, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

**BBC PHILHARMONIC: WHEN IN ROME...** Featuring Daniel Bjarason (conductor), Zoë Beyers & Peter Dixon (soloists). Programme includes works by Berlioz, Mendelssohn & Brahms, Fri 8 May, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**CBSO NOTELETS: WIND IN THE WILLOWS** Featuring Jane Wright (presenter). With live music, storytelling and plenty of chances to move, sing and play along, Fri 8 - Sat 9 May, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

**THE MIDLAND SINFONIA** Family concert culminating in Saint-Saëns' Carnival of the Animals, Sat 9 May, St Laurence Church, Alvechurch

**WORCESTERSHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: BEETHOVEN'S CHORAL SYMPHONY** Featuring Keith Slade (conductor). Programme also includes works by Brahms & Parry, Sat 9 May, Worcester Cathedral

**LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL CHORUS SPRING CONCERT** Programme includes works by Vivaldi & Poulenc, Sat 9 May, Lichfield Cathedral

**CERAMIC CITY CHOIR : BARD & BROADWAY** Featuring Anthony Rose (conductor), Ian Riddle (piano), Hannah Ruth McDonald (soprano) & Mark Goodhew (double bass). Programme includes works by Shearing, Bernstein, Rodgers & Diemer, Sat 9 May, St Andrew's Church, Newcastle-under-Lyme

**PICCADILLY SINFONIETTA: RACHMANINOV'S 2ND PIANO CONCERTO** Featuring Warren Mailey-Smith

(piano). Programme also includes works by Beethoven & Grieg, Sat 9 May, St Philip's Cathedral, B'ham

## Comedy

**SOPHIE GARRAD** Fri 1 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**JESSICA FOSTEKU** Fri 1 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

**PHIL MEALEY** Fri 1 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**KANE BROWN** Fri 1 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**FUN! WITH BARBARA NICE** Fri 1 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**PETER KAY** Fri 1 - Sat 2 May, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**DAVE FULTON, ANDREA HUBERT, JACK MCLEAN & STEVE WILLIAMS** Fri 1 - Sat 2 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**SUSIE MCCABE** Sat 2 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**PETE FIRMAN** Sat 2 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**LUCY PORTER** Sat 2 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**KIELL SMITH-BYNOE** Sat 2 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**DANIEL O'REILLY** Sat 2 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**TEZ ILYAS & TOMMY SANDHU** Sun 3 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**LAURA BELBIN** Tues 5 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**JOSH WIDDICOMBE** Tues 5 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**LENNY HENRY** Tues 5 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**NATALIE CUOMO** Wed 6 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**IGNACIO LOPEZ, NICK PAGE, GBEMI OLADIPO & FREDDIE QUINNE** Wed 6 May, Herbert's Yard, Birmingham

**LENNY HENRY** Wed 6 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**ANDY ROBINSON, IAN COPPINGER, HARRIET DYER & RYAN KENNY** Thurs 7 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**SIMON MUNNERY** Thurs 7 May, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

**EL BALDINIHO, DAVE CHAWNER, JAMIE DOUGLAS & DAN SMITH** Thurs 7 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

**MARK SIMMONS** Thurs 7 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**JARLATH REGAN** Fri 8 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**JANINE HAROUNI & HEIDI REGAN** Fri 8 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**BRIAN CONLEY, BOB MILLS, IAN CRAWFORD & WAYNE BEESE** Fri 8 May, Civic, Stourport

**MARK SIMMONS** Fri 8 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**JEN BRISTER** Fri 8 - Sat 9 May,

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**JONNY AWSUM, TREVOR BICKLES, OMAR BADAWY & DAVE LONGLEY** Sat 9 May, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**BILLY KIRKWOOD, SCOTT BENNETT, IAN COPPINGER & HARRIET DYER** Sat 9 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**DAVID ELMS** Sat 9 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**IVO GRAHAM** Sat 9 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**TOM DAVIS** Sun 10 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**MARK THOMAS** Sun 10 May, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**LENNY HENRY** Sun 10 May, Dudley Town Hall

## Theatre

**WAITRESS** Carrie Hope Fletcher, Les Dennis, Sandra Marvin and Evelyn Hoskins star in a warm-hearted tale of love and friendship, until Sat 2 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**THE LAST LAUGH** Three legendary (and dearly departed) comedians - Tommy Cooper, Bob Monkhouse and Eric Morecambe - come together in a dressing room to discuss the secrets of life, death, comedy, and what it means to be funny..., until Sat 2 May, Malvern Theatres

**DISENCHANTED!** UK premiere of the hit off-Broadway musical, featuring a mash-up of favourite fairytales, until Sat 2 May, Lichfield Garrick

**GLORIOUS!** Amateur version of Peter Quilter's play, based on the true story of an American socialite who became infamous for her highly unskilled singing, until Sat 2 May, Highbury Theatre Centre, Sutton Coldfield

**OPERATION MINCEMEAT** Olivier Award-winning musical telling the 'hilarious and unbelievable' true story of the twisted secret mission that helped win World War Two, until Sat 2 May, The Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

**SISTER ACT** Musical Theatre Stafford present an amateur version of the divine musical comedy, until 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, until Sat 2 May, The Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

**SHEILA'S ISLAND** The Lichfield Players present an amateur version of Tim Firth's tragi-comedy concerning four middle-aged women stranded on an island whilst on a team-building exercise in the Lake District, until Sat 2 May, Lichfield Garrick

**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, until Sat 2 May, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

**REDACTED** A 'high-octane, darkly comic thriller' about justice, power, and just how deep the truth can be buried, until Sat 2 May, The Rep, Birmingham

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM** Adam Carver stars as Puck in a new Brummie version of Shakespeare's much-loved comedy, until Sun 24 May, The Rep, Birmingham

**DRIFTWOOD** Martina Laird's deeply evocative story of self-determination and the search for family and belonging, until Sat 30 May, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

**POOR** Production based on Katriona Sullivan's bestselling memoir, charting her journey as she emerges from a childhood in Coventry and Birmingham marked by poverty, addiction and homelessness, Fri 1 - Sat 9 May, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**JAMAICA LOVE** Award-winning musical that weaves together the rich tapestry of British and Jamaican history, Sat 2 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



**AN IDEAL HUSBAND** Aunty Jen Productions present Oscar Wilde's classic comedy, Tues 5 May, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

**SINGLE WHITE FEMALE** Kym Marsh and Lisa Faulkner star in the stage version of the hit 1992 movie, Tues 5 - Sat 9 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER** Amateur version based on the famous 1977 film. Presented by West Bromwich Operatic Society (WBOS), Tues 5 - Sat 9 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG** Amateur version presented by Brownhills Musical Theatre Company, Tues 5 - Sat 9 May, Lichfield Garrick

**BEAUTY AND THE BEAST** Tinkers Farm Opera present an amateur version of the Disney musical, Tues 5 - Sat 9 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

**MAKING A KILLING** A dark, razor-sharp comedy about justice, corruption, and the cost of survival, Wed 6 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**MURDER SHE DIDN'T WRITE** Improv show in which the audience become

the author and the cast act out an Agatha Christie-inspired masterpiece live on stage, Wed 6 - Thurs 7 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**THE PRODUCERS** The Top Theatre Company present an amateur version of the Mel Brooks musical, Wed 6 - Sat 9 May, Highbury Theatre, Sutton Coldfield

**SHREK THE MUSICAL** Amateur version presented by Coventry Youth Operetta Group (YOG), Wed 6 - Sat 9 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**LOVE LOVE LOVE** Amateur version of Mike Bartlett's award-winning play, exploring the dreams of a generation, Wed 6 - Sat 16 May, The Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

**WNO: FLYING DUTCHMAN** Welsh National Opera present a reimagining of Wagner's exploration of loneliness, Thurs 7 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**MURDER AT THE ALBANY** Psychological drama where comedy turns to tragedy, Thurs 7 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE** Hotbuckle Theatre present a stage adaptation of Thomas Hardy's novel, a thought-provoking exploration of human desire and the forces that shape identity, Thurs 7 - Fri 8 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**FLASHBANG** Proforca Theatre Company's award-nominated production, focusing on five best mates and the ties that bind them, Thurs 7 - Sat 9 May, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**WNO: BLAZE OF GLORY!** Welsh National Opera present a heart-warming adventure set in a 1950s Welsh Valleys community, Fri 8 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**FALLING** An experience located on the borderlines of theatre, dance and mime - devised and performed by Open Theatre's ensemble company. Note that this production contains strong language and adult themes of loss, disruption, sexuality and desperation, Fri 8 - Sat 9 May, The Rep, Birmingham

**CURTAIN UP** Amateur version of Peter Quilter's fast-paced comedy concerning five women who inherit equal shares in a dilapidated theatre and plan to bring it back to life, Sat 9 - Sat 16 May, Oldbury Rep

## Kids Theatre

**THE ULTIMATE BUBBLE SHOW** International bubbleologist Ray Bubbles creates a volcano bubble, a soap bubble carousel, a bubble ghost, and even a tornado inside a bubble! Sun 3 May, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

**WNO: PLAY OPERA LIVE - SHIPWRECKED!**

Welsh National Opera sail the high seas with an interactive family show, Sat 9 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**THE CAT IN THE HAT** An engaging first theatre experience based on Dr Seuss' bestselling book, Sat 9 - Sun 10 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

## Dance

**JOCKEY MORRIS** May Day dance from a troupe that has been dancing its way around Birmingham since 1949, Mon 4 May, Outdoor Terrace, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

## Light Entertainment

**AARDMAN IN CONCERT** A cinematic and musical celebration marking 50 years of Wallace & Gromit, Shaun the Sheep and friends..., Fri 1 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**COPACABANA MAGIC - THE BARRY MANILOW SHOW** Featuring acclaimed vocalist Martyn James and his band, Fri 1 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**NORTHERN LIVE** Sounds from the underground movement that started on dance floors in the north. Performed by an 11-piece band, with four lead vocalists performing over 30 original hits, Fri 1 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW: THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY SPECTACULAR TOUR** Join original stars of the show - Barry Bostwick (Brad), Patricia Quinn (Magenta) & Nell Campbell (Columbia) - for a 'once-in-a-lifetime' screening event with a live shadow cast. A costume contest, a memorabilia display and film artefacts also feature, Fri 1 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**THE 80S SHOW** Featuring lights, video & lasers, presented alongside hits from Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Duran Duran, Tears For Fears, Go West, Elton John and more..., Sat 2 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**THE WEST END TENORS** Featuring leading men from London's West End, Sat 2 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**PETE FIRMAN: TRICKS & GIGGLES** Brand-new show featuring Pete's trademark blend of magic & comedy. Expect 'impossible feats, sleight of hand and big laughs'..., Sat 2 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**KIELL SMITH-BYNOE'S KOOL STORY BRO** Smash-hit improv comedy show from the star of Ghosts, Taskmaster and Stath Lets Flats, Sat 2 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**SING THE MUSICALS** Interactive event where the greatest musicals of all

time are sung live on stage. A giant screen with singalong lyrics also features, to enable audiences to join in, Sat 2 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

**JUDI LOVE: ALL ABOUT THE LOVE** A brand-new show packed with home truths about the hustle of juggling parenting, work and everyday life, Sun 3 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**JOHN BARROWMAN: MY LIFE IN MUSICALS** Expect 'stories, laughter and unforgettable anthems, mixed with a few showstoppers', Sun 3 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**SIMON REEVE: TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH** Evening of 'stories, surprises, thrills and hearty laughs' with one of the world's most adventurous travellers, Sun 3 - Mon 4 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**SUE, MATT AND PHIL LIVE! THE REUNION TOUR** Join the much-loved trio and celebrity guests for an evening of quiz rounds and brand-new games, Tues 5 May, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**THE RECEIPTS PODCAST** Join Audrey and Tolani for an evening of undiluted chat and special guests, Tues 5 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**AN AUDIENCE WITH DEREK JACOBI IN CONVERSATION WITH RICHARD CLIFFORD** Wed 6 May, The Old Rep, Birmingham

**SUE, MATT AND PHIL LIVE! THE REUNION TOUR** Join the much-loved trio and celebrity guests for an evening of quiz rounds and brand-new games, Wed 6 May, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**BUS STOP GOTHs** A surreal modern folktale which centres around alt youth and the sacred outdoor spaces in which they reside, Thurs 7 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

**AN EVENING WITH ALFIE BOE** Featuring fan-favourite classics and new material from Alfie's latest album, Thurs 7 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry & Fri 8 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**BOYBAND IN THE BUFF** Throwback concert featuring Gareth Gates and a cast of 'rippers and ridiculously talented performers', Thurs 7 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**AN AUDIENCE WITH DEREK JACOBI IN CONVERSATION WITH RICHARD CLIFFORD** Thurs 7 May, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

**100 YEARS CELEBRATION OF LAUREL & HARDY** Silent film score composer Neil Brand offers a unique insight into Stan & Ollie, Sat 9 May, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**SIMON REEVE: TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH** Evening of 'stories, surprises, thrills and hearty laughs' with one of the world's most adventurous travellers, Sun 10 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



Matt Goss at RetroCon - NEC, Birmingham

## Talks & Spoken Word

**HAMZA YASSIN: MY LIFE BEHIND THE LENS** Join the wildlife cameraman & presenter as he shares behind-the-scenes tales from his epic filming expeditions across the globe, Fri 1 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**EVENING WITH PHIL MEALEY** The award-winning writer, actor & singer celebrates his work and the people, places and moments that inspired him, Fri 1 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**DR LOUISE NEWSON: BREAKING THE CYCLE** Join the renowned women's hormone specialist for a show that unpacks the history and often-neglected science of hormones, Tues 5 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**KILLER COUPLES** Join Emma Kenny as she delves into the dark psychology of couples turned killers, Wed 6 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**LILIANE LIJN: LIQUID REFLECTIONS** Special talk exploring the artist's influential career and her landmark sculpture White Koan, a defining feature at the entrance of Warwick Arts Centre, Wed 6 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**DR LOUISE NEWSON: BREAKING THE CYCLE** Join the renowned women's hormone specialist for a show that unpacks the history and often-neglected science of hormones, Wed 6 May, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**DON LETTS Q&A + REBEL DREAD SCREENING** Special evening hosted by Daniel Rachel, Thurs 7 May, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**GYLES BRANDRETH: CAN'T STOP TALKING!** A 'rollercoaster ride of tales and revelations' from Giles' life in showbusiness and politics, Sun 10 May, The Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

## Events

**CHELtenham JAZZ FESTIVAL** Featuring internationally acclaimed artists and breakthrough performers, until Mon 4 May, venues across Cheltenham

**DANCE ME TO THE END (OF LOVE) - BRUMYODO** Join artist Bianca Beneduzi for a creative and family-friendly workshop that blends dance improvisation and intuitive drawing, Sat 2 May, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

**MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS** Plenty of activities to mark the beginning of summer, Sat 2 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

**TAMWORTH FILM & COMIC CON** A day of fandom, cosplay and creativity, Sat 2 May, Ankerside Shopping Centre, Tamworth

**UNITE THE PEOPLE FESTIVAL LAUNCH** The launch of Unite the People - a bold city-wide cultural movement celebrating Birmingham's diversity and standing for justice, peace and a future beyond racism, Sat 2 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

**A NIGHT OF CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING** Conah Walker headlines in his hometown of Wolverhampton in a Midlands derby with Birmingham's battle-hardened Sam Eggington, Sat 2 May, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**HERITAGE TOURS AT THE EXCHANGE** Discover the rich history and fascinating stories behind its walls, Sat 2 May, The Exchange, 3 Centenary Square, Birmingham

**YARNIES** Guests can browse hand-dyed yarns, spinning fibres, beautiful tools & unique accessories, as well as watching demonstrations, Sat 2 May, Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

**FOUNDRY FESTIVAL** A two-day celebration powered by The Potteries' thriving underground scene, Sat 2 - Sun 3 May, Stoke-on-Trent City Centre

**VE WW2 WEEKEND** Experience the

spirit of the 1940s through a range of exciting and immersive activities, Sat 2 - Sun 3 May, Middleton Hall, Gardens & Courtyard, Tamworth

**EMBERS FIRE FESTIVAL** With demonstrations from world-class pit masters and top BBQ vendors, Sat 2 - Sun 3 May, Dale End Park, Ironbridge

**AJ BELL GREAT BIRMINGHAM RUN** 10k and half marathon races, Sat 2 - Sun 3 May, Birmingham City Centre

**RETROCON** Lose yourself in a hall packed with retro games, live music - including Matt Goss (pictured left), and pop culture treasures, Sat 2 - Sun 3 May, NEC, Birmingham

**MODEL RAILWAY WEEKEND** Around 30 of the UK's most popular displays and layouts will be on display at the Visitor Centre at Highley Station, Sat 2 - Sun 3 May, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster

**MEDIEVAL MAY DAY AT THE MANOR OF AVONCROFT** Meet the villagers and learn about everyday medieval life as summer is celebrated with a market fair, authentic crafts, dancing and games, Sat 2 - Mon 4 May, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

**GLADIATORS EXPERIENCE** Gladiators fans will be able to put their speed, strength and skills to the ultimate test, Sat 2 May - Mon 31 Aug, NEC, Birmingham

**STAFFORDSHIRE DAY** Including street food traders, community stalls, displays and activities taking place throughout the day, Mon 4 May, Market Square, Stafford

**FABULOUS 40S** Wartime event with costumed characters, live music, vehicles and more, Mon 4 May, Haden Hill House Museum and Park, Cradley Heath

**LAUNCH: THE LONGEST YARN** See displays on the West Front and participate in family friendly activities to celebrate The Longest Yarn exhibition, Mon 4 May, Lichfield Cathedral

**A MAY BANK HOLIDAY SPECIAL: WALK OF THE DANDELION** Daniel the larger-than-life puppet will walk around the grounds of Compton Verney, encouraging the making, receiving and passing on of handmade dandelions, Mon 4 May, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

**HALLS FINE ART VALUATION ADVISORY DAY** Free antique and fine art valuations, Tues 5 May, Weston Park, Shropshire

**GEMSTONE POP-UP SALE** Buy from a curated selection of loose gemstones, Thurs 7 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) Birmingham

**RHS MALVERN SPRING FESTIVAL A** four-day seasonal showcase of new horticultural trends and innovations, Thurs 7 - Sun 10 May, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**LOST IN THE HILLS FESTIVAL 26 A** weekend of art, music and nature, nestled deep within the hills of the Peak District National Park, Fri 8 - Sat 9 May, Watts Russell Arms, Hopedale, Staffordshire

**THE BABY SHOW** Discover everything you need for bump, baby and beyond, all under one roof, Fri 8 - Sun 10 May, NEC, Birmingham

**LUDLOW SPRING FESTIVAL A** celebration of food, drink and live entertainment, Fri 8 - Sun 10 May, Ludlow Castle, South Shropshire

**FLATPACK FESTIVAL** Bringing together a mix of screenings and performances, walks and installations, Fri 8 - Sat 16 May, various venues across Birmingham

**SPRING MAKERS' FAIR** Enjoy browsing a range of stalls offering a selection of unique gifts, Sat 9 May, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**DISCO BLISS DAY PARTY** A daytime dance party with 70s and 80s music, Sat 9 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**AMERICAN SUPERSLAM WRESTLING** Two hours of non-stop high-flying action, Sat 9 May, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**CANCER RESEARCH UK - PRETTY MUDDY** Funding life-saving research, Sat 9 May, Weston Park, Shropshire

**WORLD WAR TWO OPEN DAY** Commemorating the time when Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings was a temporary barracks and training centre in World War Two, Sat 9 May, Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

**UK SLOT CAR FESTIVAL** Showcasing a wide range of the major slot car manufacturers, Sat 9 - Sun 10 May, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**NATIONAL TRAIN DAY WEEKEND** Discover the magic of railways through hands-on activities, creative crafts, and expert insights, Sat 9 - Sun 10 May, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**MODELS & MODEL ENGINEERING SHOW** Bringing together the very best in engineering societies, exhibitors and traders, Sat 9 - Sun 10 May, Stafford Country Park, Tamworth

**MEET THE BODGERS** Learn about and watch demonstrations of green woodworking and heritage woodland crafts, Sat 9 - Sun 10 May, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

**SPRING MAKERS MARKET** Spend the day browsing a curated mix of independent traders, Sat 9 - Sun 10 May, FarGo Village, Coventry

**YOUNG DRIVER CLASSIC CAR EXPERIENCES** Driving experiences for kids, Sun 10 May, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**BROMSGROVE FUN RUN 2026** Raising funds for Blood Cancer UK, Sun 10 May, Bromsgrove Rugby Club

## Gigs

**TAJ FARRANT BAND** Mon 11 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**DEARY** Tues 12 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**DEAD DADS CLUB** Tues 12 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**ACM SOUNDS** Tues 12 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**LEAH KATE** Tues 12 May, O2 Institute, B'ham

**MIDGE URE** Tues 12 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**ALBERT LEE AND HIS BAND** Tues 12 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**PAUL YOUNG** Tues 12 May, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**CASSIDY JANSON SINGS CAROLE KING** Tues 12 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**NORTHERN RESONANCE** Wed 13 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**MIDNIGHT TIL MORNING + RYAN MACK** Wed 13 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**PAUL WALKER + KAREN PFEIFFER + JACK BLACKMAN** Wed 13 May, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

**EMMYLOU HARRIS** Wed 13 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**LØLØ + ELLA RED** Wed 13 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham



**UPTON BLUES FESTIVAL TAKEOVER** Wed 13 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**JOHN 5** Wed 13 May, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

**SESSION A9** Wed 13 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**DIYET AND THE LOVE SOLDIERS** Wed 13 May, The Talbot Theatre, Whitchurch, North

Shropshire

**PSYCHONAUT + COBRA THE IMPALER** Thurs 14 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**SEAMUS FOGARTY** Thurs 14 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

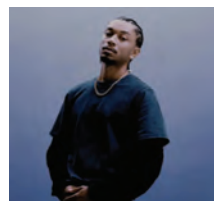
**JESCA HOOP + HOT SPRINGS** Thurs 14 May, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**AN EVENING OF... SINATRA** Thurs 14 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

**ELLE COVES** Thurs 14 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**PINS** Thurs 14 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**WESLEY JOSEPH** Thurs 14 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham



**LIGHTS** Thurs 14 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

**FALLING & LAUGHING + APPI + PINK OPAQUE** Thurs 14 May, The Victoria, Birmingham

**SETH LAKEMAN** Thurs 14 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**CELEBRATING MEAT LOAF FEATURING THE NEVERLAND EXPRESS** Thurs 14 May, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**IAN BRUCE AND KEV GREEN** Thurs 14 May, Catshill Social Club, Bromsgrove

**ELTON'S SONG: BEYOND THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD** Thurs 14 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**TOOTS AND THE MAYTALS** Thurs 14 May, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**BIG JOE LOUIS** Thurs 14 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**ELVIS TRIBUTE ARTIST WORLD TOUR** Thurs 14 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**THE OBGMS + WOOD AND NAILS + LAS VEDAS** Thurs 14 May, Just Dropped In, Coventry

**KIEFER SUTHERLAND + COLIN ANDREW** Thurs 14 May, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

**CLEARWATER CREEDENCE REVIVAL + TEN YEARS AFTER** Thurs 14 May, Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

**BODYWEB + SMOTHER + CAINHURST + INVASION + WITHERHORDE** Thurs 14 May, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE ILLEGAL EAGLES** Thurs 14 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**DIYET AND THE LOVE SOLDIERS** Thurs 14 May, Quatt Village Hall, Shropshire

**CHARLOTTE YOUNG** Fri 15 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**BLONDISH** Fri 15 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**DAVE FORMULA + NOKO** Fri 15 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE SMYTHS** Fri 15 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

**EXAMPLE** Fri 15 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**MOOSE JAW** Fri 15 May, Jo Jo Jims, B'ham

**DJABBIC 3** Fri 15 May, Tower of Song, B'ham

**CARBON BASED LIFEFORMS** Fri 15 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**THE REAL JOBS + WIIINCE + LUXURY NAN SMELL + ROOTED** Fri 15 May, Centrala, B'ham

**LOOSE ARTICLES** Fri 15 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**ANTHONY HARTY** Fri 15 May, The Victoria, Birmingham

**TOM SMITH** Fri 15 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**JO CARLEYS "WRECK AND RUIN" + TERRAPLANES** Fri 15 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**NUKE THE WHALES + BIG STRONG BOYS + TAYLOR-LOUISE + BLUE STRAWBERRIES** Fri 15 May, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**MAX COOPER + DELIAPHONIC** Fri 15 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**NOTHING BUT A GOOD**

**TIME - ROCK ANTHEMS** Fri 15 May, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**ROBIN NOLAN TRIO** Fri 15 May, Bilston Town Hall

**WILLY MASON** Fri 15 May, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

**METEORA + LIMP BISCUIT + EVANESCENT + PAPAS ROACHES** Fri 15 May, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE ROUGH KUTZ** Fri 15 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**ROBERT VINCENT** Fri 15 May, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

**MADE OF STONE ROSES** Fri 15 May, Lichfield Guildhall

**AIRTIGHT 80S** Fri 15 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**EGO FRIENDLY** Fri 15 May, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

**MIRANDA SYKES & JIM CAUSLEY** Fri 15 May, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

**LADY NADE SINGS NINA SIMONE** Fri 15 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrops

**THE BLACK JEANS** Fri 15 - Sat 16 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

**WESTWORLD WEEKEND XXII** Fri 15 - Sat 16 May, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

**GENEVIEVE MILES** Sat 16 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**EAST STREET BAND** Sat 16 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**BO STALOCH + ABBY POWLEDGE + EVE CHRISTINA** Sat 16 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**SEAN REEVES** Sat 16 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**HOSPITAL FOOD + WE HAVE NO MOUTH + YOUTH WITHIN** Sat 16 May, The Dark Horse, Birmingham

**CHANCE PEÑA** Sat 16 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**POOLER + THE CELIA FINES + SUNSCAPE + SYCAMORE HILL + CICADA** Sat 16 May, O2

Institute, Birmingham

**KINGFISHER** Sat 16 May, O2 Academy, B'ham

**ASSURANCE** Sat 16 May, Dead Wax, Birmingham

**THE CLASSIC BLUES SHOW** Sat 16 May, Bromsgrove Arts @ Fairfield Village Hall

**CLASSIC ROCK REVIVAL** Sat 16 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**R.E.M BY STIPE** Sat 16 May, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**BETH ROWLEY** Sat 16 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa



**UNDER THE COVERS** Sat 16 May, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

**RECKLESS - BRYAN ADAMS, BON JOVI TRIBUTE** Sat 16 May, Arches Venue, Coventry

**PARADISE FOUND - LIVE MEAT LOAF ROCK SHOW** Sat 16 May, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**NICKELBACK UK** Sat 16 May, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**THE ULTIMATE EAGLES** Sat 16 May, Kidderminster Town Hall

**MARK MORRIS** Sat 16 May, West Malvern Social Club

**THE UPBEAT BEATLES** Sat 16 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

**THE ILLEGAL EAGLES** Sat 16 May, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

**THE DEKKERTONES + CITYLIGHTZ** Sat 16 May, The Robin, Bilston

**HOT 2 TROT** Sat 16 May, Cafe Metro, Bilston

**COLDPLACE** Sat 16 May, Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

**MACHINE HEAD** Sat 16 May, Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**ANDY GOWER + KOALA + JOHNNY NICE PAINTER** Sat 16 May, The

Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

**JAMES MORRISON** Sat 16 May, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

**COLDPLAY IT AGAIN + STEREOCONICS** Sat 16 May, Keele University, Stoke-on-Trent

**ASHLEY CAMPBELL** Sat 16 May, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

**LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU - ROBBIE WILLIAMS TRIBUTE** Sat 16 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**DYLAN HENNER + IBUKUN SUNDAY** Sat 16 May, Unitarian Church, Shrewsbury

**ERASURED + PET SHOP BOYS, ACTUALLY** Sat 16 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**ANDY JAMES AS ELVIS** Sun 17 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**JOHN ADAMS** Sun 17 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**IMOGEN AND THE KNIFE** Sun 17 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**THE URBAN VODOO MACHINE** Sun 17 May, The Night Owl, B'ham

**SIENNA SPIRO** Sun 17 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**DEATH WARMED UP + MYSTIEL + NO SETTING SUN** Sun 17 May, Subside Bar, B'ham

**TWOMANTING** Sun 17 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**PÔT-PÔT + GLISTEN TRICK** Sun 17 May, Just Dropped In, Coventry

**STEVE CRADOCK** Sun 17 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**ZIO** Sun 17 May, The Robin, Bilston

**THE FUREYS** Sun 17 May, The Core Theatre, Solihull

**CASSIDY PARIS** Sun 17 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**DAN WALSH** Sun 17 May, The Hive, Shrewsbury

**ROXY MAGIC** Sun 17 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

## Classical Music

### THOMAS TROTTER ORGAN CONCERT

Programme includes works by Gigout, Messiaen, Perry & more..., Mon 11 May, Birmingham Town Hall

### CBSO SYMPHONIC SESSIONS: FESTIVAL EDITION

Programme includes works by Haydn, Bartók, Clyne & more..., Wed 13 May, Herbert's Yard, B'ham

### BETTY MAKHARINSKY (SOPRANO) & PAVEL TIMOFEYEVSKY (PIANO)

Programme includes works by Poulenc, Britten & Mussorgsky, Thurs 14 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

### ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: FROM THE HEART OF THE DARK FOREST

Programme includes works by Ravel, Brahms, Bartók & more..., Thurs 14 May, St Nicholas Church, Warwick

### WHITTINGTON MUSIC FESTIVAL 2026 A

'vibrant and ambitious' programme of concerts with classical music at its core, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 May, St John the Baptist Church, Whittington

### GEMA LU CAI PIANO RECITAL

Fri 15 May, St Mary's Church, Warwick

### TOTAL VOKAL

Fri 15 May, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

### LEAMINGTON SINFONIA: MAHLER 8

Featuring Joe Davies (conductor) & Edward Boothroyd (leader), Sat 16 May, Coventry Cathedral

### THE MUSIC OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Featuring Mystery Ensemble, Sat 16 May, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

### LUDLOW ORCHESTRA SPRING CONCERT

Featuring Jonathan Lyness (conductor) & Claire Tocknell (leader). Programme includes works by Schubert & Mahler, Sat 16 May, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

### ECHO RISING STARS 2025/26: TRIO

CONCEPT Featuring Edoardo Grieco (violin), Francesco Massimino (cello), and Lorenzo Nguyen (piano). Programme includes works by Dvořák, Elgar, Viëtor & more..., Sun 17 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

### WARSAW PHILHARMONIC

Featuring Krzysztof Urbański (conductor) & Alexandra Dariescu (piano). Programme includes works by Lutoslawski, Chopin, Bacewicz & Beethoven, Sun 17 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

### NORTH WALES OPERA: VERDI'S

RIGOLETTO Featuring Anne Williams-King (director), Andrew Charity (musical director), Ensemble SY1 & Alex Postlethwaite (ensemble leader), Sun 17 May, Shrewsbury Abbey

### LICHFIELD SINFONIA

Featuring Sara Birchall (conductor), Luke Cutler (oboe) & Emily Bowen (leader). Programme includes works by Nielsen, Strauss & Sibelius, Sun 17 May, Lichfield Guildhall

## Comedy

**JONNY COLE** Wed 13 May, Lichfield Garrick

**LEO KEARSE** Wed 13 May, Brierley Hill Civic

**DANIEL KITSON** Wed 13 - Thurs 14 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**KANE BROWN & JOE BINGHAM** Thurs 14 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**ANDY ROBINSON, LIAM WITHNAIL, KATE BARRON & SAMIRA BANKS** Thurs 14 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**LEO KEARSE** Thurs 14 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre



**JOHN KEARNS** Thurs 14 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**IAN STONE** Thurs 14 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

**JONNY COLE** Thurs 14 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**JASON PATTERSON, MAFF BROWN, LIAM WITHNAIL, KATE BARRON & CHRISTIAN JEGARD** Fri 15 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**FATIHA EL-GHORRI** Fri 15 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MARK WATSON** Fri 15 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

**MIKE WOZNAK** Fri 15 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**THE COMEDY STORE ON THE ROAD** Fri 15 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**VLAD ILICH, HARRY JENKINS, KATE LUCAS & PAUL REVILL** Sat 16 May, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**JASON PATTERSON, MAFF BROWN, LIAM WITHNAIL & KATE BARRON** Sat 16 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**WILL OWEN** Sat 16 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**AL MURRAY** Sat 16 May, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**LUCY BEAUMONT** Sat 16 May, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**DALISO CHAPONDA** Sat 16 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**KANE BROWN** Sat 16 May, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**SEANN WALSH** Sat 16 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**CLINTON BAPTISTE** Sat 16 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**MARK WATSON** Sat 16 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**LUNCHTIME FAMILY COMEDY SHOW** Sun 17 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

### ROUGH WORKS: NEW MATERIAL NIGHT

Sun 17 May, The Glee Club, B'ham

### NABIL ABDULRASHID, MUHSIN YESILADA, SHAZIA MIRZA & AATIF NAWAZ

Sun 17 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**CLINTON BAPTISTE** Sun 17 May, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

## Theatre

### LA TRAVIATA - THE FAREWELL TOUR

Ellen Kent Opera present Verdi's tragic tale, Mon 11 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

### OPERATION MINCEMEAT

Olivier Award-winning musical telling the 'hilarious and unbelievable' true story of the twisted secret mission that helped win World War Two, Mon 11 - Sat 16 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

### TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT

Here To There Productions present Graham Greene's comic adventure, Mon 11 - Sat 16 May, Malvern Theatres

### CARMEN - THE FAREWELL TOUR

Ellen Kent Opera present Bizet's tale of passion and sexual jealousy, Tues 12 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



**MALORY TOWERS** Emma Rice's stage adaptation of the original 'girl power' story. A tale of high jinks, high drama and high spirits - all set to music, Tues 12 - Sat 16 May, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**MAMMA MIA!** Smash-hit musical telling a story of love, friendship and identity through the timeless songs of ABBA, Tues 12 - Sat 30 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

### MONEY FOR NOTHING & UNTITLED

Double bill of new works performed as part of Origins Festival. Grace Barrington's Money For Nothing is based in a working men's club in Yardley, struggling to stay afloat during austerity. Meanwhile, Amerah Saleh's Untitled gives space to the complexities of grief, Wed 13 May, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

### MADAMA BUTTERFLY - THE FAREWELL TOUR

Ellen Kent Opera present Puccini's heartbreaking story of a young Japanese girl who falls in love with an American naval lieutenant - with dramatic results, Wed 13 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**THE LAST LAUGH** Three legendary (and dearly departed) comedians - Tommy Cooper, Bob Monkhouse and Eric Morecambe - come together in a

rough works: new material night means to be funny..., Wed 13 - Sat 16 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**THE TEMPEST** Kenneth Branagh stars as Prospero in Shakespeare's final play, Wed 13 May - Sat 20 June, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

### AS POETIC AS IT SOUNDS & HURTS SO GOOD

Double bill of new works performed as part of Origins Festival. Nathan Sebastian Lafayette's As Poetic As It Sounds is a dance-theatre piece exploring what it means to be an artist. Louis Wharton's Hurts So Good plays on themes of queer storytelling with a bold and inventive process, Thurs 14 May, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

### MURDER TRIAL TONIGHT 4: DEATH OF A LANDLORD

The audience become the jury in a courtroom thriller based on the true story of Victor Sloane, a wealthy and ruthless landlord found murdered in his office..., Thurs 14 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

### TWO Tread The Boards Theatre

Company present Jim Cartwright's poignant play, set in a working-class northern pub and taking place over the course of one evening, Thurs 14 - Sun 24 May, The Attic Theatre, Cox's Yard, Stratford-upon-Avon

### FALLING

An experience located on the borderlines of theatre, dance and mime - devised and performed by Open Theatre's ensemble company. Note that this production contains strong language and adult themes of loss, disruption, sexuality and desperation, Thurs 14 May, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

### PRETEND LIKE IT'S CALM & THE BODY I SEE IS ALSO MINE

Double bill of new works performed as part of Origins Festival. Zakariye's Pretend Like It's Calm is a one-man poetic exploration of grief, family and unlikely friendships. Tina Hofman's The Body I See Is Also Mine is a journey through memory via new writing, movement and imagery, Fri 15 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

### TEAM VIKING

Storytelling, music and comedy combine in a comic ode to death, friendship and the beautiful absurdity of life, Fri 15 May, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

### EARTH SECRETS & MID

Double bill of new works performed as part of Origins Festival. Elizabeth O'Connor's Earth Secrets focuses on two neighbouring families and their dispute over a bordering fence, a rose bush and a lost dog. Meanwhile, Jaz Morrison's MID shines the spotlight on themes of social space, community, culture-building and storytelling, Sat 16 May, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

**THE CRAWL** Physical theatre show that takes a dive into the world of absurd

competition via performance, cinematic storytelling and audience interaction, Sat 16 May, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**ODE TO JOYCE** One-woman show in which Cheryl Knight portrays Joyce Grenfell - one of the greatest female entertainers of the 20th century - using songs and monologues, Sun 17 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

## Kids Theatre

**A SQUASH AND A SQUEEZE** Musical adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's bestselling book, Wed 13 - Thurs 14 May, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE MUSICAL** Amateur version presented by The Rugeley Arts, Fri 15 - Sun 17 May, Rugeley Rose Theatre

## Dance

**PHOENIX DANCE: INTERPLAY** A powerful mixed bill showcasing work by internationally renowned choreographers, Tues 12 - Wed 13 May, Malvern Theatres

**STRICTLY COME DANCING: THE PROFESSIONALS** High energy production featuring 10 dancers from the hit tv series as well as a live band and vocalists, Fri 15 - Sat 16 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**LES BALLETS TROCKADERO DE MONTE CARLO** Immaculate technique, daring physicality and impeccable comic timing is guaranteed when all-male comedy ballet company The Trocks take to the stage, Fri 15 - Sat 16 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

## Light Entertainment

**THAT'LL BE THE DAY: 40TH ANNIVERSARY SHOW** Blend of rock & roll, pop and comedy, featuring timeless hits from the 1950s through to the 1980s, Mon 11 - Tues 12 May, Lichfield Garrick

**UNCOVERED - FORBIDDEN REALM OF CONSPIRACIES** 'Bold, immersive theatre experience' that pulls audiences deep into the world of conspiracy theories, hidden narratives and forbidden questions...., Tues 12 May, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**ALASTAIR MCGOWAN** Music, poetry, impressions & chat, Tues 12 May, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

**BOX OF FROGS** 'Birmingham's premiere improv group' present an evening of high-octane improvised comedy nonsense based entirely on audience suggestions, Wed 13 May,

1000 Trades, Birmingham

**KENDAL MOUNTAIN TOUR 2026 LIVE TOUR** Experience the best of the world's stunning landscapes through a curated selection of Kendal Mountain Festival award-winning short adventure films, Wed 13 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**THE D-DAY DARLINGS: VICTORIOUS** Celebration of 'resilience, love and legacy' featuring timeless classics from Vera Lynn, The Andrew Sisters and more...., Wed 13 May, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**THE MUSIC OF JOHN WILLIAMS VS HANS ZIMMER** Presented by the Great British Film Orchestra, Wed 13 May, Lichfield Cathedral

**BOWIE BY CANDLELIGHT** Fri 15 May, Worcester Cathedral

**THE D-DAY DARLINGS: VICTORIOUS** Celebration of 'resilience, love and legacy' featuring timeless classics from Vera Lynn, The Andrew Sisters and more...., Fri 15 May, Halesowen Town Hall

**BOX OF FROGS** 'Birmingham's premiere improv group' present an evening of high-octane improvised comedy nonsense based entirely on audience suggestions, Fri 15 May, Highbury Theatre, Sutton Coldfield

**ROSALIE MINNITT: CLEMENTINE** Character comedy show described as 'a story about sickly sisters, self-love and Sylvanian Families', Fri 15 - Sat 16 May, The Rep, Birmingham

**MAGIC OF MUSICALS** Featuring stars of the West End and the 10-piece CN Live Orchestra, Sat 16 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

**JOHNS' BOYS: 10TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR** Concert performed by the only British choir ever to be crowned Choir of the World, Sat 16 May, Dudley Town Hall

**PINK FLOYD BY CANDLELIGHT** Sat 16 May, Worcester Cathedral

**PHANTOMS OF THE POPERA - STARRING G4** Show described as 'the ultimate celebration of musical theatre', Sun 17 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**SUKHVINDER SINGH PINKY** 'Rare and captivating performance from one of the finest exponents of traditional Punjabi percussion art', Sun 17 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**THE WEST END TENORS** Celebrating 'the greatest triumphs of musical theatre and film', Sun 17 May, Lichfield Garrick

**TAKE FLIGHT** Multi-sensory interactive theatre show for very young audiences, Sun 17 May, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**SAY SHAVA SHAVA** Live music & dance experience paying tribute to the legendary Bollywood film Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham as it marks its 25th anniversary, Sun 17 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**SEVEN DRUNKEN NIGHTS** The story of

Irish legends The Dubliners.

Described as 'the ultimate feelgood show', Sun 17 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

## Talks & Spoken Word

**HAMZA YASSIN: MY LIFE BEHIND THE LENS** Join the wildlife cameraman & presenter as he shares behind-the-scenes tales from his epic filming expeditions across the globe, Wed 13 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**JOHN ROBB 'PUNK ROCK RUINED MY LIFE'** Join John as he talks about his life and the rise and fall of the punk generation. Martin Bramah is the special guest, Thurs 14 May, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

**HAMZA YASSIN: MY LIFE BEHIND THE LENS** Join the wildlife cameraman & presenter as he shares behind-the-scenes tales from his epic filming expeditions across the globe, Fri 15 May, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent



**SIMON YATES: PLEASURE AND PAIN** The Touching The Void mountaineer shares stories from his adventures in South America, Central Asia and the Himalayas, Sun 17 May, The Civic, Stourport

## Events

**SHAKESPEARE INSTITUTE OPEN DAY** Hear first-hand about life studying at the Shakespeare Institute, Mon 11 May, Mason Croft (Shakespeare Institute), Stratford-upon-Avon

**BITE-SIZE TALK - TEXTILES UNFOLDED** Join the costume curator to learn about the importance of Worcestershire's costume collection, Tues 12 May, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**VALUATION DAY WITH BBC'S KATE BLISS** The independent jewellery and fine art valuer returns, Tues 12 May, Ludlow Castle, South Shropshire

**THINKTANK HOME EDUCATION DAY** A day dedicated to home educated children and their families, Wed 13 May, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**2026 BETMGM PREMIER LEAGUE DARTS** With Luke Littler, Luke Humphries, Gian van Veen, Michael van Gerwen, Jonny Clayton, Stephen Bunting,

Josh Rock and Gerwyn Price, Thurs 14 May, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**QUILTS UK** Over 200 quilts on display, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 May, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**SPRING DIESEL FESTIVAL** Featuring both guest and home-fleet locomotives operating a busy timetable between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 May, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster

**THE MURDER OF ANNA SHEARS** A murder mystery night, Fri 15 May, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

**GRIEF AND CLAY WORKSHOP** With artist Jemma Mellor and support from Northfield volunteers, Fri 15 May, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

**1960S EVENING** Transport yourself back to the vibrant sounds of the 1960s, Fri 15 - Sat 16 May, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

**LAND ROVER MONTHLY LIVE** Trade stands, club and vehicle displays, a live events arena and more, Sat 16 - Sun 17 May, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**GIRAFFE JAMBOREE** A brand-new show, trails, competitions and the chance to win prizes, Sat 16 - Sun 17 May, West Midlands Safari Park, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**MAKERS CENTRAL** Celebrating creativity, craftsmanship, and hands-on innovation, Sat 16 - Sun 17 May, NEC, Birmingham

**MEDIAEVAL MARKET AND LIVING HISTORY CAMP** Over 120 re-enactors will welcome visitors into medieval life, Sat 16 - Sun 17 May, Evesham Market Place & All Saints Church and St. Lawrence's Church Grounds

**25TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND** Two unique days of vibrant performances, reflective moments and powerful storytelling, Sat 16 - Sun 17 May, National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire

**WHITCHURCH FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL** Free family event celebrating local food and drink, Sat 16 May, Jubilee Park, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

**STORM THE CASTLE** The duathlon returns, Sun 17 May, Ludlow Castle, South Shropshire

**SCOOTERFEST '26** A social for fellow 'scooterists' and friends with a rally, market and parts fair, Sun 17 May, The Market Place & Silk Street Car Park, Leek, Staffordshire

**FORD MODEL T DAY** A display of vintage Ford Model T vehicles at Spring Village Station, Sun 17 May, Telford Steam Railway, Shropshire

**BIKE 4 LIFE** One of the UK's most popular and biggest ride outs, attracting more than 6,000 bikers and pillions, Sun 17 May, Weston Park, Shropshire



Kraftwerk - Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

## Gigs

**GLOIN** Mon 18 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**RICO ACE** Mon 18 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**BÉGAYER** Mon 18 May, Centrala, Birmingham

**MAX COOPER** Mon 18 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**JOHN ADAMS** Mon 18 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**SUKHVINDER SINGH PINKY** Mon 18 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**SUBMOTION ORCHESTRA** Tues 19 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**JERRON PAXTON** Tues 19 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**FLORENCE ROAD** Tues 19 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**ALPHAWHORES** Tues 19 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**CHRISTOPHER CROSS** Tues 19 May, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**ZAYN** Tues 19 May, Utilita Arena B'ham

**HOWLING GIANT + ALUNAH + TELLEMAHOOKAH** Tues 19 May, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**THE HILLBILLY MOON EXPLOSION + COUNTRY TIES** Tues 19 May, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**LUCY SPRAGGAN** Tues 19 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

**GIRL IN THE YEAR ABOVE** Wed 20 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**THOMAS DOLBY +**

**MARTIN MCALOON** Wed 20 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**BOB FOX + JOHN & CAROLE HOARE** Wed 20 May, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

**NASHVILLE SOUNDS** Wed 20 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**SARAH BLASKO** Wed 20 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**SHEILA FAWKES CAFÉ ORCHESTRA** Wed 20 May, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

**THE DUNWELLS** Wed 20 May, West Malvern Social Club

**GLENN TILBROOK** Wed 20 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**JENNY COLQUITT** Thurs 21 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**ALAN DANIEL TOBIN** Thurs 21 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**KELE LE ROC & TERRI WALKER** Thurs 21 May, The Jam House, B'ham

**THE CASES + FREIGHT + THE ARISTON** Thurs 21 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**THE RECKLESS BREED** Thurs 21 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE EX** Thurs 21 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**COMMON GOLDFISH** Thurs 21 May, The Victoria, Birmingham

**CELEBRATING CELINE - A NEW DAY** Thurs 21 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**WILLIE AND THE BANDITS (FT STEVIE WATTS)** Thurs 21 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**LUTHER UK** Thurs 21 May, Warwick Arts

Centre, Coventry  
**JARBOE FEAT. THOR HARRIS & JOY VON SPAIN** Thurs 21 May, Just Dropped In, Coventry

**TOYAH** Thurs 21 May, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**KRAFTWERK** Thurs 21 May, Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**APRIL MOON + DAVID BOARDMAN & HELEN WALFORD** Thurs 21 May, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

**WOODEN DOG** Fri 22 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**THE GOOD WATER + LOBBY + NOT SOUP** Fri 22 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**RINGLETS + GEORGE DILLON** Fri 22 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**DINO BAPTISTE** Fri 22 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**999** Fri 22 May, The Dark Horse, B'ham

**LABYRINTHINE OCEANS** Fri 22 May, The Night Owl, Birmingham

**BLU EYES + EVERYTHING WE DO** Fri 22 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**TREVOR BABAJACK STEGER** Fri 22 May, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

**-ZIQ + ID:MORA + MEEMO** Fri 22 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**A LOSS FOR WORDS + BEACH FRONT + DOWNCAST + LUNAR HIJACK** Fri 22 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**FELICETTE + TRUST CLUB + SINEWS** Fri 22 May, The Victoria, Birmingham

**PRETTY GREEN + THE**

**PORCELAIN MODS** Fri 22 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**THE SAMPLES + SCREAMING DEAD + VOMIT + GEOFFREY + OII!COTT** Fri 22 May, Marris Bar, Worcester

**TOYAH** Fri 22 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**QUILL** Fri 22 May, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**TOOTS & THE MAYTALS FEATURING LEBA HIBBERT** Fri 22 May, Kidderminster Town Hall

**PINK LIVE FT. VICKY JACKSON** Fri 22 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

**THE GRUNGE ADDICTION** Fri 22 May, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

**DEFINITELY GREENDAY + THE BETTER DAYS** Fri 22 May, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**SEDGLEY MORRIS** Fri 22 May, Cafe Metro, Bilston

**BLUE** Fri 22 May, Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**OASISH** Fri 22 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**CELEBRATING CELINE** Fri 22 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**ROBIN NOLAN** Fri 22 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**NORTHERN LIVE - DO I LOVE YOU** Fri 22 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**TEMTRIS + DESIRE LINES** Fri 22 May, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

**THE GROOVE ASSEMBLY** Fri 22 - Sat 23 May, The Jam House, B'ham

**LAURENCE JONES + AMY EFTEKHARI** Fri 22 - Sat 23 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**H&H HOUSE BAND PERFORM 'THE QUEEN IS DEAD' BY THE SMITHS** Sat 23 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**PHIL ODGERS AND PAUL SIMMONDS** Sat 23 May, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**RUBY ROBERTS** Sat 23 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**FAYE SMITH** Sat 23 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**BANCO DE GAIA + SCANNER + MARCONI UNION** Sat 23 May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**DUSK BROTHERS** Sat 23 May, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

**ALBION** Sat 23 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**CHARLIE PARR** Sat 23 May, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**CARL AYLOTT + NICKY AGER + PAUL QUINN** Sat 23 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**SKATRAIN** Sat 23 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**POPESTARS + ROBBED ZOMBIE** Sat 23 May, Arches Venue, Coventry

**TANNAHILL WEAVERS** Sat 23 May, Number 8, Pershore

**SPOUKY KIDS & KORN AGAIN** Sat 23 May, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**GUNS OR ROSES** Sat 23 May, Marris Bar, Worcester

**NICK HARPER** Sat 23 May, West Malvern Social Club

**NAKED SUNDAY + BEN AND STUART GREEN + SIMON LINDON** Sat 23 May, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**CHEZ KANE** Sat 23 May, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

**ANTARCTIC MONKEYS** Sat 23 May, Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

**AMY'S WINEHOUSE & THE EMPTY CELLARS** Sat 23 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**BIG WOLF BAND** Sat 23 May, The Boat Shack, Bromsgrove

**SCOTT BRADLEE'S POSTMODERN JUKEBOX** Sat 23 May, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**A VISION OF ELVIS** Sat 23 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**SPEAKING IN TONGUES - TALKING HEADS TRIBUTE** Sat 23 May, The Station, Cannock

**FITZ N STARTZ** Sat 23 May, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

**A TRIBUTE TO STING & THE POLICE** Sat 23 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**THE BOO RADLEYS** Sun 24 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**THE DEAD MARSHES** Sun 24 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**CHRIS BRAIN** Sun 24 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**TEMPTED 2 TOUCH** Sun 24 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

**THE MIKE DAVIDS BAND** Sun 24 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**GODSKITCHEN** Sun 24 May, Digbeth Triangle & O2 Institute, B'ham

**SOUL & LOVERS ROCK LEGACY** Sun 24 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**HAIKU SALUT + THE SILVER FIELD** Sun 24 May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**PLINI + SUNGAZER** Sun 24 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

**COLDPLAY IT AGAIN + OASIS HERE NOW + STEREOCONICS** Sun 24 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**COLIN BLUNSTONE** Sun 24 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**NIGHT SWIMMING** Sun 24 May, Just Dropped In, Coventry

**THE BLUETONES + SURA LAYNES** Sun 24 May, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**LOGICALTRAMP** Sun 24 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**THE BOB DYLAN STORY** Sun 24 May, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**KAISER MONKEY KILLERS** Sun 24 May, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**LIFE** Sun 24 May, Cafe Metro, Bilston

**THE BUSHBURYS + THE EMPTY CAN** Sun 24 May, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**RAY QUINN** Sun 24 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**QUILL** Sun 24 May, Lichfield Garrick

**RICH PARSONS** Sun 24 May, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

## Classical Music

**MARTYN RAWLES ORGAN RECITAL** Tues 19 May, Lichfield Cathedral

**ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: RED SKY AT SUNRISE: LAURIE LEE IN WORDS & MUSIC** Featuring Anton Lesser & Charlie Hamblett (actors), Tues 19 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**CBSO RUSH HOUR CONCERT** Featuring Amy Thomas (presenter). Programme includes works by Strauss, Wed 20 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**LUDLOW PIANO FESTIVAL** Featuring old friends, lots of big names and five days of non-stop, fabulous pianism, Wed 20 - Sun 24 May, various venues around Ludlow, South Shropshire

**CBSO: STRAUSS & WAGNER** Featuring Fabien Gabel (conductor) & Nikola Hillebrand (soprano), Thurs 21 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**ELGAR FESTIVAL: RELAXED CONCERT** An hour-long concert full of beautiful music as part of Dementia Action Week, Thurs 21 May, Pershore Abbey

**CBSO CENTRE STAGE: ATLANTIC CONNECTIONS** Featuring Helen Edgar (cello), Joanna Patton (clarinet) & John Thwaites (piano). Programme includes works by Muczynski, Boulanger & GVA Walker, Fri 22 May, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

**ISAAC BOULTER PIANO RECITAL** Fri 22 May, St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham

**SOPHIE HENDERSON (SOPRANO) & ASHLEY WAGNER (PIANO)** Fri 22 May, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

**EROICA** Featuring Peter Marks (conductor) & Sally Alexander (cello). Programme includes works by Mendelssohn, Saint-Saëns & Mozart, Sat 23 May, St Nicolas Church, Kings Norton, Birmingham

**ELGAR FESTIVAL 2026** A celebration of Worcester's most famous son in his hometown and surrounding areas, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May, various venues around Worcestershire

## Comedy

**JOE KENT-WALTERS** Tues 19 - Wed 20 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MATT BRAGG, TOUSSAINT DOUGLASS & DANNY MCLOUGHLIN** Wed 20 May, Morris Hall, Shrewsbury

**MILTON JONES, TONY LAW, KAZEEM JAMAL & KEVIN DANIEL** Wed 20 May, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**DANIEL KITSON** Wed 20 - Thurs 21 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**PIERRE NOVELLIE** Thurs 21 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**ANDY ROBINSON, ALANA JACKSON & BRUCE DEVLIN** Thurs 21 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**WOMEN'S COMEDY SHOWCASE** Thurs 21 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**KAREN BAYLEY, TOM LITTLE, CERYS NELMES & KEV MUD** Thurs 21 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**JONNY COLE** Thurs 21 May, Kidderminster Town Hall

**SCOTT BENNETT** Fri 22 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**NICK MOHAMMED** Fri 22 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**JOANNE MCNALLY, FIN TAYLOR, RACHEL FAIRBURN, JOSH JONES & FREDDIE QUINNE** Fri 22 May, Warwick Castle

**KAREN BAYLEY, STEVE DAY, KENT CAMERON & JON PEARSON** Fri 22 May, Bedworth Civic Hall

**ELLIOT STEEL, LEWIS GARNHAM, ALANA JACKSON & BRUCE DEVLIN** Fri 22 - Sat 23 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**EDDY BRIMSON, BEN TRELOAR, AARON WOOD & ADAM BEARDSMORE** Sat 23 May, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**JEFF GREEN** Sat 23 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**RUSSELL KANE, ED BYRNE, ESTHER MANITO (PICTURED), THOMAS GREEN & FREDDIE QUINNE** Sat 23 May, Warwick Castle



**JONNY COLE** Sat 23 May, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

**CHRIS MCC AUSLAND, SCOTT BENNETT, MIKE RICE, HATTY PRESTON & FREDDIE QUINNE** Sun 24 May, Warwick Castle

**LOU CONRAN, DAVID EAGLE, ELERI MORAHAN & DAVE CHAWNER** Sun 24 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

## Theatre

**DOOMGATE** Dark comedy performed by a local theatre class run by Halftail Productions, Mon 18 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE** Amateur version of Tennessee Williams' timeless masterpiece, Mon 18 - Sat 23 May, Talisman Theatre & Arts Centre, Kenilworth

**2:22 A GHOST STORY** Award-winning supernatural thriller starring James Bye, Natalie Casey, Grant Kilburn and Shvorne Marks, Mon 18 - Sat 23 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**BLOOD BROTHERS** Willy Russell's legendary play tells the tale of twins who, separated at birth, grow up on opposite sides of the tracks, only to meet again with fateful



*Glorious! - The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry*

consequences, Tues 19 - Sat 23 May, Lichfield Garrick

**THE BEEKEEPER OF ALEPPO** Stage adaptation of Christy Lefteri's bestselling novel, Tues 19 - Sat 23 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**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 19 - Sat 23 May, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**GLORIOUS!** Wendi Peters stars in Peter Quilter's play, based on the true story of an American socialite who became infamous for her highly unskilled singing, Tues 19 - Sat 23 May, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**FOOTLOOSE** Five Towns Theatre present an amateur version of the 1988 musical that's based on the 1984 film of the same name, Wed 20 - Sat 23 May, Stoke Repertory Theatre

**WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION** Amateur version of the Agatha Christie thriller, Wed 20 - Sat 30 May, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

**MACBETH ALONE** A 'thrilling and visceral' reimagining of Shakespeare's bloodiest tragedy, Thurs 21 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**THE NARCISSIST** Psychological thriller based on true events, Thurs 21 - Sat 23 May, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**CRAZY FOR YOU** Masqueraders Theatrical Society present an amateur version of George Gershwin's classic musical, Thurs 21 - Sat 23 May, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

**TREASURE ISLAND** Family-friendly version of Robert Louis Stevenson's swashbuckling adventure, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

**AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS** The Jules Verne classic gets the New Vic treatment as eight actors take on 109 characters, Sat 23 May - Sat 20 June, The New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

## Kids Theatre

**THE BALD PIGEON-BOY** The story of a sad little girl who meets two magical creatures whose mission is to bring joy to children. Suitable for audiences aged five-plus and performed in Farsi (with an English summary) by the Iranian Theatre of Birmingham, Tues 19 - Wed 20 May, The Rep, B'ham

**THE GRUFFALO** Tall Stories' musical adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved children's book, Wed 20 - Sun 24 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**ZOG** Staging of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's feelgood story for younger audiences, Fri 22 - Sun 24 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**MY FIRST CONCERT** High-energy musical experience for children aged between two and seven. The programme features Baby Shark, Pinkfong & The Zoomies, Sat 23 May, Malvern Theatres

**JUSTIN LIVE - JUSTIN TIME TO ROCK** High-energy, feelgood family show featuring music, dancing and plenty of giggles, Sun 24 May, The Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent



### Dance

**BREAKIN' CONVENTION A** groundbreaking festival of hip-hop dance theatre from around the world, Wed 20 May, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

### Light Entertainment

**PSYCHIC SALLY** An evening of mediumship with 'the nation's favourite psychic', Wed 20 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**UNCOVERED - FORBIDDEN REALM OF CONSPIRACIES** 'Bold, immersive theatre experience' that pulls audiences deep into the world of conspiracy theories, hidden narratives and forbidden questions..., Wed 20 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**PALESTINE: PEACE DE RESISTANCE** Sami Abu-Wardeh's critically acclaimed show, in which he digs deep into his ties to resistance and Palestinian identity, Thurs 21 May, The Rep, Birmingham



**DAVID THE MEDIUM** Join the Australian psychic medium when he stops off in Birmingham with his *Coming Home: Reunion* show, Thurs 21 May, Birmingham Town Hall

**AN EVENING WITH JIMMY TARBUCK** The acclaimed raconteur reflects on his life in showbusiness, Thurs 21 May, Dudley Town Hall

**UNCOVERED - FORBIDDEN REALM OF CONSPIRACIES** 'Bold, immersive theatre experience' that pulls audiences deep into the world of conspiracy theories, hidden narratives and forbidden questions..., Fri 22 May, Dudley Town Hall

**A STAR WARS IMPROV SHOW: THE ONE-MAN MADE-UP MOVIE** Improviser Jon Hipkiss presents 'the ultimate celebration of comedy and fandom', creating an entirely new Star Wars film based on audience suggestions, Fri 22 May, The Hive, Shrewsbury

**JOE TRACINI - 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT ME** Join the actor, writer & presenter for an evening of storytelling and humour..., Fri 22 - Sat 23 May, The Rep, Birmingham

**HUDSON & HUDSON MAGICIANS: MARRIED AT FIRST SLEIGHT** Feelgood show from a real-life couple who mix

marriage, magic and mind-reading, Sat 23 May, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

**LOOKING FOR ME FRIEND - THE MUSIC OF VICTORIA WOOD** Acclaimed show celebrating the music and lyrics of the late comedy icon, Sat 23 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**PIAF** Musical homage and theatrical tribute to one of France's most endearing icons, Sat 23 May, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

**JUDI LOVE: ALL ABOUT THE LOVE** Brand-new show packed with home truths about the hustle of juggling parenting, work and everyday life, Sat 23 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**A STAR WARS IMPROV SHOW: THE ONE-MAN MADE-UP MOVIE** Improviser Jon Hipkiss presents 'the ultimate celebration of comedy and fandom', creating an entirely new Star Wars film based on audience suggestions, Sat 23 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

**JUDI LOVE: ALL ABOUT THE LOVE** Brand-new show packed with home truths about the hustle of juggling parenting, work and everyday life, Sun 24 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**K.POP FANTASY** High-energy theatrical celebration of the global phenomenon, Sun 24 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

### Talks & Spoken Word

**ELIZABETH I** Historian interpreter Lesley Smith presents a dramatic costumed performance that takes audiences back to the time of Drake, Raleigh and Shakespeare, Mon 18 May, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

**DAMIAN HALL: FOREVER RUNNING** Spend an evening with the ultrarunner, coach, author, climate activist and tea addict, Tues 19 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**ELLA AL SHAMAHI: BECOMING HUMAN** Join the palaeoanthropologist, TV presenter, explorer & stand-up artist as she presents a talk on 'our remarkable origin story', Thurs 21 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**PIECE OF WORK - POETRY AT BMAG** Featuring acclaimed, world-renowned poets, as well as an open mic, Thurs 21 May, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

**SHANE EMBURY IN CONVERSATION: LIFE? AND NAPALM DEATH** Join the longest-serving member of Napalm Death as he reflects on 40 years of noise terrorism, Thurs 21 May, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

### Events

**VICTORIAN DRAMA MUSIC & AFTERNOON TEA** Step back into the elegance of the Victorian era beneath the historic beams of Guesten Hall, Wed 19 May, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

**THE GREAT BRITISH FARM FEST** Combining the traditional joy of a large country fair with the excitement and energy of a modern music festival, Fri 22 - Sun 24 May, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

**SOUL REVOLUTION FESTIVAL** Bringing together over 200 transformative workshops, live music, and thought-provoking talks, Fri 22 - Sun 24 May, Weston Park, Shropshire



**FAMILY TRAIL: ROYAL CARRIAGES** Celebrate the restoration of the crown this May half-term holiday with a trail of colourful royal carriages, Fri 22 - Sun 31 May, The Commandery, Worcester

**GATEHOUSE THEATRE TOUR A** backstage tour with expert guides, Sat 23 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**POP-UP FAMILY FEST** Bursting with creativity, curiosity, and fun for all ages, Sat 23 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**BONGO'S BINGO** The original bingo rave sensation, Sat 23 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**CINEMA UNDER THE STARS: AMMONITE** A cinema-style screening of *Ammonite*, celebrating Mary Anning's birthday and pride in STEM, Sat 23 May, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**NIGHT TIME AT THE ZOO** An evening of live music, food, and animals, Sat 23 May, Exotic Zoo, Telford

**SPOTLIGHT INDIE LIVE** One-day celebration of indie fantasy, science fiction, horror and speculative fiction, art and storytelling, Sat 23 May, Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

**THE "COME AND HAVE A NOSE" TOUR** Visit parts of the hall not usually open to the public, Sat 23 May, Himley Hall, Dudley

**BACKSTAGE TOUR** Explore The Old Rep, a beautiful Grade II listed theatre bursting with stories from over a century of theatre magic, Sat 23 May, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

**BEACH ON FESTIVAL SQUARE** Grab a deckchair and your bucket and spade and enjoy some beach fun away from the sea, Sat 23 - Sun 24

May, Festival Square, Oswestry, North Shropshire

**BIRMINGHAM PRIDE** Annual celebration of the LGBTQA+ community starring Katy B, Sigala, Nadine Cole, Danny Beard and many more... Sat 23 - Sun 24 May, Birmingham City Centre

**FOSSIL FUN WEEKEND** Celebrating Mary Anning, the fossil-hunting pioneer, Sat 23 - Sun 24 May, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**MAY HALF TERM FUN** Explore the new themed family discovery trail, 'Roll up your sleeves' to meet historic characters, Sat 23 - Sat 30 May, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

**MEERKAT MAY-HEM** Meerkat and otter talks and feeding sessions, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May, Exotic Zoo, Telford, Shropshire

**TROUBLE MAKERS: EXPERIMENTING WITH COLLAGE** Visit the Trouble Makers Studio where you will find a range of collage materials, fabrics, magazines and glue guns, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

**GIRAFFE JAMBOREE** A brand-new show, trails, competitions and the chance to win prizes, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May, West Midlands Safari Park, Bewdley

**MYSTERY MISSION** Follow the trail, track down the clues and crack the codes to uncover the secret message, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire

**RAILWAY 200 EXHIBITION TRAIN** Promoting the past, present and future of the railway, Sat 23 - Sun 31 May, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster



**PEPPA PIG'S SPACE ADVENTURE** Little explorers are encouraged to play, discover, and join in the fun, Sat 23 May - Sun 8 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

**BRIDGNORTH CARNIVAL** With a fun fair, singers, stalls and Bridgnorth dog show, Sun 24 May, Severn Park, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

**TEDDY BEARS PICNIC** Travel between the three historic stations onboard a steam train to track down all the bears, Sun 24 - Mon 25 May, Telford Steam Railway, Shropshire

**FAMILY EXPLORER TOUR** Designed to bring the history of Weston to life for families and young people, Sun 24 - Tues 26 May, Weston Park, Shropshire

## Gigs

**JOHN VINCENT III** Mon 25 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**IMOGEN CLARK + ANDREW LEAHEY** Mon 25 May, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**REINHARDT BUHR** Mon 25 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**CHERRYHOLT** Mon 25 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**SARAH KINSLEY** Mon 25 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**JULIE'S HAIRCUT + BROWN SPIRITS** Mon 25 May, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**THE MILK MEN** Mon 25 May, The Lamp Tavern, Dudley

**TREACHEROUS CRETINS** Tues 26 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**HUTCH** Tues 26 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**SEEDHE MAUT** Tues 26 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**BEARS IN TREES + DUTCH CRIMINAL RECORD** Tues 26 May, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**SCOTT BRADLEE'S POSTMODERN JUKEBOX** Tues 26 May, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**DOJA CAT** Tues 26 May, Utilita Arena B'ham

**TOM HINGLEY** Wed 27 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

**THE 113** Wed 27 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**BROADSIDE** Wed 27 May, The Asylum, Birmingham

**DUKE SPECIAL** Wed 27 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

**LIGHTNING THREADS + BONE BROKE KINGS** Wed 27 May, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

**SKIPINNISH** Thurs 28 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**BENJAMIN STEER** Thurs 28 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**XO** Thurs 28 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**TRANSMISSION** Thurs 28

May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**JJ BULL** Thurs 28 May, Dead Wax, Birmingham

**RATCHET DOLLS + HUMANTIDE + MISTRUSTED** Thurs 28 May, Subside Bar, Birmingham

**PLEASUREINC.** Thurs 28 May, The Victoria, Birmingham

**OVER THE MOON** Thurs 28 May, Catshill Social Club, Bromsgrove

**TOBIAS BEN JACOB & CHRIS CLEVERLEY** Thurs 28 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE WASHBOARD UNION** Thurs 28 May, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**TOMORROW'S NEW QUARTET** Thurs 28 May, Marris Bar, Worcester

**DEBORAH BONHAM BAND** Thurs 28 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**HEAVEN 17** Thurs 28 May, The Robin, Bilston

**JEFF GOLDBLUM & THE MILDRED SNITZER ORCHESTRA** Thurs 28 May, Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**KITTY CRAFT** Thurs 28 May, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

**TALISK** Thurs 28 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**THE OUTCHARMS** Fri 29 May, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**ANDY BENNETT** Fri 29 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**PEARL SCAM + HEY PIXIES** Fri 29 May, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**JEP-RD** Fri 29 May, Tower of Song, B'ham

**PASSIVE FIX** Fri 29 May, Dead Wax, Birmingham

**NONTAINES S.C** Fri 29 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**DARIUS ZALTASH** Fri 29 May, The Victoria, Birmingham

**THE GLEN CAMPBELL STORY** Fri 29 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**BOOTLEG BLONDIE** Fri 29 May, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**HANNAH ALDRIDGE AND LACHLAN BRYAN** Fri 29

May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE ELO SHOW** Fri 29 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**RICKIE LEE JONES** Fri 29 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**MORETALICA** Fri 29 May, Marris Bar, Worcester

**MOMENTS OF PLEASURE - KATE BUSH TRIBUTE** Fri 29 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**DANADRA** Fri 29 May, The Red Lion, Evesham

**FONTAINES Y.C. VS ANTIC MONKEYS** Fri 29 May, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**GORDON HENDRICKS AS ELVIS** Fri 29 May, Civic, Stourport

**DOGDY BOILERS + BROKEN WIRES + BIGGER THAN SEATTLE** Fri 29 May, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**JAMES MORRISON** Fri 29 May, Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**THE ULTIMATE CLASSIC ROCK SHOW** Fri 29 May, Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

**DURAN DURAN EXPERIENCE** Fri 29 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**LADY SINGS THE BLUES - MUSIC OF BILLIE HOLIDAY** Fri 29 May, Lichfield Guildhall

**SLYDER** Fri 29 May, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

**THE ROCK ANTHEMS SHOW** Fri 29 May, Rugeley Rose Theatre

**BLACKMORE'S BLOOD - TRIBUTE TO RICHIE BLACKMORE** Fri 29 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**THE ENDINGS** Fri 29 May, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

**SMOKE LIKE A FISH + BRILLCOCK COLLECTIVE + SICK BOYS CLUB** Fri 29 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrops

**URBAN INTRO** Fri 29 - Sat 30 May, The Jam House, Birmingham

**ELEPHANT SESSIONS** Sat 30 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**ARKAYLA** Sat 30 May, The Sunflower Lounge,



Talisk - Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Birmingham

**THE CADENZAS** Sat 30 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**VENT 414** Sat 30 May, O2 Institute, B'ham

**SOFIA ISELLA + SEB LOWE** Sat 30 May, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**CANAAN COX** Sat 30 May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**FLIPTRIX** Sat 30 May, Dead Wax, Birmingham

**SEATTLE THRIFT STORE** Sat 30 May, The Flapper, Birmingham

**DEAD PONY** Sat 30 May, Mama Roux's, Birmingham



**HEATHER PEACE** Sat 30 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**PAUL MILLS - SIMPLY DYLAN, DONOVAN, AND ME** Sat 30 May, Bromsgrove Arts @ Fairfield Village Hall

**BURN - DEEP PURPLE TRIBUTE** Sat 30 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIEW** Sat 30 May, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**MCHALES PERMANENT BREW** Sat 30 May, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**ALL 4 INDIE + BRITPOP UNITED** Sat 30 May, The Rhodouse, Sutton

Coldfield

**EMO FEST** Sat 30 May, hmv Empire, Coventry

**MARTA DEL GRANDI** Sat 30 May, Just Dropped In, Coventry

**THE SKALECTRICS** Sat 30 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**BEN PORTSMOUTH: THIS IS ELVIS** Sat 30 May, Malvern Theatres

**HOLDING BACK THE YEARS - SIMPLY RED TRIBUTE** Sat 30 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

**OLIVIA RODRIGO V SABRINA CARPENTER** Sat 30 May, Dudley Town Hall

**THE BROTHERS EMERY** Sat 30 May, Cafe Metro, Bilston

**PAUL YOUNG** Sat 30 May, Civic, Stourport

**KATIESFEST WITH NQDY + BIRDBROTHER + BRIAN STONE** Sat 30 May, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**GEOFF TATE'S OPERATION: MINDCRIME** Sat 30 May, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

**BOLLYWOOD TIME MACHINE** Sat 30 May, Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

**MOSHTALGIA** Sat 30 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE RUTS DC** Sat 30 May, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

**THUNDER HAMMER** Sat 30 May, The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

**SYNTH** Sat 30 May, The Station, Cannock

**THE BIG INDIE TRIBUTE FESTIVAL** Sat 30 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**UPBEAT BEATLES** Sat 30 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrops

**ELKAPATH + NEON ORACLE + INSINCERE** Sat 30 May, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

**C.W. STONEKING** Sun 31 May, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**TAXI FOR JESUS** Sun 31 May, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**THE VERY THINGS** Sun 31 May, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**CATH ROBERTS + OLIE BRICE + ALEX WARD + MIKE GENNARO + JOHN EDWARDS** Sun 31 May, Centrala, Birmingham

**CELL GAMES + CRYPTID** Sun 31 May, Subside Bar, Birmingham

**THE SOUTH SUN** Sun 31 May, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**KATIESFEST WITH JESS SILK + SHOTGUN MARMALADE + RYAN** Sun 31 May, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**QUO CONNECTION** Sun 31 May, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN** Sun 31 May, Lichfield Garrick

**THE GIACOMO SMITH QUARTET** Sun 31 May, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**CHRIS STAPLETON UK** Sun 31 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

## Classical Music

### I FAGIOLINI 40TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR

Programme includes works by Victoria, Weelkes, Monteverde, & A Williams, Tues 26 May, Pershore Abbey

### MADELINE BROWN PIANO RECITAL

Tues 26 May, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

### CBSO: PHILIP GLASS' DOUBLE TIMPANI

**CONCERTO** Featuring Alpesh Chauhan (conductor), Matthew Hardy & Toby Kearney (timpani). Programme also includes works by Simon & Rachmaninoff, Thurs 28 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

### ESO STRING ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Featuring Nicholas Daniel (oboe). Programme includes works by Elgar, Schoenberg, Sibelius & Musgrave, Thurs 28 May, Great Malvern Priory

### MY FIRST CONCERT: JAZZ AROUND THE

**WORLD** Featuring Alicia Gardner Trejo (saxophone), Thurs 28 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

### CBSO: MOVIES AND VIDEO GAMES IN

**CONCERT** Featuring Stephen Bell (conductor), Fri 29 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

### RBC OUT AND ABOUT

Featuring Corey Kohut & George Sharman (trumpets), Daniel Black & Matthew Franklin (saxophones), Leighton King (trombone), Inioluwa Kuti (tuba) & Thomas Kelly (drum kit), Fri 29 May, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

### CHU-YU YANG (VIOLIN) & ERIC MCELROY

(PIANO) Fri 29 May, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

### THE MUSIC OF JOHN WILLIAMS VS HANS

**ZIMMER** Featuring The Great British Film Orchestra, Sat 30 May, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

### COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS: SPRING

**INTO SUMMER** Featuring Liam Condon (conductor) & Adam Heron (organ). Programme includes works by Handel, Fauré, Stanford & more...., Sat 30 May, St Nicholas Church, Kenilworth

### CBSO SINGALONG: BRAHMS' GERMAN

**REQUIEM** Featuring Simon Halsey CBE (conductor), Hilary Cronin (soprano), Jure Počkaj (baritone) & the CBSO Chorus, Sun 31 May, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

## Comedy

**JOE LYCETT & FRIENDS** Tues 26 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MOLLY MCGUINNESS** Wed 27 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**DEIRDRE O'KANE & KUAN-WEN HUANG** Thurs 28 May, The Glee Club, B'ham

### COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY

**ROBINSON, SOL BERNSTEIN, ALLYSON JUNE SMITH & CHARLIE LEWIS** Thurs 28

May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MICK MILLER** Thurs 28 May, Dudley Town Hall

**JONNY COLE** Thurs 28 - Fri 29 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

**CHRISTOPHER MACARTHUR-BOYD** Fri 29 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**SUZI RUFFELL** Fri 29 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre



**SUSAN CALMAN** Fri 29 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**JUSTIN MOORHOUSE** Fri 29 May, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

**RUSSELL KANE** Fri 29 May, Benn Hall, Rugby

**EVA BINDEMAN, ADAM BLOOM, SOL BERNSTEIN & ALLYSON JUNE SMITH** Fri 29 - Sat 30 May, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**DARIUS DAVIES, DANE BUCKLEY, JASON NEALE & COMIC TBC** Sat 30 May, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**PRINCE ABDI, EDEN VOSS, ALISTAIR BARRIE & DANI JOHNS** Sat 30 May, Macready Theatre, Rugby

**HAL CRUTTENDEN** Sat 30 May, Kidderminster Town Hall

## Theatre

**OH ZEUS!** 'Kings of comedy' Le Navet Bete present 'a riotous, all-out hilarious ride through Greek mythology', Tues 26 - Wed 27 May, Lichfield Garrick

**THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION** Joe McFadden, Ben Onwukwe & Bill Ward star in the stage adaptation of Stephen King's novella, examining themes of friendship and hope behind the bars of a maximum security prison, Tues 26 - Sat 30 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**SINGLE WHITE FEMALE** Kym Marsh and Lisa Faulkner star in the stage version of the hit 1992 movie, Tues 26 - Sat 30 May, The Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE INVISIBLE MAN A** 'fast-paced and riotous' stage adaptation of HG Wells' classic story, Wed 27 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**IF I DIDN'T LAUGH I'D CRY - THE FRANK CARSON STORY** Mike McCabe's one-man show, based on the life of one of the UK & Ireland's best-loved comics, Wed 27 May, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**WHY I STUCK A FLARE UP MY A\*\*\* FOR ENGLAND** Alex Hill's acclaimed one-

man show, exploring what it means to be a die-hard football fan, Wed 27 May, Macready Theatre, Rugby

**DECKCHAIRS** Swan Theatre Amateur Company present Jean McConnell's five twist-in-the-tail playlets for two women, Wed 27 - Sat 30 May, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**THE WIZARD OF OZ - ADULT PANTOMIME** X-rated version of Frank L Baum's famous story, Fri 29 May, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**DIAL 1 FOR UK** Mohit Mathur's 'hilarious and poignant' one-man exploration of the UK care sector, Thurs 28 May, Lichfield Garrick

**ADULT PANTO (UNSCRIPTED)** Featuring outrageous characters and filthy humour, Sat 30 May, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON** Adapted from the HG Wells classic, Jonathan Goodwin's one-man show is described as a 'high spirited and rollicking scientific romance', Sat 30 May, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

**THE INVISIBLE MAN A** 'fast-paced and riotous' stage adaptation of HG Wells' classic story, Sat 30 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**PRIDE & PREJUDICE... BUT FUNNY** Take a romp through all the Bennets, Bingleys, bachelors and balls in a 'hilarious' retelling of Jane Austen's most-loved story, Sat 30 May, Lichfield Garrick

**BOG WITCH** Bryony Kimmings' critically acclaimed show tells how she uprooted herself and her son to live in a tumbledown cottage in the wilderness, Sat 30 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**AUSTENTATIUS: AN IMPROVISED JANE AUSTEN NOVEL** Acclaimed show in which a new Jane Austen novel - inspired entirely by a title from the audience - is performed live on stage, Sat 30 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

## Kids Theatre

**MINISTRY OF SCIENCE LIVE** Explosive science show for younger audiences. Expect 20ft liquid nitrogen clouds, exploding oxygen & hydrogen balloons, fire tornados, hydrogen bottle rockets, ignited methane and even a self-built hovercraft, Mon 25 May, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**JUSTIN LIVE - JUSTIN TIME TO ROCK** High-energy, feelgood family show featuring music, dancing and plenty of giggles, Mon 25 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**FIREMAN SAM LIVE: THE LOST PIRATE TREASURE** Swashbuckling adventure for all the family, Mon 25 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**STUPIDEST SUPER STUPID SHOW**

Family-friendly comedy featuring jokes, poos on pogo sticks, and truth-telling cheese, Mon 25 May, Lichfield Garrick

**DINOSAUR ADVENTURE LIVE: DANGER ON T-REX MOUNTAIN** Interactive stage show in which a group of intrepid rangers embark on a quest to recover a data crystal and save the dinosaurs, Tues 26 May, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**UNICORN LIVE!** Children's show featuring favourite pop and musical theatre songs, dazzling costumes and a real unicorn named Sparkle, Wed 27 May, The Old Rep, B'ham

**DINOTALES: A ROARSOME DINOSAUR ADVENTURE** Family-friendly adventure featuring a 'captivating' story and an entire herd of pre-historic beasts, Wed 27 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

**MINISTRY OF SCIENCE LIVE** Explosive science show for younger audiences. Expect 20ft liquid nitrogen clouds, exploding oxygen & hydrogen balloons, fire tornados, hydrogen bottle rockets, ignited methane and even a self-built hovercraft, Wed 27 May, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**YOU CHOOSE** Interactive musical show for all the family based on Pippa Goodhart & Nick Sharratt's book of the same name, Wed 27 May, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

**THE CAT IN THE HAT** Engaging first theatre experience based on Dr Seuss' bestselling book, Wed 27 - Thurs 28 May, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**THE GRUFFALO** Tall Stories' musical adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved children's book, Wed 27 - Sat 30 May, The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**ICE AGE ADVENTURE LIVE** Family-focused show in which fearless explorers trek through snow-packed valleys and encounter pre-historic animals along the way, Thurs 28 May, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

**THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TEA** Stage adaptation of Judith Kerr's terrific tale about a tea-guzzling tiger, Thurs 28 - Fri 29 May, Lichfield Garrick



**HORRIBLE HISTORIES 3D - TERRIBLE TUDORS & AWFUL EGYPTIANS** Family-focused show in which historical figures and events come alive on stage, Thurs 28 - Sat 30 May, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**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', Fri 29 May, Stourbridge Town Hall

**THE CAT IN THE HAT** Engaging first theatre experience based on Dr Seuss' bestselling book, Fri 29 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**THE ULTIMATE BUBBLE SHOW** International bubbleologist Ray Bubbles creates a volcano bubble, a soap bubble carousel, a bubble ghost, and even a tornado inside a bubble! Fri 29 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**SO UNFAIR** Interactive science demo with a twist, featuring engineers from across the UK zooming in to help save the day. Suitable for children aged between seven and 10, Sat 30 May, SpArC, Bishops Castle, South Shropshire

**THE CAT IN THE HAT** Engaging first theatre experience based on Dr Seuss' bestselling book, Sun 31 May, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

**ICHI** A family show that takes the notion of a one-man band to new limits. A unique show that promises to be fun, danceable and exciting, Sun 31 May, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**FUN FOR LITTLE ONES - A TRIBUTE TO MS. RACHEL** 'Singing, dancing, giggles and non-stop fun' combine in an interactive show for youngsters, Sun 31 May, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

## Dance

**JAZZ CO. DREAMS** A new body of work crafted by leading choreographers using a variety of dance styles, Tues 26 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

## Light Entertainment

**AN EVENING WITH JIMMY TARBUCK** The acclaimed raconteur reflects on his life in showbusiness, Tues 26 May, Malvern Theatres

**WONDERS OF OUR UNIVERSE** Theatre show in which astrophysicist Ian Hall takes audiences on a journey 'from the explosive birth of the cosmos to humanity's first steps beyond Earth', Tues 26 May, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**WEST END MAGIC** Family-friendly show presenting a mix of magic, comedy and variety acts. British Champion of Magic, Oliver Tabor, features, Wed 27 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**K.POP FOREVER** All-action, high-energy tribute concert, Wed 27 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**NO PHOTOS** Humour, rhyme and

storytelling combine in a spoken-word show exploring social anxiety, self-image and visibility..., Thurs 28 May, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**THE D-DAY DARLINGS: VICTORIOUS** Celebration of 'resilience, love and legacy' featuring timeless classics from Vera Lynn, The Andrew Sisters and more..., Thurs 28 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**THE ITALIAN BROS - LIVE INTERACTIVE SHOW** 'High-energy, laugh-out-loud interactive experience packed with music, chaos and audience participation', Thurs 28 May, Kidderminster Town Hall

**MAN! I FEEL LIKE BINGO WITH SHAUNIA WAYNE** Tracey Collins (Shell Suit Cher, Elvis Lesley and Audrey Heartburn) unveils her latest musical comedy character, Fri 29 May, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**THE MUSIC OF JOHN WILLIAMS VS HANS ZIMMER** The Great British Film Orchestra pay tribute to two musical legends who between them are responsible for some of the greatest film scores ever written, Fri 29 May, Dudley Town Hall

**BOLLYWOOD TIME MACHINE** Evening filled with 'laughter, dance and timeless melodies', Sat 30 May, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

**SUSIE DENT: WORD PERFECT** Join Britain's best-loved wordsmith as she explores the joys of the English language, Sat 30 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**SHOOT FROM THE HIP** Award-winning improvised comedy featuring 'chaotic games, epic scenes and unhinged performances', Sat 30 May, Birmingham Town Hall



**JOHN BARROWMAN: MY LIFE IN MUSICALS** Expect 'stories, laughter and unforgettable anthems, mixed with a few showstoppers', Sat 30 May, Lichfield Garrick

**AN EVENING WITH SIR DAVID JASON** An evening of 'hilarious anecdotes and personal reflections' with the Only Fools And Horses, Sun 31 May, Birmingham Hippodrome

**JOHN BARROWMAN: MY LIFE IN MUSICALS** Expect 'stories, laughter and unforgettable anthems, mixed with a few showstoppers', Sun 31 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**UNCOVERED - FORBIDDEN REALM OF CONSPIRACIES** 'Bold, immersive theatre experience' that pulls audiences deep into the world of

conspiracy theories, hidden narratives and forbidden questions..., Sun 31 May, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

## Talks & Spoken Word

**AN AUDIENCE WITH NIGEL PLANER - YOUNG ONCE A** 'warm, sharply funny live show of storytelling' with the Young Ones actor, Wed 27 May, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

## Events

**OAK APPLE DAY** Step back in time to 1660 and celebrate the restoration of the crown on Bank Holiday Monday, Mon 25 May, The Commandery, Worcester

**MEGASLAM WRESTLING** Team Megaslam do battle with Team Nasty in action packed matches, Mon 25 May, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**TUDOR MAY CELEBRATIONS** Celebrate Mayday and Whitsun Tudor style, Mon 25 - Thurs 28 May, Ford Green Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**MAY HALF TERM ACTIVITIES** Featuring arts and crafts, outdoor trails and storytelling, Mon 25 - Fri 29 May, National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire

**HEROES OF THE AIR** A family-friendly celebration of courage, adventure and the remarkable stories of those who took to the skies, Mon 25 - Fri 29 May, Royal Air Force Museum Midlands, Cosford

**INSIDE THE T REX** A groundbreaking world-first live dinosaur production, Mon 25 - Sun 31 May, Village Hotel, Shirley, Birmingham

**DINO LAB!** Step into the Science Garden and travel back millions of years via fun activities, Mon 25 - Fri 29 May, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**FABULOUS FOSSILS WORKSHOP** Make a fizzy exploding dinosaur fossil and learn how real fossils are formed, Tues 26 - Thurs 28 May, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**KINOTON RAF STEM: PAINTING WITH SPHERO ROBOTS** Learn to direct and instruct the Spheros from tablets provided, using them to move through paint and create an experimental painting, Wed 27 May, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

**STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY SHOW** Celebrating agriculture, competition, entertainment, food, shopping and so much more, Wed 27 - Thurs 28 May, Staffordshire County Showground, Stafford

**JURASSIC GLADSTONE** Get ready to travel back in time with a walking,

growing T-Rex, Thurs 28 May, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

**DINOSTORY TIME** Dinosaur themed storytelling in the Thinktank Theatre, Thurs 28 May, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**JQ LATES: EXPLORE SMITH & PEPPER** Explore the history of the Jewellery Quarter after hours, Thurs 28 May, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

**WILDLIFE AT SAREHOLE MILL** Families are invited to explore the outdoors, learn about nature, and take part in hands-on activities, Fri 29 May, Sarehole Mill, Birmingham

**NEIGHBOURS DAY AT BLAKESLEY HALL** A chance to explore the beautiful Blakesley Hall with free admission for members of the local community, Fri 29 May, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

**MIDLANDS AIR FESTIVAL** Filling the skies with classic jet fighters, vintage aircraft, hot air balloons, helicopters, high energy aerobatics, and more, Fri 29 - Sun 31 May, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

**UK GAMES EXPO** The UK's largest tabletop game convention, Fri 29 - Sun 31 May, NEC, Birmingham

**BEER FESTIVAL, TRACTION ENGINE RALLY AND STEAM TRAINS** Road meets rail, with traction engines, steam rollers and of course the steam hauled trains, Sat 30 May, Foxfield Railway, Staffordshire

**JEWELLERY QUARTER HERITAGE WALK** A lively guided walk looking at the people, places and themes that have helped to shape this singular working district, Sat 30 May, St Pauls Church, Birmingham

**CINEMA UNDER THE STARS: ICE AGE** A cinema-style screening of Ice Age, Sat 30 May, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**BACKSTAGE TOUR** Explore backstage and meet the expert technical and creative teams, Sat 30 May, Lichfield Garrick Theatre

**BUILD IT LIVE** From inspiration to reality, the UK's leading self-build experts come together under one roof, Sat 30 - Sun 31 May, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**THE NATIONAL KIT CAR SHOW** Meet the UK manufacturers behind the cars and explore displays from the industry's leading names, Sat 30 - Sun 31 May, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**FAMILY EXPLORER TOUR** Designed to bring the history of Weston to life for families and young people, Sun 31 May, Weston Park, Shropshire

**QUILTER CHEVIOT BRITISH OPEN SQUASH 2026** One of the most prestigious and historic tournaments in professional squash, Sun 31 May - Sun 7 June, The Rep, Birmingham

Enter now at [whatsonlive.co.uk](http://whatsonlive.co.uk) to be in with a chance of bagging one of these fabulous prizes!



**Win! A family ticket to see A Midsummer Night's Dream**

Shakespeare veterans and newbies alike will enjoy The Rep's new production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. An enchanting new take on the Bard's classic comedy, the action is set in the heart of Birmingham and is bursting at the seams with 'Brummieness'! We have a family ticket (four tickets) to give away to see the show at The Rep on Wednesday 20 May...

**Competition closes Monday 11 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 and hope 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 '80s Classical**

Step back into the decade of big hits, big hair and even bigger anthems as Nik Kershaw, Johnny Hates Jazz and Jaki Graham take to the stage with the Orchestra of Opera North for '80s Classical. The show comes to Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Thursday 11 June - and we have two tickets to give away...

**Competition closes Friday 29 May**



**Win! A pair of tickets to see Omar**

Celebrating 40 years in showbiz, British soul legend Omar is stopping off at Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, on Thursday 18 June as part of his much-anticipated Brighter The Days tour. What's On is offering one lucky reader the chance to win two tickets to the show...

**Competition closes Monday 8 June.**

For your chance to WIN! with What's On, visit:  
**[whatsonlive.co.uk](http://whatsonlive.co.uk)**

**AIR TIGHT 80s**  
The 80s ROCK ANTHEMS show  
FRI 15 MAY

SAT 16 MAY  
**erasure**  
THE BIG 80's PARTY  
PERFORMED BY NOL  
erasure  
TRIBUTE  
A LIVE TRIBUTE TO  
PET SHOP BOYS  
BY PET SHOP BOYS, ACTUALLY

**ROXY MAGIC**  
CELEBRATE THE MUSIC OF  
BRYAN FERRY & ROXY MUSIC  
BACK BY DEMAND!  
SUN 17 MAY

**NORTHERN LIVE**  
DO I LOVE YOU  
FRI 22 MAY

**K-POP SUPERSTARS**  
SUN 24 MAY  
PLUS VIP MEET & GREET

**WRESTLING**  
LIVE  
2026 MEGA TOUR  
BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY 25 MAY

**Blackmore's Blood**  
A TRIBUTE TO THE MAGIC OF RITCHIE BLACKMORE  
FRI 29 MAY

**THE BIG INDIE FEST**  
SAT 30 MAY  
UK'S BIGGEST INDEPENDENT MUSIC NIGHT  
EXPECT TO HEAR THE BIGGEST NEW SOUND

SUN 31 MAY  
CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF  
**CHRIS STAPLETON**  
WITH CHRIS STAPLETON UK & HIS LIVE BAND

**DESPERADOS**  
THE ULTIMATE TRIBUTE TO  
THE EAGLES  
THURS 4 JUNE

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF NEVERMIND AND TEN  
**VRVANA**  
The Independent Tribute  
THE PEARL JAM  
**Brain of Jax**  
TRIBUTE BAND  
FRI 5 JUNE

**SPECIAL KINDA MADNESS**  
PRESENTING A LIVE TRIBUTE TO THE SPECIALS AND MADNESS  
2 BANDS  
2 TONE  
1 FANTASTIC NIGHT  
SAT 6 JUNE

THE **BLUES ROCK ROADSHOW**  
FEATURING REMI HARRIS & DAVE SMALL  
SUN 7 JUNE

★★★★★  
THE GLOBE WORLD  
MON 8 JUNE  
**KARL LOXLEY**  
SONGS FROM THE STAGE & SCREEN  
THE GREATEST SHOWMAN | THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA  
LES MISERABLES | THE LION KING AND MANY MORE

THE WORLD'S BEST  
**P!NK**  
TRIBUTE SHOW  
Vicky Jackson  
& HER FULL LIVE BAND!  
FRI 12 JUNE

**THE HISTORY OF SOUL**  
THURS 18 JUNE

**motorhead**  
FRI 19 JUNE  
The UK's No.1 Live tribute to Motorhead

**over thirty club.**  
30+ OUTDOOR SUMMER FESTIVAL  
**SHREWSBURY**  
Daytime Clubbing For The Over 30s.  
SAT 20 JUNE

SUN 21 JUNE  
**Sebastian Bech**  
THE UK'S #1 SCHOOL OF ROCK LIVE TRIBUTE SHOW BAND

THE DIG CAPITAL BY ARRANGEMENT WITH NEIL O' BISHEN ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS  
**inspiral carpets**  
SAT 27 JUNE

SUN 28 JUNE  
**GORDON HENDERIKS**  
THE KING'S VOICE

THURS 2 JULY  
**HERMAN'S HERMITES**

FRI 3 JULY  
**RAMMLIED**  
THE UK'S AMERICAN COUNTRY MUSIC TRIBUTE

Day Life!  
**ABBA**  
ALL DAY OUTDOOR GARDEN PARTY  
SAT 4 JULY

THE UK'S  
**ROCK SUMM!**  
FRI 10 JULY

THE ULTIMATE BRUNCH PARTY!  
SAT 11 JULY  
**Neddy Swings** & **Rag'n'Bone Man**

**TRIFIDS**  
A METAL TRIBUTE TO THE DEE GEYS & DEICONS  
"They are great fun!"  
Bruce Dickinson, Iron Maiden  
THURS 10 JULY

The Rock'n'Roller's Top  
FRI 24 JULY  
**LITMUS EX!**  
50 YEARS OF AEROSMITH

**LIVE!**  
SHREWSBURY

THE BUTTERMARKET  
SHREWSBURY

Howard St, Shrewsbury, SY1 2LF. TEL: 01743 281750 www.thebuttermarket.co.uk

BUY TICKETS HERE:





Save  
**1/3**  
with GroupSave\*  
(3-9 people)

• **Cheap trains** •  
**when you go Off-Peak**



Scan the QR code  
for more information

\*T&Cs apply



**West  
Midlands  
Railway**